

GROUP LEADERS NOTES – STUDY 1

Question 1

The answer to this question is not found in the passage but requires an assessment of what has happened previously. Look for the group to draw out the following ideas:

- a) The nation had spent 430 years in Egypt; most of those in slavery. They did not have a trained army; neither would they have been well equipped.
- b) The initial euphoria of deliverance had all but dissipated. Three days after the miracle of crossing the Red Sea and the destruction of the pursuing Egyptian army, they were grumbling about lack of water (Exodus 15:22-24).
- c) In Exodus 16 they are grumbling again; this time about food. Again at the beginning of chapter 17; water again.
- d) But this was not only about having a good moan. They have already convinced themselves that they would have been better back in Egypt (**Exodus 16:2-3; 17:3, 7**).

Question 2

- a) Our passage in Exodus 17 leaves us in no doubt that the Amalekites would have defeated the Israelites if Moses had not been playing his part on the top of the hill.
- b) The most significant work done in the kingdom of God is that of hands lifted to God.

- c) **1 Kings 8:22-26, Psalm 141:2 and 1 Timothy 2:8** are just three examples from scripture where the lifting of hands is mentioned in relation to prayer.
- d) The importance of prayer is often played down. At the same time, however, we must remember that in Exodus 17 prayer was accompanied by action!
- e) We could argue that the glamorous work; certainly the most high-profile work was being done on the battlefield. On the other hand, have you tried keeping your hands in the air for the duration of a military conflict?

Question 3

- a) Whilst we are to use our abilities and resources to the fullest extent for the glory of God; we cannot ultimately rely on ourselves.
- b) It did not matter how well Joshua and his army were doing, victory was ultimately dependent on God.
- c) We also see here how God uses others in the background. It may have been Joshua who was the visible face of the victory; even that Moses was the one relied on to keep his hands up. But don't forget Aaron and Hur; without whom the whole project would fall.
- d) Although it is true that God does not need our help; nevertheless in His wisdom He chooses to use us as His instruments.

Question 4

- a) At first glance this might seem to be the same as the previous question.
- b) Perhaps the most important lesson that Joshua could ever learn from this experience is that this victory against the enemy of God is not to be won but to be received.
- c) Note how this is reinforced in the passage from Joshua 1 that we read at the beginning of the study: **verse 2** "*land that I am giving to them*"; **verse 3** "*I have given to you*"; **verse 6** "*I swore to their fathers to give them*").
- d) Their task was to take the land that through God's promises was already theirs.

Question 5

- a) A standard would display the arms of the country that the army represented.
- b) Therefore it was the banner under which the soldiers enlisted and under which they triumphed.
- c) Jehovah-nissi is a reminder that the people belonged to God; fought for Him and it was God who brought the victory.
- d) All these things were essential to Joshua's training for later leadership.