



## Unit 8 | Session 2

# GOD GAVE THE PEOPLE THE LAND

## Joshua 7-11

God was with His people when they entered the promised land. Joshua and the Israelites defeated the cities of Jericho and Ai (AY igh). They made peace with the people of Gibeon (GIB ih uhn).

Then one day, a king called to four other kings. These kings did not love God or worship Him, but they had heard about God's people and they were afraid. The first king said, "Gibeon made peace with Joshua and the Israelites. Help me attack Gibeon." So the five kings joined forces and went up with all their armies to fight against Gibeon.

Soon the men of Gibeon sent a message to Joshua: "Help us! Save us! All the kings in this land are fighting against us!"

So Joshua and his whole army went to help Gibeon. The Lord said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid of the kings, for I have handed them over to you. Not one of them will be able to stand against you."

Joshua and his army marched all night and surprised the five kings' armies. As the Israelites fought, God confused the kings' armies and helped Israel defeat their enemies. The five kings' armies fled, but God sent hail to stop them.

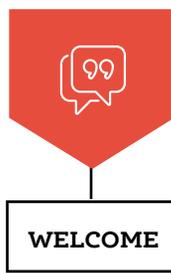
The battle wasn't over yet. Joshua needed more time to fight before the sun went down.

So Joshua prayed to God, "Sun, stand still over Gibeon, and moon, over the valley." The sun stood still and the moon stopped for almost a full day. Israel and Gibeon defeated the five kings.

As the Israelites traveled in the promised land, they took over many other cities. God fought for His people and helped them conquer the land God had promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Then for many years, God gave the Israelites peace and rest from their enemies.

**Christ Connection:** Joshua's name means "The Lord is salvation." God fought for Joshua and the Israelites, saving them and giving them victory over their enemies. Sinners can look to God for victory over sin and death. God brought us salvation by sending His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross and rise again.

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## 1 WELCOME TIME

Greet each preteen as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

- **Think about your week. What is something exciting that happened? What is something difficult or challenging that happened?**
- **How did you see God working in your life and around you?**

## 2 SESSION STARTER

### OPTION 1: SUN AND MOON, STAND STILL



Ask kids to spread out. Choose one kid to be a guesser. Direct her to stand at the front of the room, facing away from the group. Designate one kid to be the “sun” and one kid to be the “moon.” These players must remain still (feet planted) throughout the game. Ask the guesser to look over the group, and then turn around again. All the other players should now move to a new location in the room.

Once everyone has found a new place, allow the guesser to face the group. She must guess which players did not move. Allow play to continue until the guesser correctly identifies the “sun” and “moon.” If time allows, choose new kids to fill each role.

**SAY** “Normally, the sun and moon do not stand still. The moon revolves around the Earth, and the sun appears to move across the sky as the Earth rotates. In our story today, though, God performed a miracle, and they both stood still!”

### OPTION 2: FIVE AGAINST ONE

Distribute modeling clay. Form groups of six kids. Direct each group to designate one person to work on his own. You should now have several groups of five vs. one. Give each individual a few extra containers of clay. The goal is for teams to race to create 10 small spheres out of clay (about the size of a tangerine). For example, a group of five must create just 2 each before an individual can create 10 on his own. The larger group should easily win.

After one round, add a special rule: individuals may smash their opponents’ spheres, but groups may not. This should enable some individuals to win.

**SAY** “You probably guessed the larger groups would win, but one extra rule changed everything. In today’s story, five armies went to war against one. You might expect the larger group to win, but God can do unexpected, amazing things!”



## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

### 1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

The Bible tells us what is true about God and about ourselves. All of the stories in the Bible fit together to tell us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

Today we are going to hear how God gave the Israelites the promised land. Whether this is your first time or your tenth time hearing this story, there is always something new to learn in God's Word.

**Read from Joshua 7–11.**

#### •What does this story teach us about God?

God helped Joshua and the Israelites defeat many of their enemies. The Israelites established peace and made a treaty with Gibeon. Israel had a responsibility to protect Gibeon. Five kings attacked Gibeon, so Joshua and the Israelites went to battle. God fought for Joshua and the Israelites, saving them and giving them victory over their enemies.

**Sinners can look to God for victory over sin and death.** God brought us salvation by sending His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross and rise again.

#### •What are some of the ways God fought against the five kings?

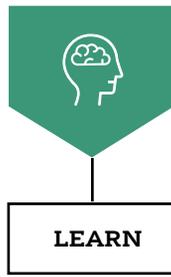
**God confused Israel's enemies, He sent hail to fall on them, and He stopped the sun and moon to give Joshua and the Israelites time to fight.** Only God can do these things. These are all miracles. What is a miracle? A miracle is something God does that usually cannot be done so that we can know He is all-powerful.

Form groups of two or three and practice retelling the Bible story in your own words. Think of someone you could share the story with this week.

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### CHRIST CONNECTION

Joshua's name means "The LORD is salvation." God fought for Joshua and the Israelites, saving them and giving them victory over their enemies. Sinners can look to God for victory over sin and death. God brought us salvation by sending His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross and rise again.



## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

### 2 MISSIONS MOMENT

Ask the kids to share what they remember about the Worthy family. Ask a volunteer to find Italy on a map. Remind kids that Joshua prayed to God, asking for more daylight to fight Israel's enemies. Ask how it could be a good thing for people to see them and their family praying before a meal. How might that help them share the gospel with them? Explain that one day, when the Worthys prayed over a meal in a restaurant, a worker asked them if they believe in Jesus. Prayer is always powerful, and in this case prayer led to a new friendship and a conversation about Jesus. Pray and ask God to give the kids opportunities to talk to others about Jesus this week.

### 3 PRAY

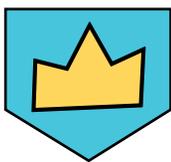
God, You do incredible things. Everything is under Your power. Even the sun, moon, earth, and stars obey You! Thank You for watching over and protecting us. Help us to follow and serve You. Amen.

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## THE GOSPEL

### GOD'S PLAN FOR ME

The gospel is the good news, the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use Scripture and the guide provided below to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.



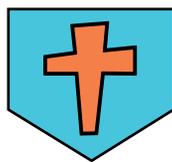
#### **GOD RULES.**

Ask: "Who is in charge at home?" Explain that because God created everything, He is in charge of everything. Read Revelation 4:11.



#### **WE SINNED.**

Ask: "Have you ever done something wrong?" Tell kids that everyone sins, or disobeys God. Our sin separates us from God. Read Romans 3:23.



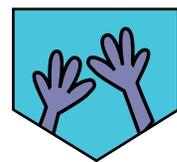
#### **GOD PROVIDED.**

Explain that God is holy and must punish sin. God sent His Son, Jesus, to take the punishment we deserve. Read John 3:16.



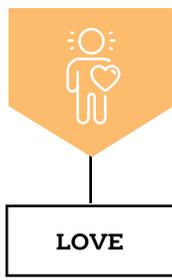
#### **JESUS GIVES.**

Ask: "What is the best gift you've ever received?" Say that Jesus took our punishment for sin by giving His life, and He gives us His righteousness. God sees us as if we lived the perfect life Jesus lived. This is the best gift ever! Read 2 Corinthians 5:21.



#### **WE RESPOND.**

Explain that everyone has a choice to make. Ask: "Will you trust Jesus as your Savior and Lord? You can turn from self and sin and turn to Jesus." Read Romans 10:9-10.



## THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

### 1 THINK ABOUT THE STORY

- What should I do if I feel jealous of a friend?
- What has God given you that you can be thankful for?

### 2 GROUP DISCUSSION

Distribute Bibles. Guide preteens to open their Bibles to Joshua 10. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Joshua 10:12-14. Remind preteens that God worked many miracles in order to give Joshua and the Israelites victory. Choose another volunteer to read aloud Joshua 10:12-14 again. Then lead the group to discuss the following questions.

#### 1. Why do you think God answered Joshua's prayer to stop the sun and moon?

God answered Joshua's prayer as part of His plan. Without God, Israel would have lost the battle. God told Joshua that He had handed over Israel's enemies. God had already decided that Israel would have victory, and He would give it to them. Nothing can stop God's plan. He will do whatever it takes to make it happen! (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Josh. 10:8,14.)

#### 2. When you remember that God is all-powerful, one response is to honor, respect, and worship Him. How else can you respond? How should you act when you face difficulty?

Many times through the Book of Joshua, God told Joshua, "Do not be afraid." When you remember all the miracles God has worked and think about all the amazing things He has done, it can help your faith to grow. This can help you to have courage and confidence, even in difficult situations. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Josh. 10:8.)

#### 3. What is a personal battle or struggle you are dealing with right now? How can you trust God to fight for you and give you victory?

The agreement between Israel and Gibeon meant that Israel (the stronger nation) would watch over and protect Gibeon (the weaker nation). God watches over and protects us, too. When we are in trouble, we can ask Him to help us. When we are struggling, we can ask Him to fight for us. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Josh. 9:15; 10:6.)

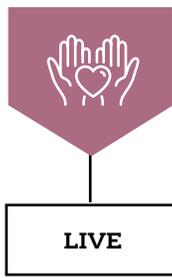
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### BIG PICTURE QUESTION

What is a miracle?

A miracle is something God does that usually cannot be done so that we can know He is all-powerful.

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## THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

### 1 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY

Before the session, write the key passage as words or phrases on separate index cards. Instruct kids to open their Bibles to Psalm 77:14. Lead them in reading the key passage aloud together.

Form two groups. Mix up the key passage cards and distribute them to each group. Instruct groups to race each other to arrange the words in the correct order. When groups finish, invite them to complete the challenge again by arranging the cards in reverse order.

### 2 PRAY

Invite volunteers to share prayer requests. Then pray for kids to have confidence in God through any difficult situations they might be facing in their lives right now.

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### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

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#### PISA PASTA

Group the kids into teams. Give each team raw spaghetti noodles and marshmallows. Remind the kids of the Tower of Pisa in Italy, where the Worthy family serves as missionaries.

Explain that there are more than 70 types of pasta in Italy. Most Americans are familiar with spaghetti. Challenge kids to make your own tower, using nothing but spaghetti and marshmallows. It's OK if a tower leans like the Tower of Pisa, but if it falls they have to start again. The team that builds the tallest tower wins.

Show the kids how to poke the ends of the spaghetti noodles into the marshmallows to construct a tower. When the kids finish their towers, ask each team to name one fact that they remember about the Worthys or Italy.