

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Leads Us

SCRIPTURE: Joshua 5–6

WORD OF WONDER: From 1 Chronicles 16:15

When life gets crazy, sometimes I just want to be told what to do. I long for someone to enlighten me on the “right” way to proceed. But when I ask for a friend’s advice, I don’t always take it. Why? Because deep down, I believe my own ways of solving life’s problems are better.

After God faithfully led the Israelites across the Jordan River on dry ground and gave them assurance that they would defeat Jericho, He gave Joshua an unusual battle plan: Walk around the city, blow trumpets, and shout. Although God’s ways are mysterious, the Israelites were learning that His leadership can always be trusted.

Read [Joshua 6:1–7, 20–21](#). Joshua had the Lord’s assurance of success if he followed each instruction. The people followed Joshua’s lead, and the result was a crumbling wall and an overwhelming victory.

- When have you followed God’s lead? What happened?
- When have you failed to follow God’s lead? What happened?
- What is an area in your life you can yield to the Lord’s leadership today?

In good times and bad, we can trust God to lead us. He is a good shepherd with a perfect plan. God led the Israelites, and God leads us too! Thank Him for providing divine guidance in every situation.

—**Suzanne Gosselin**

Children’s Ministry Volunteer

Contributor to Wonder Ink

Sunday, Sept 20

FOR LEADERS

JOSHUA AND JERICO

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

This story revolves around God and how He delivered Jericho into Israel's hands. Jericho was famous as a walled city, but God showed that He is stronger than the thickest walls.

WHAT?

[Joshua 5–6](#) shows how God led the Israelites to defeat the army of Jericho. God laid out a plan and the Israelites followed it, marching around the city for seven days. On the seventh day, God brought the walls of Jericho crashing down.

WHERE?

The story takes place at Jericho, which is one of the oldest cities in the world. The city was located on particularly fertile land in Canaan, which made it strategically valuable to the Israelites.

WHEN?

This story takes place immediately after God piled up the water of the Jordan River so that the Israelites could cross on foot ([Joshua 3–4](#)).

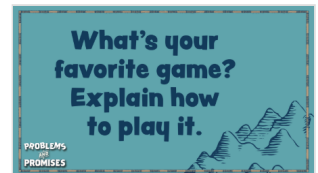
CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

This story shows the central role that God played in defeating Israel's enemies. The Israelites didn't have to tear down the walls themselves. Instead, God brought the walls down for them. Likewise, salvation isn't something we can earn through what we do: It's a gift from God through Jesus!

Welcome & Curiosity Question

SUPPLIES: [Jericho Welcome Question Slide](#)

Display the [Jericho Welcome Question Slide](#). “What’s your favorite game? Explain how to play it.”



As kids arrive ...

Welcome each kid by name. Remember to introduce kids to each other and encourage everyone to introduce themselves when new kids arrive. Point out the Welcome Question and read it to younger kids. Talk with kids about their favorite board games, outside games, or sports.

At your start time ...

Greet all the kids excitedly and welcome them to church! Invite 2–3 kids to answer the Welcome Question aloud: **What’s your favorite game? Explain how to play it.**

Directions are pretty important to playing a game, aren’t they? Sometimes, we might want to jump right into the game—before making sure we know what we’re doing. Today, we’re going to learn about some unusual directions God gave His people when they finally arrived in the promised land. But first, it’s time to be curious!

Ask the following “I’m curious” questions. Say, “I’m curious ...” before each question and give kids a chance to think about and answer each one.

I’m curious ...

- **Have you ever followed directions you didn’t understand? Tell us about it.** As an example, you could share how following directions for a recipe can be hard and confusing.
- **What do you think makes a good leader?**

Curiosity Activity: Marching

SUPPLIES: chair

Set out a cone or chair in the middle of your small group area and have the kids form a circle around it.

We’re going to do an activity where I’ll be your leader, and I’ll tell you some silly ways to march around the circle. You’ll have to listen closely to directions as I call them out.

Call out instructions and encourage the kids to do the different movements as they're walking around the circle.

