

LESSON 9: GOD MAKES THE SUN STAND STILL

Leader Guide for Grades 5 & 6

Classroom: Deeply Rooted

 Joshua 10:1-15

10/27/2019

Teachers Dig In

Dig In to the Bible

- Read: Joshua 10:1-15
- In This Passage: Joshua leads a small, weak army of Israelites into battle against five unified armies. The Israelites are fighting to defend another population, the Gibeonites. In turn, God defends the Israelites, sending their enemies into a panic and causing the sun to stand still so they have time to defeat their enemies. God is our defender, too.
- Bible Point: God is our defender...
- Application: ...so we defend others.
- Summary Verse: "The Lord is compassionate and merciful, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love" (Psalm 103:8).

Dig Deeper

- You'll Be Teaching: *God is our defender*. Kids will easily relate to the bullying aspect of this story. They've likely been picked on by a bully and certainly have seen other kids fall victim to bullies. Help kids see that even when others are mean to them, God is their defender. And when they see others who aren't being treated well, they can step in and show kindness.
- Think About: Recall a time in your life when you needed someone to defend you. Did anyone defend you? What did that experience show you about God?

Dig In to Prayer

- Pray that your kids will find ways to peacefully defend others.

Quick Tip

- You can set the tone for defending others right in your Sunday school classroom! Kids may learn as much about God from a positive relationship as from a good Sunday school lesson. On the other hand, a negative or socially unsafe environment can keep a child out of church for many years—even forever. Make sure your class environment is socially safe. Institute a zero-tolerance policy when it comes to teasing or put-downs. Avoid putting kids on the spot. And most important, set an example yourself by reflecting the love of Jesus to all the kids in your Sunday school class.

This Lesson at a Glance



OPENING

Kids share about a topic related to the lesson.

Supplies

- Bible



OBJECT LESSON

Kids defend paper with crayon.

Supplies

- 8½x11 sheets of printer paper (1 per child)
- crayons
- spray bottles (1 for every 4 kids)
- paper towels



CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Kids use battle figures to re-enact the Bible story.

Supplies

- Bible
- "Battle Figures" handout (1 per child) ([download here](#))
- scissors
- tape
- marbles (at least 1 per child)
- paper wads (at least 2 per child)
- pens



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Kids play a version of Capture the Flag.

Supplies

- 2 hula hoops
- 2 pieces of different-colored fabric or thick ribbon
- masking tape
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Easy Prep

- Tape a line on the floor to split your play area in half.
- On opposite ends of your play area, place a hula hoop on the ground at least 10 to 15 feet from the taped line. If your space is smaller than that, simply put as much space between the hula hoops as you can.
- Place 1 of the pieces of fabric or ribbon in each hula hoop as a flag.



LOW-ENERGY GAME

Kids try to stand still while others try to get them to move.

Supplies

- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Kids pray for others.

Supplies

- battle figures from Core Bible Discovery
- paper
- pens



CRAFT

Kids make sundials.

Supplies

- thick paper plates (1 per child)
- wooden skewers (1 per child)
- straws (1 per child)
- rulers
- pencils
- markers
- flashlights

Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids.

**Marked supplies are also used in Core Bible Discovery*

Let's keep kids safe! You can help by using supplies as instructed for only ages 3+, purchasing child-safe items, and being aware of allergy concerns.



Supplies

- Bible

Welcome

- Thank kids for coming.
- Just for fun, have kids wave at three people they're not sitting near.
- Make announcements.
- Introduce new kids.
- Celebrate birthdays by having kids say "drippy haybath" (the letters of happy birthday mixed up).
- Collect the offering.

Introduce the Lesson

Say: **Today we're going to learn that God is our defender. In our Bible story, we'll see how God defended the Israelites by making the sun stand still so they had a longer day!**

Share

- Act out what *you'd* do if you had extra time in your day to do whatever you want, and have kids guess.
- Have kids form pairs. Ask kids to take turns acting out and guessing what *they'd* do if they had extra time in their day to do whatever they want. After partners have guessed correctly, kids can share why they'd like to do that.
- After partners have acted out their answers, ask two or three kids to share with the whole group what they shared with their partners.

Summarize

Open a Bible to Joshua 10, and say: **We had fun ideas for how to spend our extra time. In the Bible, the Israelites spent their extra time fighting a battle! We'll see how God was on their side. God's on our side, too, because God is our defender. We'll see what the Bible says about how God defended the Israelites. We know everything in the Bible is true and is from God, so let's take a moment to talk to God as we get started.**

Pray, praising God for being our defender.



OBJECT LESSON

We've Got You Covered!

