The Day the Sun Stood Still

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Text

Joshua 9-10

Key Quest Verse

“A good man obtains favor from the Lord.” Proverbs 12:2 (NIV)

Bible Background

News of Joshua spread fast and the kings of Canaan were scared. They began to make alliances with other kings and territories so they would not be conquered like Jericho and Ai. One territory decided to use deception and make a treaty with the Israelites. God told the Israelites not to make any peace treaties with the people from Canaan. The Israelites made a hasty decision without consulting with God. Joshua had been deceived but he made the treaty so they would keep their promise. Even though they made a mistake, God used the opportunity for the Israelites to conquer several territories in one battle. The story of the sun standing still is somewhat of a mystery, if you take it for what it is called. The sun always stands still. It is the earth that rotates around the sun. No matter how we look at the event, it was a miracle from God. The day was prolonged so that Joshua and the Israelites would celebrate in victory.
Leader’s Devotion

Joshua was a good man. He loved God and followed His commands, therefore obtaining favor from Him. Psalm 37:4 tells us, “Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.” Joshua’s desire, or request, for the sun to stand still was an easy task for God. I imagine it was easier yet for God to want to give Joshua his request. Revelation 21:23-25 speaks of the New Jerusalem and there being “no night” and no need for the sun or the moon. The glory of God will give us light. What a wonderful day that will be. No more battles. We won’t have to follow Joshua’s example in that respect, because our battles will be over. Every earthly battle will be gone. “There will be no more death or mourning, or crying or pain …” (Revelation 21:4). God knows how to make a place look inviting! He has captured it … the desire of my heart.
Get Set!

Option A

Pre-cut sponge to fit snug into bottom of your cup. Optional: Glue the sides of the sponge, so that it will hold tight in your paper cup. Put the ice cube on top of the sponge. Fill medicine dropper with water.

Procedure: Hold your full dropper over your cup. I’m going to make it rain. Drop water into your cup. The sponge should absorb the water. This will be our rain. Have you ever seen ice falling from the sky? Do you know what that would be called? It’s called hail. In a few moments we’ll see if I can turn our rain into hail. Sometimes it’s fun to stand out in the rain, but do you think it would be safe to stand out in a hailstorm?

In our story we will learn just how dangerous it was to be caught out in God’s hailstorm. Turn your cup over and let the ice cube fall onto the table. Wow! The Israelite’s enemies weren’t dealing with a little rain; they had God hurling big pieces of ice at them. Follow up with the story.

GO TO THE BIBLE STORY

Option B

Materials: Glass of water, table, and a hat.

Procedure: Place a hat over the glass of water, on a table. I can drink this glass of water without touching the hat. Just wait and see! Lean under the table and pretend to be gulping and drinking. Come up from under the table. When someone wants to check under the hat – let them. When they lift the hat, pick up the glass of water and drink it. See I told you I could drink the water without touching the hat!

Did that seem tricky? Joshua and his men also got tricked. The Gibeonites didn’t want the Israelites to fight them, so they tricked Joshua into believing they were from a far off land. They took moldy bread, worn out shoes, and old clothes to show Joshua that they had been on a long journey. They actually lived close and had only traveled a few days. Joshua and his men were tricked into a peace treaty with the Gibeonites. It is hard to know when you are being tricked. An important thing to do when something significant is in question, is to talk to God about it. Also consult a responsible, trustworthy adult about the situation.

GO TO THE BIBLE STORY
Teacher Tip: Provide markers for students to highlight portions of the story in their Bibles

Materials: Alarm clock. Preparation: Set alarm to go off during object lesson. Talk about different instances when you ran out of time and missed out on something. Examples: gift certificate, coupons, sales, visiting people. Ask the kids if they ever missed out on something because they ran out of time. Allow for feedback. Time is constantly passing; we can’t stop it and we can’t get it back. We need to focus what time we do have on living for the Lord and trying to share His grace with others. One day the alarm (trumpet - 1Cor. 15:52) will go off and we will meet our Savior. Set off alarm now if you didn’t preset it. There won’t be anymore time when this alarm sounds. No stopping time or going back in time. That will be it. There is a unique story in the Bible, however, when God found favor with a man and actually held time still for him.