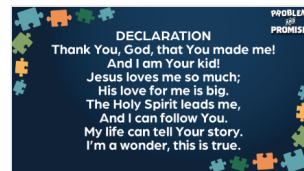
- March like a soldier
- March and cheer loudly
- March and be as quiet as you can
- Skip
- Walk in slow motion
- March as fast as you can
- Crawl
- Tiptoe
- Walk sideways facing the middle of the circle
- Take really big steps
- Do a hopscotch pattern
- Walk upside down (The kids might not understand this one ... Have fun with it!)

That last instruction was hard to understand, wasn't it?! Is it always easy to understand instructions from leaders? Allow the kids to respond. **In our story today, we're going to hear about people who were given instructions from God that didn't seem to make sense at first! The story had to do with people marching around and around. We're going to hear how God led His people and how God leads us too! We can always trust God as our leader.**

Declaring God's Wonder

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Declaration [Slide](#)

Display the Declaration [Slide](#) and encourage the kids to say the statements and do the motions with you.



Thank You, God, that You made me! *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*

Make prayer hands, then point up to God and to yourself.

And I am Your kid! *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*

Put your hands on your hips.

Jesus loves me so much; *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*

Spread your arms out wide to your side one at a time, then pull them in for a hug around your chest.

His love for me is big. *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*

Hold your arms up high and wide above your head.

The Holy Spirit leads me, *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*

Bring your arms down from above, making a path in front of you.

And I can follow You. *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*

March in place like you're following the leader.

My life can tell Your story, *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*

Hold your hands in front of you like an open book.

I'm a wonder; this is true. (*Kids repeat words and motions.*)

Put your hands up, shake your fingers, and celebrate ("praise hands").

God's Big Story : Joshua 6:1–20

SUPPLIES: Bible, [Bible Story Picture](#)

Bible Time Rhyme

Say the Bible time rhyme (with motions) each week with the kids before the Bible story, to remind kids that what they're about to hear is part of God's big story.

I open my Bible and what do I see? *Hold your hands together, then open your palms, as if opening a book.*

God's big story, waiting for me! *Point to yourself.*

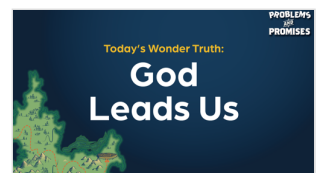
Let's start by reading part of God's big story from the Bible. We're going to read from the Old Testament.

Read [Joshua 6:1–20](#) from the Bible. You can also show the [Bible Story Picture](#) to give kids a visual depiction as you tell the story.

Connecting the Wonder Truth

SUPPLIES: [Jericho Wonder Truth Slide](#)

Our Wonder Truth today is **GOD LEADS US**. Where did you see our Wonder Truth in the story? Allow kids to answer freely.



Even though God worked through the Israelites to bring about His plans, it was God—not the strength of Israel's army—who defeated Israel's enemies. The Israelites didn't have to tear down the walls themselves. Instead, God brought the walls down for them. Our sins, or the wrong things we do, build a wall between us and God. But God doesn't expect us to tear down the wall by ourselves! He tears down the wall for us! God sent Jesus to live, die, and rise again so we can be with Him forever—no more walls!

Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Bible, Problems and Promises Word of Wonder [Slide](#)

WORD OF WONDER

God keeps His promises forever.

—from 1 Chronicles 16:15

Display the Word of Wonder [Slide](#). **Our Word of Wonder for the Problems and Promises series is from 1 Chronicles 16:15: “God keeps His promises forever.”** Encourage the kids to say the verse with you. Today we learned how God led the Israelites to the land He promised them long ago. Our Word of Wonder reminds us that God keeps His promises forever!



Encourage the kids to do the motions and say the verse with you.

- **GOD**—Point up.
- **KEEPS**—Spread your right hand out before you from left to right.
- **HIS PROMISES**—Place an index finger on your lips. Move your hand downward and open your palm.
- **FOREVER**—Draw large circles in the air with your index finger.
- **FROM 1 CHRONICLES 16:15**—Open your hands in front of you, like opening a book.

Encourage the kids to do the motions and say the verse with you three more times, each time doing a different movement along with it.

- The first time, they should march in a large circle while saying the verse.
- The second time, they should hop in place while reciting the verse.
- The third time, they should pretend to blow trumpets while saying the verse.

You did a good job following instructions! The Israelites followed God, and He helped them defeat Jericho so they could get to the promised land. God kept His promise and led His people. God keeps His promises to us too.

