

LESSON 9: GOD MAKES THE SUN STAND STILL

Leader Guide for Ages 3-6

Classroom: Monkeys

 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

Preschoolers share about a topic related to the lesson.

Supplies

- Bible



CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Preschoolers shoo balloons and pop them, experience the sun standing still, and talk about the Bible point.

Supplies

- Bible
- balloons in 6 colors (at least 4 of each color)
- safety pin
- bedsheet
- paper wads (several per child)
- flashlight

Easy Prep

- Inflate at least 4 balloons of each color. Five of the colors will represent the 5 armies, and the sixth color will represent the Israelites and Gibeonites. If you have more than 10 children, add an equal number of balloons in all 6 colors so you'll have 2 balloons per child.
- Referring to the diagram below, place the 6 "Israelite and Gibeonite" balloons as follows: 1 in the center of your room, 1 at one end of the room, and the remainder under the bedsheet on the same end of the room. Place the remaining 5 colors of balloons at the opposite end of the room, and separate the colors.



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Preschoolers pray while a light stands still above them.

Supplies

- flashlight*

**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 preschoolers give a fist bump to four friends.
- Make announcements.
- Introduce new kids.
- Celebrate birthdays by having preschoolers say “snappy mirthgray” (which rhymes with happy birthday).
- Collect the offering.

Introduce the Lesson

Say: **Today we'll learn that God is our defender. That means he protects us from danger, and he's always on our side. The Bible tells about a time God helped protect his friends from danger. God made the sun stay in the sky for a long time—much longer than normal—so his friends could win a battle. Let's think about what we might want to do if we had an extra-long sunny day.**

Share

- Share what *you'd* want to do if you had an extra-long sunny day.
- In leader-led small groups, have preschoolers share what *they'd* want to do on an extra-long sunny day.
- After small groups have discussed, have adult or teen helpers share with the whole group what they talked about in their small groups.

Summarize

Open a Bible, and say: **There are so many fun things we can do on long sunny days. The Bible tells about a time God made the sun stay out even when it should have been nighttime! He did it to help his friends and to protect them from danger. God is our defender, too. He protects us from danger. When we're friends with God, we can know that God will help us protect others, too.**

Pray, thanking God for being our defender.

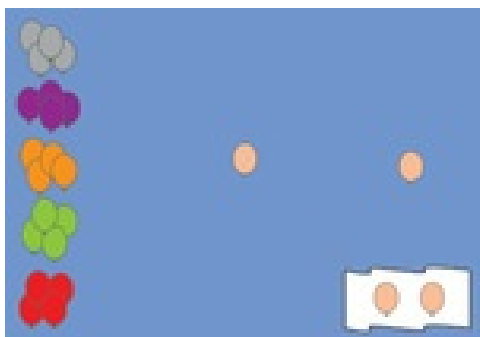


Supplies

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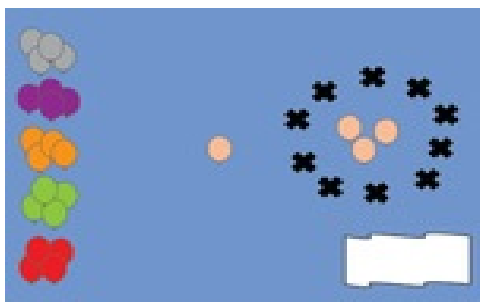
Tips

- To avoid choking hazards, be sure to pick up pieces of any broken balloons promptly.
- If printing this lesson, be sure to print it in color so you can see the different colors of balloons and the way they're arranged.

Shoo Balloons

Have the children sit in a circle around the balloon that's all alone on the one end of your room. There should be two or more balloons in that same color on the same side of the room under the bedsheet, but the kids won't know about these yet. Say: **Today we'll learn that God is our defender. We'll learn how God defended, or protected, his friends, the Israelites.**

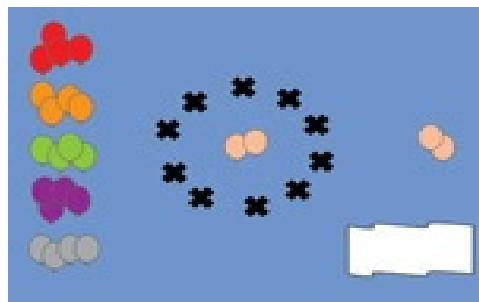
Show the Bible. Say: **The Bible says God made the Israelites stronger and stronger over time.** Invite a few children to shoo the two additional balloons from under the bedsheet toward the one they're sitting around (see diagram below).



