

YOUNG PEOPLE'S
Bible Class

For Adults Ages 18 Through 25

SUMMER QUARTER
June, July, August 2022



Union
Gospel
Press

Young People's Bible Class

SUMMER QUARTER

June, July, August 2022

The Quarter Ahead	2
Editorial	3

Servants and Healers

UNIT I: Faithful to Serve

June 5—Samuel's Call and Ministry—I Sam. 3:1-9, 19-20; 7:3-5, 10, 12.....	5
June 12—Isaiah's Commission—Isa. 6:1-8	10
June 19—Asaph's Lament—Ps. 73:1-3, 12-13, 16-18, 21-26	15
June 26—The Service of Godly Leaders—Ezra 6:13-22.....	20

UNIT II: Faithful to Prophecy

July 3—Haggai Calls for Faithful Service—Hag. 1:1-11	25
July 10—Micah Stands Firm for God—Mic. 2:4-11	30
July 17—Habakkuk Praises God's Faithfulness—Hab. 2:1-5; 3:17-19	35
July 24—Ezekiel Brings Hope to Israel—Ezek. 37:1-14.....	40

UNIT III: Faithful to Heal

July 31—Jesus Heals a Centurion's Servant—Luke 7:1-10.....	45
Aug. 7—Jesus Heals Two Demoniacs—Matt. 8:23-34.....	49
Aug. 14—A Lame Man Healed—Acts 3:1-16	53
Aug. 21—Ananias Heals Saul—Acts 9:10-20	57
Aug. 28—Miracles on Malta—Acts 28:1-10	61

Editor in Chief: Kenneth Sponsler



Edited and published quarterly by
**THE INCORPORATED TRUSTEES OF THE
 GOSPEL WORKER SOCIETY
 UNION GOSPEL PRESS DIVISION**

Rev. W. B. Musselman, Founder

Price: \$3.25 per quarter*
 \$13.00 per year*

**shipping and handling extra*

ISBN 978-1-64495-238-2

This material is part of the "Christian Life Series," copyright © 2022 by Union Gospel Press. All rights reserved. No portion of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means without written permission from Union Gospel Press, except as permitted by United States copyright law. Edited and published quarterly by The Incorporated Trustees of the Gospel Worker Society, Union Gospel Press Division. Mailing address: P.O. Box 301055, Cleveland, Ohio 44130-0915. Phone: 216-749-2100. www.uniongospelpress.com

The Quarter Ahead

This quarter's lessons take a look at selected servants of the Lord throughout both the Old and New Testaments. The survey covers the stories of judges, prophets, psalmists, apostles, and our supreme Prophet, Priest, and King, the Lord Jesus Himself.

The lessons in our first unit of study are all from the Old Testament. Lesson 1 recounts the calling and ministry of the final and greatest judge of Israel, Samuel. God honored Samuel's service by making sure that all his words came true (1 Sam. 3:19). In lesson 2, we study the account of Isaiah's glorious and dramatic vision of God in the temple, complete with six-winged seraphim singing thunderous praises. Confronted by the supreme holiness of the Lord, Isaiah was mortified by the realization of his own sinfulness and unworthiness. But God sent one of His seraphs to take a hot coal from the temple altar and apply it to Isaiah's lips, thus cleansing him for his monumental prophetic ministry. In lesson 3, we examine the lament of the psalmist Asaph, in which he confesses his temptation to envy the wicked. He is rescued from this temptation by the realization that, no matter how prosperous evil people seem to become, their end is eternal destruction. Lesson 4 presents us with Ezra's account of the post-exilic leadership of Haggai and Zechariah.

Our second unit of study features four prophets from the Old Testament. In lesson 5, Haggai rebukes the returned exiles for procrastinating about rebuilding God's temple while they dwell comfortably in their own luxurious

homes. In lesson 6, Micah rebukes the pre-exilic Israelites for their oppression of the poor. They were piling up their sins, and judgment would one day fall. In Lesson 7, Habakkuk rejoices in God's faithfulness. In lesson 8, Ezekiel is given a prophetic vision of dry bones coming back to life, symbolizing Israel's future restoration as a nation.