[10 min]

Supplies

- 8½x11 sheets of printer paper (1 per child)
- crayons
- spray bottles (1 for every 4 kids)
- paper towels

Color One Half of the Paper

Say: **People use wax paper to protect surfaces. You might use it to keep cookies from sticking together or set it on your countertop when frosting cookies. Let's do an experiment where we'll create our own wax paper.**

- Give each child a piece of paper, and have each child fold and crease the paper down the middle to create two halves.
- Have kids cover one half entirely with crayon. They'll need to press firmly as they color so the entire half of the paper is thickly covered and no paper peeks through. Encourage kids to take their time and spend several minutes completely coloring one half of the paper.

Spray Water on the Paper

Ask: • **What do you think will happen when we spray the paper with water?**

- Have kids each open the paper so it's flat on the table in front of them. One half will have crayon, and the other half will be blank.
- Have them take turns using the spray bottle to spray water on both halves of the paper and observe the difference. They'll notice that the water on the crayon half forms into droplets while the water on the other half just absorbs and spreads across the blank paper.
- Encourage kids to play with the water droplets on the crayon half. They can blow them across the paper or gently tip the paper so the water moves from one side to the other.
- Give kids each a paper towel so they can dry off the crayon half of the paper, removing all the water.

Talk About It

Ask: • **How did the two halves react to the water?**

Say: **The crayons defended the paper from the water, but the other half was soaked! In our Bible story God defended the Israelites and the Gibeonites. He was on their side! He even made the sun stand still to help them. But the other armies were defeated. God wasn't on their side. When we're friends with God, he'll defend and help us, too. There'll still be rainy days when things seem dreary and difficult, but even when hard times come, God will cover us with his love and strength so we can make it through tough times.**

Ask: • **Tell about a time God helped you during something difficult.** Share an example from your own life to begin.

Say: **God is our defender. He covers us with love and strength to help us when we need it the most.** Have kids throw away their papers and use extra paper towels to dry off the tables.

**Supplies**

- Bible
- “Battle Figures” handout (1 per child) (download [here](#))
- scissors
- tape
- marbles (at least 1 per child)
- paper wads (at least 2 per child)
- pens

Prepare for Battle

Say: **We have to hurry. I just heard some scary news: Five kings and their armies are on their way to attack the Gibeonites!**

That might not mean much to you, but it meant something to the Israelites. You see, the Israelites were God’s chosen people. They’d made a promise to help the Gibeonites, so they had to go defend them! Because God is our defender, we defend others.

Let’s prepare for battle!

Have kids cut out the figures on the “Battle Figures” handouts, roll them into tubes, and tape them so they can stand up. Then have kids line up the figures on the floor, with all the Israelite soldiers facing one way and all the Enemy soldiers so they’re facing toward the Israelites.



Say: **Uh-oh...five kings got all their armies together! That’s a *lot* of people. And the Israelites? Well, they were former slaves who’d just started to settle into a land after wandering without a homeland for 40 years. They didn’t exactly seem like mighty warriors.**

Five trained armies against two inexperienced armies! It doesn’t seem likely that the Israelites and Gibeonites can win.

Ask: • **Tell about a time you felt like there was no way you could win.** Share your own story first.

Say: **Sometimes when a bully threatens us or everyone seems like they’re out to get us, it can feel as if we’re the tiny group of Israelites up against five big armies. But God is our defender.**

Stage the Battle

Say: **The Bible has a lot of battles in it. Let’s see what happened in this one and how God defended his people. Before the battle started, God made a promise.**

Read Joshua 10:8.

Say: **Well, that sounds good! God is our defender, and they knew before the battle even started that God would defend them.**

So Joshua, who led the Israelite army, led them to the enemies and took them by surprise. They marched through the night and sneaked up on the enemies. Let's act that out with our figures.

Have kids make the Israelite figures quietly sneak up and surprise the Enemies.

Say: **It worked! God threw the enemies into a panic, and the Israelites killed a lot of them.**

Have kids roll marbles from 5 feet away to try to knock down all the Enemy figures. Tell kids they'll have one minute to knock down all the figures, and when you turn the lights off, they'll have to stop.

Just shy of a minute, warn kids that time is almost up. If they protest, tell them you'll give them extra time. If they don't protest, ask if they'd like extra time. Then keep the lights on longer. It will be pretty hard for kids to knock down all the figures, but if they do, stand a few back up as kids keep rolling.

After another minute, have kids stop rolling marbles. Give kids paper wads.

Say: **The Israelites fought really well, but God fought, too! Listen to what he used as a weapon.**

Read Joshua 10:11. Have kids turn the remaining Enemy figures around to make them look like they're retreating. Have kids throw paper wads until all the enemy figures are knocked down. Then turn the lights off.