* indicates children.

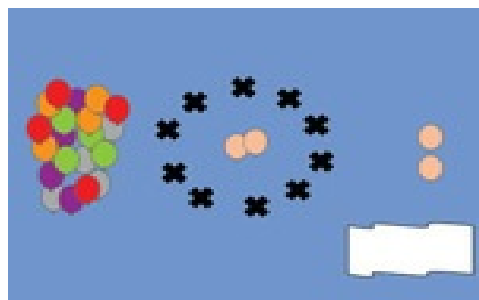
Say: **The Bible says the Israelites became friends with some people called the Gibeonites.** Point to the single balloon in the center of the room.

Say: **The Israelites' leader, Joshua, said they'd even help defend the Gibeonites if they were attacked.** Take one balloon from your circle to join the balloon in the center of your room, and have the children join you in the center of the room (see diagram below).



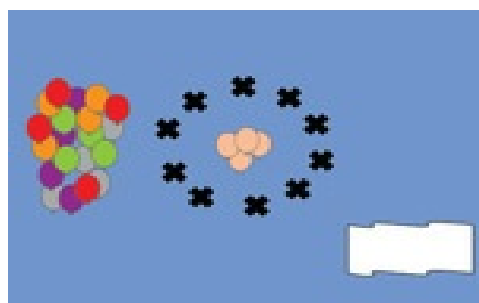
*** indicates children.**

Say: **But a king from another land** (point to one color of balloons on the opposite side of the room) **noticed the Israelites were becoming stronger, and he didn't like it. That king sent someone to talk to kings from other lands, and five armies joined together to fight God's friends.** Have kids gather all the colors of balloons representing the five armies and mix them together (see diagram below). Then have kids return to their circle.



*** indicates children.**

Say: **Then the five armies attacked the Gibeonites. When Joshua heard that the Gibeonites were being attacked, he gathered the Israelites to defend the Gibeonites. Joshua prayed for God's help, and God said, "Don't be afraid of them. You will win." So the Israelites surprised the five armies that had surrounded the Gibeonites.** Have kids shoo the rest of the "Israelites and Gibeonites" to the center of the room (see diagram below).



*** indicates children.**

Say: **The men in the five armies that attacked the Gibeonites panicked!** Pop a non-Gibeonite balloon using the safety pin. If kids aren't too startled by popping balloons, have children pop several more non-Gibeonite balloons by stomping on them. (Don't pop any balloons from the Israelites' army.) Alternatively,

deflate balloons quietly by making a hole with the safety pin near the tie. Quickly pick up any balloon pieces and discard them.

Say: **The Israelites chased the five armies away from the Gibeonites.** Have children shoo the rest of the balloons representing the five armies back to their original wall.

Say: **Then God sent hail on the five armies that tried to attack the Gibeonites. But none of the Israelites were hit by hail.** Shoo the “Israelite and Gibeonite” balloons back to the opposite wall and away from the five armies.

Say: **God defended the Israelites by sending the terrible hail on the five armies that had attacked his friends.** Give kids paper wads to toss onto the balloons representing the five armies. Have an adult or teen helper continue to pop or deflate the rest of the five armies’ balloons as the children toss “hail” on the balloons. Quickly pick up any balloon pieces and discard them.

Say: **God’s friends, the Israelites, won the battle!** Invite the children to cheer. **God defended his friends, and God is our defender.** That means he protects us and takes care of us when someone is trying to hurt us.

Experience the Sun Standing Still

Say: **On that day, the Israelites’ leader, Joshua, prayed to God that they would win the battle. Joshua asked God to make the sun stay in the sky so it would be light out and they could see. And God did what Joshua asked. Let’s see what that might be like.**

Normally it’s dark at night while we’re sleeping because we can’t see the sun. Turn off the lights, and have kids lie on the floor and pretend to sleep.

