

LESSON 4

THE SUN STANDS STILL

LESSON AT A GLANCE

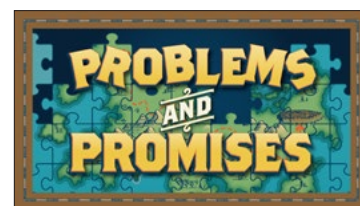
WONDER TRUTH: God Hears Us

SCRIPTURE: Joshua 10

GOD'S BIG STORY: The Israelites come to the aid of their allies—the Gibeonites—when enemies attack. In the midst of the battle, Joshua speaks to the Lord, and God hears, making the sun and moon stand still until the battle is won!

WORD OF WONDER: God keeps His promises forever. —from 1 Chronicles 16:15

- Play Stations:
 - Day and Night Sort
 - Nighttime Play and Listen
 - The Sun Stands Still Coloring Sheet
- Curiosity Activity: Shake and Listen
- Word of Wonder: From 1 Chronicles 16:15
- God's Big Story
- Declaring God's Wonder
- Prayer of Invitation
- Worship: Psalm 8, Over & Over
- Connecting the Wonder Truth
- Prayer and Blessing
- Circle Time: Can You Hear?
- Craft: Prayer Picture
- Game: Sun Goes Down, Freeze!



SCAN FOR THIS
WEEK'S VIDEO!



LESSON 4 FOR LEADERS

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Hears Us

SCRIPTURE: Joshua 10

WORD OF WONDER: From 1 Chronicles 16:15

Not long ago, I was in the midst of some trials that seemed insurmountable. What I needed from God felt like too much to ask, so I held back. A friend reminded me that petitioning the Lord for what I need is proof of a relationship with Him. He invites me to bring my requests—big or small—to Him.

With several victories under their belts, the Israelites faced another big challenge. Alarmed that Israel had signed a peace treaty with Gibeon, the five kings of the Canaanites teamed up to attack the Gibeonites. As the Israelite army rushed to the aid of their allies, God assured Joshua of their victory.

Read Joshua 10:12–14. Joshua made an audacious request. He asked God to hold the sun in place so they would have light long enough to win the battle. The most exciting part of this story is that God listened and answered! The sun was suspended for nearly a day, and Israel won the battle.

- How does it make you feel to know God hears our requests?
- What request do you have for God that feels like it's too much to ask?

We need not worry that our problems are too big for our heavenly Father. God hears us and delights in showing us grace and helping us in our times of need. Thank Him today for hearing you and answering your prayers.

—Suzanne Gosselin

Children's Ministry Volunteer

Contributor to Wonder Ink

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Joshua, the Israelites, and the Gibeonites play key parts in this story. The Gibeonites tricked the Israelites into making a covenant and becoming their allies (Joshua 9). Still, the Israelites honor the alliance and come to the Gibeonites' aid when the five Canaanite kings attack.

WHAT?

Joshua and the Israelite army came to the defense of their ally, the Gibeonites, against five Canaanite armies. God fought on behalf of His people, dropping hailstones on the enemy armies. When Joshua spoke to the Lord, God heard, and the sun stood still until the battle was won.

WHERE?

The setting of the story is Gibeon, an ancient and influential Canaanite city northwest of Jerusalem.

WHEN?

The events of this story take place after the Israelites captured the city of Ai (Joshua 8). This event frightened the people of Gibeon so much that they pretended to come from outside Canaan and tricked Joshua into making a covenant with them (Joshua 9).

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY:

God values covenants. He helped Israel honor a covenant with the Gibeonites He had not approved, and He remained faithful to the Mount Sinai covenant—where Israel promised to follow God's law—even when Israel did not, by sending Jesus to cover their sin and restore relationships.



Curiosity

Belief

Faith

Identity

LESSON 4 **EARLY CHILDHOOD**

Spark curiosity and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Hears Us

SCRIPTURE: Joshua 10

WORD OF WONDER: From 1 Chronicles 16:15

Play Stations

SUPPLIES: scissors (prep only), small tent or bedsheet, flashlight, coloring utensils, table (optional), sound machine with nighttime sounds (optional), projector with stars (optional)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Day and Night Sort Sheets (1/SG), The Sun Stands Still Coloring Sheet (1/kid)

Greet the kids warmly and briefly explain the play stations to them. Invite them to play at any of the stations.

