

The God of Details

Leader's Notes and Bible Passages

[Please do NOT use the "if time permits" sections when your study session time is limited. These sections could possibly be done by the participant in private.]

Faith Talk: Discuss the following phrases and their meaning with a partner or in your small group. "It's a God thing" and "The devil is in the details." **Answers will vary, but encourage everyone to share. Make it clear that everything confided within the group stays within the group.**

Introduction: Have you ever had a time in your life when you could see how God had worked out the details and ultimately a solution to any given situation? In our Bible study, we will consider our awesome and wonderful God of details – in biblical history, in His plan of salvation and in our daily living.

Opening Prayer: Heavenly Father, You are our awesome God! We thank You for sending Jesus to be our Savior from sin, death and the power of the devil. We praise You for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Please bless our study of Your Word. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

Detailed History

Read **Joshua 6:3-27**, the Old Testament account of the fall of Jericho at the hands of the Israelites. Note the details of this battle below:

1. **verse 3 – march around city once for six days**
2. **verse 8 – seven priests with seven trumpets marching before the ark, blowing trumpets continually**
3. **verse 9 – armed men before the ark; priests; rear guard**
4. **verse 10 – people were silent as they marched for six days**
5. **verse 15 – on seventh day, march around city seven times**
6. **verse 16 – people shout after the seventh time around the city following trumpet blast**
7. **verse 17 – everything destroyed (except Rahab and those in her house)**

Joshua 6

¹Now Jericho was shut up inside and outside because of the people of Israel. None went out, and none came in. ²And the LORD said to Joshua, "See, I have given Jericho into your hand, with its king and mighty men of valor. ³You shall march around the city, all the men of war going around the city once. Thus shall you do for six days. ⁴Seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark. On the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets. ⁵And when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, when you hear the sound of the trumpet, then all the people shall shout with a great shout, and the wall of the city will fall down flat, and the people shall go up, everyone straight before him." ⁶So Joshua the son of Nun called the priests and said to them, "Take up the ark of the covenant and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD." ⁷And he said to the people, "Go forward. March around the city and let the armed men pass on before the ark of the LORD."

⁸And just as Joshua had commanded the people, the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the LORD went forward, blowing the trumpets, with the ark of the covenant of the LORD following them. ⁹The armed men were walking before the priests who were blowing the trumpets, and the rear guard was walking after the ark, while the trumpets blew continually. ¹⁰But Joshua commanded the people, "You shall not shout or make your voice heard, neither shall any word go out of your mouth, until the day I tell you to shout. Then you shall shout." ¹¹So he caused the ark of the LORD to circle the city, going about it once. And they came into the camp and spent the night in the camp.

¹²Then Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the LORD. ¹³And the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD walked on, and they blew the trumpets continually. And

the armed men were walking before them, and the rear guard was walking after the ark of the LORD, while the trumpets blew continually. ¹⁴And the second day they marched around the city once, and returned into the camp. So they did for six days.

¹⁵On the seventh day they rose early, at the dawn of day, and marched around the city in the same manner seven times. It was only on that day that they marched around the city seven times. ¹⁶And at the seventh time, when the priests had blown the trumpets, Joshua said to the people, "Shout, for the LORD has given you the city. ¹⁷And the city and all that is within it shall be devoted to the LORD for destruction. Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall live, because she hid the messengers whom we sent. ¹⁸But you, keep yourselves from the things devoted to destruction, lest when you have devoted them you take any of the devoted things and make the camp of Israel a thing for destruction and bring trouble upon it. ¹⁹But all silver and gold, and every vessel of bronze and iron, are holy to the LORD; they shall go into the treasury of the LORD." ²⁰So the people shouted, and the trumpets were blown. As soon as the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people shouted a great shout, and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they captured the city. ²¹Then they devoted all in the city to destruction, both men and women, young and old, oxen, sheep, and donkeys, with the edge of the sword.

