# God Gives Second Chances!

By Deborah Wassenberg

## Introduction:

This lesson teaches children that even when they mess up, God doesn't give up on them. He helps them start again with courage, obedience, and His love.

## Warm Up Activity: Oops, Try Again!

- Jenga
- KerPlunk
- Pick Up Sticks
- Tumbling Monkeys
- Barrel of Monkeys

## Bible Story: The Story of Ai
## Bible Reference: Joshua Chapters 6, 7 & 8

## Visuals You Will Need:

1. Joshua and the city of Jericho
2. Defeat at Ai
3. Achan
4. Victory over Ai
5. Joshua reading to God's people
6. Child with arms held up to receive a hug

## Words:

1. God's people were finally in the Promised Land.
   They had crossed the Jordan River, and now the first big city stood in front of them.
   Jericho.
   Jericho had huge, thick walls that were impossible to break, but God told Joshua what to do.
   Walk around the city once a day for six days.
   The Priests carry the Ark.
   Everyone stays quiet.
   On the seventh day, after the seventh lap around Jericho, Joshua lifted his hand.
   'Shout, for the Lord has given you the city!'

The trumpets blasted, the people shouted, and the walls fell down flat.
God had done it.
Jericho was theirs.
But God had given Joshua an important instruction:
'Stay away from accursed things.'
That meant the Canaanite's idols and anything to do with their worship of false gods.
The gold, silver, and other precious metals were to be taken for God's treasury.
One man did not listen.
Achan took a beautiful robe, silver and gold, and hid them under his tent.

2. Soon after, Joshua sent a small group of soldiers to fight a small town called Ai.
Ai wasn't big like Jericho.
It didn't have giant walls.
But when the Israelites attacked, the soldiers from Ai chased them away.
Israel lost the battle.
Thirty-six men were killed.
Joshua fell to the ground and cried out to God.
'Why did this happen?'
God answered, 'Israel has sinned. There is an accursed thing in your midst.
You cannot stand before your enemies until you take away the accursed thing from among you.'

3. The next morning, God showed Joshua exactly who it was.
Achan stood before everyone, his head down.
He confessed.
He had coveted (strongly desired) a Babylonian robe, gold and silver.
He had disobeyed God.
He had taken the treasure.
He had hidden it.
Achan's sin didn't just hurt him, it hurt the whole community.
Sin always brings trouble.
Obedience always brings blessing.
But the story doesn't end there.

4. After dealing with Achan's sin, God spoke again.
'Do not be afraid. Take the whole army. I will give you Ai.'
God gave them a second chance.
It was time to go back to where they had been defeated.
Joshua followed God's plan.
Some soldiers hid behind the city.
Joshua and others stood in front.
When all of Ai's soldiers ran out to attack just as they had before, Joshua and his men rode away into the wilderness, drawing the soldiers away from the city.
The city of Ai was wide open.
Joshua lifted his spear.
This was the signal for the hidden soldiers to rush in.

They entered the city and set it on fire.
When the men of Ai looked back, they saw the smoke billowing into the sky.
They could not go back.
Joshua and his men turned around and fought the army of Ai and defeated them.
God had forgiven them.
God had helped them.
God had given them a second chance.

5. Then Joshua built an altar to God.
   He read God's Word to all the people, men, women and children.
   Everyone listened.
   Everyone remembered.

6. Achan's sin affected the whole community.
   Sin can hurt more than just you.
   But God gives second chances.
   After failure, God didn't abandon Israel.
   He helped them.
   When you sin, your failure will not make God's love disappear.
   He will not give up on you.
   Trying again is part of following God.
   He helps you get back up.
   God forgives.
   God restores.
   God helps you try again.
   Obedience brings blessing!

## Ministry to the Children:

When you belong to Jesus but still sin, remember who you belong to. You are God's child. Jesus saved you. He will help you. Talk honestly to God about what happened. 'I messed up and I'm sad about what happened. Please help me.' Let God show you what needs to change. Were you rushing? Were you scared? Did you try to do it alone without God's help? Receive God's forgiveness and fresh start. Take one brave step forward and follow God's plan, not your own. Celebrate the victory that God gives you!

## Salvation:

You can try to do your best but still get things wrong. Maybe you said something unkind or told a lie. Maybe you disobeyed. Maybe you hid something because you felt ashamed. The Bible has a word for this: sin. Sin means we fall short of God's perfect way.

God is perfect, holy, and good. But every person, even the nicest ones, fall short of His goodness. It's like trying to jump across a huge canyon. Some people might jump further than others… but no one can jump all the way across. *(Romans 3:23)* Just like Achan's secret hurt the whole community, our sin separates us from God.