Welcome to church! While we're getting ready to start, you can play at any of these stations to help you get ready for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas about what we'll be learning today?

Play Station: Day and Night Sort

Set up: Ahead of time, print and cut apart the Day and Night Sort Sheets.

Play: Encourage kids to put the pictures into piles of things that happen during the daytime and things that happen at night. When they finish, encourage them to think of other things they do during the day and at night that aren't on the cards.

Play Station: Nighttime Play and Listen

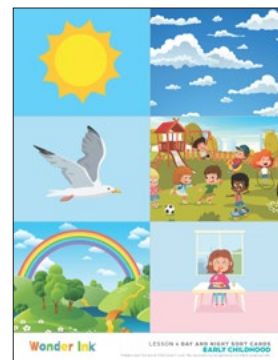
Set up: Ahead of time, set up a small, kid-sized tent. If a tent is not available, drape a bedsheet over a table so that the sheet hangs over each side and makes a pretend tent. The tent is meant to provide a darker space so that the kids can pretend it's nighttime. Put flashlights in the tent. If available, play nighttime or nature sounds (such as crickets chirping) on a sound machine near the tent. If you have a projector with stars, you can set that out too.

Play: Invite the kids to play in the tent and use the flashlights. They can pretend it's nighttime and use the flashlights to look around inside the tent. Encourage the kids to listen closely to see what they can hear. If no sound machine is available, invite the kids to make their own "nighttime sounds," such as snoring or singing lullabies.

Play Station: The Sun Stands Still Coloring Sheet

Set up: Ahead of time, print one copy per kid of the coloring sheet and set out coloring utensils.

Play: Let the kids color. The kids can also turn the sheet over and draw a picture of a sun and moon.



Curiosity Activity: Shake and Listen

SUPPLIES: opaque containers or cups with lids (4–6); variety of small items such as rice, beads, marbles, cotton balls, paper clips, or coins (several per container)

Ahead of time, fill each container or cup with some of the small items (one type of item per container) and secure the lids.

Allergy Caution: Be aware of any food allergies or sensitivities among your kids and volunteers before doing this activity!

We're going to play a game where you'll guess what's inside each of these containers just by shaking the container and listening to the sound. You'll have to be a really good listener to figure it out.

Gather the kids in a circle and invite them to sit down. One at a time, give kids a container and invite them to shake each container. Ask them to think about what could be inside the container and pass it to the next person. Encourage kids to listen closely so they can guess what's inside. Once the container has gone all the way around the circle, ask kids to share their guesses. Open the container and reveal what's inside. Continue the activity until all containers have been passed around and opened.

We had to listen closely to figure out what was in the container. Is it hard for you to listen? Allow the kids to respond. **Sometimes it can be really hard for us to listen, but God always listens and always hears us. Today in God's big story, we're going to discover a time when Joshua asked God for help and God heard Joshua. God did something amazing to help His people! Today's Wonder Truth is **GOD HEARS US**.**

Make It Inclusive: If you have any kids in your group with a hearing impairment, you can encourage him to think about how heavy or light the container is. Also, describe the sound to give a clue about what is inside.

Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Bible, yellow poster board, marker, tape

WORD OF WONDER
God keeps His promises forever.

—from 1 Chronicles 16:15

Ahead of time, cut out a large yellow circle from posterboard. This will be the center of the sun. Cut six long, yellow strips of posterboard and write one word of the Word of Wonder on each strip. One strip will be for the reference. These strips of paper will be the sun's rays.



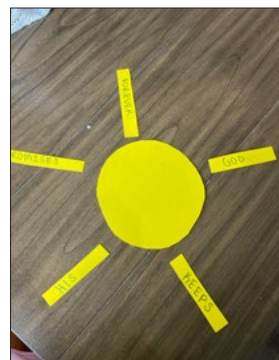
Our Word of Wonder for the Problems and Promises series is from 1 Chronicles 16:15: “God keeps His promises forever.”