Say: **Earlier I said you had only one minute to knock down all the figures, but then I gave you extra time. And then the "hail" helped finish the job.**

In the Bible, Joshua needed more time for the battle, too. So he asked God for something very specific. Check it out.

Read Joshua 10:12-13.

Say: **God defended the Israelites by causing their enemies to panic, by sending hail to defeat more people than the Israelites could, and by making the sun stay out longer so the Israelites could finish the battle. Wow! God definitely won that battle. God defended the Israelites so they could defend the Gibeonites. God is our defender, so we defend others.**

Pray

Say: **God is our defender. We're not fighting the same kind of battles the Israelites fought, but we do face battles. Our enemies might be bullies, tough math tests, fears, parents getting divorced, the death of people we love, or other hard things.**

Tell kids a battle you're facing. Tear a piece off a paper wad, crumple it up, and put it in an Enemy figure.

Have each child tear a piece off a paper wad, small enough to crumple and fit into an Enemy figure. Have kids each write on their paper a battle or an enemy they're facing. Then have each child put the paper into one of the Enemy figures.

Ask: **• If you're willing, tell a partner about the battle you're facing.**

Say: **When Joshua and the Israelites had a battle, God promised to give them victory. God is our defender, too. We may not always have victory in the way we want, but God will *always* be there for us. And like Joshua, we can ask for very specific help in our battles.**

Let's do that now.

Have each child tear off another small piece of paper, write a specific prayer request, and then crumple it and put it into an Israelite figure. Have kids hold the figures while you pray.

Pray: **God, thank you that you are our defender. You defended the Israelites, and the Israelites defended the Gibeonites. Come to our defense, and help us defend others with your strength. Answer our specific prayers for your help in our battles. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Have kids save the two figures, with their prayer requests inside. They'll use them again in the Life Application Wrap-Up section and then take them home. Kids can throw away or recycle the extra Enemies.



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

On the Defense

[10 min]

Supplies

- 2 hula hoops
- 2 pieces of different-colored fabric or thick ribbon
- masking tape
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Easy Prep

- Tape a line on the floor to split your play area in half.
- On opposite ends of your play area, place a hula hoop on the ground at least 10 to 15 feet from the taped line. If your space is smaller than that, simply put as much space between the hula hoops as you can.
- Place 1 of the pieces of fabric or ribbon in each hula hoop as a flag.

Tip

- If you used the Music Video block, consider repeating the songs from today's lesson during the game. You can find the album [here](#).

Play a Version of Capture the Flag

Say: **In the Bible today we saw an awesome example of how God is our defender.**

There are a lot of times in our lives when we need to defend ourselves or others. It might not be a battle like in Joshua's story, but we all need God to defend us. Let's play a game where we'll do some defending.

- Form two teams that are as close to even as possible, and have teams choose a side of the play area.
- Invite two willing people on each team to be the Flag Protectors. They'll stand guard near their team's hula hoop to try to keep the flag from being taken. They can't touch the flag or step inside the hula hoop to defend it, but they will try to tag anyone attempting to take the flag.
- Everyone else can spread out around their team's side of the play area.
- All the players except for the Flag Protectors will try to cross over to the other team's side to take the flag and return it to their side.
- Players can tag people from the opposite team who come into their side of the play area.
- When anyone is tagged, he or she must go back to his or her team's side, freeze, and count to 10 before jumping back into the game.
- Give a signal to start the game. If you'd like, play upbeat music while kids play.
- A round is over when a team's flag is successfully taken to the opposing team's side.
- Have teams switch sides and put the flags back to start a new round. Also choose new Flag Protectors.
- Play as many rounds as time allows.

Talk About It

Ask: • **What was fun or frustrating about defending your flag?**

• **How did you work with your teammates to defend your flag or each other?**

• **What was it like when a teammate helped you?**

Say: **When we're defending ourselves or others, it can be a huge relief to have help! Joshua had God's help, and so do we! God is our defender.**



LOW-ENERGY GAME

[10 min]

Make a Stand

Supplies

- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Tip

- If you used the Music Video block, consider repeating the songs from today's lesson during the game. You can find the album [here](#).

Try to Hold Still

Say: **In our Bible story, Joshua trusted God to defend him and his soldiers as they battled an army of men that outnumbered them. It looked impossible for Joshua's army to defeat the others, but with God on their side, they stood strong.**

Let's play a game where you'll do your best to stand strong—to hold completely still—even when others have “ganged up” on you. Stay very focused on holding still because you can't even smile!

