Unit 8: Into the Land

Unit Description: Joshua and the Israelites saw God do what the previous generation had doubted: God went before them into the land and conquered their enemies through His wondrous works. At the end of his days, Joshua challenged the people to remember who God is and what He had done and worship only Him forevermore.

Big Picture Question: What is a miracle? A miracle is something God does that usually cannot be done so that we can know He is all-powerful.

SESSION 1: God Defeated Jericho
Joshua 2; 6

SESSION 2: God Gave the People the Land
Joshua 7–11

SESSION 3: Joshua Challenged the People
Joshua 23–24

UNIT 8 | SESSION 2

GOD GAVE THE PEOPLE THE LAND

JOSHUA 7–11

KEY PASSAGE: **You are the God who performs miracles;
you display your power among the peoples.
Psalm 77:14 NIV**

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What is a miracle? A miracle is something God does that usually cannot be done so that we can know He is all-powerful.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

Joshua's name means "The LORD is salvation." God fought for Joshua and the Israelites, saving them and giving them victory over their enemies. Sinners can look to God for victory over sin and death. God brought us salvation by sending His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross and rise again.

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PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

PREPARE

PREPARE YOUR HEART TO TEACH; PLAN THE SESSION

WELCOME

GREET KIDS AND OPEN THE SESSION

LEARN

TEACH KIDS THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE

LEAD KIDS TO LOVE THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE

LEAD KIDS TO LIVE OUT THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LEADER Bible Study

In today's story, we see that God fights for His people and gives them peace and rest. We live in a world filled with conflict and pain. We desperately want peace. The reality is that true peace doesn't come from any amount of solitude or self-confidence; we need true peace that comes from being forgiven. Peace comes as we trust in the finished work of Jesus. His forgiveness, not our own effort, brings us lasting peace.

Read the words of the apostle Paul in Ephesians 2:12-14. In a world of conflict, Christ is our hope. In a world filled with division, He is our peace. This peace and hope Paul speaks of are available to us when we place our trust in Christ alone for our salvation. This is a continual, daily dying to self so that we may live in Christ.

What is so interesting about the section of Scripture your kids will be learning about today is that it shows us that we humans have not changed and God has not changed. Israel obeyed God at Jericho, and God fought for His people. They enjoyed good success.

Next, they went up against a smaller city and relied on their own strength rather than seeking God's strength. They disobeyed and took things devoted to God and fought a battle at Ai without consulting God and His plan. Their lives were filled with disunity. Sin is the reason our world is in disunity. The lie we believe is that sin is personal and doesn't affect anyone else. Sin is the rejection of God Himself and the placing of our trust in things He has made. The sin of one Israelite—Achan—affected him, his family, and the whole nation.

Joshua's response was right. He humbled himself, appealed to God's covenant-keeping power, and responded with obedience when God spoke to him.

When we sin, we must recognize the damage that it creates in our lives and in the world. Our response must not be to cover it up but to run to Christ because He is our hope, our life, and our peace.

Dwell on these words from theologian Charles Spurgeon: "My faith rests not upon what I am or shall be or feel or know, but in what Christ is, in what He has done, and in what He is now doing for me. Hallelujah!"

PEOPLE TO KNOW

Enemies Israel battled:
- Philistines (1 Sam. 17)
- Jerichoans (Josh. 6)
- Five kings (Josh. 10)
- Canaanites (Judg. 4)
- Midianites (Judg. 7)
- Babylonians (2 Kings 25)

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PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.

Activity Page
- ☐ "Big Picture Unscramble" activity page

Session Starter (Option 2)
- ☐ modeling clay

Introduce the Session
- ☐ countdown video

Big Picture Question
- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline
- ☐ Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story
- ☐ "God Gave the People the Land" video
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids
- ☐ "Unit 8, Session 2" questions from kids video

Missions Moment
- ☐ "Worthy Family Poster" printable

Key Passage Activity
- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ "The God Who Works Wonders (Psalm 77:14" song
- ☐ worship song of your choice (optional)

Review & Bible skills
- ☐ Small Group Timeline and Map Set
- ☐ world map

Activity Choice (Option 1)
- ☐ raw spaghetti noodles
- ☐ marshmallows

Activity Choice (Option 2)
- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster
- ☐ flashlights
- ☐ medium balls
- ☐ small balls

Journal and Prayer
- ☐ Journal Page
- ☐ "God's Battle Plan" activity page

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WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

> **SAY** "*Think about your week. What is something exciting that happened? What is something difficult or challenging that happened? How did you see God working in your life and around you?*"

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete "Big Picture Unscramble" on the activity page.