Encourage the kids to do the motions and say the verse with you.

- **GOD**—Point up.
- **KEEPS**—Spread your right hand out before you from left to right.
- **HIS PROMISES**—Place an index finger on your lips. Move your hand downward and open your palm.
- **FOREVER**—Draw large circles in the air with your index finger.
- **FROM 1 CHRONICLES 16:15**—Open your hands in front of you, like opening a book.

In today’s story, God helped the Israelites keep their promise to the Gibeonites. God cares about promises. He made a promise to save His people. And God kept His promise through Jesus! The sun standing still reminds us that God hears and cares about His people. Let’s use a sun to help us remember this verse.

Review the verse with the kids several times as you model the motions. Then hold up the first word and say it aloud. **This sun ray says, “God.” Let’s attach it to the circle like a ray of sunlight. Does anyone know which word is next in today’s Word of Wonder?** Invite the kids to attach the rays to the yellow circle with tape. Continue asking the kids to name the next word in the verse until the sun is complete. Hang the sun on the wall as a meaningful decoration and as a reminder of the Word of Wonder.



Gather the kids to discuss these questions:

- **How did God keep His promise to Joshua and the Israelites?** (God helped them win the battle; stopped the sun and moon so they could see; led them to the land He promised them.)
- **Has anyone ever broken a promise to you? How did you feel?**
- **Does God break His promises?** (No!)

VIEW THE GOD’S BIG STORY VIDEO
Watch the God's Big Story Video as kids eat their snacks!



Declaring God's Wonder

Show the [Early Childhood Declaration Slide](#) and encourage the kids to say the statements and do the motions with you.

Thank You, God, that You made me! (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Make prayer hands, then point up and then to yourself.

And I am Your kid! (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Put your hands on your hips.

Jesus loves me so much; (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Spread your arms out wide to your side one at a time, then pull them in for a hug around your chest.

His love for me is big. (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Hold your arms up high and wide above your head.

The Holy Spirit leads me, (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Bring your arms down from above, making a path in front of you.

And I can follow You. (Kids repeat words and motions.)

March in place like you're following the leader.

My life can tell Your story. (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Hold your hands in front of you like an open book.

I'm a wonder; this is true. (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Put your hands up, shake your fingers, and celebrate ("praise hands").



Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words: **God, we love You and are so thankful that You're with us today. Please help us listen and understand Your Word today. Thank You for hearing us. Help us show others that you love us and hear us. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

Worship

Today we'll learn that God hears us. He hears our prayers and praises, so let's sing our praises for Him!

Play [Psalm 8, Over & Over](#) and encourage the kids to sing and dance as they praise God.

God's Big Story

SUPPLIES: Bible, Bible Story Picture (1/SG)

Bible Time Rhyme

Say the Bible time rhyme (with motions) each week before the Bible story to remind kids that what they're about to hear is part of God's big story.

I open my Bible, and what do I see? (Hold your hands together, then open your palms, as if opening a book.)

God's big story, waiting for me! (Point to yourself.)

Let's start by reading part of God's big story from the Bible. We're going to read from the Old Testament.

Read the God's Big Story Script provided. You can also show the Bible Story Picture to give kids a visual depiction as you tell the story.

GOD'S BIG STORY SCRIPT

SUPPLIES: scissors (prep only), yellow construction paper, gray construction paper, paper wads (about 10), ruler or stick (2, optional), tape (optional)

Ahead of time, cut out a circle from yellow construction paper (which will represent the sun) and one from the gray construction paper (which will be the moon).

You can tape them each to a ruler or stick, if available. Crumple about 10 paper wads and set them aside. The kids will act out the story as you tell it. If you have a small group, you can use only one or two kids to represent each group of people. If you have a very large group, call a few kids up to the stage or the front and invite them to act it out.

