



Lesson 48: The sun stands still

Scriptural Basis:



Joshua 9 and 10

Overview:

The Gibeonites, one of the people groups in the land of Canaan (the Promised Land), resort to trickery to try to preserve themselves from destruction by deceiving Israel into thinking that they are not residents of the land of Canaan, but from a far-away land. The Israelites take the Gibeonites at their word rather than inquiring of the LORD. They make a formal treaty with the Gibeonites but relegate the Gibeonite to a life of servitude when their deception is discovered. Upon hearing of the treaty, five kings of the Amorites become alarmed that the Gibeonites were only going to strengthen the Israelite army. So the Amorites join forces and attack Gibeon. Israel comes to the defense of the Gibeonites, and God seals the victory by hurling hail stones at the Amorites, then causing the sun and moon to stand still in the sky.

Things to consider:

This is the third major miracle that God performs as He removes His enemies from the land of Canaan. In this story, God's strength is made even more prominent as compared to Israel's mistake of not first seeking the Lord, resulting in them being so easily deceived by the Gibeonites. In this story, we see that God is indeed BIG. He is sovereign over the earth and all of creation! It is not coincidence that God spared the Gibeonites, who were of the Hivite people, because these are the descendants of Ham, who God cursed to become servants of Shem.

The gospel in the story:



The Gibeonites received 'unmerited favor;' this is certainly a picture of God's grace. Even though their method was deceptive, God chose to spare them from destruction. The Israelites also received grace from God. Though they did not seek His counsel when dealing with the Gibeonites, God allowed them to be victorious for His glory.

Bible Study for Preparation:



Read Joshua 9 and 10:1-18. The Israelites weakness of not first seeking God reminds us that even those who have found new life in Jesus are still 'young' and weak, and must continually live in a posture of depending on Him. That process of learning and growing in Jesus, is called **sanctification**. It is the process by which we come closer and closer to Him as we walk in His Spirit and obey His ways. It is the process of becoming increasingly dead to our slavery to sin and alive in our slavery to Christ (Romans 6).

Teaching the lesson:

- A: Review: Last week – Israel's sin
- B: Bible verse memory activity
- C. Story
- D. Additional activity