



CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS

JUNE 14 2008

not like other gods

Scripture Story: 2 Chronicles 32; 2 Kings 19.
Commentary: *Prophets and Kings*, chapter 30.

PREPARING TO TEACH

I. SYNOPSIS

Jerusalem is attacked by the forces of Sennacherib, king of Assyria. King Hezekiah prepares the city's defenses for a long siege and cuts off the supply of fresh water outside the city, where the Assyrians will be camped. He encourages his people to place their trust in the Lord. The Assyrians launch a propaganda campaign, reminding the citizens of Jerusalem that Sennacherib's army has already steamrolled a number of other countries, and none of *their* gods lifted a finger to save them. Why should Israel's God be any different?

But Israel's God is not like other gods—He fights for His people. The story as told in 1 Kings 19 and 2 Chronicles 32 records that 185,000 Assyrian soldiers died mysteriously in a single night—slain by the angel of the Lord. Sennacherib retreated to his own country in disgrace.

Focus this week's lesson discussion on the fact that we can trust God to care for us. That doesn't mean that we will never have troubles. God did allow Israel and Judah to be threatened and attacked by foreign armies when it was part of His larger purpose. But He promises to always protect and care for His people, even in the most difficult situations. God is not just an idea or a concept like the gods of the pagans. He is a powerful, personal Being who cares about each of us. Students should leave this study assured that God is trustworthy even when times are tough.

II. TARGET

The students will:

- Know that God has the power to save in desperate situations. (*Know*)
- Trust God to protect and care for them. (*Feel*)
- Surrender their current fears and worries to God, trusting Him to provide. (*Respond*)

III. EXPLORE

- God's power
- Trust
- Surrender

You will find material to help you explore these and other topics with your students at www.leadoutministries.com.

TEACHING

I. GETTING STARTED

Activity

Refer the students to the What Do You Think? section of their lesson. After they have completed it, discuss their responses.

Have students suggest several different situations in which a person might pray for God's deliverance. Some ideas to get them started might be:

- Writing an exam
- Moving to a new community
- Speaking out when friends are doing something you believe is wrong
- Facing serious illness

Discuss each scenario they come up with. Is there a “God’s role” and “our role” here? Does relying completely on God mean we don’t do anything, or do we have a part to play in the answering of our prayers?

Illustration

Share this illustration in your own words:

A well-known story tells of a man who prayed to God to save him when a flood threatened his home. A radio report warned residents to evacuate, but the man stayed in his house, insisting that God would save him.

He climbed to the roof of his house as the floodwaters rose and was clinging there when a neighbor passed in a rowboat. “Do you want to get in the boat?” the neighbor asked.

“No, God is going to save me!” the man replied.

The waters rose; the man climbed higher. A rescue helicopter hovered overhead. From the helicopter, a voice called down, “We’re here to rescue you! We’ll drop a ladder and you can climb up into the helicopter.”

But the man waved the helicopter away, saying, “I prayed! God will save me!”

The man drowned in the flood. In heaven, he challenged God, “Why didn’t You save me?”

“I sent a radio report, a rowboat, and a helicopter,” God pointed out. “What more did you want?”

II. TEACHING THE STORY

Bridge to the Story

Share the following in your own words:

We often face situations in which we can’t see a way out. As Christians, it’s natural for us to cry out to God for help. Sometimes we do our best to meet the crisis, and God helps us in our efforts. Other times, God intervenes miraculously. In today’s story, God miraculously delivered Jerusalem from an invading army—but only after King Hezekiah took a lot of practical steps to prepare the city for an attack.

Out of the Story for Teachers

After you read the Into the Story section with your students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.

Discuss the *Out of the Story* questions with the class, then direct the class’s attention to the Bible texts in the *Punch Lines* section. If you have a small class, choose one text that class members find inspiring. For a large class, divide into groups and assign one text to each group.

