

"The Jokers Of Jericho" Script Preview #1
by Fred Passmore
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(Begin Track #1: "The Jokers of Jericho" complete with narration.

(ACTIONS DURING THE NEXT PARAGRAPH: Grandpa's Wife comes onstage and is straightening up. In response to a light knocking, she goes to the door on the side of the stage and opens it to several children who are there. She welcomes them warmly, some with hugs, and they sit down on the floor. This happens several times, as more children arrive. As they sit, they are forming a half-circle facing the as-yet-empty Storyteller's chair. It faces away from the audience, and toward the children.)

Narrator: David: My name is David McAllister. This is part of a continuing series that I'm writing which recalls the stories told by legendary local storyteller that we only knew as Grandpa. As a kid in the mid 70's, I enjoyed listening to him relate Bible stories on the radio, and that's where I learned much about God and the things that happened in His word.

The imagination is a wonderful thing, a gift from God. It's not only for children, although they use it the most. With it, we can see things we have only heard about, but never actually seen with our eyes. It is through our imagination, or eyes of faith, that we see the things we read about in the Bible; both in the past, and in the future. I hope that as I tell my story, that your imagination will help you to see it as I did all those years ago. Let's go back in time now... and let the scene come alive as you picture in your mind's eye the memories I am relating.

(ACTIONS DURING THE NEXT PARAGRAPH: The main character, David McAllister, walks down the aisle toward to stage. He seems to be deep in thought, his hands in his pockets. He goes to the door, and Grandpa's wife lets him in. She is particularly warm with him, as she seems to be her favorite. She then brings out a tray of hand-baked cookies and offers them to the gathered children. All take one and munch on it. Then Grandpa himself enters from the side. He waves to the children with a smile, and moves slowly to his chair, sitting down in it facing the kids.)

And there I am, heading to Grandpa's house on a Saturday afternoon. You see, he was more special to the kids in my neighborhood, because he lived there! We knew him personally, and just about every Saturday afternoon we'd gather at his house and he'd share his stories in person. If I looked a little down, it's because I had a problem. There were three things I hated most about school.... the annual dance, the weekly math test, and the daily bullying by Elliot Goolsby. Elliot made fun of me for going to church, for not doing the stuff the other kids did, and for not believing what they taught us in science class about evolution. Just the day before he and some of his pals had used my books to play kickball. Even the home-made cookies that Grandpa's wife made for us couldn't cheer me up. Well, not very much.

Then Grandpa held up his hand until we all got quiet, and he began that week's story. I can still remember it today, even after all these years...

Grandpa: How many here have heard about the battle of Jericho? I see some of you have. Well, it's a story in the Bible... a true story, as all of them are... about how the Israelites, the chosen people of God, overcame an insurmountable obstacle by obeying God. The events of this story are found in the book of Joshua, chapter 2, verses 1 through 16. Now, Joshua had been made leader by God after Moses brought them to the edge of the Promised Land that the Lord had given them. But, the people that already lived in the land didn't just up and leave, no siree. The Israelites had to drive out the sinful pagans who had been judged unfit by

God to live there any more. The city of Jericho was protected by high walls on every side. No army could climb it or bring it down. But God had told Joshua to march around the city once a day for six days, with musicians blowing their ram's horns and worshiping the Lord. On the seventh day, there were to march around it seven times, and then blow on their trumpets when given the command. And all of the people were to shout when they heard the trumpet. As we join the story, the seventh time around the city is almost finished.

(ACTIONS DURING THE NEXT PARAGRAPH: The actors walk onto the stage and look down toward the audience. They are pointing and laughing at the spectacle, enjoying the scene.)

Grandpa: Now, I can just imagine what the people living in Jericho thought of all this. It must have seemed crazy to them. Can't you just hear them standing around on the wall, mocking the Israelites as they marched around all day?

I bet some of them gathered to have a party on the wall, and the entertainment and the music was provided by the marching Israelis. Yes sir, this was real fun. Can't you just hear them, yelling down at them, taunting and jeering?

(ACTIONS DURING THE NEXT PARAGRAPH: The actors gather at the edge of the stage and look over, seeming to look at the marching groups below them. They cup their mouths and mime yelling down to the marchers, as they point and laugh.)

"Hey, you fools! Do you think that by marching and playing music you can make us give up? Right, like we're just going to give up because you play so badly! Your God is as silly as you are!"

(ACTIONS DURING THE NEXT PARAGRAPH: While some look over the wall, others talk among themselves about how great their city is. Each of the two speakers motions around at the things they are talking about. The hearers agree heartily.)

Jericho, the walled city, was a fortress in which the inhabitants lived in total confidence that no army could harm them. Relying upon their own efforts and work, they boasted proudly about their safety from disaster. "Who do these people think they are, coming out of the wilderness and expecting to take over our city and land?" "These walls took years to build, and when the gates are closed, no-one gets in. We have our own crops inside the walls, our cattle, our own water supply. All we have to do is wait til they tire of marching around!"

(ACTIONS DURING THE NEXT PARAGRAPH: Rahab walks onstage, clearly looking for someone, and the mockers look at her. One of them, a young man, doesn't want to be seen by her and tries to hide from her on the other side of the group. As she circles, she eventually sees him and motions to him. He shakes his head, he wants to stay with his friends.)

I know they had their fun, because everyone around them believed like they did. Well, I have to say, not everyone. There was one woman, named Rahab, who wasn't joining in with the crowd. Rahab didn't have a good reputation, but that wasn't why they mocked her. Word had gotten around that she had acted kindly toward some Israeli spies, and in general sympathized with their faith. Rahab had hidden the spies when the town leaders tried to find them, and they could prove nothing against her.

(End of the script preview.)