

GLENVIEW NEW CHURCH SUNDAY MORNING PROGRAM

Primary Lessons: Phase 3 - Lesson 21

**Joshua's Battle at Gibeon, Conquering and Dividing the Land (Joshua
10:5-15)**

I. Underlying Ideas for the Teacher

- A. The Lord cannot lead us to heaven unless we want to do what is right.
- B. All power to do what is right is from the Lord alone. It is the Lord who delivers us from evil.
- C. We have to drive out our spiritual foes in order to attain a heavenly character. The Lord gives us the power to conquer our inner enemies.
- D. We never come to the end of our spiritual battles while we are in this world; but we can know a measure of heavenly joy and peace even while here.
- E. Casting lots means that we leave the decision of a thing in the Lord's hands. There is no such thing as chance or accident. Everything is under the control of the divine providence.
- F. Just as each tribe of Israel was different in character and received its own particular inheritance in the land, so each of us has a different heavenly character and inherits a specific place in the heavens where he alone can serve.

II. Story Circle

A. Introduction

1. Last time we learned that the children of Israel came to the end of their 40-year Journey through the wilderness and crossed the Jordan River into the land of Canaan.
2. But there were many tribes already living in the land of Canaan, so the Israelites had many battles ahead of them before they would be able to settle in the land and call it their own. Last time we learned about the first battle and victory in Canaan that the Lord helped them to win. Do you remember the name of the city that the Israelites conquered? (Jericho)
3. After Joshua and his men conquered Jericho, they took another city named Ai and utterly destroyed

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it. So the people of the city of Gibeon were afraid that Joshua would attack them, and they tricked him into agreeing to be friends and into promising not to attack Gibeon.

4. Then the five kings of the Amorites decided to attack Gibeon, and Joshua had to help protect the Gibeonites as he had promised. Let's read from the Word about what happened.

B. Tell/Read the Story and Ideas to Discuss

1. Read Joshua 10:5-15

- a. Who attacked the city of Gibeon? (5 kings of the Amorites)
- b. Who helped Gibeon by attacking the Amorites? (Joshua and his men)
- c. Who told Joshua not to be afraid, and that he would win against the Amorites? (Lord)
- d. What thing did the Lord do that killed more Amorites than the Israelites had killed with their swords? (Cast down large hailstones on them from heaven)
- e. What miracle did the Lord cause to happen the day He helped Israel win against the Amorites? (The sun stood still over Gibeon for a whole day.)

2. Summary of Joshua 13-21

After Joshua and his men conquered Jericho, Ai, and the five kings of the Amorites, the Lord helped them to win many more battles against their enemies. Joshua led the fighting men for more than 20 years, and even then there were still enemies left in the Promised Land.

But after 7 years, the Israelites had won enough battles with the Lord's help that the Lord told Joshua to divide the land among the tribes of the children of Israel, and the Lord said they should go in and possess, or live in it.

[As you cover the following material, keep handy a map of how the land was divided. Be sure to name each tribe at the appropriate time and point out what land was given to it.]

Five of the tribes (Reuben, Gad, Manasseh, Ephraim, and Judah) had already been promised particular pieces of land. So Joshua gave them what had been promised to them, and they went out and took possession of it; that is, each of these 5 tribes settled in its own territory and lived there.

Then all the children of Israel went to Shiloh in the center of the land [show on map] and set up the tabernacle

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permanently. They didn't move it from camp to camp any more. It stayed at Shiloh for over 300 years! "Shiloh" means peace.

But there were still 7 tribes (Benjamin, Simeon, Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and Dan) that had not yet received their inheritance. So Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the Lord, and he divided the land among those tribes according to the lots.

But there was one tribe of Israel that did not receive an inheritance. Do you know which tribe that was? (Levi) The Levites were the priests; they were in charge of worship. So instead of a large portion of land, they were given 48 cities throughout the land of Canaan (four cities in the land of each of the other 12 tribes). By being scattered throughout Canaan, the Levites could teach the people how to worship the Lord, and they could receive sacrifices and offerings all year long.

Now all the land was divided, and all the children of Israel had a place to live in Canaan. And Joshua commanded each tribe to continue to fight the enemies in their own part of the land and to make sure the enemies which they had already conquered didn't rise up again and take back the land.

3. Read Joshua 21:43-45.

4. Summary of Joshua 23-24:

Now Joshua was an old man. Before he died, he called together all the Israelites and reminded them that the Lord would help them against their enemies as long as they obeyed His Word. But he also told them that if they disobeyed the Lord, He would not help them fight their enemies. "And the people said to Joshua, 'The Lord our God we will serve, and His voice we will obey.'" (24:24) Then Joshua died, and "Israel served the Lord."