Gather the kids to discuss these questions:

- **What promises did God make to His people?** (Possible answers: to lead them to the promised land; to be with them; to take care of them.)
- **How do you know that God keeps His promises?** (Possible answers: The Bible says God keeps His promises; God is trustworthy; God is faithful.)

Discussion Questions

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

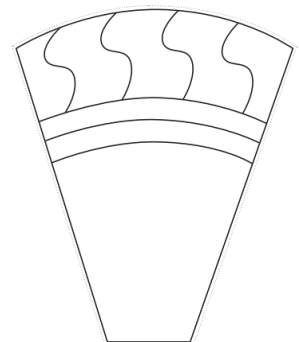
- **What problem did Israel have after they crossed the Jordan River?** *(The city of Jericho was in their way; Jericho had a big wall around it.)*
- **What was around the city of Jericho?** *(a big wall)*
- **What did God's messenger tell Joshua to do?** *(March around the wall each day for seven days; blow trumpets and shout on the seventh day.)*
- **What happened when the Israelites blew their trumpets and shouted?** *(The walls of Jericho fell down.)*
- **What did God promise to the Israelites in today's story?** *(to help them take over Jericho; that they would get to the promised land)*
- **How do you know God keeps His promises?**
- **How does God still lead us today?**
- **What is one way God had led you this past week?**

God led the Israelites all those years ago, and He will lead you too. It can be hard to follow God's instructions sometimes, but He will help us follow His way! God knows what's best for us, and He loves us so much.

Craft: Trumpets

SUPPLIES: coloring utensils, kid-safe scissors, tape, [Trumpet Template](#) (1 per kid, printed on cardstock)

In our story today, the Israelites shouted and blew trumpets, and God made the walls around the city fall down. God led them and helped His people. God helps us and leads us too, even when things seem hard or impossible. God is with us, and He can do anything. Let's make our very own trumpets! You can make your trumpet to take home as a reminder that God leads us. Set out the copies of the [Trumpet Templates](#), coloring utensils, kid-safe scissors, and tape.



Invite kids to color and decorate their trumpets. Then help them cut out the trumpet shape and tape the edges together to create a trumpet. As the kids are working, you can talk to them about how their trumpets can remind them that God leads us.

Leader Tip: Have kids keep their trumpets to use during the game.



Game: Call It Out

SUPPLIES: trumpets from the Craft (1 per kid)

What instructions did God give the Israelites when they came to the city of Jericho? Allow answers. **God told them to march around the city every day for seven days. Then on the last day, they marched around the city seven times. Then they blew their trumpets and shouted really loud. And God made the walls of Jericho come down! They listened to God, and He led them. We can play a game where we'll listen to instructions.**

Invite the kids to line up. Then use a trumpet from the Craft as a megaphone to call out actions for the kids to do. Use the following actions (or add your own):

- Hop on one foot
- Bark like a dog
- Give someone a high five
- Spin in a circle
- Touch your knees
- Run and touch the wall (point to a wall)
- March around the room
- Do five jumping jacks
- Do "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes" while walking around the room

Once the kids have done a few actions, allow kids to take turns using their trumpets as megaphones to call out actions for the group to do. If you have kazoos, let the kids march around while blowing their kazoos.

Instructions don't always make sense! In the story today, God gave instructions to the Israelites that didn't seem to make sense at first, but God was in control and had a plan to lead His people. He showed He keeps His promises, and He is a faithful leader. We can trust God to lead us too.



Identity

Create space for God to remind kids they are known, loved, led, and their lives can tell of God's wonder.

Blessing Your Kids

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: [Jericho Blessing Slide](#)

Display the [Jericho Blessing Slide](#). Speak this blessing over your kids, as a group or as individuals. If you bless kids individually, insert each name into the blessing.



Blessing: May God continue to lead you each day. May you recognize God's presence with you and understand His directions for you. May you have the courage to follow God's leading and know how very loved you are!

Closing Game: March Around (use this if you need to fill more time during dismissal!)

SUPPLIES: chair

Set out a cone or chair in the middle of the room and have the kids form a circle around it. March around the cone or chair with the kids following you. You can march in a variety of ways, such as slowly, quickly, backward, or on your tiptoes. You can also stack boxes into a tower and tell the kids to march around the cone or chair (or boxes) seven times, then let them knock down the tower of boxes. The kids will love taking turns knocking down the stack of boxes!