- Invite a willing person to be the first Mover—he or she will try to get others to move by making noise, by running around other people in an attempt to make them flinch, or by being goofy to try to get someone to crack a smile.
- The Mover may not touch anyone.
- Everyone else will attempt to hold as still as statues.
- When the Mover gets someone to move, that person will join the Mover to become a team of Movers all attempting to get others to move.
- The last person who stands strong and doesn't move will be the first Mover in a new round of the game.
- If you'd like, play upbeat music while kids play.
- Play as many rounds as time allows.

Talk About It

Ask: • **What made it hard to not move?**

• **Why was it harder—or not—when there were a *bunch* of people trying to get you to move?**

Say: **Sometimes in real life it feels like people are ganging up on us, and it can be hard to stand strong. Sometimes we need someone else to help defend us.**

Ask: • **Tell about a time you felt you were being ganged up on.** Share an example of your own, such as friends believing something untrue about you and needing another friend to confirm the truth.

• **Who has defended you when you needed help, and how did that person defend you?**

Say: **Let's thank God for those people! I'll start the prayer, and you say their names.**

Pray: **God, thank you for defending us through other people. Thank you for** (pause for kids to share names). **In Jesus' name, amen.**

Say: **It can be hard to defend ourselves and stand strong, but we're not alone. God is our defender, and God is always with us. God can help us stand strong, and God can help us defend others, too. It's awesome how God can put us in the right place at the right time to help someone who needs it.**



Supplies

- battle figures from Core Bible Discovery
- paper
- pens

Spend Time With God

Say: **God is our defender, so we defend others. Let's defend others with prayer.**

- Tell kids to each think of a battle someone they know is facing. For example, they may know someone with cancer, an adult who is unemployed, or a child whose parents are getting divorced.
- Have kids tear pieces of paper small enough to crumple and wedge into an Enemy figure.
- Have kids each write on their paper the battle or enemy someone they know is facing. Then have them put it into one of the Enemy figures.
- Have kids each write on another small piece of paper a prayer for the person they know.
- Kids can crumple up their prayers and put each one in an Israelite figure.

Wrap Up

Pray: **God, thank you that you are our defender. We lift up all the battles in our Enemy figures to you. Fight them! In Jesus' name, amen.**

Thank kids for coming, and encourage them to come back next week. Encourage kids to take home their Israelite and Enemy figures as a reminder to defend the people they mentioned by praying for them throughout the week.



CRAFT

Stand-Still Sundials

[20 min]

Supplies

- thick paper plates (1 per child)
- wooden skewers (1 per child)
- straws (1 per child)
- rulers
- pencils
- markers
- flashlights

Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids.



Make Sundials

Say: **Before there were clocks, people used sundials to tell time. Sundials sat outside in the sun, and people could tell what time it was by seeing where the sun cast a shadow.**

Show kids the sample craft you made. Give each child a paper plate, a skewer, and a straw. Set out the remaining supplies to share, and have kids follow these instructions to make sundials.

- Turn the plate upside down.
- Use a ruler to measure the exact center of the plate, and mark it with a pencil.
- Poke a skewer through the center of the plate so that it stands up straight.
- Place a straw over the skewer.
- Near the top edge of the plate, write “12” with a marker.
- Use a pencil to estimate where the remaining numbers of a clock would be.
- Decorate the plate around the numbers.
- Include the Bible point: God is our defender.

Use a Flashlight

Say: **To make sure your sundial tells time correctly, you need to set it up. To do that, you’ll put it outside right at noon, making sure the shadow of the straw points right at the twelve.**

Tape the sundial down so it doesn’t move. Come back outside with a marker each hour, and see if your other numbers are in the right place. The shadow should be pointing at the 1 at 1:00 and so on. Adjust the placement of the numbers if needed, and write in the numbers with markers when you know they’re in the right spot.

Once you've checked all the hours, your sundial will be ready to tell time...as long as it's not night or cloudy!

- Have kids take turns using flashlights to simulate the sun rising and setting over their sundials.
- Kids can experiment with which way to move the "sun" so the shadow moves clockwise.
- Kids can also hold the flashlight still to replicate how God made the sun stand still during Joshua's battle.

Talk About It

Ask: • **What's your favorite time of day?**

• **What devices do you use to tell time?** Try to ask follow-up questions such as whether clocks are analog or digital, who uses a phone to tell time, and so on.

Say: **If you were to sit outside on a sunny day for hours, you'd watch the shadow on your sundial move slowly but surely. But can you imagine if it *stopped* moving because the sun stood still? God only made the sun stand still *one* time—ever! He did it to defend Joshua and the Israelites because God is our defender.**

Have kids take their sundials home and show their friends and families how they work, explaining that God made the sun stand still to defend Joshua.