



JUNIOR BIBLE TEACHER

SPRING

March, April, May 2019

For Teachers of children
Ages 9 Through 11

Junior Bible Teacher

SPRING QUARTER

March, April, May 2019

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Servants of the Lord

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Dear Junior Teacher:

A fascinating and diverse group of biblical narratives greets the junior class teacher this quarter. Some of the stories are ones the children will be well acquainted with, such as the encounter between David and Goliath, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and the fiery furnace, the story of Queen Esther, and Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Others the students will be completely unfamiliar with, such as Jeremiah's temple address, Hezekiah's encounter with the Assyrian army, or Paul's missionary work in Asia.

Although some lessons will be better known than others, a good approach to take might be to treat each lesson as if it is the first time the students are hearing the material. In this way important details will perhaps not be left out that otherwise might simply be glossed over.

Unit I focuses on five stories from the Old Testament. As already mentioned, students will probably have heard at least the story of David and Goliath and possibly the account of Esther and King Ahasuerus (Xerxes). Not so familiar to the students will be Moses and the rebellion of Korah, Jeremiah's defense in the temple, and the Assyrian threat to Hezekiah and Judah.

Unit II focuses on Christ, the "Beloved Servant." The lessons cover Christ's baptism, His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, Easter, and Christ's power in the healing of the lame man at the temple, an event involving the Apostles Peter and John.

Unit III is comprised of two lessons from the Old Testament (the beginning of Samuel's ministry, and the three Hebrew young men in the fiery furnace) and two from the New Testament (Philip and the Ethiopian court official and Paul and his missionary endeavor in Asia).

Whether students are acquainted with the stories or not, paying attention to details, such as easily overlooked phrases in the biblical account, will help students (and perhaps the teacher as well) gain a greater understanding of the text.

For instance, in lesson 2 the golden text contains the phrase "that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel" (I Sam. 17:46). David's victory over Goliath did not just end the Philistine threat to Israel. It sent word out to all the surrounding nations that the God of Israel was mighty and powerful and not to be trifled with.

In lesson 8, Matthew's account of Jesus' resurrection, we see that the risen Lord appeared first to a group of women who came to the tomb at dawn. This is significant, because in the ancient world a woman's testimony would not even be admitted in court because it was considered unreliable. Yet it was to these women that God would first reveal the news of Jesus' resurrection.

How deeply it is necessary to go into these details with students at this age level is something you as a teacher will decide. It may be enough just to explain the biblical account in simple terms the students can grasp without delving into other issues.

God bless you as you teach your class this quarter.

In Christ,

James Parry

Extraordinary Events, Ordinary People

The lessons for this quarter present an extraordinary kaleidoscope of historical events that reveal why the Bible has fascinated readers for millennia. The thirteen narratives that constitute the lessons for the quarter recount events that actually happened. Archaeology continues to confirm the accuracy of the scriptural accounts.

The events recounted in the lessons are indeed extraordinary. Consider, for instance, the very first lesson. In the Old Testament, God brought judgment in various ways: fire and brimstone (Sodom and Gomorrah), snakes (the Israelites in the desert), water (the Egyptian army). In judging Korah's rebellion, God used an earthquake that opened a huge fisher in the ground into which the rebels fell.

Or consider God's deliverance of Judah from Sennacherib's army. In one night God destroyed 185,000 Assyrian soldiers. The Bible does not tell us how they died, but there is no plausible naturalistic explanation.

David's victory over Goliath is certainly an extraordinary event, one that could not have happened apart from God's miraculous working. Nine-foot tall giants in full battle gear simply do not fall dead before youthful shepherd boys.

The three Hebrew young men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, were delivered in a fashion that was certainly extraordinary. Apart from God, no human beings could have survived such an ordeal. Their deliverance was clearly miraculous.

Paul's missionary activity in Asia also showed evidence of God's supernatural working. The miracles that Paul was involved in were called "special miracles" (Acts 19:11), meaning that they were extraordinary even among the miraculous happenings involving the apostles.

The most extraordinary event of all, of course, is the empty tomb on resurrection morning. In the two thousand years since the event, the only logical explanation is the one given in Scripture. Is there corroborating evidence? Yes. In two millennia, no one has ever produced a body (and no one ever will!).

Though the events recounted in the lessons are extraordinary, the individuals involved were, like all of us, ordinary people, with one exception—the Lord Jesus Himself. God used these ordinary people to accomplish amazing things.