> **SAY** "*Last week, we began focusing on a new big picture question and learning a new key passage. We are learning all about miracles. When God works miracles, He reveals His strength, and we can see and know that He is all-powerful.*"

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: SUN AND MOON, STAND STILL

Direct kids to spread out. Choose one kid to be a guesser. Direct her to stand at the front of the room, facing away from the group. Designate one kid to be the "sun" and one kid to be the "moon." Ask the guesser to look over the group, and then turn around again. All the players should now move to a new location in the room except for the sun and moon; these players must remain stationary throughout the game.

When everyone is still, permit the guesser to face the group. She must guess which players did not move. Play additional rounds until the guesser correctly identifies the sun and moon. If time allows, choose new kids to fill each role.

> **SAY** "*Typically, the moon moves around the Earth, and the sun appears to move across the sky as the Earth rotates. In our Bible story today, though, God performed a miracle and the sun and moon both stood still!*"

☐ OPTION 2: FIVE AGAINST ONE

Form groups of four to six kids. Direct each group to designate one person to work alone. You should now have several groups of three to five vs. one. Distribute clay to each group. Provide a few extra lumps of clay to individuals. Challenges teams to race to create 10 small spheres out of clay. A group of five creating 10 spheres would form about two each, while an individual must create 10 on his own.

Larger groups should easily win. After one round, add a special rule: individuals may smash their opponents' spheres, but larger groups may not. This should level the give individuals a greater chance to win.

> **SAY** "*You probably guessed that the larger groups would win, but one extra rule changed everything. In today's story, five armies went to war against one. You might expect the larger group to win, but God can do unexpected, amazing things!*"

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**

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THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION *(3 minutes)*

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

> **SAY** *Hello, everyone. My name is [**your name.**] My favorite planet in our solar system is [**provide answer.**] On the count of three, tell me your favorite planet. One, two, three! [**Allow responses.**] Awesome! Raise your hand if your favorite planet is the same as mine. I mentioned our solar system because our Bible story today includes some really amazing details about the Earth, our moon, and the sun.*
>
> *If you brought a Bible, get it out and open it to the Book of Joshua. [**Distribute additional Bibles as needed.**] Joshua is the first book of Old Testament History, after the five books of the Law. Let's get ready to encounter God through His Word today.*

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION *(1 minute)*

> **SAY** *Our big picture question for this week is, **What is a miracle?** We started learning the answer to this question last week. Does anyone remember all or part of the answer? [**Allow responses.**] **A miracle is something God does that usually cannot be done so that we can know He is all-powerful.** Say that all together: **What is a miracle? A miracle is something God does that usually cannot be done so that we can know He is all-powerful.***

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE *(1 minute)*

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

> **SAY** *Let's review some of what we have learned from the Bible. God created everything, including people. People sinned and rebelled against God. God made a special promise to Abraham. Abraham's descendants became slaves in Egypt, but God freed His people and Moses led them out of Egypt. Afterward, Joshua began to lead God's people—the Israelites. Let's hear more of Joshua's story.*

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THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER *(10 minutes)*

Open your Bible to Joshua 7–11. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video "God Gave the People the Land." Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

GOD GAVE THE PEOPLE THE LAND

"**God was with His people when they entered the promised land.** Joshua and **the Israelites** defeated the cities of Jericho and Ai (AY igh). They **made peace with the people of Gibeon** (GIB ih uhn).

Then **one day, a king called to four other kings.** These kings did not love God or worship Him, but **they had heard about God's people and they were afraid. The first king said, "Gibeon made peace with** Joshua and **the Israelites. Help me attack Gibeon."** So **the five kings joined forces** and went up with all their armies **to fight against Gibeon.**

Soon **the men of Gibeon sent a message** to Joshua: **"Help us! Save us!** All the kings in this land are fighting against us!"

So Joshua and his whole army went to help Gibeon. **The Lord said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid of the kings, for I have handed them over to you.** Not one of them will be able to stand against you."

Joshua and his army marched all night and surprised the five kings' armies. As the Israelites fought, **God confused the kings' armies and helped Israel defeat their enemies**. The five kings' armies fled, but God sent hail to stop them.

The battle wasn't over yet. **Joshua needed more time to fight before the sun went down. So Joshua prayed to God, "Sun, stand still over Gibeon, and moon, over the valley." The sun stood still and the moon stopped for almost a full day.** Israel and Gibeon defeated the five kings.

As the Israelites traveled in the promised land, they took over many other cities. **God fought for His people and helped them conquer the land** God had promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Then for many years, **God gave the Israelites peace and rest** from their enemies.

