

The Whole Armor of God *Ephesians 6:10-20*

Shield of Faith Helmet of Salvation

Faith of a Centurion

Luke 7:1-10

A centurion (*sen-TOUR-ee-un*) was a Roman soldier who would work his way up the ranks. He was a commander over 100 soldiers. He was not a daredevil, but rather a man who was cautious, courageous and kept his cool in times of crisis and battle. The five centurions spoken of in the New Testament were men of integrity and strength of character. The centurion in today's story showed respect and tremendous tact in how he approached Jesus. He was well aware of the tension between the Jewish leaders and Christ. He did not allow Jesus to enter his home and he used a mediator to make contact with Jesus.

Introduction

Jesus had been criticized by the Pharisees for gathering grain for his disciples and healing a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath. In spite of His critics, Jesus continued to teach the people. It was after these miracles Jesus spent an entire night in prayer. Afterwards, He chose the twelve men who would be His apostles. It was on a mountain in Galilee that Jesus gave "The Sermon on the Mount." As Jesus was returning to Capernaum He was met by Jewish elders that were sent by a centurion. They pleaded with Jesus to come and heal the centurions servant.

Progression of Events

- There was a centurion who sought the help of Jesus. He had a slave that was sick and he was very fond of him.
- The centurion saw past the bitter battle that was taking place between the Jewish religious rulers and Jesus. He valued who Jesus was. He sent some Jewish elders to Jesus, asking Him to come and heal his servant.
- The elders begged Jesus to come. They said the centurion deserved His help because "he loves our nation and has built our synagogue." So Jesus went with them.
- When Jesus was near the centurions' home, he sent friends out to say to Him, "Lord, don't trouble yourself, for I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. That is why I did not even consider myself worthy to come to you. But say the word, and my servant will be healed." This centurion must have felt his request was very bold.

Climax

The centurion said to Jesus, "I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." A centurion was well aware of his authority to command his men. He was given his authority to command from the Roman government. He understood what unquestioning obedience was about. This

Centurion saw Jesus speak with divine authority. He knew that whatever Jesus commanded it would be done.

Conclusion

“When Jesus heard this, He was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd following him, He said, ‘I tell you, I have not found such great faith even in Israel.’” The man who had been sent out to talk to Jesus returned to the house and found the servant well. A Gentile set an example of faith for all of Israel.

Shield of Faith

Helmet of Salvation

A Roman soldier carried a large wooden shield into battle. An enemy would often set his arrows on fire before shooting them. The shield would give the soldier protection from his enemies’ arrows. Satan throws fiery arrows and darts at us through temptations, insults, etc. He tries to get through our shield by trying to get us to sin. How do you fight off Satan’s attack? You put on the Shield of Faith. You do this by never doubting God and by trusting Him completely. You must believe that God is able to work problems out for you and that He loves you and is always with you.

The Roman soldier would also wear a helmet to protect his head. You wear a helmet when you ride a bike, roller blade, skateboard or play sports. The helmet protects your head so you won’t get hurt when engaging in these activities. How do you protect your head from Satan? Put on the Helmet of Salvation. You do this by being aware of what you allow to enter your mind. You are careful what you listen to on the radio, watch on television and what you read. Ask yourself, would Jesus approve of this TV program, movie, music, conversation or book? Remember, your savior, Jesus Christ is more powerful than Satan. We know this because the bible says so (I John 4:4). It will be impossible for Satan to harm you when you have put on all of God’s Armor.

The centurion had a shield of faith. We know this because he had faith in Jesus. He believed that whatever Jesus commanded it would be so. He had on the Helmet of Salvation because he did not listen to what others said about Jesus.

Memory Verse

Jesus said, “Have faith in God.” (Mark 11:22)

Questions

For class discussion ask your students any of the following:

1. Describe a centurion.
2. How many centurions are told about in the New Testament.
3. Why did the centurion send the Jewish elders to ask for Jesus’ help?
4. Was the centurion well liked in his community?
5. Why did the people like the centurion?
6. Explain why Jesus was amazed at the centurion’s words.
7. How do you think the servant felt when he was suddenly healed?
8. What does it mean to have faith?
9. Explain what the Shield of Faith is.
10. Explain what the Helmet of Salvation is.
11. How can you apply this armor to your life?
12. Which is easier, believing something you’ve seen or something you haven’t seen?