Moses, like David, was a shepherd. He tried to argue with God that he was not up to the task of leading God's people, but God knew him better and sent Aaron to assist him. Moses simply pronounced the judgment on Korah's band of rebels that God carried out.

David, the youngest in his family and not highly regarded by his brothers, had a heart for God like few others and courage. He killed a bear and a lion that threatened his flock. God used David to bring judgment on pagan nations.

Esther, though physically beautiful, was probably no different than many Jewish women of her time, yet her name has become famous both in Jewish and Christian history. The Feast of Purim commemorates her courage.

Peter and John, like the other disciples, forsook the Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane yet were mightily used of God once empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Extraordinary events, ordinary people—this is the mark of God's working in the world. Those who read and study this quarter's lessons will be blessed.

FOR COMFORT AND CHALLENGE

ALICE JACOBS

All Along . . .

Reach new heights,
Buoy my faith,
Grow my mustard seed.
Help me find
The narrow way to
Love in word and deed.
I will give
Myself to Thee,
Always to be true.
Draw me close
With each new day to
Ever dwell with You!

Unadulterated

Lord, guard my heart,
Protect my mind
From teachings so untrue.
I'll share Your Word
Both true and pure
To guide men close to You.
I shall not bend,
Won't compromise
Your truth bestowed on me.
I'll spread it far;
I'll spread it wide—
The truth that sets men free.

New

Thanks to You for open eyes,
The truth they now can see.
Better ways, I knew not,
But then—You guided me.
Perfect? No, I am not now.
A long road it will be.
But I will try with each new day,
Your mirror image see.



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Moses pronounced God's judgment on the disobedient Israelites who had rebelled against God.

God's Servant Moses

Lesson Text:
Numbers 16:23-34

GOLDEN TEXT—"If these men die the common death of all men, . . . then the Lord hath not sent me" (Numbers 16:29).

Scripture Lesson Text

NUMBERS 16:23 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

24 Speak unto the congregation, saying, Get you up from about the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.

25 And Moses rose up and went unto Dathan and Abiram; and the elders of Israel followed him.

26 And he spake unto the congregation, saying, Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins.

27 So they gat up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, on every side: and Dathan and Abiram came out, and stood in the door of their tents, and their wives, and their sons, and their little children.

28 And Moses said, Hereby ye shall know that the LORD hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of mine own mind.

29 If these men die the common death of all

men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men; then the LORD hath not sent me.

30 But if the LORD make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the LORD.

31 And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them:

32 And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods.

33 They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation.

34 And all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them: for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also.

APPROACHING THE LESSON

AIM: to help students appreciate the fact that, because God is holy, He must judge sin.

There is not much heard these days about the judgment of God. When God is talked about in the public square (even within the church), it is usually His qualities of love and kindness that are discussed. Judgment of sin is not a popular topic, partly because the understanding of what constitutes sin is becoming more narrowly defined these days or is changing altogether. In our time, sin is abuse of the environment or cruelty to the creatures that inhabit the planet (unborn humans are excepted).

The challenge for the teacher of this week's lesson is to convey a balanced view of God's attributes so that students understand that He is both loving and just. This might be particularly difficult with the present text in Numbers, because not only were the leaders of the rebellion judged by God but their "little children" (Judg. 16:27) as well. God destroyed the entire families of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.

Several things about this seemingly harsh judgment of God may be men-

tioned. For one, emphasize to students that we are living in the age of grace. It is not that God's character has changed but rather that His approach to the human race is somewhat different today (but not entirely) than it was in Old Testament times. Judgment then tended to be immediate with no further chance for repentance.

Second, judgment on children is sometimes an act of mercy by God. Children tend to follow in their parents' footsteps. If only the leaders had been judged and the children spared, it is quite possible that the next generation would have taken up the parents' cause and rebelled against God. Since Israel was the only nation with the truth, it is unlikely that this generation would have been saved. In destroying them in their innocence, God was assuring them a place in heaven, something far more important than a few more years of life on earth.

Children should at least be able to get a better perspective than they otherwise would have on the just nature of God's character through the study of what has become known as Korah's rebellion.

TEACHING THE LESSON

As you read the Bible you will see a lot of names representing a lot of people. Some people were not friends of God. Others were faithful servants of God. One of these faithful servants was Moses. He led God's people, the Israelites, thousands of years ago.

The Israelites were once enslaved by the Egyptian Empire and their wicked king, Pharaoh. God used Moses to bring His people out of Egypt and toward a beautiful place called the Promised Land.

But not all of the Israelites believed that the Lord would do what He said.