

General Church Education



The Sun Stands Still

Joshua 10:1-26

Lesson 12

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 4: The Lord Is the Hero

For ages 9-10

The Sun Stands Still

Joshua 10:1-26

Teacher Background

The king of Jerusalem heard about the destruction of Ai and Jericho, and of Israel's protection of the Gibeonites. So he asked the kings of Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish and Eglon to help him fight Gibeon. When they declared war, the Gibeonites asked Joshua for help. The Lord assured them victory, so the Israelites marched all night to get there. As the enemy fled, Israel chased them into the mountains and down a steep path towards Beth Horon, where the Lord sent large hailstones, killing many. Wanting to complete the conquest, Joshua recited from the Book of Jasher, a lost book from the Ancient Word, asking the sun and moon to stand still. This happened spiritually. The kings fled to a cave, which was walled up, trapping them inside. When the battle ended in victory, the kings were released and killed.

Joshua's quick response to a plea for help prevented five kings from having a real chance to harm the Gibeonites, who they had pledged to defend. With strength and courage, they battled five armies at once. Likewise, we can say "no" to evil before it catches hold in us. The Lord sent large hailstones to help. When we don't want to do what the Word teaches, truth may seem hard and destructive, like the hail. The Writings say that the sun and moon did not literally stand still, but that light was given from heaven to conquer the enemies, just as the Lord gives us heavenly light to overcome enemies as we call on Him. Putting a foot on the neck of the kings dramatically shows how an evil plan in our heads can be stopped before coming into act.

Key Ideas

- The children of Israel kept their promise to protect the Gibeonites.
- The Lord helped the children of Israel fight their enemies by sending hail and light from heaven.
- The Lord gives us time and "light" from His Word, to learn to be good people.

From the Writings

By the sun standing in Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon, signified that the church was entirely stripped of good and truth. That the sun rested and the moon stayed in their place...that the children of Israel might see their enemies is prophetic. If the miracle occurred in this way, it would have inverted the order of the world; the rest of the miracles in the Word would not do this. See *Apocalypse Explained* 401.18.

A light was given to them from heaven, a light in Gibeon like that of the sun, and a light in Ajalon like that of the moon. See *Apocalypse Explained* 401.18.

"When anyone is turning over in his mind some evil deed, and intending to do it, they should say to themselves: 'I am thinking about this and I intend to do it, but I shall not because it is a sin.' This has the effect of blunting the thrust of hell's tempting and preventing it from advancing any further."
True Christian Religion 535

The Sun Stands Still

Joshua 10:1-26

Vocabulary

ascend—to move upward or rise

valor—bravery when facing great danger

rout—an overwhelming defeat

lowland—land at sea level that is flat

Five Kings Are Afraid

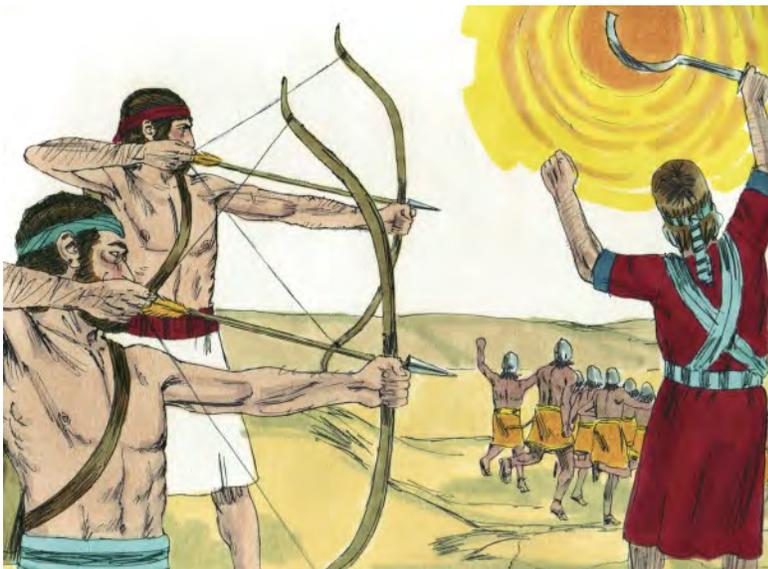
As word of Joshua's amazing victories against the cities of Jericho and Ai spread, people living nearby felt frightened. Five Amorite kings from the mountains heard that their neighbors, the Gibeonites, had made peace with the powerful enemy. So they joined together to attack their capital city, Gibeon.