When the Israelites saw the walls of Jericho, they didn't give up hope for the land God promised. They did not try to do it with their own strength. Instead, they trusted God to lead them. God showed the Israelites that His way is always the best way. This story reminds us that God leads us too, and He can help us do things that seem big or hard! God led the Israelites in His way, and God leads us too!



GAMES AND ACTIVITIES

These additional games and activities can be used throughout the Problems and Promises series. If you want to integrate more movement and facilitate more interaction in your lesson, check out these options. We've included tips to make the games and activities inclusive for all kids and have designated which games are intended for each lesson in the series.

GAME 1: WHO HAS IT?

SUPPLIES: small object (such as a toy, coin, paper clip, or magnet)

Invite the kids to sit in a circle with their hands behind their backs.
For this game, you'll need to begin with your hands open behind your back and your eyes closed. I'm going to place a (name small object) **in someone's hand. If you get it, stay quiet so you don't let anyone know you're the one with the object. Everyone will sit in a circle and pretend to pass the object from person to person with your hands behind your backs. After about a minute of that, I'll call out, "Freeze," and everyone will stop. Then we'll take turns guessing who has the object.**

Invite the kids to close their eyes. Walk around the outside of the circle, pause occasionally, and then place the object in someone's hand. If your group wants to move around (and you have space), the kids can walk around while passing (or pretending the pass) the object. **Now everyone should close your hands and keep your eyes closed until I tell you to open them. If you're the**

**Works well with the
Rahab and the Spies
lesson!**

one who has the small item, try to keep a straight face. Don't give it away! Place the small object in one person's hands.

Now you can all open your eyes and everyone pretend to pass the object while the person who really has the object is actually going to pass it. You have to be careful so we don't know who really has it. You can change the direction you're passing it, too, by passing it back to the person who passed it to you. Encourage the kids to all pretend to pass the object behind their backs. After about a minute, call out, "Freeze."

Choose someone to guess first. Go around the circle, allowing each kid to guess who has the item, including the one who has it. If anyone guesses correctly, he wins that round. If it makes it around the circle without anyone guessing correctly, the kid with the object wins that round. Whoever wins the round gets to pass the item on to another kid.

Could you tell when someone was hiding the object? What gave it away? Give kids a chance to answer. **In today's story, when God's people were in danger, God protected them as they hid in the home of a woman named Rahab! Rahab and God's people may have had to be sneaky when hiding so they didn't get caught, kind of like we were hiding something in the game. We're learning how God prepared the way for His people in our story today!**

Make It Inclusive: Some kids may not have the ability to pretend to pass something if they don't actually have an object. You can give them a small object to hold in their hands so they can have something to hold.

GAME 2: STONES ACROSS THE RIVER

SUPPLIES: painter's tape, paper wads (12 per team), baskets or bowls (2 per team)

Ahead of time, use painter's tape to mark parallel lines on the floor as far apart as you can get them (to make a big "river" in the middle). Set out a basket or bowl on each side of the river for every team of 4–6 kids.

In this game, kids will compete in a relay race to get 12 stones across a pretend river. Create equal teams. Put 12 paper wads (pretend stones) in each team's basket or bowl on the side of the river that the kids will start on. Have the teams line up behind their basket or bowl.

You're going to work together as a team to get all 12 stones to the other side of the river. You can only take one stone at a time across the river. When you get to the other side, drop it into your team's basket (or bowl) and run back to tag the next person in line, who will do the same thing. Keep going until all 12 stones are on the other side of the river. It sounds easy ... but I'll be calling out instructions with different ways to move through the river to get across it, so listen carefully and do what I say! When the teams are ready, say, "Go," and let them start moving the stones across the river. As they play, call out the following instructions for ways to move across the river, changing it up as frequently as you want:

- Jumping
- Skipping

**Works well with the
Crossing the Jordan
River lesson!**

- Slow motion
- Marching
- High knees
- Jumping jacks
- Crawling
- Wheelbarrow (2 people working together; one on hands while the partner holds his feet)
- Linking elbows with a partner
- Walking backwards
- Dancing
- Spinning
- Tiptoeing

Was it more challenging to get the stones across the river when you had to move in different ways? No matter what challenges we come up against, we can trust God to be with us. We're learning today about how God was with His people when they crossed a river and how He made a way for them. They used stones from the river to help them always remember what God did for them and how God made a way through anything.