²²But to the two men who had spied out the land, Joshua said, "Go into the prostitute's house and bring out from there the woman and all who belong to her, as you swore to her." ²³So the young men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab and her father and mother and brothers and all who belonged to her. And they brought all her relatives and put them outside the camp of Israel. ²⁴And they burned the city with fire, and everything in it. Only the silver and gold, and the vessels of bronze and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD. ²⁵But Rahab the prostitute and her father's household and all who belonged to her, Joshua saved alive. And she has lived in Israel to this day, because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

²⁶Joshua laid an oath on them at that time, saying, "Cursed before the LORD be the man who rises up and rebuilds this city, Jericho. 'At the cost of his firstborn shall he lay its foundation, and at the cost of his youngest son shall he set up its gates.'" ²⁷So the LORD was with Joshua, and his fame was in all the land. [ESV]

Read **Joshua 6:1**. What condition is Jericho in even before the battle? **It was essentially under siege – no one went out or came in.**

What is the significance of the Lord's words to Joshua in **6:2**? **Jericho was already defeated – even before the battle!**

Since the outcome of the battle at Jericho was already assured by the Lord, why do you suppose God insisted on the details of the battle? Were the details for Himself or for the Israelites? Why? **The details were for the Israelites, who needed to learn that God was in control and that He was with them in this battle and would be with them into the future, just as He promised. A possible question for discussion: What are the implications in this account for the Israelites if they had not followed God's instructions for the battle?**

Faith Talk: Share with a partner or the group a time in your history when you could see God at work in the details of the event or situation. **Answers will vary**

If time permits: Identify additional biblical accounts in the Old Testament that show God's attention to detail. **For example: creation; Noah's ark and the flood; Moses and the flight from Egypt; Leviticus – priestly laws; Ruth; Esther; Nehemiah and the rebuilding of the wall**

Detailed Salvation

Read **Luke 2:1-7**. What details are included in this account?

1. **verse 1 – census taken during rule of Caesar Augustus**
2. **verse 2 – Quirinius was governor of Syria**
3. **verse 4 – Joseph went to Bethlehem because he was of house and lineage of David**
4. **verse 5 – Mary accompanied Joseph; she was pregnant and close to delivery**
5. **verse 7 – Mary gave birth to her firstborn son; laid him in a manger because no room in the inn**

Luke 2:1-7

¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. [ESV]

Read **Matthew 1:18-25**. What additional details about the birth of Jesus are included in **verses 21-22**? **His name will be Jesus (Immanuel – “God with us”); mother is a virgin**

Matthew 1:18-25

¹⁸Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: ²³"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us). ²⁴When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus. [ESV]

Read **Matthew 2:1-12**. What details about the wise men's visit are provided in the following verses?

1. **verse 1 – Herod was king in Jerusalem; wise men came from the east**
2. **verses 2,9 – A star showed the place where Jesus was residing**
3. **verses 4,5 – Jesus born in Bethlehem; fulfilled prophecy**

Matthew 2

¹Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, ²saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." ³When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: ⁶""And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel."" ⁷Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. ⁸And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." ⁹After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. ¹¹And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. ¹²And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way. [ESV]

See **Romans 5:6** and **Galatians 4:4-5**. What is the message? **God was in the control of the timely birth of Jesus, as well as the timing of His saving life and work**

Romans 5:6

⁶For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. [ESV]

Galatians 4:4-5

⁴But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. [ESV]

During the time of Jesus' birth, life and death, the Roman rule brought about a world peace known as the "Pax Romana." This peace was evident by increased protection and improved road conditions, both of which contributed to easier travel and better communication. How could this world situation contribute to making Jesus' birth, life and saving work the "right time" – God's time? **Politically, the atmosphere was right for crucifixion and being under Roman rule; travel was safer and thus, the "word" about Jesus would have gotten out quickly and in relative safety; the Good News spread as God blessed the disciples' witness**