Unit 3 is made up of five healing stories from the New Testament. Lesson 9 examines Jesus' healing of a devot centurion's servant. Jesus is amazed by the centurion's great faith. In lesson 10, Jesus exorcises demonic spirits from two possessed men in a Gentile region near Galilee. Instead of being grateful, the people there were upset about the loss of a herd of pigs, and begged Jesus to leave their region. In lesson 11, Peter and John miraculously heal a lame man in the name of Jesus, providing an opportunity to preach the gospel. Lesson 12 deals with Ananias's healing of the newly converted Saul of blindness. Although he greatly feared Saul by reputation, Ananias obeyed the command of God to go and heal him, even addressing him as "brother." In our final lesson for this quarter, we find that same Saul, now the apostle Paul, shipwrecked on the island of Malta. When the people see him remain unharmed after being bitten by a venomous snake, it opens doors for the proclamation of the gospel among the inhabitants of the island.

My sincere hope is that you will be encouraged and spiritually enriched by this quarter's studies of these faithful servants of the Lord.

—John Lody.

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).

The Call to Faithful Service

JOHN LODY

What does it mean to be called into God's service? First of all, if you are a Christian, you have already been called into God's service in some capacity. Each of us is meant to serve God in our daily lives, even if our earthly vocation does not involve being a full-time pastor, missionary, or some other job that is entirely devoted to ministering God's Word. Even if your job seems to have nothing to do with building up God's kingdom, you are called to dedicate yourself as a living sacrifice, using every opportunity that God brings into your life to proclaim Christ's gospel and glorify Him before a world in desperate need of His salvation (cf. Rom. 12:1-2).

Additionally, each Christian has been called to serve as a vital member of Christ's body, the church. No member of that body is unimportant; we all have an essential role to perform in fulfilling God's plan for His church (cf. I Cor. 12:12-31; I Pet. 2:5).

But what of that special calling to full-time Christian service? What does it mean to be "called of God" in such a distinctive way? Well, as we can see from our Bible lessons for this quarter, it involves experiences as varied as the called persons themselves.

Samuel was called at a young age, and his calling involved God's actual voice audibly calling to him in the early hours of the morning (cf. I Sam. 3:1-21). Isaiah was probably somewhat older than Samuel when he was called, and his calling involved not only audible words from God, but also the thundering voices of seraphim like an earthquake, along with a vision of the glorious God Himself, seated upon His throne in a flowing robe that filled the whole temple. He was surrounded by



angelic servants who both proclaimed His perfect holiness in resounding song and guarded it by their presence.

Saul of Tarsus was called in the midst of zealously persecuting Christians. The risen Lord Jesus Himself appeared to him with a light from heaven that literally blinded him, striking him to the ground and rendering him helpless until the Lord sent Ananias to heal him. Ananias was told by the Lord that Saul would become "a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake" (Acts 9:15-16).

Obviously, not all calls to serve God occur with such extraordinary voices, visions, or blinding heavenly lights. Today, such calls rarely if ever are characterized by such miraculous phenomena. Usually today, they are experienced in a more private, subjective manner. But the persons called

can quite often testify to an unmistakable feeling of being drawn by the Lord to leave their normal vocational pursuits and to begin preparing themselves for a special lifelong dedication to God's Word and His kingdom. Sometimes they claim to hear an internal voice calling them, sometimes it is merely an irresistible impulse to change the course of their lives toward a particular ministry. However they describe it afterwards, it results in a definite change of life direction and a commitment to serve God in whatever special career He has called them to.

But what does it mean to serve God faithfully? Once again, our survey of God's faithful servants for this quarter will provide us with ample insight into what faithfully serving the Lord entails.

Through Samuel's experience, we learn that communicating God's message can be a difficult and uncomfortable prospect at times. Samuel's first assignment was to tell Eli the bad news that God was preparing to judge his family because of the unrestrained sins of his sons (cf. I Sam. 3:11-14).

Similarly, in order to proclaim the gospel as good news, we often must relate the bad news first—that our sins have alienated us from God as His enemies who deserve only His eternal wrath. People usually do not respond well to such profoundly negative news, so faithful service to God's Word often means becoming the target of their hostility toward the gospel. But, like Samuel, we must faithfully deliver that message, trusting in God's wisdom and His care for us, especially when such gospel service is our livelihood!

From Isaiah's experience, we learn that answering God's call to ministry first involves recognizing our own sinfulness and need for cleansing in order to prepare ourselves for service to the God who is "Holy, holy, holy" (Isa. 6:3). In Isaiah's case, the fiery coals of the temple altar may symbolize the trials

of life that God brings upon His servants to purify them. God does not choose his servants based on anything in themselves that makes them worthy of His calling, but He nevertheless does insist on perfecting their faith through purifying trials (cf. I Pet. 1:6-7). Answering God's call means you can expect to go through such cleansing trials in your life.

