

Sunday School Superintendent

SUMMER QUARTER
June, July, August 2021



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LESSONS FOR ADULTS

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Editorials

Welcome!

We are so glad you have chosen the Sunday School Superintendent as your class study. This summer, the adult lesson track is titled “People of Valor” and looks at men and women throughout Scripture who acted courageously. We will see that the Lord used them in mighty ways. Although the title commends the characters, we must remember that they were not super humans by any means. Each of the characters were flawed, sinful beings just like us; but in their weakness God’s power was revealed.

One of the major themes we will encounter along the way is trusting that God is working even when we cannot see it. We must have faith that God will fulfill His promises and that He is fully in control of all the details in our lives. He is working out His perfect plan, and we can choose to boldly join Him in it.

We will also study God’s perfect timing. He is the Creator and has had the perfect plan since the beginning of time. Even if God does not act in our timing or in the way that we hope, we must believe that He has our best in mind and is still perfectly good and in control. Just because things do not go our way does not mean that we are not following God’s will. Though we focus on many triumphant moments

this quarter, many of our heroes also faced great suffering throughout their lives.

Another theme we will encounter is that it is the Lord who fights our battles. We are powerless in our own strength; but at the same time we can be confident in knowing that we have the same power living in us that conquered the grave. Every victory ultimately belongs to our Protector. While the people of the Bible had qualities we can learn from, the true Hero is always God, and we should imitate Him. We should always give credit to God for His great work of salvation in us and the Holy Spirit’s ongoing work in us.

Most importantly, as we embark on this journey together, we will gaze upon the incredible attributes of God, such as His unchanging faithfulness, perfection, providence, power, fierce love, and His protection and care for His people. God is still working on behalf of His children. Though His deliverance may not look exactly the same, His attributes do not change. May our study of His people ultimately cause us to treasure the ultimate Hero of the Bible more deeply.

Before you begin or begin anew your leadership role, I encourage you to humble yourself before the Lord

PLEASE NOTE: Fundamental, sound doctrine is the objective of The Incorporated Trustees of the Gospel Worker Society, Union Gospel Press Division. The writers are prayerfully selected for their Bible knowledge and yieldedness to the Spirit of Truth, each writing in his own style as enlightened by the Holy Spirit. At best we know in part only. “They received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11).



in prayer. Ask that God would speak through you and use you where He is already working in the lives of your students. Pray that He would help you handle His Word faithfully and guard you and your class against the deceitfulness of the devil. Read each lesson carefully before Sunday and take note of any special instructions for the teachers on those days.

Make sure students know that being a faithful servant of the Lord is often less showy than the situations in our lesson text. Maintaining integrity and humbly serving others will often be the way they can show their faithfulness to the Lord. In a self-seeking and materialistic culture, this kind of behavior will stand out. However, if students do get an opportunity to do something big for God, they should not shy away from it out of fear, but confidently embrace it. God does not call us to be average, and we should never become complacent about our work for the kingdom.

More than likely you will encounter some difficult topics, and students

may bring up hard questions; this is a wonderful thing because it forces us to realize and admit our own limitations and trust in God to make up what we lack. Never be ashamed to admit when you do not know something, and always offer to find an answer to the question before the next class period. Your humility and trust in God will speak volumes. To that end, do as much preparation beforehand as possible: brainstorm questions, use a concordance, read a theologically sound commentary, study a Bible dictionary (many can be found online), and be ready to write down any questions to research for students during the week.

Finally, be sure to test the words of this study against Scripture because it is the final authority. Do likewise with any ideas or interpretations of the lesson that students put forward. So often we are apt to accept an interpretation that is not aligned with Scripture for the sake of not offending someone, but that is not truly loving our neighbors or God.

This does not mean we should start splitting hairs about differing interpretations and trivial details. Do some research on the major heresies as the need arises so that you are well prepared to guard your students against these theological falsehoods. If they challenge you, try to get to the heart of their issue with the text: Is this particular student having a hard time trusting God's power? Does he or she doubt that God is sovereign? Do your students believe in the prosperity gospel? Discerning these doubts will help you address the real issue at hand. Make sure their thinking does not reflect poorly on God's character.

We pray this material will deepen both your own and your students' knowledge of and love for our awe-inspiring Lord. Enjoy!

LESSON 1—JUNE 6, 2021

Joshua Commands the Sun to Stand Still

Lesson Text: Joshua 10:1-15

GOLDEN TEXT—“And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the Lord fought for Israel” (Joshua 10:14).

OPENING MOMENTS

Suggested Song (Adults)

“The Battle is Yours” (Houghton, Binion, Dufrene, Edge)

Suggested Song (Children)

“Trust in the Lord” (Goodgame)

Icebreaker

If God made the sun stand still for a day, what would you do with that extra time?

LESSON OUTLINE

1. Adoni-zedec gathers kings to attack Gibeon (Josh. 10:1-7)
2. God assures Joshua of victory (Josh. 10:8)
3. Joshua commands the sun to stand still (Josh. 10:9-15)

KEY ISSUES

It can often seem that Satan never fails to find new ways to punish those who make peace with God. If we are called by Christ's name and seek to live apart from the world, we can depend on the fact that we will have trouble in this world. But God never allows us to suffer needlessly; He is always close by, and He never fails to apply our suffering in a way that is for our good and His glory (cf. Rom. 8:28).

