

Age-Level Overview

	Open the Bible	Activate Faith
Lower Elementary		
WORKSHOP FOCUS: God calls us to trust.	SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Story Bibles	SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Story Bible
TEAM RELAY: Kids work together to practice trust and teamwork.	SUPPLIES: Chairs	SUPPLIES: Folding chairs, scarves or rope, soft objects (such as foam balls, pillows, crumbled paper, stuffed animals), blindfolds
TAKE AN OBSTACLE WALK: Kids form pairs and lead each other over a simple obstacle course with one person blindfolded.		
Upper Elementary		
WORKSHOP FOCUS: Never give up! God is with us!	SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers	SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Bibles
WORD SCRAMBLE: Kids work in teams to unscramble words and find one verse from the story.	SUPPLIES: None	SUPPLIES: Newsprint and markers or whiteboard and markers, paper, masking tape, cardboard boxes, CD player, Spark CD or another CD
BUILD THE WALL: Kids try to add a box to the wall when the music stops.		
All Kids		
WORKSHOP FOCUS: God's people work together.	SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Story Bibles, Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers	SPARK RESOURCES: None
BUILD A TOWER: Kids work together to build a tower.	SUPPLIES: None	SUPPLIES: Wooden or plastic blocks, bins or boxes, drinking straws, string or yarn, paper, masking tape, paper cups, ping pong balls, chairs
HUFF AND PUFF: Kids work in teams to do three tasks and think about following directions.		



Visit www.sparksundayschool.org for more Spark content. Watch a short Lesson Prep Video that will prepare you and give you confidence to explore this Bible story with the kids you are leading. You will also find a downloadable Family Page for this rotation's story filled with ideas for families to use to explore this story and live out their faith at home.

Workshop Focus: God calls us to trust.

Keep these tips in mind as you welcome kids to the workshop and explore the story together.

- Each week, remember to welcome kids to the rotation. Keep in mind that for some kids it may be the first time they are visiting your workshop!
- If kids have heard the story several times during previous weeks, read it again! Kids learn through repetition, and every workshop will explore the Bible story in a slightly different way.
- Remember that the Shepherds are there to support you as they accompany kids each week.
- Be sure to visit www.sparksondayschool.org to download the Family Page for this story. Make copies of it and ask Shepherds to distribute it during the Wrap Up.

Open the Bible (10 minutes)

The Battle of Jericho Storytelling

Set Up: Set up chairs in a circle with room outside the circle for kids to march around.

Activity Instructions

1. Greet kids by name as they arrive.
I am so glad to see all of you this morning. We are going to hear a story about a time when God kept a promise to the Hebrews and they learned to trust God again. God promised to give the Hebrews a new land after they had wandered in the wilderness for forty years. When they got to the new land there were already people living there. What would you think if someone promised you a new house and there was already someone living there? *(The person who made the promise was wrong, the people in the house were wrong, somehow everything got mixed up.)* **What would you think then when the person who made the promise told you to march around the house seven times to make the other people move?** *(that would be silly, wouldn't trust the person, would laugh)* **However, that is exactly what God told the Hebrews to do and exactly what happened. The Hebrews trusted God to keep the promises God made.**

Spark Resources
Spark Story Bibles

Supplies
Chairs, enough to make a circle kids can march around

What does trust mean? What do I mean if I say you can trust me? (*We can believe you, you will do what you say you will do, you won't let anything hurt us.*)

That's right. We can trust people most of the time, but we can trust God all of the time.

2. Give out the Spark Story Bibles and help kids find The Battle of Jericho on page 102. **Listen as I read the story and follow along. What would you have done if God told you to march, blow horns, and shout to make the walls come down?** (*laughed, refused to do it, obeyed God, trusted God*) **I am going to read the story again. This time you can get up and march around the chairs pretending to blow the trumpet each time it is mentioned in the story. And on the seventh day, you can shout and fall down like the wall.** Have kids march six times around the chairs you have set up. When kids shout, they can all then fall down.

Good job. Now come back near me. What happened when the people shouted? (*God made the walls fall down.*) **Did the Hebrews believe this would happen?** (*yes, no, maybe*) **The Hebrews trusted God even though they did not really understand how God would make the walls fall down. They trusted God and followed God's instructions. Sometimes we need to trust God and other people even when it is hard and we do not understand. We're going to play some games that will help us to practice trust—and have some fun. Are you ready? Let's get into a circle and then I will tell you about the game.**

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Team Relay

Set Up: Mark a starting line for the relay teams and a finish line where you will place a folding chair. You will need lots of space for this game and for kids to move.

