

General Church Education



The Lord Is the Hero Who Fights Evil (Easter)

John 18:28-38

Lesson 34

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 4: The Lord Is the Hero

For ages 9-10

The Lord Is the Hero Who Fights Evil

John 18:28-38

Teacher Background

The Lord is the perfect Hero, demonstrating strength, commitment and courage. The Lord came to earth to overcome the power of hell, which had become so great that people no longer knew the truth and could not find the way to heaven. To do this the Lord, the God of heaven and earth, took on a human body and mind from Mary. The hells could attack him in human states. He fought these attacks with His Divine Love, by means of the truths of His Word. In fighting the evils in Himself, the Lord made his human Divine. His great work was finished through dying on the cross and rising on Easter morning as the Divine Human. Through His work, all are redeemed. The Lord's act of universal redemption means that all people *can now be saved*, but individual salvation *only takes place* if a person uses the choice the Lord has provided to follow Him through living in accord with His commandments. The Lord fights for us and is the hero in our struggles. The victories we experience are His victories, as the Lord's Prayer says, "Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory." He gives the power and strength to fight evil, so we can enter His kingdom of heaven.

Key Ideas

- The Lord is the greatest Hero, and His example shows us how we can become heroes too.
- The Lord is brave against evil and fights for what is true.
- When the Lord was in the world, He fought against the hells and conquered them.

From the Writings

If the Lord did not protect people in every instant, they would perish, for there is murderous hatred reigning in the world of spirits against all forms of love and faith in the Lord. For several years now I have been in the next life in the company of spirits. I have been surrounded by evil spirits who have been allowed to pour out their venom in every possible way, but who could not harm the tiniest hair on my head, so well did the Lord protect me. I have become thoroughly informed about the conflict which people who are being regenerated must inevitably undergo if they are to attain the happiness of eternal life. See *Arcana Coelestia* 59.2.

To redeem means to free from damnation, to reclaim from everlasting death, to snatch from hell, and to release the captives and those in bondage from the hands of the devil. The Lord performed this by conquering the hells and founding a new heaven. The reason why people could not by any other means be saved was that the spiritual and natural worlds are inseparable. This principally affects people's souls and minds; those of the good are linked with the souls and minds of angels, those of the wicked with the souls and minds of the spirits of hell. Their union is such that if a person were deprived of them, they would fall lifeless. Likewise neither could angels and spirits remain in existence, if human beings were taken away from them. For this reason redemption took place in the spiritual world. Heaven and hell had to be brought into order before a church could be established upon earth. See *True Christian Religion* 118.

The Lord Is the Hero Who Fights Evil

John 18:28-38

Vocabulary

swine—pigs

mission—an important purpose or job

tomb—place where a person is buried

You have learned about many heroes in the books of Joshua and Judges. They were heroes because they obeyed the Lord and led the people to worship Him. All their power came from the Lord.

The Lord Is the Hero

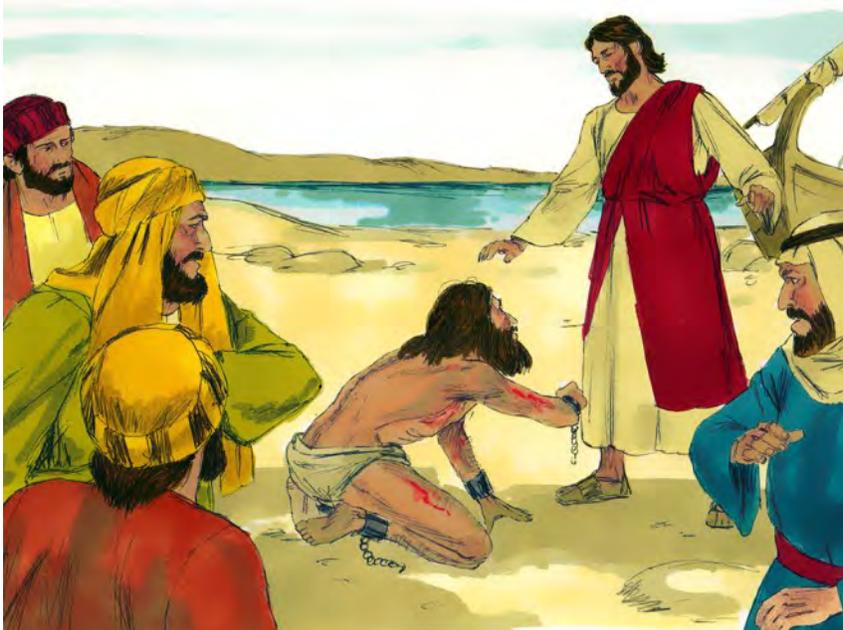
The Lord is *the* hero. The Easter story shows us His qualities as a hero of great strength, commitment and courage. A hero fights for what is right. When the Lord was on earth, He fought for what is right. By fighting against the hells, He showed how we can become heroes as well.

