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| ***Title:*** | ***Captain of the Lord of Hosts*** |
| **Goal/Objective:** | (There are three separate lessons that can be combined or used independently:)  **Lesson 1:** Show that it is important to remove what would bring contaminants into our walk with the Lord.  **Lesson 2:** Show the higher perspective of the LORD as compared to Joshua (and us).  **Lesson 3:** Show the parallel of the land with being in Christ. |
| **Scripture Passages:** | Joshua 5:13-15, John 4:7-10 [**click here for Scriptures**](http://www.cmintl.webspaceforme.net/pages/CaptainLordHostsScriptures.htm) |
| **Materials:** | **Lesson 1:** Printed puppets on construction paper or other stiff material, scissors, crayons or markers, optional costume for Captain of the Lord of Hosts (or just a sword) or hand puppet to portray him. [**click here for finger puppets 1**](http://www.cmintl.webspaceforme.net/gifs/CaptainLord%20HostsPuppet.gif) **and** [**puppets 2**](http://www.cmintl.webspaceforme.net/gifs/CaptainLord%20HostsPuppet2.gif)  **Lesson 2:** Copy of test and pencils or pens [**click here for Test**](http://www.cmintl.webspaceforme.net/pages/CaptainLordHostsTest.htm)  **Lesson 3**: Items to set about the room that need to be “sanctified” (ex. shoe, vase, chair, candy dish) |
| **Introduction:** | We will look at the story of Joshua meeting the Captain of the LORD of Hosts and see:  **Lesson 1:** how important it is that we walk by the life of Jesus in us.  **Lesson 2:** how Joshua’s question to the Captain of the LORD of Hosts and His answer changed Joshua’s perspective.  **Lesson 3:** how the land that the Lord had promised is a picture of being in Christ and what it means for that to be “sanctified”. |
| **Development and Practice:** | Read the scripture passage in Joshua and then choose which aspect and activity to address:  **Lesson 1:**  Ask the students if someone has ever asked them to take their shoes off. Then ask them why they would need to take their shoes off. *Look for an answer such as “because our shoes were muddy”* or “*because they didn’t want the floor to get dirty”*. You can get silly with this such as suggesting that we shouldn’t walk on the floor at all! Or perhaps we should just stay outside and never go inside ever again!  So just as we do not track in dirt from outside due to respect, the Lord did not want Israel to bring their old wilderness ways of relating to the Lord into the land. It is the same now that we have received Jesus as our life. We do not want to track in our old ways of thinking and walking. How do we do that? By allowing the Lord to live and walk through us.  Make finger puppets and show that the students’ fingers are what make the puppets walk. The puppets are walking by the life of another.  **Lesson 2:**  Joshua was about to lead the Israelites to conquer Jericho. Full of confidence in the Lord to have victory over the “enemy”, he boldly asks the captain of the army of Jehovah if he is for Joshua and the Israelites or for their enemies. Often we are so involved in what the Lord is doing in our lives that we fail to see that He is bigger than the role He plays in our minds. We tend to see only “our side” and “the other side” and fail to see that God doesn’t take sides—He overtakes it all. We ask Him “Should I go here or there” and He might not answer or else might say something that doesn’t seem to relate to our question—just like He did with Joshua. Joshua asks a straightforward question—answer is “A” or “B”. The answer He gets is “1”.  What if a student in algebra class asked the teacher for assistance with one of the math problems, but the student did not understand what 3+2 was? When the teacher realizes that the student does not understand basic subtraction, the teacher would begin to explain addition and subtraction instead of addressing the algebra problem. The student might become frustrated because he is just trying to “work through his problems” and wants help “getting the answers”. But a good teacher desires for the student to understand algebra rather than just finish some problems. There is a difference in the goals. The student wants to finish his algebra assignment. The teacher wants him to know algebra. Often we want Jesus to help us get answers to our problems, but Jesus desires that we KNOW the answer by knowing Him. No one could memorize every possible algebra problem. It is actually much easier to learn algebra. Then any algebra problem we have, we can answer. In the same way, no one could memorize all the correct answers to every possible problem in life that we encounter. It is actually much easier to know Jesus and consequently the answers that are found in Him.  We can get frustrated because it appears that He is not answering us clearly or directly. This is from our lack of understanding that He has a completely different perspective. In the example with Joshua, He has a purpose beyond conquering Jericho. The Captain says “No” to Joshua’s question, because He cannot answer the question otherwise. He is trying to show a bigger picture, and with Joshua, He succeeds. Joshua removes his sandals as he is told and worships.  **Lesson 3:**  Look more closely at the words in this passage of scripture:  The word “captain” refers to “the head person” and implies “dominion” (Strong’s 08269 and 08323)  Jehovah is “self existent” or “eternal” (Strong’s 03068)  Joshua is told to take of his sandals because the place is holy. The word “place” is “used widely of a locality” and can include “country, home,” etc. (Strong’s 04725)  The word “holy” means that the place is dedicated and sanctified (Strong’s 06944).  So the head of the army of our eternal God (the Lord Himself) tells Joshua that this land is dedicated and set apart for His purpose. The land is a type of being in Christ. This is a holy place and set apart for His purpose alone. This is important to realize that because when our goal and His goal are not the same, there will be a struggle and confusion.  Sanctification is when something is set apart for a purpose. I can use my shoe as a doorstop and it will work to some degree. However, when I put that shoe on my foot, I have sanctified the shoe. At that point, I am using the shoe for the purpose for which it was created. When we allow the Lord to live His life through us, we are sanctified—used for the purpose for which we were created. |
| **Checking for Understanding:** | **Lesson 1:**  Using the puppets they have made, have the students act out meeting the Captain of the Lord of Hosts. (The teacher, another student or another puppet can play the part of the Captain.) If the students are having difficulty in following the account, act it out yourself and make up silly alternatives until the students have corrected the story and can explain it all the way through on their own. For example, you can start out the drama with the finger puppet saying “Are you the muffin man?” The Captain of the Lord of Hosts could reply, “No, I come in the name of Chucky Cheeses….now go eat your pizza!” As the students correct your silliness, have them act it out until they can do it on their own without assistance.  **Lesson 2:**  Give the students a copy of the test to complete. After they have looked at the test, point out that the answers do not fit the questions. Joshua gave him answer options that did not fit the question. He could not pick between the options given, because from His perspective, neither was correct. Sometimes this is the type of test we give the Lord. We ask Him questions with answer options that do not fit his perspective. How can He answer accurately?  Read John 4:7-10; explain that Samaritans and Jews did not socialize together. Samaritans were not socially acceptable people to hang out with. Ask the students:  What did Jesus ask the Samaritan woman for? *Water*  How did the woman reply? *She asked why this Jewish man was asking for water from a Samaritan woman*  How did Jesus answer her? *If you knew who I was, you would have asked Me for living water*  Why didn’t Jesus just answer her question? He could have said that He wasn’t prejudice like the rest most of the Jews and it didn’t matter to Him that she was a woman or a Samaritan. That was her question. So why did He answer her in the way that He did. *Because His view was much greater than the social situation of that time in history. He was announcing to her that the Messiah had come, and He was Him! He has a much bigger view than we do!*  **Lesson 3:**  Prior to class, set items around the room that are being used for something for which they were not created. (ex. shoe as a doorstop, chair holding books or a plant, candy dish with pennies in it, drinking glass as a vase, etc.) Challenge the students to find the items. Then, as they discover each item, have them “sanctify” or change the use to match the item (ex. put the shoe on their foot, sit in the chair, put candy in the candy dish (my favorite because then you can “sanctify the candy” by eating it), drink water out of the glass and put the flowers in the vase that is currently full of marbles and being used as a bookend, etc.) Point out that if two different people want to use the same item differently, there could be a struggle and confusion. What if you want to wear the shoe, but I insist that the door cannot operate without it? What if you want a drink of water, but I insist that the flowers must stay in the glass? What if the Lord wants to live His life through us, but we insist that we must continue doing whatever it is we are doing? |
| **Extended Lesson:** | If time permits for the second lesson. Continue reading in John 4. Notice in verse 28 that after Jesus identifies Himself as the Messiah, the woman leaves her waterpot to go back into the city. She leaves the waterpot, the thing that started the whole conversation between her and Jesus. She forgets to get the water she came for, because she truly found the One who would satisfy her thirst on a greater level than any water could. Many times, the questions we have become unimportant and forgotten when we see Jesus and begin to understand just Who He really is. |