Christ Connection: Joshua's name means "The LORD is salvation." God fought for Joshua and the Israelites, saving them and giving them victory over their enemies. Sinners can look to God for victory over sin and death. God brought us salvation by sending His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross and rise again."

STORYTELLING TIPS

Encourage Active Listening: Ask kids to hold up the matching number of fingers each time you say a number in the story.

Vary Your Volume: Vary your volume through different parts of the story. Loud volume can suddenly grab attention, and soft (yet intense) volume helps draw kids' focus.

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THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY *Open your Bible to Joshua 7–11. God helped Joshua and the Israelites defeat many of their enemies. The Israelites experienced peace. They made a treaty with Gibeon, so Israel had a responsibility to protect Gibeon. Five kings attacked Gibeon, so Joshua and the Israelites went to battle. God fought for the Israelites.*

*What are some of the ways God fought against the five kings? Look at Joshua 10:10-13. [***Choose a volunteer to read the verses aloud.***] God confused Israel's enemies, He sent hail to fall on them, and He stopped the sun and moon to give Joshua and the Israelites time to fight. Only God can do these things. Each of these is a miracle.* ***What is a miracle? A miracle is something God does that usually cannot be done so that we can know He is all-powerful.***

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY *Joshua's name means "The LORD is salvation." God fought for Joshua and the Israelites, saving them and giving them victory over their enemies. Sinners can look to God for victory over sin and death. God brought us salvation by sending His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross and rise again.*

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the "Unit 8, Session 2" questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. What should you do if you feel jealous of a friend?
2. What has God given you that you can be thankful for?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Show the poster and ask the kids to share what they remember about the Worthy family. Ask a volunteer to find Italy on a world map.

SAY *Joshua prayed to God, asking for more daylight to fight Israel's enemies. Do you think it could be a good thing for people to see you and your family praying before a meal? How might that help you share the gospel with them? (They could see that we love Jesus. They might feel they could ask us questions about Jesus.)*

One day, when the Worthys prayed over a meal in a restaurant, a worker asked them if they believe in Jesus. Prayer is powerful. In this case, prayer led to a new friendship and a conversation about Jesus.

Pray and ask God to give the kids opportunities to talk to others about Jesus this week.

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THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Before the session, write the key passage as words or phrases on separate index cards. Make two sets. Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Psalm 77:14 together.

> **SAY** *"Our key passage comes from Psalm 77. Many psalms are songs of praise to God. When you remember that God is all-powerful, you can respond by praising Him."*

Form two groups. Mix up each set of key passage cards and distribute them to each group. Instruct the groups to race to arrange the words in the correct order. When groups finish, mix up the cards and invite them to complete the challenge again by arranging the cards in reverse order.

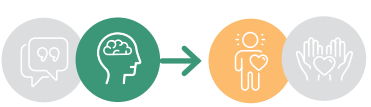
Lead kids to sing "The God Who Works Wonders (Psalm 77:14)." You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

> **SAY** *"God, You are powerful and You do incredible things. Everything is under Your control. Even the sun, moon, earth, and stars obey You! Thank You for watching over and protecting us. Help us to follow and serve You all our lives. Amen."*

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**



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THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Joshua 10. Explain that if you follow a straight line west from the top of the Dead Sea, you can find the Valley of Aijalon (A juh lahn) about midway between the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. Joshua asked God to stop the sun over this valley.

Consider comparing the Old Testament Kingdoms Map to a modern-day map to help kids understand where these stories took place. (Tip: Locate the areas in and around modern-day Israel.) Choose a volunteer to read aloud Joshua 10:12-14.

> **SAY** *"God worked many miracles in order to give Joshua and the Israelites victory.* ***A miracle is something God does that usually cannot be done so that we can know He is all-powerful.*** *God confused Israel's enemies, and He sent hail to fall on them. He even caused the sun and moon to stand still so Joshua could continue the battle!"*

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

> **SAY** *"Why do you think God answered Joshua's prayer to stop the sun and moon?"*

God answered Joshua's prayer as part of His plan. Without God, Israel would have lost the battle. God told Joshua that He had handed over Israel's enemies; He spoke ask if it had already happened even though it hadn't yet. God had already decided that Israel would have victory, and He would give it to them. Nothing can stop God's plan.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Josh. 10:8,14.)