Early in these lessons we learned that the names Joshua and Jesus have the same meaning—"the Lord is Savior". Joshua and Jesus were both heroes. Let's look at similarities between the brave things each of them did.

Joshua Fought Israel's Enemies

Joshua fought for the Lord and was victorious in many battles against enemy nations in Canaan. When Joshua died, so many enemies had been conquered that the children of Israel could settle

down to live in the land. This took much hard work and a long time—about seventeen years. Joshua's sword of truth was a powerful weapon. The forces of evil were powerless against it.



Joshua bravely carried out the tasks the Lord set for him. He led the children of Israel across the Jordan River and into the Promised Land. He bravely led the Israelites into battle no matter how strong or frightening the enemy seemed. All his life he remained faithful to his task of leading the children

of Israel to conquer the land, and to worship the Lord. Most importantly, Joshua obeyed the Lord, who is the greatest Hero of all.

The Lord Fought Against the Hells

When the Lord came on earth He did not fight with a sword. He fought against the hells with words and actions. Before the Lord was born the evil spirits had become so powerful that people no longer knew what was true and right.

Because of this people were not free to choose to lead heavenly lives. The Lord came to earth to bring back people's freedom to know and choose the path to heaven. To do this He fought and conquered the evil spirits in hell.

The Lord God Jesus Christ also fought wrong ideas that stopped people from knowing what was right and good. You may remember how he spoke to the scribes and Pharisees. They wanted people to follow many rules that were not in the Word. The Lord spoke against the laws they had made and spoke up for what was true and right.

The Lord's courage in His battle with the hells was more than we can ever understand. He remained faithful to His mission of saving the human race, even when it was so hard that "His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (Luke 22:44).

Do you remember a time in the Lord's life when he helped a man possessed by demons? The demons made it impossible for the man to live near others. He had to live among the tombs outside of town. The Lord spoke to the evil spirits who were troubling the man and commanded them to come out of him. Then He cast the devils into a herd of swine. The swine rushed down a steep hillside, fell into the Sea of Galilee and drowned (Luke 8).

Evil spirits can still make us *want* to do things that are wrong but they can no longer take possession of our bodies. By conquering evil the Lord gave us a way to send the evil spirits away. This new way is possible because of the Lord's "redemption". His redemption gives us the choice not to listen to what evil spirits try to tell us to do. And by turning away from selfish thoughts, we can freely do what the Lord tells us to in His Word. This is how He can save us and prepare us to live in heaven.

The Lord Was Brave

A hero is brave. The Lord was very brave in His fight against evil. Let's look at stories from the New Testament that show how brave He was.

After the Lord rode triumphantly into Jerusalem on a donkey He went to the temple, where peo-



ple worshiped the Lord. There, He found people buying and selling doves and changing money. He overturned their tables and drove them out of the temple saying, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations’ but you have made it a ‘den of thieves’. He knew the scribes and chief priests would be angry. He knew they would try to destroy Him, but He fought for what was right (Mark 11:15–19).

During the last week of His life on earth, the Lord celebrated the Passover feast with His disciples. This meal is sometimes called the Last Supper. Afterwards, He told the disciples there were still things He needed to do before He could leave them. The Lord knows everything. He knew He would be captured in the Garden of Gethsemane and crucified. Knowing this did not stop Him from going to the garden to pray. He faced His crucifixion bravely so that He could finish His work of conquering the hells and saving people. He prayed for strength, showing that we too can pray for strength to battle selfish habits (Luke 22:41–44).

