

Better Than Dynamite: The Battle of Jericho

by Rev. Joseph Baumgarten

The priests blew the trumpets. As soon as the army heard the sound, they gave a loud shout. Then the wall fell down. Everyone charged straight in. So they took the city. —Joshua 6:20 NIV

- Have you ever seen a building fall down or collapse? If so, where did you see it?
- Did the building fall down because someone planned it, or did it fall down because of a tragedy like a fire or an earthquake?

When a large building is empty and no longer safe, it needs to be torn down. One of the ways this is done is with explosives or dynamite. But they don't just blow the building up. Each explosion is timed, planned, and set off in order. This is done so no one gets hurt. The building then collapses in a pile of dust and rubble.

In the Bible, Joshua was the leader who took over for Moses when he died. Joshua was chosen by God to bring God's people to the land they had been promised years and years ago. When Joshua was leading God's people, the Israelites, through the Promised Land, they needed to get past Jericho. Jericho was a huge city with a giant wall surrounding it.

- Have you ever been to a big city? If so, where?
- Have you ever seen a fort or a battleground? If so, was there a wall around it?
- Do you think you could break down a wall around a fort? If so, how?

There was no dynamite back in the time of Joshua, so Joshua was left wondering what they could do to capture a city surrounded by a giant wall. God sent a messenger to Joshua to tell him how to do it. It didn't involve guns or weapons, explosives or dynamite, or any strong military soldiers. God told Joshua the wall would come down with faith and their voices. (Reread the Bible verse.) God told them to follow His directions and then make a lot of noise!

(If you are in a place where it is OK to yell...put a glass in front of the group.) Do you think we can yell loud enough to break this glass? Let's try it...one, two, three, yell!

- Well, that didn't work! What would you think if Joshua told you to yell and the wall would fall down?

The good news is Joshua trusted God and the people trusted Joshua. So the people did what God wanted them to do; they had faith. They obeyed the Lord's directions and marched around the city. Then at the end of the march, they lifted up their voices and gave a loud shout! The trumpets sounded, and the wall dropped in a pile of dust and rubble. It was better than dynamite! God can do amazing things even when it looks impossible. He gives us faith as a gift so we can trust and obey, just as Joshua did. Even when things don't look too hopeful, we can trust God to take care of us. He promises He will always be with us.

Prayer

Dear Almighty God,
You are so powerful and strong.
Help us trust You even when things are hard.
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