Do You Believe?

This object lesson may be used either at the beginning of class or after you tell the story.

Preparation

You'll need napkins and a bag of unshelled peanuts.

The Lesson

Ask your students:

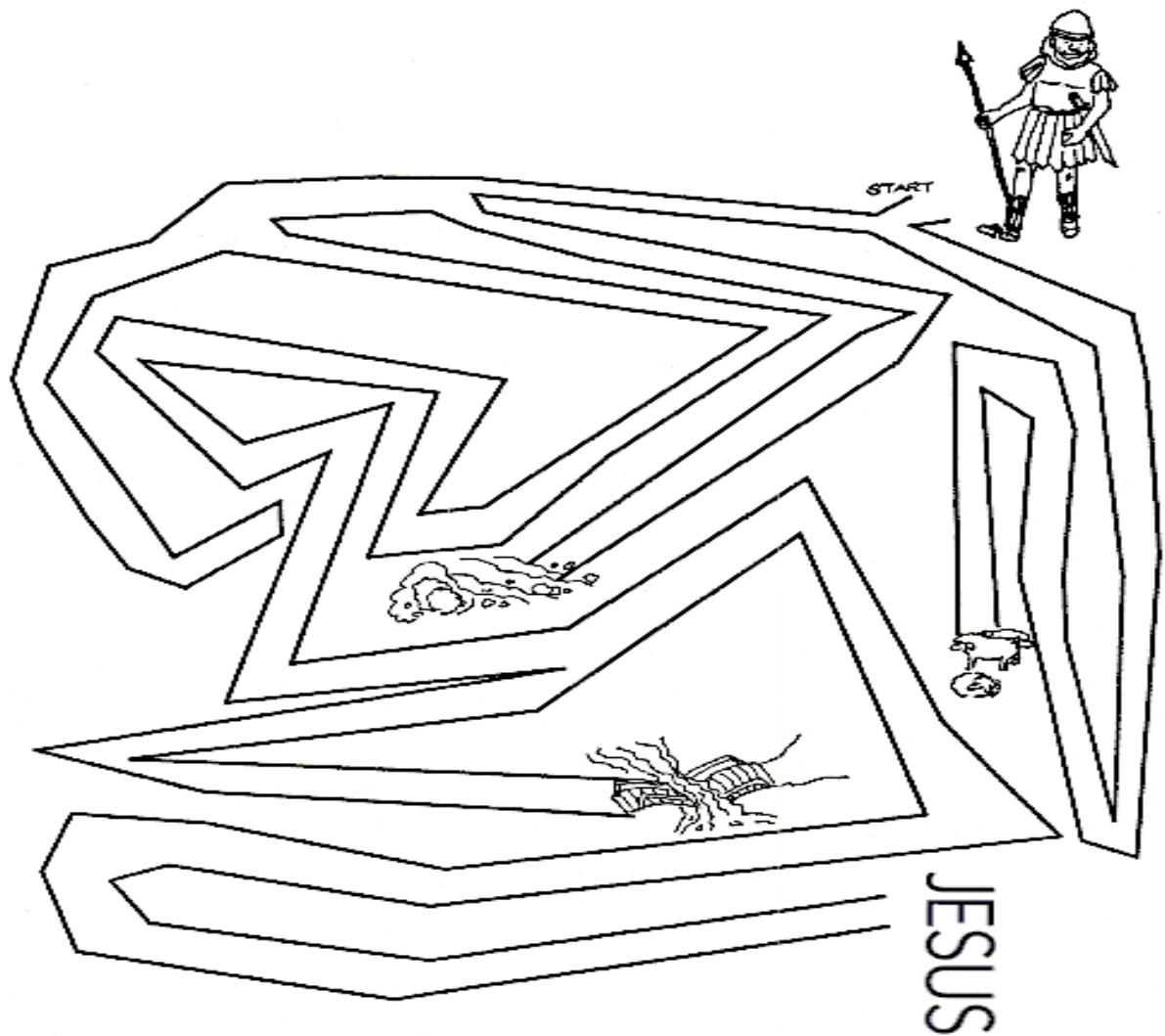
1. **Do you believe I can give you something without touching it? How could I do it?** (You could wear gloves; you could pick it up with a spoon or other tool.)
2. **Do you believe I can give you something no human hand has ever touched? Explain.** (No, lots of people probably touched it before you; maybe everyone who touched it wore gloves.) Distribute napkins, then take several unshelled peanuts from the bag and offer them to the children. They will protest that you're touching the peanut. Carefully split one peanut's shell in half, and drop the peanuts inside onto a child's napkin.
3. **Now do you believe I can give you something no human hand has ever touched?** Give children several shelled peanuts. Show them how to remove the shells.
4. After you saw the peanuts, you believed I could give you something no human hand ever touched. While you're eating your peanuts, we'll hear a story about a man who believed Jesus could heal his servant without even touching him.
5. If you have already told the story, ask the children the questions while they eat their peanuts.