A long, long time ago, God promised His people—the Israelites—that they would one day live in a special place called Canaan. God helped His people beat their enemies. After many years, God led Joshua and the Israelites into the special land He promised them. Encourage all the kids to walk in place and then stop and cheer, as they pretend like they've made it to the promised land.

There were some people nearby called the Gibeonites. Choose a few kids to stand a few feet away and pretend to be the Gibeonites. **They saw that God was helping the Israelites, so the Gibeonites wanted to be on their side. The Israelites and the Gibeonites made a special promise to God and to each other. They promised to help one another and to not fight each other.** Invite a few Gibeonites to come shake hands with a few of the Israelites (or give "air high fives" if they don't want to shake hands).

But a king named Adoni-Zedek did not like that promise. He was afraid, so he asked four other kings to join him and attack the city of Gibeon. All five kings and their armies came to fight.

Choose five kids from the group to pretend to be the five kings. Invite them to make angry faces.

The Gibeonites were scared and sent Joshua a message: "Come quickly! Save us! Help us!" Invite the Gibeonites to make scared faces and gesture toward the Israelites in a "Come here!" motion.

Joshua and the Israelites kept their promise. They marched all night long to help the Gibeonites. God told Joshua to not be afraid and that God would help them win. Invite the Israelites to march in place toward the Gibeonites.

When the Israelites reached Gibeon, they surprised the enemy armies. Invite the five kings to march toward the Gibeonites. **And they were not fighting alone —God was helping them! God sent big hailstones from the sky that knocked down many of their enemies.** Toss the paper wads (or invite a few kids to toss them!) up into the air near the five kings, as if the paper wads are hailstones falling from the sky.

But the day was getting late, and Joshua was worried. Encourage all the kids to yawn, as if they're tired because it's getting late. **It would soon be dark and hard for the soldiers to see who was on their side. They didn't have lamps and lights back then, like we have now. If they didn't have light, they would not win the battle. So Joshua talked to God in front of everyone. Then Joshua said to the sun and the moon, "Stop where you are!"** Invite a kid to hold the gray moon in place on the other side of the room.

And God made something amazing happen: The sun stayed where it was in the sky and didn't go down for a whole extra day! Invite a kid to hold the yellow paper sun up over the Israelites and Gibeonites and the five kings. **With the sunlight still shining, the Israelites won the battle and saved the Gibeonites.** Encourage the Israelites to cheer.

There has never been a day like that again. God listened to Joshua—and God was fighting for His people.

Just like God listened to Joshua, He listens to our prayers too. We can trust God to do what is best all of the time. We may think our problems are too small, or even too big, to bring to God. But no matter what we face, we can trust that God will help us because God hears us. Save the paper sun and moon to use again in the Game.

Connecting the Wonder Truth

Ask the following question to help kids connect the Wonder Truth to God's big story:

Our Wonder Truth today is GOD HEARS US. Where did you see our Wonder Truth happen in the story? Allow kids to answer freely.

God rescued His people in an amazing way when He stopped the sun and the moon so they could win the battle. He rescued His people from sin by sending Jesus to die for our sins and to fix our relationship with God. We can talk with God and have a relationship with Him because of Jesus, and He always hears His people and cares about us.

Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish their activity, pray with them and thank God for always hearing us.

God, thank You for hearing us, no matter what we're feeling or what we're facing. We can always come to You and talk with You. Help us hear from You. We love You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands are open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

Blessing: May you remember that God is with you. May you talk with Him throughout your days, remembering that He promises to hear you!

Circle Time: Can You Hear?

SUPPLIES: voice-changing toy or phone app (optional)

Invite the kids to sit in a circle on the floor. **In today's story, God heard Joshua when Joshua asked God to make the sun and moon stand still. God helped His people. He cares about and listens to us too! I'm going to ask you some questions. Listen carefully.** Whisper a question so quietly that no one can hear it. Whisper, "Can you hear what I'm saying now?" See how the kids respond. Ask the same question again a little louder, but still at a very low whisper volume. Wait to see how the kids respond. **Can you hear me? I was talking so quietly that you could barely hear me! Remember though, God can hear everything. Even if we can't hear, God can! Now, let me use my regular voice and ask you a few questions.** Ask the questions in silly voices and encourage the kids to answer the questions in a variety of voices, such as quiet, loud, singing, high-pitched, fast, slow, silly, robot, low, squeaky, etc. You could also use a voice-changing toy or phone app and let the kids use it too. To make it more fun, the kids can answer in silly voices too.