> **SAY** *"When you remember that God is all-powerful, one response is to honor, respect, and worship Him. How else can you respond? How should you act when you face difficulty?"*

Many times through the Book of Joshua, God told Joshua, "Do not be afraid." When you remember all the miracles God has worked and think about all the amazing things He has done, it can help your faith to grow. This can help you to have courage and confidence, even in difficult situations.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Deut. 31:6.)

> **SAY** *"What is a personal battle or struggle you are dealing with right now? How can you trust God to fight for you and give you victory?"*

The agreement between Israel and Gibeon meant that Israel (the stronger nation) would watch over and protect Gibeon (the weaker nation). God watches over and protects us, too. When we are in trouble, we can ask Him to help us. When we are struggling, we can ask Him to fight for us.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Josh. 9:15; 10:6.)

Transition from **LOVE** *to* **LIVE**

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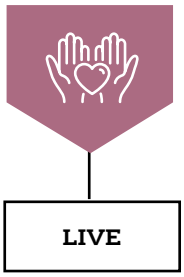

THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: PISA PASTA

Group the kids into teams. Give each team raw spaghetti noodles and marshmallows. Remind the kids of the Tower of Pisa in Italy that the Worthy kids showed them.

> **SAY** *"There are more than 70 types of pasta in Italy. Most Americans are familiar with spaghetti. You are going to make your own tower, using nothing but spaghetti and marshmallows. It's OK if your tower leans like the Tower of Pisa, but if it falls you have to start again. The team that builds the tallest tower wins."*

Show the kids how to poke the ends of the spaghetti noodles into the marshmallows to construct a tower. When the kids have finished their towers, ask each team to share one fact that they remember about the Worthys or Italy.

☐ OPTION 2: IT'S PHENOMENAL!

Guide kids to form two or three small groups. Give each group a flashlight, small ball, and medium ball. Encourage group members to work together to model:

- how the Earth rotates (daily) and revolves around the sun (yearly)
- how the moon rotates (monthly) and revolves around the Earth (monthly)
- what took place in Joshua chapter 10

> **SAY** *"Think about this miracle and what the Bible says. In fact, the sun did not 'stand still,' but the Earth stopped rotating for almost a full day. Is this a mistake in the Bible? No. The Bible does not contain any mistakes or errors. The writer of Joshua described what Joshua observed from his perspective. This is similar to how we talk about the sunrise or sunset. We know the sun does not move, but from our perspective on Earth, it looks that way. The Bible is completely true and trustworthy."*

2 JOURNAL AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page. As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas.

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

Review the gospel and encourage kids to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions. Then pray for kids to have confidence in God through any difficult situations they might be facing in their lives right now. As time allows, lead kids to complete "God's Battle Plan" on the activity page.

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JOURNAL PAGE

1. What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?

2. What does this story teach me about myself?

3. Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?

4. Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?

5. How does this story help me to live on mission better?

Unit 8 • Session 2

GOD GAVE THE PEOPLE THE LAND

Joshua 7–11

WHAT IS A MIRACLE? A MIRACLE IS SOMETHING GOD DOES THAT USUALLY CANNOT BE DONE SO THAT WE CAN KNOW HE IS ALL-POWERFUL.

God was with His people when they entered the promised land. The Israelites made peace with the people of Gibeon.

One day, a king called to four other kings. They had heard about God's people and they were afraid. The first king said, "Gibeon made peace with the Israelites. Help me attack Gibeon." The five kings joined forces to fight against Gibeon.

The men of Gibeon sent a message to Joshua: "Help us! Save us!"

The Lord said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid of the kings, for I have handed them over to you. Joshua and his army marched all night and surprised the five kings' armies. God confused the kings' armies and helped Israel defeat their enemies.

The battle wasn't over yet. Joshua needed more time to fight before the sun went down. So Joshua prayed to God, "Sun, stand still over Gibeon, and moon, over the valley." The sun stood still and the moon stopped for almost a full day. Israel and Gibeon defeated the five kings.

As the Israelites traveled in the promised land, God fought for His people and helped them conquer the land. Then for many years, God gave the Israelites peace and rest from their enemies.

Christ Connection: Joshua's name means "The LORD is salvation." God fought for Joshua and the Israelites, saving them and giving them victory over their enemies. Sinners can look to God for victory over sin and death. God brought us salvation by sending His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross and rise again.

FOLD

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God's Battle Plan | Find and circle the key words and phrases hidden in the picture.

Big Picture Scramble

What is a miracle?

Unscramble the words to find the big picture answer.