Activity Instructions

The Hebrews trusted God to keep the promise God made, and they trusted each other to do their part in following God's instructions. In this game we will need to trust each other as we work together as a team. What were some of the things the Hebrews did to show their trust in God? (*followed God's directions to march around the city together, the priests blew the trumpets, the people walked silently, the soldiers walked in front of the priests*) **What did the people do to work together?** (*went in the right order, blew the trumpets, stayed quiet until it was time to shout, did what they were supposed to do*)

Line up in three (or four) teams. To choose the teams, let's count off by threes (or fours). Point to kids in the circle and help them count off, "One, two, three, (four); one, two, three, (four), etc. **Now all the ones get in a line; all the twos get**

Spark Resources
None

Supplies

Folding chair, 1 per team
Scarves or rope, 15" (38 cm),
1 per team

in another line; all the threes get in another line (and all the fours get in another line). Have kids line up so the first person in the line is standing behind the starting line and facing the folding chair for his or her team. The rest of the players should stand behind the first person, all facing toward the folding chair. The teams need to have an equal number of members, so a Shepherd may need to join one of the teams.

Describe the game. **When I say, "Go," the first person in the line will go to the folding chair, run around the chair, and then run back to the starting line. He or she will take the hand of the next person in line, and both will run around the chair together. Then the two kids will take the hand of the third person and run around the chair. Continue to add kids to the line until everyone in the line has gone hand-in-hand around the chair. When the last person is ready to go around the chair, the whole team will shout and the last person will fold the chair and put it on the ground. Then everyone should sit behind the starting line.**

When kids are lined up, be sure everyone understands the instructions. **Go.** Cheer for kids on all the teams and encourage them. The goal of this game is not winning but having fun and trusting each other to work together.

When all teams are done, talk about how kids trusted each other and worked together. **What did you do to help each other?** Encourage kids to name specific things. **When did you need to trust each other?** Encourage kids to name specific times. **Why is it a good idea to trust other people? Why is it a good idea to trust God?** Allow all answers.

If time allows, play the game again.

Take an Obstacle Walk

Set Up: Plan an easy obstacle course using soft objects such as balls, pillows, crumpled paper, and/or stuffed animals. Don't set it up until the first partner is blindfolded, and be ready to change it slightly after the second partner is blindfolded.

Activity Instructions

We can trust God to take care of us and to keep promises. This is another game that can remind us that we can trust each other and God.

Describe the game. **In this game you will work with a partner and do an activity in which you will need to trust each other. One partner will be blindfolded, and the other partner will lead them through an obstacle course, making a promise to keep that person safe. Remember that the Hebrews learned that God would keep God's promise and they trusted God.**

Find a partner and decide who will be blindfolded first. After the first partners are blindfolded, set up the obstacle course you planned using soft objects such as balls, pillows, crumpled paper, and stuffed animals, scattering them around an open space. **I have set up the obstacle course and it only has safe things in it so no one will be hurt. Now the sighted partner should promise the blind partner to keep him or her safe on the obstacle course. Are you ready?**

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Soft objects such as balls,
pillows, crumpled paper,
stuffed animals
Blindfolds

Have the “sighted” partner lead the “blind” partner around the objects on the obstacle course. Remind kids to tell their partners where to turn or step. Encourage them not to let their partners get hurt. When all the pairs have completed the course, have them switch the blindfolds. Make some small changes to the arrangement of the course and have kids repeat the obstacle course.

Now that everyone is finished, come over here and sit down. What was hard about this game? Allow all answers. **Which was harder—being the leader and keeping the promise to keep your partner safe, or being the blind person and trusting the promise of your partner? Sometimes it is hard to trust someone—even God—to keep a promise. The Hebrews learned they could trust God. You learned you could trust your partner. You will discover that you can always trust God, too!**

Send (5 minutes)

Wrap Up

Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Page for this story if kids haven't already received it, and come together for Wrap Up.

Today we heard the story about the Hebrews and the walls of Jericho. The people trusted God to care for them and to bring down the walls even though they did not understand the plan. When are some times this week that you will need to trust God to care for you? (*going to school, doing homework, obeying parents, making friends, when afraid*) **When you go home you can tell your family all about the walls that fell down when the people trusted God.**

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

None

Prayer Time

Dear God,
Thank you for helping the Hebrews. Thank you for caring for me. Help me to trust and follow you always.
Amen.