The Lord was taken from the Garden of Gethsemane and brought before the chief priests and Pontius Pilate. Even though He was treated terribly, He was strong and did not get upset or break down during His trial.

Read John 18:28-38. If you would like, you can also read about how brave the Lord was in Mark 14:53–65 and Mark 15:1–15.

Discussion Questions

- What is bravery? What does it mean to be brave?
- Describe ways in which heroes are brave.
- How did Joshua’s acts of bravery help the children of Israel conquer the Promised Land?
- How did the brave things the Lord did while He was in the world conquer the hells?
- How do the acts the Lord did while He was in the world make a difference to us today?
- Can a person feel afraid and still be brave?
- The Lord was brave for us. How can we be brave for the Lord?
- The Lord fought against all the evil spirits so we could be free to choose. What is the choice we must make?

Activity Overview | The Lord Is a Hero

Easter Lesson

Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

The Lord is my light and my salvation;

Whom shall I fear?”

The Lord is the strength of my life;

Of whom shall I be afraid? Psalm 27:1

Projects

Choose one or two activities.

- Building Our Heavenly Home Project
- Garden of Gethsemane Shadow Box
- Picture to Color—Jesus Prays in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26)

Additional Activity Ideas

- Create a collage of the Lord praying in the Garden of Gethsemane. Download the project at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/file/project-collage-of-the-lord-praying-at-gethsemane-matthew26.pdf>.

Activity 1 | Building Our Heavenly Home Project

The Lord was born on earth as a baby. His purpose was to bring new truth. He fought evil spirits who were making it impossible for people to find the way to heaven. He is a Hero because He fought and conquered the hells so we can go to heaven.

Like the Lord, we are to fight selfish feelings and false ideas. We are to learn to live for others in the light of the Word. In the Word, the mind is represented by a house (see *True Christianity* 395.2). Our minds are where we live spiritually. We build our heavenly homes through our choices on earth. When our minds are formed by true ideas from the Lord's Word we are building a heavenly home where we will live for ever. "Build" an eternal home out of heavenly building blocks from the Word.



Materials Needed

My Home in Heaven

scissors

blank piece of paper for a background

glue

markers or crayons

optional: fancy supplies for decorating

Directions

1. The Lord's Word tells us what we are to do to build a beautiful home in heaven. The "stones" we are to build with are true ideas. Start by coloring each "stone" of *My Home in Heaven* a different color.
2. Cut out the shapes. Place the pieces on to a blank piece of background paper. Arrange them into a beautiful home.
3. When your home is finished, glue the pieces down.
4. *Optional*: decorate your picture with markers, sequins and glitter.

Trust the Lord

Love the Lord

Love Friends

Be Kind

Share

Tell the Truth

Obey Parents

Control Myself

Be Thankful

The Word

Be Useful

Pray

My Home in Heaven

Activity 2 | Garden of Gethsemane Shadow Box

The Lord's most difficult work on earth was near the end of his earthly life, at Easter time. The Lord fought hard to overcome evil spirits so people could once again go to heaven. This work took great courage and sacrifice. Make a diorama of the Lord praying as He worked hard to save us in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Materials Needed