- a. How many years did Joshua and his men fight in the land of Canaan before they were able to divide the land and settle there? (7)
- b. Were all their enemies conquered in 7 years? (No)
- c. Where did the Israelites take the tabernacle and set it up permanently? (Shiloh, in the center of the land)
- d. What does the name "Shiloh" mean? (Peace)
- e. After being taken down and moved each time the Israelites changed camping places in the wilderness, how long did the tabernacle stay set up at Shiloh? (Over 300 years)

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- f. There were 7 tribes that had not been promised certain parts of the land. How was it decided which portions they would receive? (By casting lots)
- g. When lots are cast, who really makes the decision? (The Lord)
- h. Which tribe didn't receive an inheritance in the land, and why? (Levi; because they were in charge of worship throughout all Canaan)
- i. What were the Levites given instead? (48 cities: 4 in each of the 12 tribes' portions of the land)
- j. When Joshua was 110 years old, he called the children of Israel together before he died and reminded them of something. What was it? (If they obeyed the Lord, He would help them against their enemies; but if they disobeyed, He wouldn't help them.)
- k. What did the Israelites promise? ("The Lord our God we will serve, and His voice we will obey." 24:24)

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C. Further Ideas

1. Help Against Our Enemies

- a. We have to fight and conquer enemies, just like the children of Israel did. Who are our enemies? (Evil spirits) And just like the children of Israel, we must obey the Lord if we want His help in our battles. If we don't listen to Him, He can't help us, just as He wouldn't help the Israelites win their battles unless they obeyed Him.

2. Our Inheritance in the Promised Land

- a. Each tribe of Israel got a special place, an inheritance, in the land of Canaan, the Promised Land. But before they could take their places in the land, the tribes of Israel had to obey the Lord and conquer their enemies. And this took many years. What is the land that the Lord has promised to each of us? (Heaven)
- b. We have to obey the Lord and conquer our enemies (the evil spirits) before we can have our place in the Promised Land - in heaven. This fight takes us all our earthly lives, but we know there is an inheritance in the Promised Land waiting for each one of us - our own special place in heaven.

III. Enrichment Activities

A. Music

1. "May we learn, O Lord of life," HYMNAL #219
(serving the Lord)
2. "Heavenly Father, Thou art near," HYMNAL #158
3. "Stand Still, Sun!" LORI'S SONGS V, WONDERFUL!

B. Activities

1. Using a large map of the Holy Land, trace the journey of the Israelites from Egypt, through the wilderness, across the Jordan River, and into Canaan. Point out: Egypt, Red Sea (waters parted), Mt. Sinai (Ten Commandments), Jordan River, Jericho, Ai, Gibeon, Shiloh (tabernacle's resting place).
2. Play the Casting Lots Game. Before class, the teacher places four stones, three brown or black, and one white, in a paper bag. In class the

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teacher divides the class into two groups and each group stands on a side of the room. The teacher pulls a stone out of the bag without looking and places it on the floor by each group. The group to get the white stone wins that round. Then that group gets divided up into two and the process is repeated until just one person has won the white stone.

3. Discuss with the children times they have wished the day could have been longer (a day trip to the shore or an amusement park, for example), and how wonderful it would have been if the sun had stood still, making their day longer than it would be otherwise. Tie this in with the story.

C. Projects

1. Division of the Land among the Twelve Tribes
 - a. See attached map and glue-on land inheritances (This project inspired by one in the *Sunday School Activity Book* for Lesson 52).
 - b. Materials needed: glue sticks or roller glue, scissors, colored pencils or crayons
2. Make a mural of activities the children would choose to do if the sun stood still, giving them extra time. (To avoid pictures of activities like watching TV, you might require that these be outdoor activities.) Include a picture of the sun high in the sky. Label the mural.
3. Sidewalk Chalk Map of the journey of the Israelites—to be made on a parking lot or driveway
 - a. Assign each child (or group of children) a major geographic point in the Israelites' journey from Egypt to Canaan (see Activity 1). Each group gets a card with its assignment and stands in the appropriate place on the parking lot (this will be very approximate).
 - b. Each group decides on an image to use with its assignment (e.g. Egypt: slaves; Jordan River: ark in the midst of cut-off waters; Jericho: walls tumbling down). The teacher may need to give the images to the children by including them on the cards. Each group draws its location. Encourage large, detailed pictures.
 - c. This could also be done as a mural.

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4. Journey of the Israelites—a cooperative group game to be used with the Sidewalk Chalk Map above
 - a. The students as a group are the Israelites. The object is for them to trace the Israelites' journey (which could be drawn in ahead of time with a dotted line) by answering questions correctly. The teacher asks questions based on this lesson's story circle. The whole group moves from one drawing to the next, every time a question is answered correctly. (This may need to be done in more than one group, depending on the size of the class and the size of the map.)

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IV. Teaching Aids

- A. Large map of the Holy Land
- B. Map of Journey from Egypt through wilderness
- C. Map of divisions of the promised land

V. Further Reading for the Teacher

- A. Dole's Bible Study Notes, Volume 2, "The Division of the Land" (Joshua 18:1-10), pp. 357-370.