Joshua had become quite a leader of God’s people and His army. Joshua knew how important God’s laws were. He read the Book of the Law to the whole assembly of people. He read God’s Word to men, women, children, and even aliens that lived among them. God favored Joshua and the Israelites were unstoppable with God on their side. Most of the kings in that area wanted to fight and destroy the Israelites, but one group of people took a different approach. The Gibeonites had heard of Israel’s miraculous victories and they didn’t want to fight Joshua and God’s people. They came up with a plan to trick Joshua into a treaty to save their lives. They loaded their donkeys with dry and moldy bread, worn-out sacks, and old wineskins, cracked and mended. The men from Gibeon put on worn and patched sandals and old clothes. When they got to Joshua they told him they had “come from a very distant country because of the fame of the Lord your God” (Joshua 9:9). They asked to make a treaty with them. They showed Joshua all their food. They lied and said when they left from their home, their bread was still warm and their wineskins were new. They also said their clothes and sandals wore out from the long journey. Joshua made a peace treaty with them without consulting God. Three days later, the Israelites found out that these men were liars and were actually their neighbors. Joshua questioned them about this. They said they knew God’s power and they knew God’s people would be wiping out all their enemies in this land. They were afraid for their lives. The people of Israel were angry about the treaty. Joshua told them they could live but they would be woodcutters and water carriers for the community and for the altar of the Lord. The Gibeonites readily accepted this position.
There was a king in Jerusalem who heard of Joshua’s victories, and also heard about the treaty with the Gibeonites. He called out for four other kings to join him in attacking the Gibeonites. These five kings assembled their troops and got in position to attack Gibeon. The Gibeonites quickly sent word to Joshua and said, “Do not abandon your servants. Come up to us quickly and save us! Help us ... (Joshua 10:6). Joshua got his entire army and started marching toward the five kings and their armies. The Lord reassured Joshua, “Do not be afraid of them; I have given them into your hand. Not one of them will be able to withstand you.” (Joshua 10:8, NIV). Joshua and his men marched all night and then took them by surprise. “The Lord threw them into confusion” (Joshua 10:10) and there was a great victory at Gibeon. The Israelites continued to pursue them as they ran away. God hurled large hailstones down on them from the sky. The Bible says more of the enemy died from the hailstones than by the swords of the Israelites. As Joshua and the Israelites continued to battle, Joshua said to God in the presence of Israel, “O sun, stand still” (Joshua 10:12). The sun stood still and the moon stopped until the Israelites had won the battle. Joshua 10:13-14 says, “The sun stopped in the middle of the sky and delayed going down about a full day. There has never been a day like it before or since, a day when the Lord listened to a man.” Isn’t that amazing? I have often wished for more time in my day, but Joshua asked for it and actually got it. He went to the right source. God helped the Israelites defeat the five kings and their armies. People from all around were hearing of God’s greatness and power.

I would imagine after marching all night with no sleep, then fighting all day, then fighting all day still – because it’s still day – would have been exhausting. I think if there was an alarm clock anywhere around, Joshua was ready to set it and go to sleep!


**Moldy Pie**

**FOOD**

**Materials:** 1 pre-made chocolate cookie crust in a pie pan, one quart of mint chocolate chip ice cream, whipped topping, green food coloring, gummy worms, paper bowls and spoons.

**Quest Connection**

**Procedure:** Let ice cream soften for 10 minutes, then empty the quart of ice cream into the pie crust. Smooth the ice cream so that it fills the whole pan. Place pie in freezer for at least 15 minutes – or until class. Pass out bowls of whipped topping to each student.

**Procedure:** *Today we will all enjoy moldy pie together. Doesn’t that sound great?* Who can tell me the color of mold? Green. The Gibeonites waited for their food to get moldy, so they could take it to Joshua to trick him. They wanted him to think they had traveled a long distance. I’m sure we are all hungry and don’t want to wait around for mold to form – so let’s make our own. *We’ll start with some green moldy pie.* Hand each student a piece of pie in a bowl. *Next, I will let you decide if you want another layer of mold, or just a white fungus.* Pass out bowls of whipped topping. If you’d like a drop or two of green food coloring to add to your whipped topping – I mean fungus – just let me now. You can smooth that topping on with your spoon. Hand out gummy worms. *To finish our old moldy pie, we will top it with delicious worms.* Your creation is complete – dig in!

**Close**

Once you taste your pie, you’ll realize it is actually mint flavored. We are worth a mint to God, and He wants us to know that. Fortunately we don’t have to trick God or anyone else into letting us in the Kingdom. We accept Jesus, His son, as our Savior – and we’re in! No tricks, no schemes!
Go!

**True or False?**

**GAME**

**Materials:** None

**Quest Connection**

Procedure: The object of this game is to try to discover what’s true and what’s false about your classmates. Your job is to try to trick the group. This may seem like a free pass to break the 9th Commandment; however, we will fess up during the game and tell the truth. Each of you must think up two statements. One should be true, the other false. Try to make them both sound silly and false, or trick everyone and make them sound true. Each person will take their turn with their two statements. Have the class guess which one is false. Go around the classroom letting everyone hold up one or two fingers. One finger means, the person thinks the first statement is false. Two fingers mean, that person thinks the second statement is false. After everyone voted, let the person “fess up” and tell which is false. Everyone gets a turn.