There is a saying, “If you can't beat them, join them,” which is what the inhabitants of Gibeon did. But when Adoni-zedec got word that they had made peace with the Israelites, he gathered the five Amorite kings to attack Gibeon.

As Joshua and his men made their way to help Gibeon's forces, the Lord told Joshua not to be afraid. He would help the Israelites win the battle. “There shall not a man of them stand before thee” (vs. 8). Notice that Joshua resolved to obey God, and God worked on his behalf. When God calls us to follow and serve Him, we are responsible to respond in obedience. We may shake in our shoes at first, but our faith in God will grow as we move forward and see God fulfill His promises.

Notice as the battle scene unfolds that it is ultimately the Lord's battle. Even though Joshua had a mighty force at his disposal, it is very clear that the victory was not his. *God* threw the armies into confusion and sent large hailstones on them as they fled. The text says that more of the men died from the hail than by the sword (vs. 11).

Joshua spoke to the Lord on that day and asked Him to make the sun stand still until the Israelites could completely defeat the enemy. For almost a full day, God delayed the

setting of the sun. The Lord heard Joshua's cry and answered in a miraculous way: "There was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the Lord fought for Israel" (vs. 14). We may not be able to make the sun and the moon stand still, but we can call on God whenever we are in need. God wants us to share our needs with Him and move forward in faith. We can be sure that He always listens to His children and works all their circumstances for good.

Remind your teachers to have answers prepared for questions concerning the sun standing still in the sky. There are some critics who point to the disastrous results that would ensue upon a sudden stopping of the earth's rotation. The basic explanation, of course, and certainly a sufficient one, is that God is able to overrule all natural laws. But Gleason Archer has also pointed out that the Hebrew of verse 13 does not require a complete stoppage of the earth's rotation. The words "hasted not" point to a possible slowing down of the rotation to prolong the day (*Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, Zondervan). In either case, it certainly was a great miracle.

BRINGING IT HOME

When God promises to do something, He is faithful to fulfill it. In Joshua 1:5-9, God told Joshua that no one would be able to stand against him, for the Lord would be with him. He would give him the land He swore to his forefathers.

It is worth noting that this was a slow process. God led the Hebrews in the wilderness for forty years, then slowly and gradually defeated their enemies as He brought them into the Promised Land. God has all the time there is, and He is never in a hurry when the growth of His people's faith

is at stake. By requiring them to lean on Him for a great length of time, He was training them to live according to righteousness. By Christ's righteousness, believers can live in complete reliance on Him. As we grow in faith, we need to be discipled and disciple others. Discipleship covers everything from Bible reading and prayer to handling the problems of life in a fallen world through the lens of Scripture; we should allow God's Word to change us and the way we handle things. As we seek to honor God through our lives, He will send His Spirit to help us.

The God who made the sun stand still that day is the same God living inside believers. Therefore, let us be strong and courageous, for our daily "battles" are not truly ours. The Lord will fight for us; we need only trust in Him (Ex. 14:14). If we find our peace in Him, He will always be there for us.

WHAT WAS THE BOOK OF JASHER?

"[T]he Book of Jasher was probably a collection or compilation of ancient Hebrew songs and poems praising the heroes of Israel and their exploits in battle" ("What is the Book of Jasher and should it be in the Bible?" gotquestions.org). It is referred to multiple times in the Old Testament, often to enforce the reliability of the accounts as another historical source.

Joshua Commands the Sun to Stand Still

Lesson Text: Joshua 10:1-15

Related Scriptures: Joshua 1:5-9; 23:1-13; Isaiah 38:4-8; 60:19-22

TIME: between 1405-1398 B.C.

PLACES: Gilgal; Gibeon

GOLDEN TEXT—“And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the Lord fought for Israel” (Joshua 10:14).

Lesson and Its Truth

This quarter has the overall theme “People of Valor,” and in our first unit we will look at various courageous acts of faith in the lives of several prominent Old Testament men. Life for God’s people is not a continual Sunday school picnic. In fact, for most believers, life will consist of varying degrees of trials and tribulations (John 16:33) and, hopefully, there will be lots of good times as well. The thing to remember is to trust the Lord in all things, even when surprised by challenges that pop up and seem overwhelming.

Joshua is the first person we will look at. We will specifically note one particular occasion in his life that has spawned various attempts by commentators to explain what happened. As you likely know, Joshua was God’s chosen leader for Israel as they crossed the Jordan River and began their conquest of the land He had promised to give them.

You likely also know he was one of twelve Israelites Moses had sent into the land at Kadesh-Barnea to see

what it was like. He, along with Caleb, gave a minority report that brimmed with optimistic faith that the land was terrific and could be conquered with God’s help (Num. 13:30; 14:30). He and Caleb were the only two of the spies who trusted God and the only two of those over twenty years of age who came out of Egypt to survive the judgment of death during the wilderness wanderings. It is therefore not difficult to understand why Joshua was God’s choice to succeed Moses as Israel’s leader.

A CALL FOR HELP—Josh. 10:1-5

It is helpful to understand the historical context underlying these verses. The conquering of Jericho was past as was the subsequent taking of Ai. Like Rahab and others in Jericho (2:9-11), the people of the surrounding area were well aware of the approaching Israelites, and the king of Jerusalem reached out to four other kings to join forces for battle. This was after also hearing that the people of Gibeon had surrendered peacefully to Joshua and