Garden of Gethsemane Shadow Box

Shadow Box Figures

scissors

tape

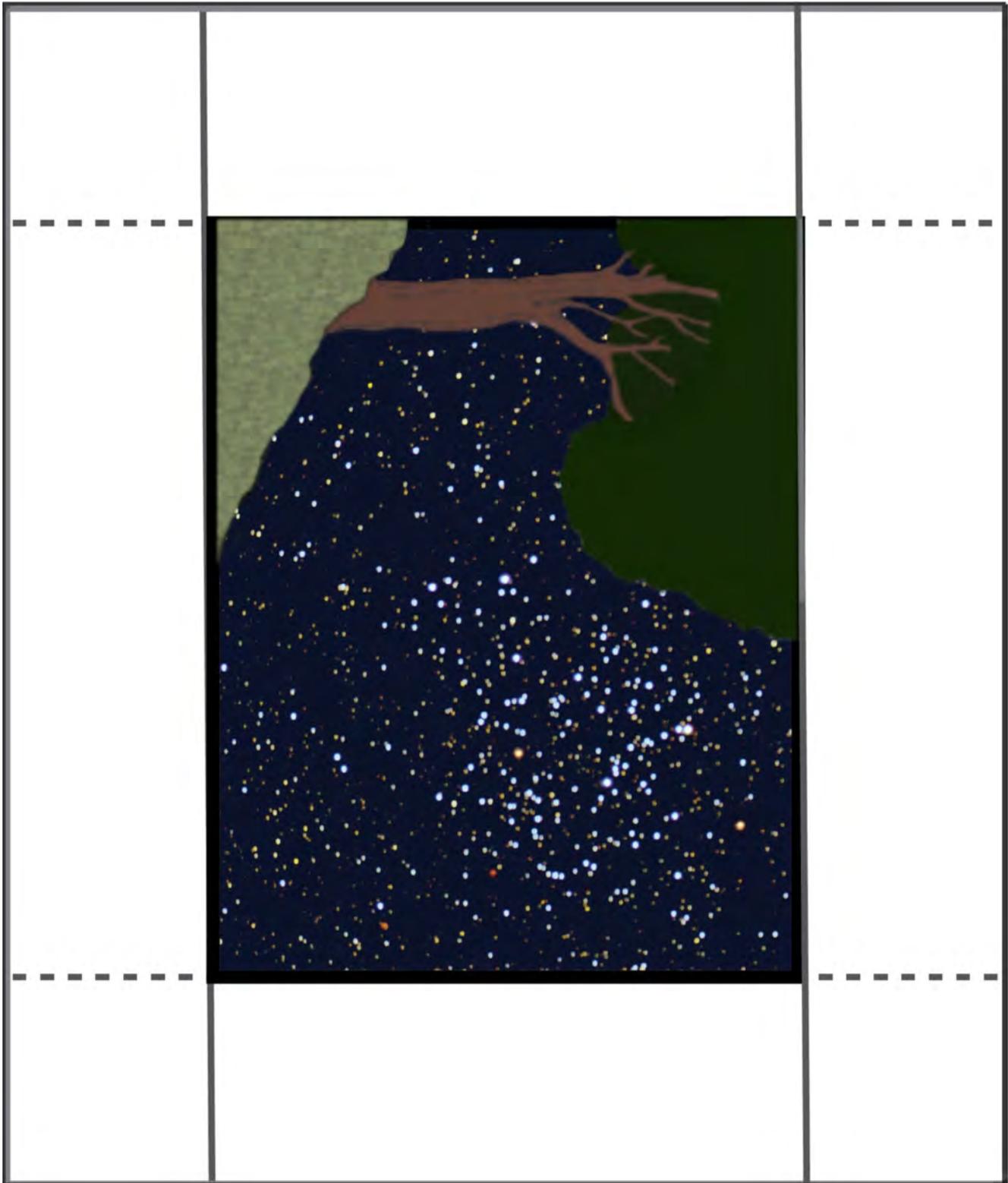
markers or crayons



Directions

1. Cut out the *Garden of Gethsemane Shadow Box* along the dark lines.
2. Fold the edge strips at the top and bottom of the picture *away from* the picture. Make neat sharp folds. Re-fold the strips towards the picture. Open the picture out.
3. Repeat this for the side strips.
4. On the dashed lines, make four cuts from the outside of the box all the way to the printed picture.
5. Form a shadow box. Overlap the four corners and tape them down. The completed box should stand up on a table.
6. Color the *Shadow Box Figures* of the Lord praying, and the disciples sleeping.
7. Cut out the picture of the disciples sleeping. You may leave a dark night-time edge around the disciples. Be careful not to cut off the two tabs marked "fold".
8. Fold the two tabs away from the picture, and then in towards the picture and crease sharply along the black lines.
9. Place the disciples sleeping inside the shadow box. Line the "fold" tab up with the front edge of the shadow box. The picture should be about a quarter of an inch or 1 centimeter away from the back of the box. Tape the top and bottom in place.
10. Cut out the Lord praying by the rock along the dark lines. You may leave a dark night-time edge around the Lord. Be careful not to cut off the tab marked "fold".
11. Fold the tab *away from* the picture of the Lord. Line the edge of the picture up with the edge of the shadow box. Tape the tab under the *outside* at the edge of the shadow box. Your project is now complete!

Garden of Gethsemane Shadow Box



Shadow Box Figures