Workshop Focus: Never give up! God is with us!

Keep these tips in mind as you welcome kids to the workshop and explore the story together.

- Each week, remember to welcome kids to the rotation. Keep in mind that for some kids it may be the first time they are visiting your workshop!
- If kids have heard the story several times during previous weeks, read it again! Kids learn through repetition, and every workshop will explore the Bible story in a slightly different way.
- Remember that the Shepherds are there to support you as they accompany kids each week.
- Be sure to visit www.sparksondayschool.org to download the Family Page for this story. Make copies of it and ask Shepherds to distribute it during the Wrap Up.

Open the Bible (10 minutes)

The Battle of Jericho Storytelling

Greet kids by name as they arrive.

I am so glad to see everyone this morning. Today I want to tell you a story about the Hebrews. After they escaped from Egypt, they spent forty years getting to the land God had promised to give them. And guess what happened when they finally got to their new home? There was someone else living there. How do you think they must have felt? (*confused, scared, mad*) What do you think they wanted to do? (*drive out the other people, ask them to leave, ask God what happened*)

Let's find out what they did. Find the story of Jericho in your Spark Bible in Joshua 6:1-20. Help kids find the passage by looking in the Table of Contents and then finding the chapter number. Encourage them to help each other. Read or ask a kid to read Joshua 6:1-5 (page 237). **What do you think of God's plan? Do you think marching will make the walls fall down? (*silly, won't work, etc.*) However, the people of God wanted to please God and decided to try God's plan.** Read what happened in verses 6-19.

Spark Resources

Spark Bibles
Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies

None

Okay, let's shout like the Hebrews and then we'll see what happened. Let kids shout and then read verse 20. **Okay, how do you think the people felt when Joshua told them to shout?** (*silly, excited, expectant, afraid*) **Let's read verse 20 together: "So the people shouted, and the trumpets were blown. As soon as the people heard the sound of the trumpets, they raised a great shout, and the wall fell down flat." Stop the reading there. The walls fell down just as God promised! Yeah! God is amazing. Sometimes we just have to try again and again and believe in God.**

Get out your Spark Bible Stickers and use them to mark your Bible by the story. Give kids a few minutes to use their stickers. **Good job. Now we're going to play some games that will help us remember to never give up and trust God.**

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Word Scramble

Set Up:

Write the following scrambled words on newsprint or whiteboard for both teams. After you have written the lists of words tape a piece of paper to cover them.

IECHOJR [Jericho]
RETSPIS [priests]
DRESLOSI [soldiers]
METRSUPT [trumpets]
OTHSU [shout]
JUAHSO [Joshua]
MSRA' RNOH [rams' horn]
VHTSENE [seventh]
KAR FO HET EVONACTN [ark of the covenant]

Activity Instructions

Describe the game. **What are some hard things you have had to try again and again to do?** (*spelling tests, math tests, sports events, mowing the yard*) **In the first game, you are going to have something challenging to do—although it won't be quite as hard as making the walls of a city fall down. Part of the game may be easy, but part may be hard. You will be working as a team just like the Hebrews did.**

I have written some scrambled words on these two pieces of paper/whiteboard, and you are going to work in teams to unscramble the words and then find one place where they appear in your Spark Bibles. Let's count off by two's to make the teams. Each team is to write the unscrambled word next to the scrambled one on the newsprint/white board and then write one verse from the story

Spark Resources

Spark Bibles

Supplies

Newsprint and markers or
whiteboard and markers
Paper to cover each list of
words
Masking tape

where the word appears. Does everyone understand? If necessary, provide an example using the word "tumbling": GTMBNIUL [tumbling]; The wall came tumbling down.

Have the two teams line up in front of the newsprint/whiteboards and uncover the words. **Go.** Give the teams five minutes to complete the assignment. **Stop now.** **Let's see how well each team did.** Check their responses against the list above and in the Spark Bible.

How did you like this game? Was it hard to unscramble the words? Allow time for answers. **Was it hard to find the words in the story?** Allow time for answers. **What did you do when it was hard?** (*tried again, tried harder, worked together, believed that the word could be unscrambled and found*) **What do you do at school or home when you have to do something difficult?** (*give up, try again, get help, pray*) **How many of you realize you can ask God to help you with anything at all? If God can knock down the walls of Jericho, God can help you accomplish hard things.**

Build the Wall

Set Up: Scatter the boxes around an area. Be sure there is room for kids to march around outside the boxes.

