

=THE LIFE OF JOSHUA=

Lesson 7

How God Helped Joshua

AIM: to teach my pupils the availability of God's help when we are in the fight for the right.

POINT OF CONTACT: Talk a little while about the times our men have landed on the moon. Ask the class what they think about the moon. Discuss for a while the moon landings and our space explorations. Then tell them that there was a time when the moon stayed in its place and the sun stood still. This miracle took place in Joshua 10, the Scripture for our lesson today.

INTRODUCTION: Last week we discussed the league that Joshua wrongly made with the Gibeonites. Shortly after this league was made, five kings (the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish and the king of Eglon) united to fight against Joshua and the Israelites. God helped His people marvelously and gave them the victory. In the lesson today, we will find how God helped Joshua in this great victory.

- I. THE OPPOSITION CAME BECAUSE OF THE SUCCESS OF JOSHUA AND GOD'S BLESSINGS UPON HIM. See Joshua 10:1, 2. The Devil does not fight a person who is just sweet, kind, and faithful to study the Bible and pray; but he fights a person who is successful for God. Satan is trying to thwart the salvation of souls by a church, a preacher, or any person. When a life is centered around success in soul winning, there comes opposition. No one fights a church because there is too much Bible reading or too much praying. The opposition comes over long invitations, excessive preaching about soul winning, the sending out of too many buses, etc. Let us always thank God for opposition. Acts 5:41 is a wonderful verse to use here; it reminds us that the disciples "departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name." Jesus tells us in the Sermon on the Mount that we are to rejoice when others speak against us wrongly and accuse us falsely. Thank God when we are worthy to be opposed! This means that we are being successful.
- II. HATRED FOR JOSHUA AND FOR GOD'S PEOPLE CAUSED ENEMIES TO ALIGN AGAINST THEM. Notice Joshua 10:3-5. Here were kings who were, no doubt, enemies of each other and had found a common denominator in hatred for Joshua. This is so often true. It happened in the life of the Apostle Paul. The Pharisees and Sadducees even agreed that they hated him and should kill him.
- III. JOSHUA DID ALL THAT HE COULD DO BEFORE GOD DID WHAT JOSHUA COULD NOT DO. See Joshua 10:6. Joshua was not a pacifist. He gathered his army together. He was going to fight the battle with all that he had. God does not do for us what we can do for ourselves, and He does not do for us what we cannot do for ourselves until we have done for ourselves all we can do. He does not bless the lazy, the indifferent, or the careless.

(Teacher, stress to the class Sunday that whatever is the battle, we must fight to our utmost and use everything at our disposal to bring about the victory. Then, after we do what we can, as in Joshua 10:7, God promises us the victory. See Joshua 10:8. There are two things necessary for victories in spiritual battles: (1) Give God every weapon you have, using all you have for Him; and (2) Trust Him completely to do what you cannot do! The battle is the Lord's, and the victory comes from Him, but He is going to use everything we have at our disposal in the battle.)

Don't forget the story of the raising of Lazarus from the dead. It was Jesus Who raised Lazarus, but He commanded that the others roll the stone away. God uses human instruments in His work.

- IV. GOD SENT HAILSTONES TO HELP JOSHUA. See Joshua 10:11. Those of us who have traveled in the Holy Land certainly know that this is a miracle. So often God sends things from Heaven and uses things against nature to help us when we have laid all on the altar for Him and have done all we can to win the battle. He sent the raven to feed Elijah; angels came to minister to Jesus; quail fell from Heaven to feed the wandering Jews; manna came from Heaven to nourish the Israelites in the wilderness; water

came from the rock in Horeb after the rock was smitten by Moses; and the Red Sea was parted, as was the Jordan River, that the Israelites might go over on dry ground.

(Teacher, you might inquire if any class member has a seemingly insurmountable battle to fight. Perhaps he could present it to the class very briefly and have the class join in prayer for God to give the victory miraculously. Pause a while and ask the class for such requests.)

- V. GOD MADE THE SUN TO STAND STILL, AND GOD ALSO STAYED THE MOON. Notice this in Joshua 10:12-14. God will use all of Heaven to fight for the one who is right, the one who has fought with all his own might, and the one who believes Him. In the book of Judges we have the story of the time when God's people fought against Sisera. Here we find that the stars in their courses fought for God's people. God has used the heavens before. There was the star of Bethlehem that pointed man to the Christ Child. Let us not limit God. (Teacher, ask the class members to relate how many stories in the Bible they can remember that were against the laws of nature. Such stories would be the virgin birth, the birth of Isaac, the ax head swimming, the resurrection of Christ, Jesus walking on the water, etc. Try to build the faith of the pupils. Show them such Scriptures as Philippians 4:13, 19.)
- VI. GOD GAVE TO JOSHUA GOOD HELPERS. Read Joshua 10:17. When the enemy armies were defeated, the five kings fled and hid in a cave, but Joshua had good helpers who told him where they were. Here is a wonderful truth: God first tests a man to find what he is made of; He then gives him spiritual victories, and then He gives him helpers. Ask the class to give you the names of some helpers of the following men:
1. Paul. (Timothy, Luke, Barnabus, John Mark, Priscilla, Aquilla, etc.)
 2. Moses. (Aaron, Hur, Joshua)
 3. Jesus. (The twelve disciples)
 4. Elijah. (Elisha)
 5. Pastors. (Deacons)
- VII. GOD GAVE JOSHUA WISDOM IN A BATTLE. Notice in Joshua 10:18-22 the armies were fleeing. The five kings were hid in a cave. Joshua found out the kings were there, so he simply rolled some stones over the cave, had his armies pursue the armies of the enemy, and then he came back and got the five kings. God gives wisdom in the battle. See James 1:5. It might be worthwhile, however, to notice that we have to earn helpers and that God does not give wisdom quickly. Yes, we may have helpers and we may have wisdom, but God gives them to people who use all they have to fight the battle for Him.

CONCLUSION: The victory was Joshua's and the victory belonged to the people of God. Victory can always come to God's people if they do two things: Trust and obey! Perhaps we should say, "First, obey; and then, trust!" We could say, "Trust and obey at the same time." Joshua did all he could, and then God did what Joshua could not do. Had Joshua simply said at first, "God will supply my needs, God will take care, God will give the victory," God would not have done so. First Joshua did all he could, gave all he had, and fought as hard as he could. Then God gave the hailstones, the staying of the moon, the standing still of the sun, the faithful helpers, and wisdom. What is the battle you face? You, too, may have the victory!