Make It Inclusive: Be aware of kids who may have impaired hearing. They can use silly motions or facial expressions instead of voices.

Leader Tip: You could also station a leader in another room and give that leader a walkie-talkie and a list of the questions. Then turn on the other walkie-talkie, let the leader ask the kids the questions via the walkie-talkie, while the kids answer back into it.

Discussion Questions

- **Who was the leader of the Israelites in today's story?** (Joshua; God was their leader)
- **What did the Israelites and Gibeonites promise each other?** (to serve and protect one another; to keep peace between one another)
- **How did God keep His promise and help the Israelites?** (sent hailstones upon the enemy army; made the sun stand still so there was more daylight so they could win)
- **How do you know God hears you?**
- **What is something you can talk to God about?**
- **When and how can you talk to God?**

God hears us, no matter where we are or what we're doing. He is always with us and ready to listen and help us. Let's spend some time talking to God. We can trust that He hears us right now!

Invite kids to share prayer requests and praises and to pray for each other. Some kids may not be comfortable praying out loud. That's OK! Encourage them to pray silently and thank God for being with us and making a way for us. God hears all our prayers!

Craft: Prayer Picture

SUPPLIES: yellow construction paper (1 sheet per kid, plus extras), scissors (prep only), markers, glue or tape, kid-safe scissors (optional), yellow paper plates (1 per kid, optional)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: music from the [Problems and Promises Early Childhood playlist](#) (optional)

Ahead of time, cut about five strips of yellow construction paper per kid (about 1" wide and 5" long). You can cut out large circles from the yellow construction paper for each kid (or allow the kids to cut their own circles if your group is older). You could also use yellow paper plates instead of cutting circles.

In today's story, God listened to Joshua. God listens to our prayers too. Joshua had a problem and needed God's help. God helped Joshua by causing the sun and moon to stand still, so nighttime didn't come and the Israelites could win the battle! We may think our problems are too small, or even too big, to bring to God. But no matter what we face, we can trust that God will help us because God hears us. Think of something you want to ask God to help you with. We're going to make a sun and draw a picture on the sun of something we want to talk with God about.

Give each kid a yellow circle or allow the kids to cut out a circle from their yellow paper. Set out markers for kids to draw pictures on their suns. They can glue or tape yellow strips of paper around the sun to make sun rays.

Consider playing music from the [Problems and Promises Early Childhood playlist](#) as the kids work on their suns.

Take your suns home to remind you that God heard His people and made the sun stand still, and He hears us too!

Game: Sun Goes Down, Freeze!

SUPPLIES: paper sun and moon (from God's Big Story), yellow construction paper (optional), gray construction paper (optional), scissors (optional)

Set out the paper sun and moon from God's Big Story. If you don't have it, use yellow construction paper to make a paper sun and gray construction paper to make a paper moon.

In today's story, the Israelites made a promise to help the Gibeonites. And God promised to help His people. When the Gibeonites needed help in a battle, the Israelites came to help. And when the Israelites needed God's help in the battle, God sent hail on the enemies and made the sun and moon stop moving so the Israelites could win! Let's play a game to help us remember the story.

Invite the kids to spread out around the room.

Let's pretend you're the Israelites. Hold the paper sun up high, where the kids can see it. **Look at the sun. When the sun is up, we can move around the room and pretend to help the Gibeonites. When the sun goes down, you must freeze!** Wait a few moments and encourage the kids to move around the room. Then move the sun down.

Oh no, the sun is going down! Freeze! We can't move around if it gets dark! If anyone moves when the moon is up, you must go touch a wall. Periodically hold up the gray paper moon and remind the kids to freeze. If anyone moves when the moon is held up, have them go touch a wall. You can play several rounds, and you can let the kids take turns holding up the sun and moon.