Activity Instructions

Point out the boxes you have collected. **Let's imagine that these are big stones for the walls of the city. In the story, the Hebrews had to obey God as God prepared to knock down the walls. In this game we will try to *build* the wall. We can have fun as fewer and fewer stones will be available to build the wall.**

I am going to play music and you can march around the stones. When I stop the music, everyone tries to get a stone and add his or her stone to make a wall. However, each time there will be one less stone to add and one person will be eliminated. If you don't get a box when the music stops then you are out. We'll play until there are no boxes left. Are you ready?

Begin with the boxes scattered about. Play the music and have kids march around the boxes. Stop the music and remind kids to get a box and build the wall. Before you start the music again scatter the boxes and remove one. Repeat this process until there are no boxes left.

Good job. How did you like this game? Did you have fun trying to get a box so you would not be out? Why do you think it is important to try again and again to do hard things? (*reach a goal, accomplish something, it is fun, etc.*)

Let's remember the Hebrews had to march around the wall for seven days. What if they hadn't followed God's instructions? (*The walls would not have come down and they wouldn't have been able to start their new life.*) **They marched and then on the seventh day when they shouted, the wall came tumbling down.**

Spark Resources
None

Supplies

Cardboard boxes of different sizes, one less than the number of kids
CD player
Spark CD or another CD

Send (5 minutes)

Wrap Up

Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Page for this story if kids haven't already received it, and come together for Wrap Up.

Today we heard the story about the Hebrews and the walls of Jericho. The people trusted God to care for them and to bring down the walls. They followed God's instruction again and again until the walls fell down. We talked about how hard it is to try again and again to do something. We talked about how important it is to listen to and follow God, especially when we are faced with something hard. Our games helped us think about trying again and again. When are some times this week that you may need to try hard to do something? (going to school, doing homework, taking a new class, practicing sports) When you go home you can tell your family all about the walls that fell down when the people obeyed God and tried again and again. I liked being with you today. Let's end our time together with prayer.

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

None

Prayer Time

Dear God,

Thank you for bringing down the walls of Jericho so the Hebrews could have a new land to live in. Help me to keep trying when I have hard things to do. Remind me to follow you and to call on you every day.

Amen.

Workshop Focus: God's people work together.

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Open the Bible (10 minutes)

The Battle of Jericho Storytelling

Activity Instructions

Welcome kids by name as they arrive. **I am glad to see you. Today we are going to talk about a time when God asked the Israelites to do something that seems somewhat silly. I wonder if you ever did something silly and got a big surprise.** Give kids a few minutes to share one or two things. **That is what happened to the Hebrews. They were in the new land that God had promised to them at a city called Jericho. The city was surrounded with big walls and instead of trying to knock down the walls, God told the people to march around them.**

Pass out the Spark Story Bibles and help kids find the story. **Listen to the story as I read it to you.** Read The Battle of Jericho on pages 102-105 in the Spark Story Bible. **What did God tell the Hebrews to do for six days?** (*The priests had to walk around the wall once a day blowing their horns, soldiers were to march in front of the priests, and the rest of the people were to walk behind without making any noise.*) **What did God tell them to do on the seventh day?** (*to march around the city seven times with the priest blowing horns and the soldiers marching and the people following*) **What happened at the end?** (*God made the wall fall down when the people all shouted.*)

Spark Resources

Spark Story Bibles
Spark Bibles
Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies

None

What do walls usually do when people march and shout? (*remain standing*) **How do you think the Hebrews felt when the walls fell down?** Let kids share their answers.

What do you think you would have done if you had been a Hebrew and heard God's plan? What would you have said to God? Let kids respond. **Even though it seemed like a strange plan, the Hebrews worked together to follow God's instructions. Why do you think it was important for them to work together?** (*God's plan might not have worked, they each had a special job to do.*) **Can you think of some times that you had to work with others to make a plan work?** Let kids remember some examples. **Today we are going to play some games in which you will have to work together as a group to reach a goal. Stand in a circle for the first game.**

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Build a Tower

Set Up: Locate several collections of blocks so you have a variety of sizes and shapes. Divide the blocks into large bins so each small group will have one bin. Choose an area where there is room for each group to build.

