

LESSON 9: GOD MAKES THE SUN STAND STILL

Leader Guide for Grades 1 & 2

Classroom: Greenhouse Kids

 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 protect clean sheets of paper.

Supplies

- resealable gallon-size bags (1 per child)
- plastic wrap
- transparencies
- white paper (1 sheet per child)
- washable markers



CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Kids 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.



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.



LOW-ENERGY GAME

Kids build and defend towers.

Supplies

- classroom blocks
- small playground balls (1 for every 4 kids)



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.



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Kids 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 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'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 small groups, have kids share what *they'd* want to do on an extra-long sunny day.
- After small groups have discussed, have a few kids 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.



OBJECT LESSON

Paper Protector

[10 min]

Supplies

- resealable gallon-size bags (1 per child)
- plastic wrap
- transparencies
- white paper (1 sheet per child)
- washable markers



Make a Design

Set out all the supplies. Say: **Today we're learning that God defends us. I have a challenge for you: Make a design on the paper without actually getting anything on the paper. You can use the supplies on the table. Try more than one thing to see what "defends" the paper best.** Here are some ways kids might make a design on the paper without marking up the paper (but they can also think of their own ways):

- Slip the paper in the bag.
- Put the paper under the transparency.
- Put the paper under a sheet of plastic wrap.

Have kids use several colors as they cover their bags completely with marker.



Talk About It

- Ask:
- **What did you try?**
 - **What worked best, and why?**

- What are some ways you've defended someone?

Say: God notices when we attempt to defend others. Whether we protect our friends completely or not, God can help us defend them, and ultimately God will defend our friends, too. And God will even defend us as we defend our friends. We can be sure of that, and we always want to be on God's side!

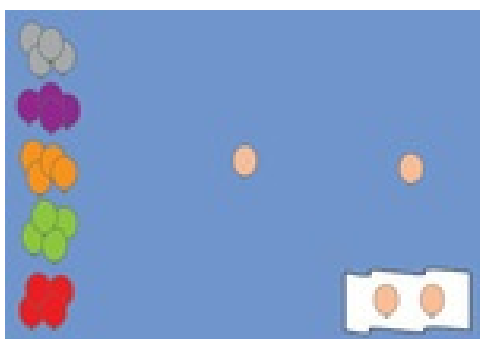


Supplies

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

Easy Prep

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- 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.



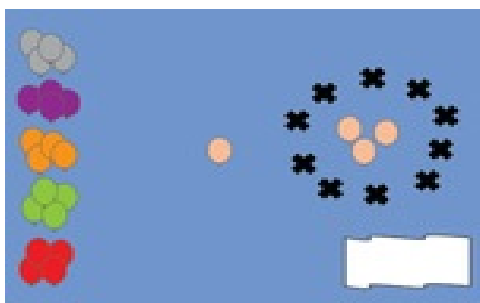
Tip

- 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.**

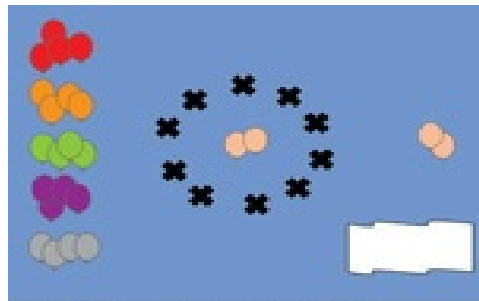
Show the Bible. Say: **The Bible says God made the Israelites stronger and stronger over time.** Invite a few children to shoo the two additional balloons from under the bedsheet toward the one they're sitting around (see diagram below).



* indicates children.

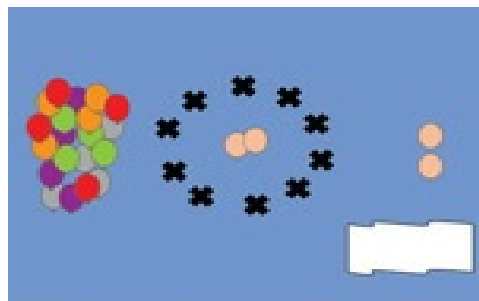
Say: **The Bible says the Israelites became friends with some people called the Gibeonites.** Point to the single balloon in the center of the room.