Read Joshua 10:1-5.

Joshua Comes to Rescue the Gibeonites

When the Gibeonites saw that the armies of the five kings were setting up camp and preparing to attack, they sent a message to Joshua, asking for his help. As soon as Joshua received the message, he gathered Israel's warriors and set out for Gibeon, prepared to fight. The Lord promised Joshua He would be with him and that Israel would win the battle.

Joshua went as quickly as he could. His army marched all night to reach Gibeon. Early in the morning, they surprised the armies of the five kings, who ran away in fear and confusion. Some



were killed. Others ran away to a steep mountain pass that lead to the city of Beth Horon. As they started to go down a rugged path to the city in the lowland, the Lord rained huge hailstones on them, and many died. In fact, more soldiers were killed by the hailstones than with swords.

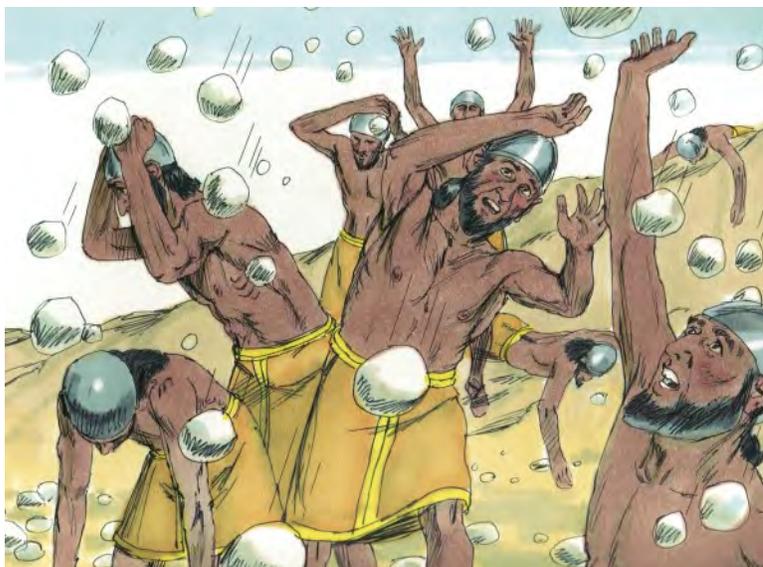
A Great Miracle

Joshua and his army had not yet destroyed all their enemies, so Joshua begged the Lord to help by saying words from the Book of

Jasher, which is a part of the Ancient Word that is now lost:

Sun, stand still over Gibeon;
And moon, in the valley of Aijalon.
So the sun stood still,
And the moon stopped,
Till the people had revenge
Upon their enemies.

And the Lord did a wonderful miracle. He gave the children of Israel light so that they could see their enemies. The light shone for a whole day, until the children of Israel had completely conquered their enemies.



Read Joshua 10:6-15.

What a dramatic picture of the Lord's great power! We know that all light is from the Lord. The sun of the natural world allows us to see everything around us. The light of heaven shines in our minds and allows us to see what is true and good. New Church teachings tell us that it was the light of heaven that helped Joshua and his men defeat their enemies.

The Lord gives us light to see *our* enemies. What kinds of "enemies" do you think we need to be able to see? Maybe we have an unkind thought or are thinking about doing something we know is wrong. True ideas from the Lord's Word can shine the light of heaven in our minds so we can see what these thoughts and feelings are really like. The light of heaven shows us that selfish thoughts and feelings can hurt others, and they can also hurt us.

The Five Kings Are Captured

The kings ran away and hid in a cave. When Joshua heard they had been discovered, he commanded warriors to roll large stones against the mouth of the cave, trapping the kings inside. He set men to watch the cave to make sure that the kings did not escape. Then the warriors chased after the last of the enemies that had escaped. They stopped them from going into cities where they would be harder to catch.