From Asaph's experience, we learn that answering God's call to faithful service will involve eventual temptation to have second thoughts about our commitment to devote our lives to righteousness, especially when we see those who care nothing for God or His gospel living in ease and prosperity. As Asaph considered his own dedication to righteousness, he was tempted to become discouraged because of the health and wealth of the wicked people around him. But then he remembered their end (cf. Ps. 73:16-17).

As we go through the purifying trials that are an essential part of our calling, we may be tempted to envy those who are free to pursue the luxury and wealth of this world without restraints. To overcome such temptations, we must remind ourselves of the inevitable outcome of such an unrepentant pursuit of worldly pleasures—eternal destruction.

From the experiences of Ezra, Haggai, and Zechariah, we learn that, despite all the risks, difficulties, and purifying trials we go through as servants of the Lord, He is faithful and generous to bless us with times of great progress and celebration. The exiles who returned after Israel's seventy-year captivity in Babylon often met with great opposition. But God sustained them through all the obstacles and setbacks to bring them into times of rejoicing.

Although we undoubtedly will go through times when we are tempted to feel that all our efforts are for nothing, God is faithful and able to bring us into times of encouragement and joy!

Scripture Lesson Text

I SAM. 3:1 And the child Samuel ministered unto the LORD before Eli. And the word of the LORD was precious in those days; *there was no open vision.*

2 And it came to pass at that time, when Eli was laid down in his place, and his eyes began to wax dim, *that he could not see;*

3 And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down *to sleep;*

4 That the LORD called Samuel: and he answered, *Here am I.*

5 And he ran unto Eli, and said, *Here am I;* for thou calledst me. And he said, *I called not; lie down again.* And he went and lay down.

6 And the LORD called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, *Here am I;* for thou didst call me. And he answered, *I called not, my son; lie down again.*

7 Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, neither was the word of the LORD yet revealed unto him.

8 And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli, and said, *Here am I;* for thou didst call me. And Eli perceived that the LORD had called the child.

9 Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, *Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth.* So

Samuel went and lay down in his place.

19 And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground.

20 And all Israel from Dan even to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was established *to be* a prophet of the LORD.

7:3 And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, *If ye do return unto the LORD with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.*

4 Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served the LORD only.

5 And Samuel said, *Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will pray for you unto the LORD.*

10 And as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: but the LORD thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel.

12 Then Samuel took a stone, and set *it* between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it **Eben-ezer**, saying, *Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.*

Samuel's Call and Ministry

Lesson Text: I Samuel 3:1-9, 19-20; 7:3-5, 10, 12

Related Scriptures: I Samuel 1:1-28; Judges 2:16-23

TIMES: about 1093 B.C.; 1047 B.C.

PLACES: Shiloh; Ramah; Mizpeh;
between Mizpeh and Shen

GOLDEN TEXT—"The Lord came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth" (I Samuel 3:10).

Lesson Exposition

Most of the judges emphasized the political nature of their leadership roles rather than the spiritual component of those positions. One man, however, combined into one the responsibilities of prophet and judge. His name was Samuel.

God was preparing to unite the individual tribes of Israel into a kingdom. Samuel laid the foundation for that change. He united the people around the worship of God through the tabernacle at Shiloh. He also led them in a great military battle. Most of all, he taught them to listen to the voice of God.

A PROPHET LISTENING TO GOD— I Sam. 3:1-9

The office of prophet had been held by very few people during the days of the judges. It was unusual for the nation to receive direct revelation from God. Occasionally a judge would be given some divine instruction, but that was rare. For God to speak regularly through a prophet had been almost unknown for hundreds of years.

Samuel grew up in the tabernacle and served the Lord from the time he was a small child. He helped Eli the

priest with simple duties like lighting and putting out the lamps. Eli had not taught him to listen for the voice of God because Eli apparently had not heard the voice of God. God may not have revealed Himself to Eli in that way.

God had to call three times before Eli figured out what was happening. When he realized that God was calling to young Samuel, he finally taught the boy how to respond. Samuel's willingness to listen to God would change the life of the nation.

Young children can be taught to respond to the voice of God in His Word. Although He does not speak audibly as He did to Samuel, God still speaks today through the Bible. Godly parents should read the Scriptures to their children and encourage them to read as well. Many good Bible storybooks are available on every reading level.

Children can also listen to the voice of God and be saved at an early age. Many children have made decisions for Christ when young. They should not be coerced into such a decision by parental pressure, but neither should they be forbidden. Pray for your children, read them the Word, and allow the Holy Spirit to work in their lives.