Say: **But when the sun comes up** (turn on the flashlight, and set it on the floor), **the sun makes it bright outside.** Have an adult or teen helper turn on the lights, and then invite children to “wake up” and stretch.

Mimic the movement of the sun across the sky by slowly moving the flashlight in a half-circle and then setting it back down on the floor. Say: **The sun moves from one side of the sky until it’s right above our heads, and then it moves back down until we can’t see it anymore.** When the flashlight reaches the floor, have the adult or teen helper turn off the lights. Then turn off the flashlight, and have kids pretend to sleep again.

Repeat the sun rising and setting two more times, each time having kids “wake up” and “go to sleep.”

Say: **But Joshua asked God to keep the sun in the sky, and God kept the sun in place until his friends, the Israelites, had won the battle.** Hold the flashlight above kids’ heads, and lead them in counting to 20. **God did something amazing to defend the Israelites. He made the sun stand still in the sky. We’ve never seen that because we know that the sun normally moves from one side of our earth to the other, and then it gets dark. It didn’t get dark the whole time the Israelites were defending their friends!**

Talk About It

Say: **God was their defender, and God is our defender. God stands up for us when someone is trying to hurt us. God is stronger than anyone, and he’ll always take care of us. No one can win against God. He’s the strongest, and he always wants the best for us. God gives us people in our lives who he knows will defend us, too, like good friends and our families. Good friends and our families treat us kindly and take care of us. God gave them to us to defend us.**

Share about someone who God gave *you* to defend or protect you. Maybe you have a friend who was supportive of you when someone was saying unkind things about you.

Ask: • **Who is someone God gave *you* to protect you?** As children share, encourage them to share how the people defend or protect them. They might mention their parents, older brothers or sisters, or close friends.

Say: **It’s so nice to know that God is our defender and that he gives us our friends and our families who he’ll use to defend and protect us, too. We can be special friends to others when we defend them, too. That means we are kind to others and we are good friends, even when others aren’t being kind to them. And we can remember in times like those that God is our defender and our friends’ defender!** Lead kids in a short prayer, thanking God for the people who defend kids and asking God for help to know when to defend friends.



Supplies

- flashlight*

Talk About Worries

Dim the lights. Have the children sit in a circle. Say: **Today we learned that God is our defender. We found out that God's friends needed God's help, and God protected them. God protects and defends us, too. Sometimes there are things that scare or worry us, but we can always remember that God is our defender. He protects us from danger.**

When I'm worried or scared about... Share one or two examples of things that feel like danger to you, and then say: **...God is my defender.**

Ask: • **Tell about something that scares or worries you.** Have children share in leader-led small groups. Listen for common themes that you can reference in a moment.

After all the children share, say: **Those things can be scary. They can even feel dangerous sometimes. The Israelites felt scared, too, but God is bigger than our worries and our fears.** Pick up the flashlight and move it in a half-circle motion to mimic the sun moving across the sky during daytime as you say: **God is our defender when...** Mention some fears you heard kids mention.

Say: **Let's talk to God about our worries.** Lead children in a short prayer, asking God to defend the children when they face danger.

Thank God for His Protection

Repeat moving the flashlight in a half-circle motion as you say: **We can always trust God to protect us, even when it feels like our worries won't stop.** Immediately move the flashlight to "noon" position and hold it there. **God stopped the sun in the sky to protect his friends, and God can do amazing things to defend and protect us, too.**

Let's thank God that he's our defender. We can trust him to protect us. Leave the flashlight at noon position, and lead children in a short prayer, thanking God for defending the children when they face danger.

Hold the Flashlight

Say: **We know that God is our defender. We don't need to worry about danger, and we can practice defending others, too. We can protect friends when someone says something mean to them by saying something kind to them instead. We can also defend others by telling an adult if someone is being hurt. Let's ask God to help us defend others.** Let each child take a turn briefly holding the flashlight in noon position. (You'll need to show kids how to do this.) Then pray: **God, you made the sun stop in the sky to help the Israelites. You defended them, and you defend us. Help us defend our friends, too. In Jesus' name, amen.**

With God on our side, we can defend others. We know God will defend us, too. This week whenever you feel afraid, remember that God is our defender and he will protect you. I hope you'll come back next week so we can all learn together once again.