Supply fabric, glue, and fabric paint or markers to each group and have them make a banner of their Bible text. Say: Throughout history, armies have carried banners into battle showing their allegiance to their kings and commanders. These banners we are making today will remind us that we go into battle under the colors of a God who promises to fight for us and deliver us.

Use the following as more teachable passages that relate to today’s story: Story of Jericho (Joshua 6); story of Gideon (Judges 6; 7); Jehosaphat’s victory

Teaching From . . .

Refer your students to the other sections of their lesson.

- **Other Eyes**

Ask them how the quotes in Other Eyes convey the point of the story in this lesson.

- **Flashlight**

Read the Flashlight statement, pointing out that most of the time it is from the commentary on this week’s story found in the book Prophets and Kings. Ask what relationship they see between the statement and what they have just discussed from Out of the Story.

- **Punch Lines**

Point out to your students the verses listed in their lesson that relate to this week’s story. Have them read the passages and ask each one to choose the verse that speaks most directly to them today. Then ask them to explain why they chose the one they did.

Or you might assign the passages to pairs of students to read aloud and then discuss, in order to choose the most relevant one to them.

Tips for Top-notch Teaching

Hands-on Illustrations

Making banners provides not only a hands-on art project that will vividly illustrate the lesson of God's power to protect us, but an ongoing reminder that God is on our side. Don't let the project end when the banners are made—choose as a group where in your Sabbath School room or church you will put them on display. Use them and refer back to them to remind your students that we may be under siege by Satan, but God is going to fight for us.

RABBI 101

over Moab and Ammon (2 Chronicles 20:1-30).

Sharing Context and Background

Use the following information to shed more light on the story for your students. Share it in your own words.

Siege warfare, a common tactic in ancient times when cities were surrounded by walls, occurs when an attacking army encounters a city or fortress that won't surrender and can't be easily conquered. The attacking army surrounds the city, cutting off supply, reinforcement, and escape routes for the people inside. While waiting outside, the attacking army usually attempts to break through the walls by the use of siege weapons such as catapults. The defenders, inside the city walls, are in a strong defensive position but can hold out only as long as food supplies and morale last. This was the approach that Sennacherib of Assyria used in trying to conquer Jerusalem.

We often talk about "spiritual warfare," but Satan's war on Christians is often more like a siege. We may not feel like we're actively fighting, but there's an

enemy camped outside the walls, ready to attack when we let our guard down, always trying to lower our morale. How can we defend against Satan's siege? We need to strengthen our defenses—just as Hezekiah strengthened the walls of Jerusalem—by being firmly grounded in God's Word and surrounding ourselves with Christian influences. We can keep our spirits up and resist the enemy's morale-sapping attacks by reminding ourselves, as Hezekiah reminded his people, that the Lord will fight for us.

III. CLOSING

Activity

Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.

Direct the students' attention to Tuesday's and Thursday's portion of the student lesson. In pairs, invite them to share with each other examples of times when God has helped them (or family members or friends) in the past. Remind them that these experiences, along with Bible stories and promises, can build our faith to help us prepare for difficult times in the future.

Summary

Share the following thoughts in your own words:

The army of Assyria was a powerful enemy. King Hezekiah and his people must have been terrified as Sennacherib's soldiers marched toward the city. They did everything they could to prepare, but they also knew that they couldn't face this threat alone. They needed God's power.

The same is true for us. Of course, we should do everything we can to be well-prepared to face life's challenges. But, ultimately, our hope is in the Lord. We can trust Him to care for us and fight life's battles for us. And the more we trust Him with our problems and challenges, the stronger our faith will grow.



Remind the students about the reading plan that will take them through the inspired commentary of the Bible, the Conflict of the Ages Series. The reading that goes with this lesson is *Prophets and Kings*, chapter 30.

*A special adaptation of *Prophets and Kings* has been created just for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and the Pacific Press Publishing Association. Get more info about it at www.cornerstoneconnections.net.

