

GOD THE GOOD SHEPHERD

UNIT ONE: God's Heroes

Lesson 3: The Walls Fell Down!

CONTENT:

1. One day Joshua met 'The Captain of the Lord's Army' who gave him instructions to attack Jericho.
2. The Israelite army marched for 6 days around the walls of Jericho with the Ark of the Covenant. On the 7th day they marched 7 times and then shouted. The walls of Jericho fell down. The Israelites won the battle.
3. After defeating the other kings of the land, Joshua divided the Promised Land between the 12 tribes of Israel. At last God's promise to Abraham came true.
4. We also face challenges on our way to heaven. We also have to 'fight'. God will win the victory for us. Our part is to obey him, trust him and keep close to him. [CCC 1821,2016]
5. Like the Israelites' procession, we also have processions: At Mass, we have the Entrance Procession and later, the Offertory Procession. The 'Christ the King' procession is a special one, because Jesus himself is carried in the monstrance. We honour and praise him.
6. When we go for Mass and receive Jesus in Holy Communion, we can take him with us into our daily lives. He will help us as we fight against temptations, fear etc. [CCC 1392-1394]

ASSIGNMENT: Read handout at home.

REFERENCES: Joshua 5:13-15; 6:1-27. John 15:5.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Handouts. Picture of a monstrance.

I. STARTER:

- Today we are going to start with a guessing game. I will give some students a word and they must try to act it. The rest of the class will try to guess the word they are acting.

[6 to 7 volunteers are given the word 'PROCESSION'. After the students act and the others guess, talk about processions as follows:]

- Have you ever seen a procession? Or taken part in one? *[Talk about other religious processions too, like the 'Palkhi'.]*
- At the beginning of Mass the priest, the altar-servers and those who are reading come in procession to the altar while we all stand and sing a hymn. This is called the 'Entrance Procession'. Later we have an Offertory procession when the bread and wine are taken up and given to the priest.
- On the Feast of Christ the King we have a very special procession when the priest carries the Blessed Sacrament (Jesus) in a special container called the MONSTRANCE. *[Write the word on blackboard. Show a picture or sketch of a monstrance.]* It is a beautiful golden container with golden rays coming out.
- We all walk behind praising God and singing hymns, carrying candles or flags. Children who have just received their First Communion walk in front of Jesus, dressed in white, throwing rose-petals. We do all this because we really believe that Jesus is present and we know that he is the King above all other kings.

II. DEVELOPMENT:

- Today we are going to hear about a very interesting and exciting procession that Joshua and the Israelites took part in.

One day Joshua was standing and looking at the strong walls of Jericho. He thought, “What can I do now? If I take the people into the land to live the king will attack us and kill us all. We have to fight and defeat the King of Jericho first. But how can I fight him? The gates are shut and the walls are too high and strong to climb or break!”

Suddenly he looked up and saw a man standing there with a sword in his hand. Joshua got a shock. “Who are you? Are you one of us, or from the enemy side?”

“I am the Captain of the Army of the Lord!” the man said.

Joshua fell down on his face. Then the man, who was an angel, said, “I have given Jericho to you, with its king and soldiers!”

Then he told Joshua exactly what to do.

The next day Joshua got all the fighting men ready. They began to march around the walls of the city. Seven priests walked in front of the Ark of the Covenant blowing trumpets (ram’s horns) Other priests carried the Ark. Some soldiers marched in front of the Ark and the rest marched behind. The people of Jericho, peeping out of their windows wondered what was going on.

After making a full round of the city, the Israelites went back to their tents to rest. The next day they did the same thing. They marched in procession round the walls, blowing the trumpets. This went on for 6 days. Each day the people of Jericho got more and more frightened.

On the 7th day, the priests did not blow the horns, but walked round silently once, twice, three times...7 times! As they completed the 7th round, Joshua called out, “Shout! For the Lord has given you the city!”

All the Israelites shouted with a loud voice... There was a rumbling sound... They saw the walls of the city shake... cracks appeared... then the huge stones began to roll down. Soon there was enough space for the whole army to enter. Joshua and his men charged in. In no time at all they had defeated the King and his army.

How excited the Israelites were when they saw how God had helped them! “God is stronger than the strongest wall!” “God is really with us to fight for us!”

Joshua did not forget Rahab and how she had helped them. She and her family joined the Israelites and were kept safe.

After defeating all the kings of that land, Joshua divided up the land between the 12 tribes. At last the people were able to live in peace in the beautiful land God had promised them.

NEXT CLASS:

[Give out handouts and answer the questions given about the story of Jericho. Go over the story with the students.]

- Who told Joshua what to do? *[The Captain of the Lord’s army, an angel.]*
- Altogether how many times did the Israelites walk round the city? *[13 times.]*
- What happened when the people started shouting? *[The walls of Jericho broke and fell.]*
- What happened to Rahab and her family? *[They went to live with the Israelites.]*
- What happened to the Israelites after they defeated all the kings? *[They lived in the Promised Land at last.]*

III. REFLECTION & PRAYER:

- The story we just heard is like our story. God wants all of us to reach heaven (like the Promised Land).
- But we have to face some difficulties on the way like the huge walls of Jericho. What difficulties do you and your family have to face? [Students unjumble the words: TEMPTATIONS, FEARS.]
- Sometimes we feel like doing bad things like hurting people or telling lies or stealing. It is difficult for us to follow God and reach heaven. These are called TEMPTATIONS. They are like a big wall stopping us.
- Sometimes we have FEARS like, 'I'm too bad to be God's friend!' or 'I'm all alone. No one can help me! Even God won't help me!'
- Are there any other difficulties which stop us from going forward, like the walls of Jericho? [Sometimes SICKNESS in the family, or BAD HABITS like drinking, or people hurting us (HURTS) make us give up and stop following God.]

[Students write these words in the space below]

- But God is with us to help us win. What should we do? [OBEY him, TRUST him and KEEP CLOSE to him.] That is what the Israelites did. They kept walking round and round, just as God had told them to do. They obeyed God and trusted him. They carried the Ark with them, because they knew that it was God who would win the battle for them.
- One way to stay close to Jesus is by going for MASS and receiving him in HOLY COMMUNION. He will give us the power to keep walking towards heaven. And he will fight for us.

IV. ACTIVITY:

[Ask the students to draw a wall on the other side of the handout. In front of it they could draw themselves and their family. On the other side they could depict heaven. On the wall they could write any difficulties they are facing. Eg. SICKNESS IN MY FAMILY. Have a short moment of prayer, asking God to be with them and fight for them, so that these difficulties may be overcome.]

Lord Jesus/
Please help us with these difficulties we are facing/
We trust in you./ Let us win and go forward/
Take me and my family /safely to heaven./ Amen

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| Home assignment: Read handout at home. |
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