Preschool–Grade 6

Jehoshaphat and the Singers

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: The battle is the LORD's. When we are afraid, we pray first, praise God, and trust Him to help us.
Bible passage: 2 Chronicles 20:1–30. Read it before class.
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)*
You need: a Bible, 7 paper strips, a marker, tape, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the 7 paper strips (see part 4). Put bookmarks in your Bible at 2 Chronicles 20:12 and 20:15.

1. Opening game: Eyes on Me (5 minutes)

Stand in front of the class. Say: "Keep your eyes on me and do just what I do." Do slow motions with no words: pat your head, touch your nose, raise one hand, march in place. Now and then point the other way and say, "Look over there!" Kids who keep their eyes on you and keep copying stay in. Play two or three rounds. Ask: *Was it hard to keep your eyes on me when I said, "Look over there"?* Say: "Today we will meet a king who had a big, scary problem. He told God, 'Our eyes are upon thee.' That means, 'We are looking to You.'"

2. Bible story: The Battle Is God's (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to 2 Chronicles 20, so the kids can see the story comes from God's Word. Tell it in your own words:

Jehoshaphat was the king of **Judah** (2 Chronicles 20:15). One day some men came and told him that a **great multitude** was coming against him (20:2). A great multitude is a huge crowd. The armies of **Moab** and **Ammon** and others were coming (20:1).

Jehoshaphat was afraid. But what did he do first? He set himself to seek the LORD (20:3). He went to God! He told all the people of Judah to **fast**. Say: "To fast means to go without food for a time, to pray and ask God for help." People came from all the cities of Judah to ask the LORD for help (20:4).

King Jehoshaphat stood up in the house of the LORD and prayed to God, "in thine hand is there not power and might" (20:6). That means, "God, You are strong. Nobody can stand against You!" Then he said, "We have no **might**," no strength, "against this great company... neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee" (20:12). Say: "He told God, 'We don't know what to do, but we are looking to You!'" All Judah stood before the LORD, even the little children (20:13).

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The story continues: Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon a man named **Jahaziel** (20:14). He said, "Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's" (20:15). Say: "That means, 'Don't be scared because of this huge army. This is not your fight. God will fight it!'" He said, "Ye shall not need to fight in this battle... stand ye still, and see" what the LORD will do (20:17).

Jehoshaphat bowed with his face to the ground, and all the people worshipped the LORD (20:18). Some of the Levites stood up and praised the LORD with a very loud voice (20:19)!

Early the next morning they went out into the wilderness of Tekoa. Jehoshaphat said, "Believe in the LORD your God" (20:20). Then he did something surprising. He chose **singers** to go out in front of the army! They sang, "Praise the LORD; for his mercy endureth for ever" (20:21). Say: "**Mercy** means God's kindness, and **endureth for ever** means it never ends."

Read 2 Chronicles 20:22 from your Bible: "And when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir." Say: "**Ambushments** are surprise attacks. The LORD fought for Judah! The enemies fought each other instead (20:23). When Judah came to the watch tower and looked, the battle was over (20:24). Judah never had to fight!"

They met in a valley and blessed the LORD, so they named it the valley of **Berachah** (20:26). Then they went home to Jerusalem with joy, with harps and trumpets, to the house of the LORD (20:27–28).

3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. Who came to fight against Jehoshaphat? *(A great multitude: Moab, Ammon and others, 2 Chronicles 20:1–2)*
2. What did Jehoshaphat do first when he was afraid? *(He set himself to seek the LORD and called a fast, 20:3)*
3. Whose battle was it? *(God's: "the battle is not yours, but God's," 20:15)*
4. Who went out in front of the army? *(The singers, praising the LORD, 20:21)*
5. What happened when they began to sing and praise? *(The LORD set ambushments against the enemies, 20:22)*

4. Memory verse: Seven Strips game (5 minutes)

Tape the 7 strips up in order: *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.* Explain the old words: **hearken** means listen, **inhabitants** means the people who live there, **thou** means you, **dismayed** means scared and ready to give up, **by reason of** means because of, and a **multitude** is a huge crowd. Read the verse together. Then take one strip away and read it again. Keep taking strips away, one each time, until the kids can say the whole verse by themselves. If the whole verse is too long for your class, have everyone shout the last strip: "for the battle is not yours, but God's!"

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5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "Jehoshaphat's problem was too big for him, so he went to God first. Our biggest problem is too big for us too. God loves you very much. But everyone has done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: '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) To **repent** means we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (Acts 2:4)."
Pray with the kids, 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.
This week: when something scares you, pray first. Then sing or say, "Praise the LORD; for his mercy endureth for ever!"

6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **Jehoshaphat word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/jehoshaphat-word-search), crossword, maze or worksheet, the craft (vbshq.com/crafts/jehoshaphat-craft), or **Singers Go First:** the kids line up as the singers in front of the "army." When you say, "Go forth!" they march around the room singing, "Praise the LORD; for his mercy endureth for ever!" When you say, "Stand still!" everyone freezes (2 Chronicles 20:17). Let different children be the king who calls out the words.

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that no problem is too big for You. When we are afraid and don't know what to do, help us keep our eyes on You, pray first and praise You. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child asks what happened to the enemy army: answer simply and gently. The Bible says the LORD set ambushments and the enemies fought one another instead of Judah (2 Chronicles 20:22–23). God kept His people safe, and they did not have to fight at all.

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