GAME 3: DO WHAT I SAY, NOT WHAT I DO

In this game, kind of like Simon Says, the kids will do what you say, not what you do. Invite kids to spread out, so they have room to move.

I'll give you an instruction; your job is to do it. But here's the trick: I'll act out something different than what I tell you to do. Don't get confused! Your job is to do what I say, not what I do. Ready?

**Works great with the
Joshua and Jericho
lesson!**

Leader Tip: The leader role in this game is a bit tricky. It's challenging to say one thing while doing something else. Give the game a good start by filling the leader role yourself for the first round of play. It might work best for you to remain the leader with younger kids. Older kids can take turns being the leader.

If a kid doesn't follow your spoken instructions or mistakenly mimics your physical action instead, she's out. The last kid remaining wins the round.

Here are some examples that are easier to follow:

- Say, "Hop on one foot" while you squat low to the ground.
- Say, "Touch your nose" while you grab your ear.
- Say, "Reach for the ceiling" while you touch your toes.
- Say, "Clap your hands" while you pat your legs.
- Say, "Lie down" while you jump up.

The closer the instruction is to the action, the more challenging it gets. Here are some examples:

- Say, "Raise both of your hands" while you raise one hand.
- Say, "Pat your belly" while you rub your belly in a circle.

- Say, “Nod your head yes” while you shake your head “no.”
- Say, “March in place” while you run in place.

Make It Inclusive: If kids in your group have physical restrictions, modify prompts to create the maximum opportunity for participation.

It was difficult to follow those instructions, wasn't it? Sometimes, it can be difficult to understand God's instructions. This might have been how Joshua felt when God gave him such strange instructions about bringing down the walls of Jericho. It takes trust to follow as God leads us! Even when it doesn't make sense to us, we can follow and trust God. He is the best leader!

GAME 4: SUN STANDING STILL FREEZE

SUPPLIES: yellow ball or yellow paper circle

In this game, kids will try to tag a person holding the sun while her back is turned, but when she faces the kids and holds up the sun, they have to freeze.

Works great with The Sun Stands Still lesson!

Choose one person to hold a yellow ball or yellow paper circle. This person is the “sun.” All the other kids will go to the other side of the room from the sun. **We're learning today about a time when God did something amazing with the sun to help His people. God knows what we need, and He hears us when we come to Him. Let's play a game where we'll watch closely to see when the sun goes up and down.**

While the sun's back is turned from the kids, she'll hold the sun down, and they'll move toward her. When she turns to face the kids, she should raise the sun up, and the kids should freeze and stand very still. If the sun sees anyone moving, that person is out. The sun should turn around periodically and leave enough time for the kids to move across the room toward her. The first person to tag the sun (or get to where she's standing) will win. Play several rounds and let a different person be the sun each time.

In this game, we had to stand still when the sun was up. In today's story, God's people were able to win a battle because God caused the sun to stand still. What would you do if you had extra hours of daylight and nighttime came super late one day? Allow the kids to respond. **God heard His people and helped them. And God hears us!**

GAME 5: COURAGEOUS CHARADES

SUPPLIES: note cards, writing utensil, timer

Before kids arrive, use a writing utensil and note cards to write down common fears to use as prompts. Examples: spiders, water, heights, needles, the dentist, public speaking, the dark, a monster under the bed, sharks, thunderstorms, elevators, flying in an airplane. If you'd like to inject some silliness and challenge, create things that almost no one is afraid of such as cake, ballet, snowball fights, kittens, and so on.

Works great with the
God Calls Gideon
lesson!

Invite kids to sit together and ask for a volunteer to go first. **You get to draw a card and then act out the fear listed on the card. The rest of the group will try to guess what it is. You're going to silently act out this fear. That means there's no talking or sound effects!** Allow the first volunteer to choose a card.

Start a timer for one minute. You and the other kids try to guess what fear the first volunteer is acting out before time is up. If someone guesses correctly, the round is over. If the timer goes off, the kid acting it out can share with the group what he's afraid of and keep the card. Play multiple rounds. Then ask the kids to share how they could be courageous when faced with each of the fears.