When the battle was over, the warriors returned to the cave. The stones were moved away from the entrance and the kings were brought out. Joshua called for his captains to come. As a sign of victory, the kings were made to lie down. Each captain put a foot on a king's neck, and the kings were killed. Stepping on the king's necks is like stopping bad thoughts and feelings in our heads and not acting them out with our bodies. The kings were hung on trees, and then buried in the cave in which they had hidden.

Read Joshua 10:16-27.

South of the Land Conquered

The children of Israel had fought their enemies until they had reached the heart of the land of Canaan. After this battle, Joshua raided the country to the south, and destroyed many strong cities there. When this was finished the whole of the southern part of the land of Canaan was conquered.

The Gibeonites asked Joshua to fight with them to help them defeat their enemies. We too must ask the Lord for help in fighting selfish thoughts and feelings. We must stop selfish thoughts and feelings before we do something that hurts ourselves or our family and friends.

Discussion Questions

- Why did the Gibeonites take so much trouble when going to Joshua for help?
- Do you think what the Gibeonites did was fair?
- Compare a person feeling threatened and lying about a situation to get protection from a parent or teacher with how the Gibeonites acted. Can a choice to tell a lie ever be the right thing to do?
- Why was Joshua forced to help the Gibeonites when the truth came out?
- Why is honoring commitments important?
- Why are the light and heat of the sun important to us?
- Compare the light and heat the natural sun gives us with the light and heat we receive from the spiritual sun.
- In what ways did the sun standing still help the Israelites fight their enemies?
- How can we receive “light” from the Lord to fight our spiritual enemies?
- Why was it so important for Joshua to defeat *all* of the enemies?
- What can happen if we only fight some of our spiritual enemies, but not others?
- *How* is the Lord a Hero of war?

Activity Overview | The Sun Stands Still

Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

The heavens declare the glory of God;
And the firmament shows His handiwork. Psalm 19:1

Projects

Choose one or two activities.

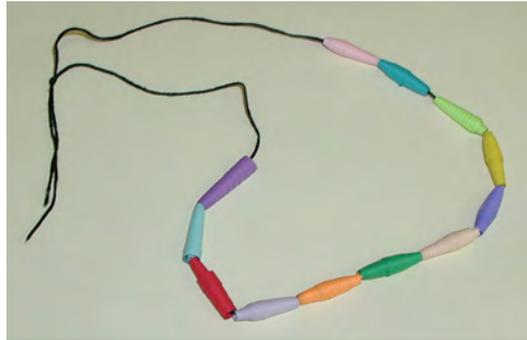
- “Stop It at the Neck” Necklace
- Compare the Suns of the Spiritual and Natural Worlds
- Picture to color—The Sun Stands Still (Joshua 10)
- Picture to color—The Five Kings Captured (Joshua 10)

Additional Activity Ideas

- Sit or stand in a sunny spot. Think of the blessings you receive from the sun. Sunlight makes our bodies produce the “sunshine: vitamin—vitamin D—that’s important for helping bones grow, and preventing certain illness. Sunlight also puts us in a good mood, and helps us sleep at night. Now think about standing or sitting in the light of the spiritual sun. How might being in spiritual sunlight help our spirits?
- For additional review questions on the battle with the kings, go to <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/file/activity-israels-battle-with-the-kings-review-questions-joshua10.pdf>.

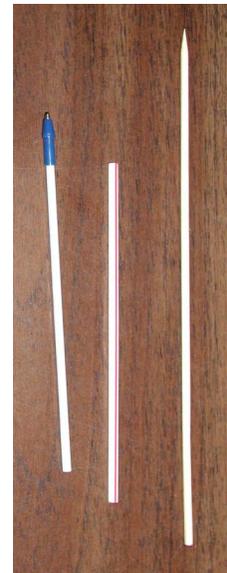
Activity 1 | “Stop It at the Neck” Necklace

All parts of the Word have an inner meaning for us. The story of Joshua’s men stepping on the necks of the captured kings before killing them might seem cruel, but it has a lesson in overcoming our bad thoughts and feelings. We can’t stop bad thoughts and feelings from coming into our minds, but we can choose what we do with them. When we don’t put the bad thoughts or feelings into action it is like stopping them at the neck. Truths from the Word, such as the Ten Commandments, can help us to do that and to live a good life.