Read **John 20:1-8**. What details did God include for the disciples in **verses 6-7**? **John and Peter saw the linen cloths and the face cloth, folded up in a place by itself**

John 20:1-8

¹Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. ²So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." ³So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. ⁴Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, ⁷and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. ⁸Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed. [ESV]

Faith Talk: Jesus fulfilled all the Old Testament Messianic prophecies made concerning Him (over 300). What is the importance of this godly attention to detail? **Jesus Christ was the fulfillment of prophecies made many years before His birth; the "chances" of any one person fulfilling every one are astronomical**

If time permits: Identify additional details of Jesus' life, death and resurrection from your knowledge of the New Testament Gospels. **For example: John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus; the travel to Egypt to escape Herod; visited the temple with his family as a boy; the Baptism of Jesus (Trinity present); Judas as betrayer; Peter's denial; Isaiah 53 prophecy compared with the account of Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection; Jesus gave up His Spirit on the cross – no bones were broken**

Detailed Living

Read **Psalm 119:169-176**. These words ask the Lord to help the Psalmist remember and delight in His statutes (His Law). Does God's Word give us a detailed guide or curb to live our daily lives? **Yes** What do we call this guide? (See **Exodus 20:1-21**.) **The Ten Commandments; God's Law**

Psalm 119:169-176

¹⁶⁹Let my cry come before you, O LORD; give me understanding according to your word! ¹⁷⁰Let my plea come before you; deliver me according to your word. ¹⁷¹My lips will pour forth praise, for you teach me your statutes. ¹⁷²My tongue will sing of your word, for all your commandments are right. ¹⁷³Let your hand be ready to help me, for I have chosen your precepts. ¹⁷⁴long for your salvation, O LORD, and your law is my delight. ¹⁷⁵Let my soul live and praise you, and let your rules help me. ¹⁷⁶I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek your servant, for I do not forget your commandments. [ESV]

What does God through Peter detail for us to "put away" in **1 Peter 2:1-3**? **Malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, slander** What are we to long for? **Pure spiritual milk** What is God's pure spiritual milk? **God's Word**

1 Peter 2:1-3

¹So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. ²Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— ³if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. [ESV]

What does **Colossians 3:5** encourage the Christian to do? **Put to death all our earthly passions**

Colossians 3:5

⁵Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. [ESV]

Colossians 3:10 reads: “put on the new self.” The Holy Spirit uses the Means of Grace – the Word and Sacraments – to make us new creatures in Christ and to renew us daily. (See **Psalm 119:105**; **Galatians 3:27**; **1 Corinthians 11:23-25**.)

Psalm 119:105 God's Word

¹⁰⁵Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. [ESV]

Galatians 3:27 Baptism

²⁷for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. [ESV]

1 Corinthians 11:23-25 The Lord's Supper

²³For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, ²⁴and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." [ESV]

Read **Colossians 3:12-16**. Write down the specific details for Christian living included in this list.

Colossians 3:12-16

¹²Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, **compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience,** ¹³**bearing with one another** and, if one has a complaint against another, **forgiving each other**; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴**And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.** ¹⁵**And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.** ¹⁶**Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.** [ESV]

Faith Talk: Is our heavenly Father interested in the details, perhaps even what we consider those trivial details, in our lives? Why or why not? Support your answer with specific examples from your life.

Answers will vary

Faith Walk:

1. Share in detail or make a list of ways that you are daily in the Word.
2. Identify one person to share God's Word of salvation with this week.
3. Look for ways the God works daily in the details of your life.

Closing Prayer (based on Psalm 139): O Lord, You know me! You know every detail about me. You know when I sit down and when I rise up and You discern my thoughts. You know what I am going to say even before I do! You hem me in, behind and before, and lay Your hand upon me. You created me and made me and I praise You. O Lord, You are everywhere and You watch over and protect me. Search me, O God and know my heart and lead me in the way everlasting. In the precious Name of Jesus, Amen!

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