We’re being tricky like the Gibeonites. They turned out to be pretty crafty liars. Joshua fell for their lies. Just like we confessed our lies, they had to tell the truth in the end. Because of their lies, the Gibeonites became woodcutters and water carriers for the Israelite community. Let’s make the most of our lives, and live truthful, godly lives.
ARTS AND CRAFTS

**Materials:** construction paper, pencils, and scissors. Preparation: triple fold construction paper like an accordion.

**Procedure:** Have children use pencils to make a sun on their papers. The key to this project is they must have at least one place on each side of the construction paper (while it’s folded) that doesn’t get cut. See arrows on yellow example. If one place on each side isn’t cut, you can open your paper and find three suns, attached. After they’ve drawn their pattern, they can cut them out. After they open their sun picture, have them write on each of the three suns. On the first sun write, “The Sun” on the second, “Stood”, and on the third, “Still”. This is a fun project and it will remind them of a miracle God preformed. If they have time once class is over, they can try hearts, people, or their hands with the accordion fold. They just must keep a place on each side that doesn’t get cut.

Review story during this craft and encourage kids to discuss this story with one adult.
CD Locker Mirrors

ARTS AND CRAFTS

Materials: Old CD’s, magnetic adhesive strips, and permanent markers.

Procedure: Give each student one CD and some magnetic adhesive strip. Have them apply magnet and think of a design for their CD. They could write their memory verse. They could write numbers on it like a clock and then write: “It’s time to live for God” or “It’s time to follow Jesus”. Puffy paint will also work on these. If they want to be subtle because they want it for their locker, they could write “I Believe”.

Close

Encourage students that this could be a great witnessing tool at school, without even opening their mouths.
Popcorn Toss

FOOD

Materials: Popped popcorn

Quest Connection

**Procedure:** Divide class equally and have them form two lines (“Line A” and “Line B”), facing each other, and approximately ten feet apart. Each child needs to have a partner directly in front of them. They will always pass with the same person. If there are an odd number of children, choose one child to help you keep score. You will be keeping track of successful catches. Give each child in “Line A” one piece of popcorn. On the count of three they will pass it to their partner who is ten feet away. If you have older children, you may want to restrict them to one hand passing and catching. **The popcorn represents our relationship with God.** Count to three and let them pass. A ten foot distance will cause many pieces of popcorn to fall to the floor. Count the number of pieces that were caught and write that number on a chalkboard. Hand each child in “Line B” a piece of popcorn and have them take one step toward their partners. Count to three, have them toss, and count up the pieces caught. Do this several more times, each time having them take a step toward their partners until the two lines are together. Last time, count to three and let them drop the popcorn into their partner’s hand. There should be no misses. Count up the number of successful catches and write it on the board.

Close

This popcorn toss is similar to our relationship with God. The further away you were from each other, the harder it was to catch the popcorn. The further we are from God, the harder it is to maintain a relationship with Him. In the same respect, the closer we are to God, the easier it is for us to have a strong relationship with Him. We can obtain this through prayer, reading our Bibles, and attending Sunday School. The closer we are to God, the easier it is to handle what people are tossing our way. Joshua had more than popcorn being thrown his way, but his relationship with God made handling the battle scene quite a bit easier.
Go!

Out of Control

OBJECT LESSON

Materials: None

Quest Connection

Procedure: Have everyone sit on a chair. Now imagine how the hands of a clock go around. I want you to lift your right foot and begin moving it in a clock-wise circle. Clocks just keep on going no matter what we hope for, so keep your foot going. Now it gets tricky, I want you to lift your right hand and draw a 6 in the air. This is nearly impossible without a lot of practice.

Close

Does this seem impossible? Do you think Joshua took “impossible” as a final answer ever? As a matter of fact, he was a faithful servant and he was just bold enough to ask for the impossible. He asked God to make the time (the sun) stand still, and God granted his request. Don’t give up when something in life seems impossible. Keep in mind, God is on your side.
Draw a line to the clock that comes next.

Do you feel like you're getting no where?
Just think how the Amorites felt when the sun stood still.
Joshua spent a day without seeing night. Will there be “night” in the Kingdom?
Revelation 21:25
   Yes
   No
   Maybe

Where will the light come from in the Kingdom? Revelation 21:23
   Sun
   Moon
   God’s glory
   Fireworks

How did the Gibeonites trick Joshua?
   Magic show
   Lied about food and clothes
   Put ants in his pants

What jobs did Joshua give the Gibeonites?
   Woodcutters and water carriers
   Tent makers
   Cleaners of the sewage
   Aerobic instructors

How many kings did Joshua and the Israelites have to fight?
   One and his evil queen
   Two brothers
   Five

What did God hurl down from the sky at the Amorites?
   Pigeons
   Apples
   Hailstones
What TIME is it? Fill in the hands on the clock to match the time. Write one thing you are usually doing at that time. Circle the time when you feel closest to God.

7:30am
9:45am
12:10pm
3:25pm
6:40pm
10:20pm