Materials Needed

- copy of bead directions
- copy of bead template
- thin round stick to roll the beads, e.g. coffee stirrer, pen insert, wooden skewer (see picture at right)
- scissors
- glue
- full size piece of scrap paper
- thread, dental floss or thin string



Directions

1. Cut out the bead template triangles.
2. Choose one or more commandments that can help you stop selfish thoughts at the neck—before they become actions in your life. There are also some blank beads if you want to write something you want to stop in your own words.
3. Make one or more beads following the directions supplied. You may want to practice with one of the extra triangles.
4. Thread the beads or beads on floss or string and tie the ends together to form a necklace.

Stop It at the Neck Bead Directions

Making the beads can be a bit tricky but will get easier with practice. You may want to start with one of the blank beads.



1. Place one of the triangles with a blessing printed on it face up on your sheet of scrap paper with the point facing away from you.

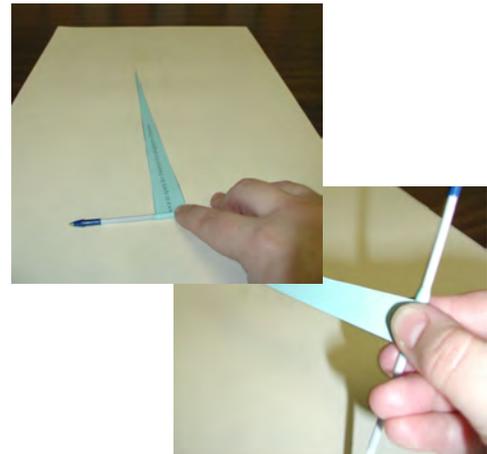
Starting about an inch from the bottom of the triangle, spread a thin layer of glue all the way to the point.



2. Place whatever you are using as a roller just on top of the straight end of the triangle and begin rolling the paper tightly around the roller.

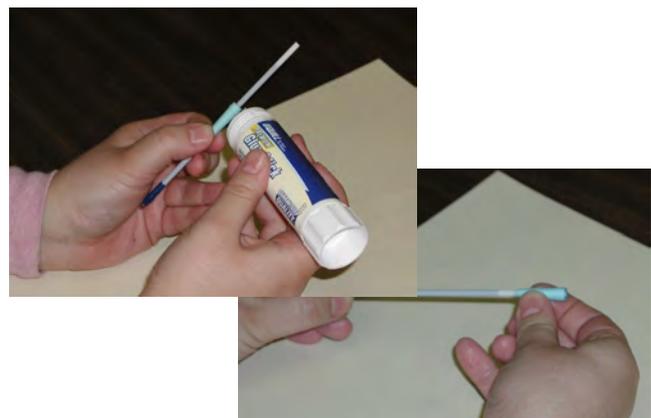
When you get part way it may be easier to pick the roller up in your fingers.

Don't worry if the paper doesn't roll completely straight. The different shapes will be interesting!

