Preschool–Grade 6

Jehoshaphat and the Singers

Sunday School Lesson for Preteens (Ages 11–12), 45–60 minutes

Main point: When you don't know what to do, keep your eyes on God. The battle is the LORD's, so trust His Word and praise Him before you see the victory.
Bible passage: 2 Chronicles 20:1–30. Students read 20:1–22 and 20:26–30 out loud themselves.
Memory verse: "And he said, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the LORD unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's." *2 Chronicles 20:15 (KJV)* and "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee." *Psalm 56:3 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each student, paper or a notebook and a pen for each student, a whiteboard and a marker, and one take-home sheet for each student.
Before class: read 2 Chronicles 20:1–30 and Psalm 56:3. Write both memory verses on the board. Decide who reads which verses.

1. Opening game: What Do You Do First? (5–10 minutes)

Read each situation. Students write down the first thing most people their age would do, then the first thing they think God would want. 1) Your family gets bad news about a grandparent's health. 2) A group at school starts turning people against you. 3) You have three big assignments due the same day. 4) You have a fear you have never told anyone. Compare a few answers. Ask: *Why is prayer so often the last thing we try instead of the first?* Say: "Today a king faced an army too big to beat, and he went to God first."

2. Bible story: Students Read It (15 minutes)

Read out loud: 2 Chronicles 20:1–22. Students take turns, a few verses each. Old words in this passage:

- **multitude** (20:2): a huge crowd; **company** (20:12): a band of people, here an army
- **set himself to seek the LORD** (20:3): made up his mind to go to God; **proclaimed a fast**: told everyone to go without food for a time to pray
- **heathen** (20:6): the nations that did not know God; **withstand**: stand against
- **affliction** (20:9): trouble and suffering
- **dismayed** (20:15): scared and ready to give up; **by reason of**: because of
- **set yourselves, stand ye still** (20:17): take your places and wait; **salvation of the LORD**: the LORD saving you
- **established** (20:20): made strong and steady; **prosper**: do well
- **the beauty of holiness** (20:21): God's holy beauty; **endureth**: lasts
- **ambushments** (20:22): surprise attacks; **smitten**: struck down, beaten

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Tell 20:23–25 in your own words: the enemy armies turned on one another, and when Judah came to the watch tower in the wilderness, none of the enemy had escaped. Judah never fought. It took three days to gather what was left behind, there was so much.
Read out loud: 2 Chronicles 20:26–30. Old words: **Berachah** (20:26) is the valley's name, given because "there they blessed the LORD"; **psalteries** (20:28): stringed instruments; **realm** (20:30): kingdom.

Look closer. Point out these details with the class:

- **Afraid, and still faithful.** "Jehoshaphat feared" (20:3). The Bible doesn't hide his fear. What matters is what he did next: he set himself to seek the LORD.
- **He prayed from who God is.** Before he asked for anything, he said who God is and what God had done (20:6–9). Then he admitted, "neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee" (20:12).
- **Stand still, and go out.** God said, "Ye shall not need to fight," yet also, "to morrow go out against them" (20:17). Trusting God did not mean staying home; they obeyed and went, and God did the fighting.
- **Praise came before the victory.** The singers went out before the army (20:21), and "when they began to sing and to praise," the LORD acted (20:22). Years earlier David said the same truth to Goliath: "for the battle is the LORD'S" (1 Samuel 17:47).

3. Questions to ask (15 minutes)

1. Jehoshaphat "feared" (20:3). How is being afraid different from being faithless? What did he do with his fear?
2. His prayer spends more time on who God is (20:6–9) than on the problem. How could praying that way change the way you pray?
3. "Neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee" (20:12). Why is it hard to admit we don't know what to do? What does keeping your eyes on God look like in real life?
4. God told them to stand still but also to go out (20:17, 20:20). Where is God asking you to trust Him and still take a step of obedience?
5. Why do you think the singers went first (20:21)? What would praising God before the answer look like in your life this week?
6. They named the valley Berachah because they blessed the LORD there (20:26). What "valleys" in your life could become places where you thank God?

4. Memory verse (5 minutes)

Old words in 2 Chronicles 20:15: **hearken** means listen; **inhabitants** means the people who live there; **dismayed** means scared and ready to give up; **by reason of** means because of. In Psalm 56:3, **what time** means whenever.
Read both verses together. Then students cover one phrase at a time and quiz a partner. Say 2 Chronicles 20:15 this week; keep working on Psalm 56:3 next week too.

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5. What this means for us (5–10 minutes)

Say: "Judah had no might against that army (20:12), and we have no might of our own against sin. God loves you, and 'all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, God who came as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures' (1 Corinthians 15:3–4, KJV). We obey the gospel the way Peter preached it: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) We **repent**, turning from sin, and our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are buried with Jesus by baptism in His name, all the way under the water. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we rise to walk in newness of life, a brand-new life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the Holy Ghost, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance, which means as He gives the words (Acts 2:4). Jesus called this being born of water and of the Spirit (John 3:5)."
Pray with the students, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

6. Activity: Journal (10 minutes)

Each student writes privately. No one has to share. Write these three prompts on the board:

1. What is a "great multitude" in my life right now, something too big for me?
2. Write three things that are true about God, the way Jehoshaphat did in 20:6.
3. Write a short prayer that ends, "neither know I what to do: but my eyes are upon thee," and one line of praise to God before you see the answer.
   If there is time, invite a few volunteers to share one sentence.

This week: pray first about the thing you wrote in question 1, before you worry about it. Each day, thank God for one thing, because "his mercy endureth for ever" (20:21).

7. Prayer

"Dear God, You rule over all the kingdoms, and in Your hand is power and might. When we don't know what to do, help us keep our eyes on You, obey You and praise You before we see the victory. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a student asks about the battle: the Bible says the LORD set ambushments and the enemy armies destroyed one another (2 Chronicles 20:22–23). Judah did not fight. God was protecting His people, as He had promised (20:15–17).

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