BE all-powerful.
know CANNOT
done SOMETHING
He that
GOD usually
WE is
Miracle IS
does A
that can SO

Unscramble Here

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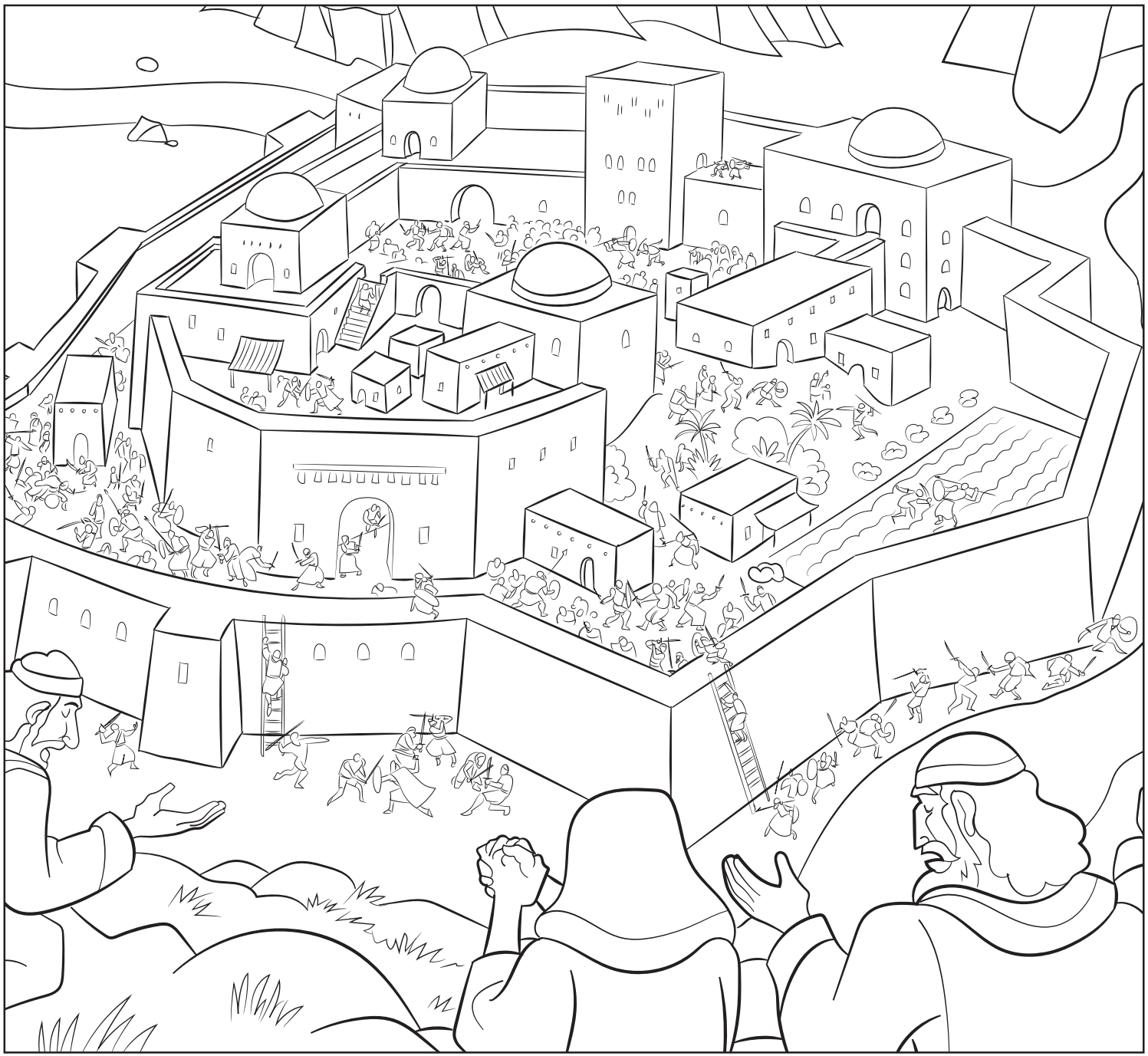

theGOSPELPROJECT

God Gave the People the Land

BIBLE STORY SUMMARY:

- After Jericho, Israel eventually defeated Ai and made peace with Gibeon.
- Five kings decided to attack Gibeon because they had made peace with Israel.
- God promised to help Israel defeat the five kings.
- God miraculously stopped the sun so Israel would have time to win the battle.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

Joshua's name means "The LORD is salvation." God fought for Joshua and the Israelites, saving them and giving them victory over their enemies. Sinners can look to God for victory over sin and death. God brought us salvation by sending His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross and rise again.

KEY PASSAGE: Psalm 77:14

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What is a miracle? A miracle is something God does that usually cannot be done so that we can know He is all-powerful.