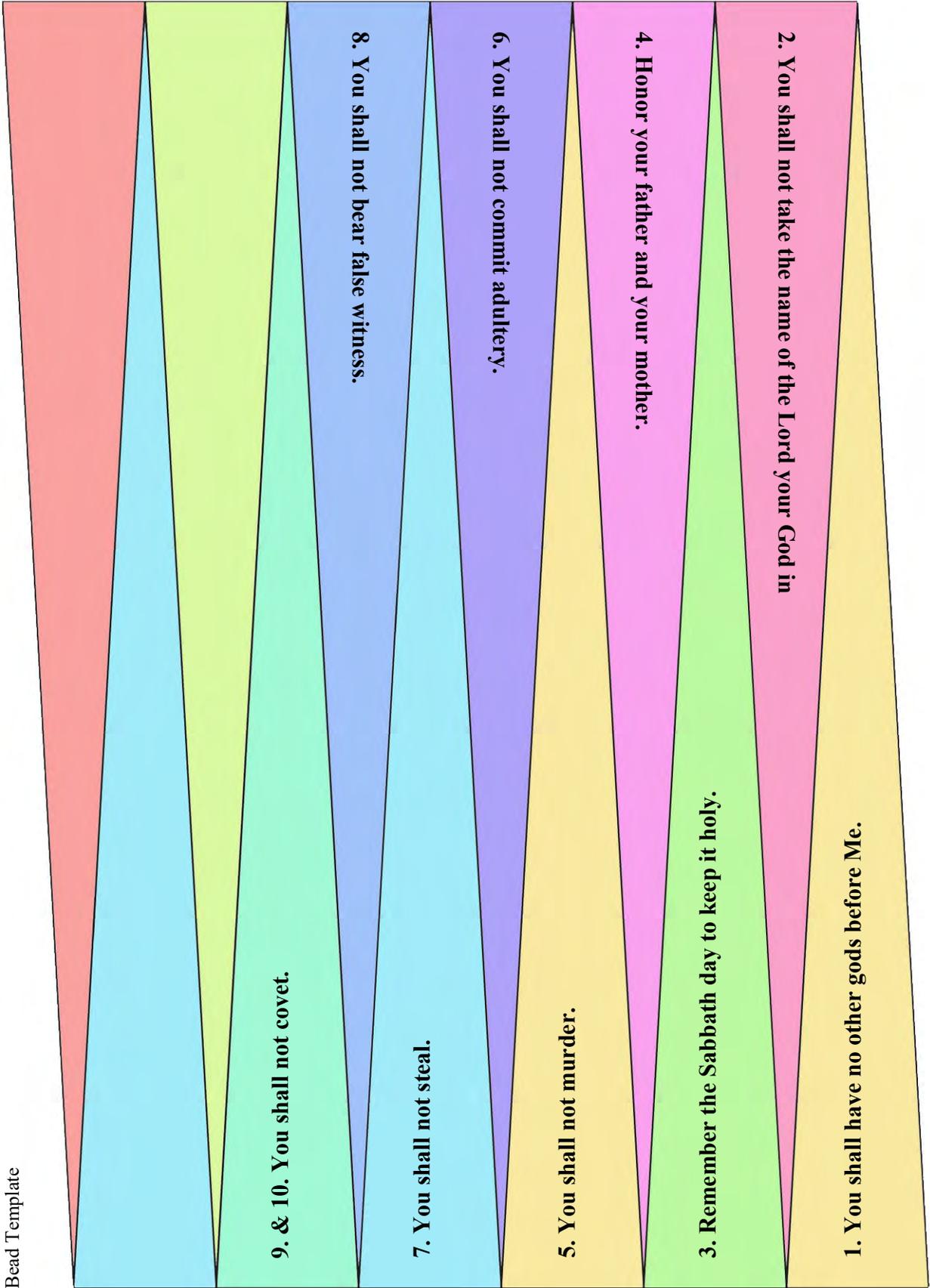


3. Secure the point of the triangle by spreading glue on the outside of the bead.

Slide the bead off the roller and let dry. If the ends pop up again, smooth some more glue down over them with your finger.



Bead Template



Activity 2 | Compare the Suns of the Spiritual and Natural Worlds

The Writings for the New Church tell us that the increased light Joshua received to fight against Israel's enemies was from the sun of the spiritual world. Just as the sun of the natural world is essential for all life on earth, the sun of the spiritual world is essential for our spiritual lives and helps us fight our spiritual enemies.

Read the list of sun qualities of light below. Decide whether each describes a characteristic of the spiritual sun, or the natural sun. Draw a line from the statement to the picture of the natural or the spiritual sun. Check your answers on the next page.

Is the source of energy for all things on earth.

The celestial angels see it in the east.

It is so big it would take a million earths to fill it.

The Lord is in it.

Its heat and light are the Lord's love and truth.

Its heat and light enable all things on earth to grow.

Is always visible.

Light from this sun helps us see what is true and good.

Is at the center of our solar system.

Appears to rise and set.

Spiritual Sun



Natural Sun



Activity 2 | Compare the Suns of the Spiritual and Natural Worlds Answer Sheet