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).



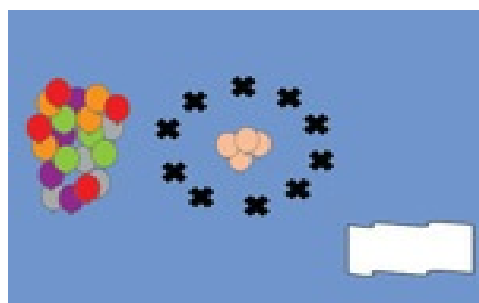
X indicates children.

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 the Israelites.** 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.



X 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).



X indicates children.

Say: **The men in the five armies that attacked the Gibeonites panicked!** Pop a non-Gibeonite balloon using the safety pin. Have kids 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. 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.

Say: **But Joshua asked God to keep the sun in the sky, and God kept the sun in place until the Israelites had won the battle.**

Ask: • **What’s so amazing about how God kept the sun in the sky?** Invite children to share their thoughts about what God did.

Say: **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.



CRAFT

Stand-Still Sundials

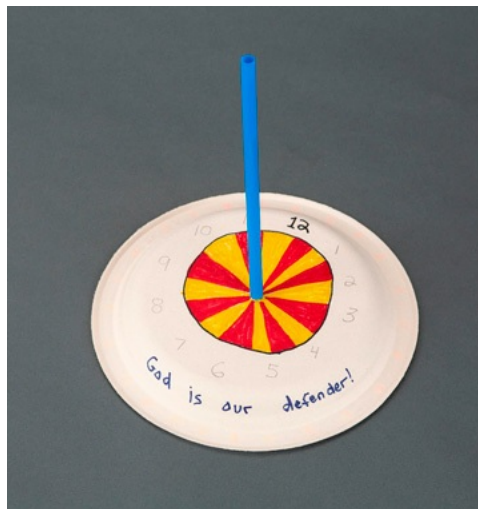
[20 min]

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 lead kids through 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 indicate 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.



LOW-ENERGY GAME

[10 min]

Guard Our Tower!

Supplies

- classroom blocks
- small playground balls (1 for every 4 kids)

Build and Defend Towers

Say: **When we defend something, we keep it safe from things that might hurt it.**

Tell about a time *you* made something and had to keep it safe. Maybe you put a freshly baked pie in a box before taking it to a neighbor's house or you built a Lego set with your son or daughter and kept it on the kitchen table where the dog couldn't knock it over.

Ask: • **Tell about something cool *you* made.** As kids share, invite them to tell ways they kept their creations safe. Kids might mention building a block tower in their living room or making a fort and asking someone to help guard it.

Say: **Let's build towers now and then defend them.**

- Form teams of four, and give each team a pile of blocks to build a tower.
- Give kids a few minutes to build, and count down from 10 as they finish their towers to let them know when time's almost up.
- Have two kids from each team take 10 big steps away from their towers. They will be the Rollers.
- Have the other two kids from each team stand in front of their towers to defend them. They'll be the Defenders.
- Give each pair of Rollers a ball. Have them take turns rolling the ball like a bowling ball toward the tower while the Defenders try to stop it from hitting the tower. Rollers can retrieve the balls and try again until they hit the tower or they each roll the ball five times.
- Have kids rebuild their towers (if necessary), trade places, and play again. Continue until all kids have a chance to defend the tower and roll the ball.

Talk About It

Ask: • **What did you do to defend your tower?**

Say: **In our game, we had to defend something we made that was special to us. In our Bible story, God defended the Israelites because they were his special friends. God is our defender, too. He loves us and wants to protect us because we're special to him.**



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 each team 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.**



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 hear 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, so we can defend others, too. We don't need to worry about danger as we can practice defending others. 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.