Everyone experiences fear. Fear isn't wrong or unhealthy. Fear is a gift from God that lets us know when something is dangerous or risky. Fear warns us to be careful. But fear can become a problem if it keeps us from living our lives or if it stops us from following and trusting God or from doing the right thing. Fortunately, God is stronger than our fears. Courage doesn't mean we'll never face scary things. It means we trust God to help us be brave. We'll learn in today's God's big story about when God helped someone be courageous in a scary situation. God helps us be courageous!

GAME 6: MINEFIELD

SUPPLIES: scissors (prep only), small items to create obstacles (such as plastic drinking cups or stuffed animals), blindfolds (1 per kid), timer, colored printer paper (optional)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: [Problems and Promises Cards](#) (1 per 2 kids)

Works great as a
review of the
Problems and
Promises lessons!

Ahead of time, print the [Problems and Promises Cards](#) for each pair of kids and cut apart the cards. Spread the problem cards out all over the floor and spread small obstacles in an area designated as the minefield. Put the promises cards on the other side of the room (or near a wall or stage area). The kids will try to get across the minefield without touching a mine, while also grabbing a problem card to match with the corresponding promise card across the room.

PROBLEM Two Israelite spies were in trouble when enemy soldiers in Jericho were searching for them.	PROMISE God prepares the way.
PROBLEM The Israelites were almost at the promised land (Israel) when they came to a big, long, and very deep river that they couldn't go around or swim across.	PROMISE God can make a way through anything.
PROBLEM To get to the promised land, the Israelites needed to get past the city of Jericho, but it had huge walls surrounding it.	PROMISE God leads us.
PROBLEM The Israelites came to the aid of their ally, the Gibeonites, during a battle, but it was getting dark and they wouldn't be able to see during the battle.	PROMISE God hears us.
PROBLEM God called Gideon to be a mighty warrior in battle, but Gideon was afraid.	PROMISE God helps us be courageous.
Wonder Ink	MINEFIELD GAME AND ACTIVITIES PROBLEMS AND PROMISES CARDS

Make It Inclusive: If there are kids in your group with physical restrictions, be sure to place the obstacles far enough apart so they can participate. Alternatively, you can modify the game so they're always the guide, giving instructions from the sidelines.

The minesweeper must cross the minefield without hitting any obstacles. You also need to collect all five problem cards from the minefield and match them with the promises they go with. The promises are the Wonder Truths from this series. Point out the area where the promise cards are set out.

The guide can give you directions, but the guide can only use words. No touching! The guide can give instructions like, "Go," "Turn left," or "Scoot a little to the right" or "Bend down and pick up the card by your foot" to lead the minesweeper through the minefield. If the minesweeper touches one of the mines, the pair is out. I'm going to start the timer. Let's see if you can get across!

Determine a reasonable time for the pairs to cross the minefield, depending on how big of an area you've set up. Don't give too much time. You want the kids to feel a little pressure to get moving. If needed, limit the number of pairs going through the obstacle course simultaneously to prevent collisions. Monitor the game as it goes. If anyone hits a mine, invite that pair to watch from the sidelines. Repeat the game, giving the pairs a chance to switch roles. You will need to reset the problem and promise cards between rounds (or let each team set them out for the next team).

You have to trust someone when you put on a blindfold! Life is a little like that. There are plenty of problems, but God has also made big promises. He promises to guide, strengthen, and always be with us. We can trust God to keep His promises and guide us through the minefields of life, even when we can't see His plans for us.

Read the problems and promises with the kids as they check to see if they correctly matched the problems with the promises.

Problem: Two Israelite spies were in trouble when enemy soldiers in Jericho were searching for them.

Promise: God prepares the way.

Problem: The Israelites were almost at the promised land (finally!) when they came to a big, long, and very deep river that they couldn't go around or swim across.

Promise: God can make a way through anything.

Problem: To get to the promised land, the Israelites needed to get past the city of Jericho, but it had huge walls surrounding it.

Promise: God leads us.

Problem: The Israelites came to the aid of their allies, the Gibeonites, during a battle, but it was getting dark and they wouldn't be able to see during the battle.

Promise: God hears us.

Problem: God called Gideon to be a mighty warrior in battle, but Gideon was afraid.

Promise: God helps us be courageous.