Activity Instructions

Form teams. **This is a game in which you will need to work together just like the Hebrews did. However, unlike the Hebrews, you are going *build* a tower instead of knocking a wall down. Let's go around the circle and count off by threes** (or fours depending on how many kids you have). After the kids count off, have the number ones get together in a group, all the twos together, etc. **Find a place in the room where you will have some space around you.**

Describe the game. **I have a bin of blocks for each group, and the groups are going to work together to try to build the tallest tower you can out of blocks. You will need to make a plan and work together to reach your goal for the tallest tower. At the end of the time we'll see who built the tallest tower. Be careful it doesn't fall down. If it does, then you will need to start again.** Tell the groups they have five minutes to build their towers. Each person must take his or her turn adding to the wall; encourage other kids to offer support. At the end of four minutes warn kids that they have one minute left. At five minutes, say, **Stop.**

Gather kids together and look at each tower. Say something positive about each one, such as tallest, most creative, most interesting, etc. **What are some of the things you did to work together?** Let kids share. **Why is it important for God's people to work together?** (*nothing would get done, they would argue, they would still have a pile of blocks.*) **Everyone did such a good job. I really liked the way you worked together and shared the job of building the tower. In the next game you**

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Blocks, wooden or plastic
Bins or boxes to hold the blocks

are going to have to work together again to follow directions. Stay in your same groups and listen for the directions.

Huff and Puff

Set Up: Mark the starting and finish line with masking tape. Place one chair at the end of each team's line. On each chair tape one end of the string or yarn on the seat. Make a small hole in the bottom of the cup and thread the string into the cup and out the bottom. Then tape the other end of the string on the back of the chair so that the string rises at about a 45-degree angle. The open end of the cup should be facing down toward the seat of the chair. Kids will be blowing into the cup to make it go up the string.

Activity Instructions

This game is a relay game. You will work in the same teams you did when you built the tower. Get into three (or four) lines, one behind the other. I am going to give you directions for three things each team is going to do. You may think that these are silly directions. Remember, the Hebrews thought God's instructions were silly too at first. The goal of the relay game is to have a good time as you work together on a team.

Point out the cups on strings taped to the chairs at the end of the course and explain the game. **Each person on the team will blow the cup to the end of the string and then pull it back to the beginning for the next person. Go to the end of the line after your turn. When everyone on the team has blown the cup and it is back at the start of the line, sit down and I will give you directions for the second relay.** Let kids follow your directions and blow the cup up the string. When all the teams are sitting down, give the directions for the second relay.

Remove the chairs from the relay course. Distribute one paper to each team and one straw to each person.

Here are the directions for the second relay. Each kid on each team is to pick up the paper by sucking on his or her straw and then carry the paper on the straw to the finish line. Then bring the paper back for the next person and go to the end of the line. Go to the end of the line after your turn. When everyone on the team has carried the paper to the finish line and it is back at the beginning, sit down and I will give you directions for the last relay. When all the teams are sitting down, give the directions for the third relay.

Remove the papers. Give each team a ping pong ball.

In the final relay, each kid on each team will blow a ping pong ball to the finish line and carry it back for the next person. When everyone on the team has blown the ping pong ball across the finish line and it is back at the beginning, sit down.

I really like the way you followed directions and worked together. That was just like the Hebrews. Good job. What are some of the things you did to help each other and work together? Let kids say what they did. Encourage them to be as specific as possible. (*followed directions, handed each other cup/paper/ping pong ball, encouraged each other, listened to each other's ideas, etc.*)

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Drinking straws, 1 per kid
Masking tape
Paper, approximately 4" x 4" (10 x 10 cm), 1 per team
Paper cup, 1 per team
Ping pong ball, 1 per team
String or yarn, 15" (38 cm), 1 per team
Chair, 1 per team

Sometimes God asks us to do things together to reach a goal—such as listening, sharing tasks, or helping each other. Why do you think it is important to work together? What do you think God likes about seeing us working together? Let kids answer. **I know God is happy when we work together.**

Send (5 minutes)

Wrap Up

Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Page for this story if the kids haven't already received it, and come together for Wrap Up.

Today we heard how the Hebrews followed God's instructions and the walls of Jericho fell. The Hebrews worked together, and we worked together to have fun and reach the goal of some games. This week you can think about the importance of working together—even if you don't understand why. Try to follow directions and cooperate with others.

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

None

Prayer Time

**Dear God,
Just as you brought the Hebrews into a new land and a new life, you will bring me into new life. Help me, Lord, to work with others to bring about your will.
Amen.**