God loves us too much to leave us stuck in our sin. So He sent Jesus, His Son, to do what we could never do.

Jesus lived the perfect life we couldn't live. He never sinned. Not once.
Jesus took our punishment on the Cross. He carried our sin - every wrong choice, every secret, every failure. Jesus rose again. He defeated sin and death completely. When Jesus died and rose again, He built a bridge across that canyon. Now anyone who trusts Him can come close to God again. Jesus offers forgiveness, a clean heart, a fresh start, a second chance. You don't earn it. You don't work for it. You simply receive it. *(Ephesians 2:8)*

**Pray:** "Jesus, I know I fall short and I've done wrong things. Thank You for loving me. Thank You for dying on the cross and rising again. I repent and choose to change direction. Please forgive my sin. Make my heart clean. Come into my life and be my Saviour. Help me follow You. Thank You for giving me a second chance. Amen."

## Memory Verse: Proverbs 24:16 (CEB)

The righteous may fall seven times but still get up, but the wicked will stumble into trouble.

**Sevens**

Set up a 'Sevens Challenge' for children to claim words of the Memory Verse!
Each challenge is done **seven times** before moving to the next one.

1. Ones: Throw & Catch
   Throw the ball against the wall, let it bounce once, catch it.

2. Twos: Throw, Clap & Catch
   Throw the ball, clap **once**, and catch it.

3. Threes: Bounce, Wall, Catch
   Bounce the ball on the ground first, then it hits the wall, then catch.

4. Fours: Under-Leg Throw
   Throw the ball under one leg to the wall, catch it.

5. Fives: Throw, Spin & Catch
Throw the ball, do a quick half-turn spin, catch it.

6. Sixes: One-Hand Catch
Throw the ball and catch it with one hand only (same hand each time).

7. Sevens — Rapid Fire
   Throw the ball seven times quickly against the wall without dropping it.
   No fancy moves — just speed and control.

Start Over If you:

- drop the ball
- miss the wall
- break the pattern your turn ends.

When it's your turn again, you start from the beginning of the challenge you failed**.**

## Game: Capture the Flag

**You Will Need:**

- 2 equal territories (use cones, ropes or natural boundaries)
- Each team hides or places a flag somewhere in their territory
- Create a 'jail' area on each side where tagged players will stand

**What to do:**

- Divide into two teams (Team A and Team B)
- Each team starts on their own side
- Children can run anywhere but only their own territory is safe
- If children run into enemy territory they can be tagged
- If tagged, children go to the enemy's jail
- Children stay in jail until a teammate rescues them by tagging them
- Children must sneak into the enemy territory, find the flag, grab it and run back to their own side without being tagged
- If tagged while holding the flag, it goes back to its original spot
- The team that grabs the enemy flag, runs back into their own territory with it and places it at their team's base wins!

**Optional Rules to Suit Your Group**

- Safe Zones
  Create small "safe circles" where players can rest for 5 seconds without being tagged.
- Multiple Flags
  Great for large groups — hide 2–3 flags per team.
- Sneak Mode
  Players must walk or tiptoe when entering enemy territory.
- Speed Bands
  Give certain players a coloured band meaning they can't be tagged for 10 seconds — great for younger kids.
- Jail Break Challenge
  If someone touches the jail cone, **everyone** in jail is freed at once.

# Craft:  Brown Paper Bag Kite

## 1 Prepare the Paper Bag

Get the brown paper bag ready so it becomes the kite's body.

- Choose a medium or large brown paper lunch bag
- Gently flatten it so there are no wrinkles
- Let children decorate it now (felt pens, stickers, memory verse)

## 2 Create the Kite Frame

Add structure so the paper bag can catch the wind.

- Cut two strips of light cardboard (approx. 20–25 cm long)
- Tape one strip inside the bag from top to bottom
- Tape the second strip across the width inside the bag
- This makes a simple cross frame

## 3 Attach the Flying String

Add the string so the kite can be flown safely.

- Punch a small hole near the top centre of the bag
- Thread string or wool through the hole
- Tie a double knot so it won't slip
- Leave 1–2 metres of string for flying

## 4 Add a Tail for Stability

The tail helps the kite stay steady in the air.

- Cut a long strip of crepe paper or ribbon (40–60 cm)
- Tape it to the bottom of the bag
- Add small bows or shapes along the tail for fun

## 5 Shape the Bag for Flight

A small adjustment helps the kite catch the breeze.

- Gently open the bag so it forms a slight pocket
- Fold the top corners backwards a little to guide airflow
- Check that the frame inside is still secure

## 6 Test and Fly

Make sure everything is secure before children run with it.

