

=THE LIFE OF JOSHUA=

Lesson 1

God Equips a Leader

AIM: to teach my pupils the preparation that God gave to Joshua in order to make him a leader.

POINT OF CONTACT: For 60 seconds or so, the children's classes could play "Follow the Leader." Then lead into the lesson as to how God prepared Joshua to be a leader while Joshua was a follower.

INTRODUCTION: This Sunday we begin a series of lessons on the life of Joshua. Let us notice the characteristics of this great leader.

- I. JOSHUA WAS A LOYAL FOLLOWER. Notice in Exodus 17:9, 10 especially the words, "So Joshua did as Moses had said to him." If one is to be used in a place of leadership, he must first be a good follower.
- II. JOSHUA FOUGHT THE BATTLES AS THE LEADER COMMANDED. See Exodus 17:10. This was not Joshua's battle. It was Moses' battle; yet God led Joshua as He led Moses. Moses was God's man, and he was the leader. The follower, Joshua, assumed the battles of God's men. (Teacher, teach the pupils the importance of law-keeping, discipline, and obedience. Teach them the dangers of anarchy.)
- III. JOSHUA SOUGHT WISDOM. In Exodus 17:9, notice the words, "And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men...." He knew he could place confidence in Joshua. If one is ever to become a leader, he must have wisdom. Someone has said, "Wisdom is knowing how to use knowledge properly." There is a way to get wisdom. James 1:5, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally...." For many years, the three things that topped the prayer list of Bro. Hyles were power, love, and wisdom. (Teacher, stress to the class that wisdom is not learned; it is gotten from God. It can be given to any person. The Bible says God "giveth to all men liberally.")
- IV. JOSHUA FOUGHT FOR RIGHT. Notice Exodus 17:8, 13. When God prepares a man to be a leader, he prepares him for the battle. The leader may not always seem kind. The leader may sometimes seem abrupt. He may seem to the followers to be untactful and to lack gentleness. This, however, is the world's concept of gentleness, love, etc. When God trains a man to be a leader, He trains him by leading him to fight for right. (Teacher, teach the pupils here the importance of always doing right. Teach them to do right if it is unpopular, to do right if they are away from home, to do right if no one else is doing right. Ask them to name situations that arise for their particular age when the temptation would be to do wrong.)
- V. JOSHUA SOUGHT AND GAVE COUNSEL. See Exodus 17:14. Bear in mind, Joshua is not yet a leader. Moses is still the leader. All the Scriptures that will be used for this lesson are Scriptures that deal with Joshua's life prior to Moses' death and prior to Joshua's assuming of the leadership. In the aforementioned verse, Moses is rehearsing in the ears of Joshua. In other words, both Joshua and Moses sought counsel of each other. One who is going to be a success in any field must seek counsel before and after becoming a leader.

(Teacher, stress here the importance of the "cabinet." Teach the young people that each young person should have a group of people whom he calls his cabinet. This group should include his parents, the pastor, someone who has the gift of wisdom, a friend, and someone who is now in the field the young person hopes to enter. Stress the importance of seeking counsel. No one is wise enough to make his own decisions without the counsel of others. The Bible says again and again that the wise man has a multitude of counselors. Such was the case with Joshua.)

- VI. JOSHUA WAS A SERVANT OF MOSES. In Exodus 24:13 he is called Moses' minister. This means "servant, helper." If one would be a good leader later, he must serve the leader now. Joshua made life easier for the leader. He helped to care for the personal comfort of the leader. He was not concerned

about a position or praise for himself. He was concerned about giving attention and praise to God's chosen man. Hence, later God exalted him to a chosen place of leadership. He was willing to lose his life for another; then he found it. (Teacher, lead the pupils to discuss ways that they can lighten the load and minister to various leaders whom they follow. Such leaders could be parents, pastor, school teachers, etc.)

- VII. JOSHUA BUILT HIS LIFE AROUND THE HOUSE OF GOD. Notice in Exodus 33:11 something very interesting. It says that Joshua "departed not out of the tabernacle." One might say that this was before the tabernacle was constructed, and he would be right. However, before the construction of the main tabernacle, there was a temporary tabernacle. Joshua seems to have lived here. (Teacher, stress the importance of young people building their lives around the house of God. If one is going to be used, he must know the work of God inside and out. Stress here the choir program, youth activities, etc. Stress to the children the importance of building their lives around our church.)
- VIII. JOSHUA WAS COMPLETELY LOYAL TO HIS LEADER. See Exodus 32:17. Moses had been up on the mount to get the tables of stone and the law. While he was gone, Aaron was in charge. Aaron had led the people to build a golden calf. Moses came back, and the people were naked; they were dancing, making merry, and in general, playing havoc with God's will and purpose. It was Joshua who was with Moses even now, and it was Joshua who heard the noise of the people as they shouted. Though Aaron was disloyal when Moses was away, Joshua's loyalty never wavered.
- IX. JOSHUA'S CONVICTIONS WERE THE CONVICTIONS OF MOSES. When God gives His leader to a man who is going to become a leader, He gives him the kind of leader whose convictions he can emulate. Hence, Joshua would not have gone against the word of Moses. Now it may be true that Joshua had some convictions Moses did not have, but Joshua nevertheless accepted Moses' convictions also. This, of course, is the safest plan. (Teacher, urge the young people here to listen carefully to the convictions of the Pastor, for he has their best interests at heart. Teach them that the Pastor is not trying to think of things that are fun that he does not want the young people to do, but rather he is trying to help them have the fullest, most happy life possible.)
- X. JOSHUA WAS OPTIMISTIC. Read Numbers 14:6-9. When the twelve spies went into the Promised Land to spy it out, only two said that they could go in. Joshua was one of these; Caleb was the other. In other words, he said, "We can do it!" He had faith in what God could do.
- XI. JOSHUA WAS TRULY HUMBLE. Before the death of Moses, again and again Moses would say to the people, "Encourage Joshua." This meant that Joshua needed the people. He never rose above the people in his need for them. He had true humility and did not feel that he in himself was capable. One of the great dangers of a person called into God's service is for him to feel immediately that he is qualified. He did not think that a position meant he was ready.
- XII. JOSHUA WAS TESTED BY HARDSHIP. He had spent 40 years in the wilderness before he became the leader. (Teach the pupils not to despair because of hardship. God may be preparing them for something great.)
- XIII. JOSHUA WAS IN THE MINORITY. This is the case with anyone whom God is going to use. Many of the pupils may be in the minority at school, in the neighborhood, at play, etc. This is not bad. It may be that God is going to use them greatly later.

FILL IN THE BLANKS:

1. Joshua was a loyal _____.
2. Joshua was a _____ to Moses.
3. Joshua always fought for _____.
4. Joshua built his life around the _____.
5. Joshua sought _____ and gave _____ to Moses.
6. One thing that Joshua must have prayed for was _____. Read James 1:5.
7. Joshua was completely _____.
8. He not only had his own _____ but assumed Moses' _____.
9. Moses asked the people to encourage Joshua, which meant that Joshua was truly _____.