6. Read Hebrews 11:1. If you have older children in your class, ask a volunteer to read it.
7. Finally, tell your students that the centurion didn't need to see Jesus heal his servant to believe it. He knew Jesus was more powerful than his servant's sickness. Even though we can't see Jesus today, we still believe in Him.

Lesson 4

Activity

A high-ranking Roman soldier once came to Jesus to ask Him to heal his servant (Matthew 8:5-10). Help the centurion find his way to Jesus.



Lesson 4

Craft

Materials

- Scissors
- Photocopy pattern on following page

Directions

1. Cut out the circle and fold in half on one dotted line, then in half again on other dotted line. Cut on the solid lines. Then open the helmet and gently stretch it over your head.
2. You may want to copy the pattern on construction paper.



Lesson 4

Craft

Materials (For Each Student)

- One wire coat hanger
- One knee-high length nylon hose
- Scissors, glue and newspaper
- Yarn, embroidery floss



Directions

1. Give each child one nylon hose and a metal coat hanger. Show how to bend the triangular part of the hanger into a circle. Help children make the “frame” as round as possible.
2. Have each child slip the nylon hose over the circular frame so the open end of the hose ends up hanging from the “hooked” end of the hanger. Instruct students to pull the hose tightly over the frame and tie a knot close to the “hooked” part of the hanger. This will keep the hose taut.
3. Show students how to bend the “hook” up to create a handle for the back of the shield. Be sure they bend them as far up as possible.
4. Have students trim any excess hose from the bottom of their shields. If time allows, set out glue and strips of yarn or embroidery floss. Allow students to decorate the front of their shields.

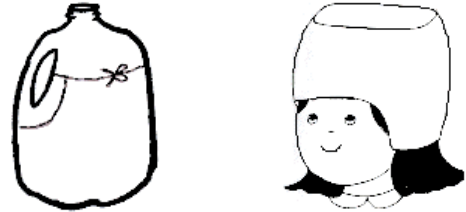


Lesson 4

Craft

Materials

- One gallon plastic milk container for each student
- Scissors
- Glue
- Decorating items such as buttons, sequins, feathers, colored paper, old Mylar balloons and stickers.



Directions

1. Clean plastic milk container for each child.
2. Be sure the scissors are sharp enough to cut the plastic (Fiskars for Kids scissors work well).
3. Before class, cut a section from each milk container; cut into the spout and then down about Three inches. Then cut across the broad 'fat' side of the carton—away from the handle—and back up to the other side of the spout.
4. Give each child a precut one-gallon milk container. Have them hold their milk container upside-down, by the handle. This is where their faces will go when wearing the helmet. Cut off the handle so that they can see. Some may need help doing this.
5. Now that the basic shape of the helmet has been made, have them think about what they want their special helmets to look like. Remind them that different countries made their helmets look unique.
6. Now they can use any of the materials (listed above) to design and decorate their helmets. When everyone is finished you can have a helmet fashion show so everyone can see.

Teacher Tip

- If you have mostly younger children in your group, you may want to cut off the handles of the milk containers ahead of time.
- If you have a tape player, bring a cassette of parade marches, play it in the background for your fashion show.