

What is God's Armor?

Summer Key Passage:

"Therefore put on the full armor of God,
so that when the day of evil comes,
you may be able to stand your ground,
and after you have done everything, to stand."
Ephesians 6:13 (NIV)

Today's Story Point:

God's armor frees us.

Today's Bible Passage:

"So let us put aside the deeds of darkness
and put on the armor of light."
Romans 13:12b (NIV)

LEADER PREP:

In previous journeys children have considered the power of God, and they also are likely aware of the power of Satan. While it's certain that God has the ultimate authority over the devil, the Bible does caution Christians to avoid evil and its temptations. In Romans 13, Paul guides readers to "put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light." Clearly, protection is needed against the forces of the devil.

When a soldier wears armor, the soldier is able to focus less on protecting himself and more on the attack. In the same way, as we put our faith into spiritual armor, we can be freed from worries and fears and instead focus on reaching out to those still in darkness.

This journey will help children realize why spiritual armor is needed, and what it means to choose God's armor, the armor of light. As children consider their need to be protected, let them know that as they stand behind the protection of God they can be freed.

WELCOME

Coloring Page:	Experiment: Invisible Armor
<p>Invite children to color today's page, the soldier of light. Explain that when a soldier wears an armor, he is protected and so he can focus on attacking.</p> <p>SAY • When we wear our spiritual armor, we can be free from worries and fears and focus on reaching out to others in need.</p>	<p><i>Give each child a paper towel, a pen or pencil and a plastic foam cup.</i></p> <p>SAY • Think of a few things or people that are very important to you. Write or draw these on your paper towel.</p> <p><i>Allow time for children to do this, then ask:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What kind of protection is needed for these people or things?• What would you do to protect these things or people?• How can these things or people be protected without your help? <p><i>Have children crumple their paper towels into tight wads and press them firmly into the bottom of their cups. The paper towel should stay in the bottom of the cup when it is turned upside down.</i></p> <p><i>Let each child turn their cup upside down, push the cup STRAIGHT down into the water, and then pull the cup STRAIGHT up and out of the water. When each child has done this, let children remove their paper towels from their cups and see if they are wet or dry. If the activity was done correctly, the paper will be dry.</i></p> <p>ASK:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why didn't your paper get wet?• What protected these things that were important to you? <p>SAY • A pocket of air was trapped between your paper towel and the water. The air, even though it was invisible, protected your paper towel from the water. This invisible protection of air reminds me of the invisible protection that God offers us. It's called the armor of God, and we're going to be learning more about this armor in coming weeks.</p> <p>ASK:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What does armor do?• Who needs armor?• Why would you need armor? <p>SAY • Most kids don't need to wear armor like a soldier would wear. Imagine going to school each day wearing a helmet and carrying a shield. People might think you were crazy! But we do need to protect ourselves against temptation, and mean thoughts, and unkind words and actions. For this we need God's armor. When a soldier wears armor, that soldier feels secure and safe. In the same way, when we wear the armor of God we can feel safe and secure.</p> <p>ASK:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why do you think God wants to protect you?• What are things you want God to protect you from?• What kind of armor do you think God might give us? <p>We'll be examining the individual pieces of armor God provides in the next few weeks. During our lesson today, we'll explore a Bible account of a time when God protected his people, freeing them from the fear of being captured by enemies.</p>

LARGE GROUP TIME

WORSHIP:

Choose 3 to 4 songs to sing today. Encourage leaders to participate by doing the hand motions!

SUMMER KEY PASSAGE:

Show the summer key passage and read it aloud it with the kids. Let them know they have the entire summer to learn this verse, and that if it doesn't make sense now, to keep coming back to learn what the armor of God is all about!

BIBLE STORY:

God's Army

Open your Bible to 2 Kings 6 and show children where this historical account is recorded in the Old Testament. Then give each child one red and one green strip of paper. Explain that these are flags kids will use as you tell the story.

SAY • The Bible tells us in 2 Kings 6:8-23 about an unusual battle. I'm going to let you guess what happens next in the story as I tell it to you. Sometimes the people in the story will have the option of going ahead or moving forward. If you think they should move ahead, wave your green flag. Green means go. If you think they should stop or go back, wave your red flag. Red means stop. Practice for a moment, calling out "Go" and "Stop" to see if kids wave the correct flag. Then continue with the story.

The king of Aram was fighting against God's people, the Israelites. He set a trap for the Israelite army by sending his army to camp in a certain location. **If you were in the Israelite army, what would you do?** Go forward, go backwards or stop where you are? Give kids a moment to wave their flags and ask a few of them why they made that choice.

There was a man named Elisha, who was a prophet of God. This means that he gave the people messages from God. God let Elisha know where the Arameans were hiding. Elisha told the king of Israel about the trap so that the Israelite army wouldn't go there. The king of Israel checked out what Elisha said and found out it was true! So he followed Elisha's suggestion, and the Israelites were safe. This happened so many times that the king of Aram thought one of his own men was leaking information to the Israelites. Finally, he found out the Elisha was the one telling the Israelite army his plans to ambush them, so he decided to capture Elisha in the city of Dothan. **If you were Elisha, what would you do?** Stay in the city of Dothan? (Red flag.) Run away? (Green flag.) Give kids a chance to wave their flags and discuss their choices.

The Aramean army surrounded Elisha. Elisha's servant asked him, "Oh Lord, what should we do?" **What would you do?** Go forward toward the army? Or stop and run away while you can? Let them wave their flags.

Elisha told his servant not to be afraid. He prayed that the servant might see that God's army was greater than the Aramean army. God opened the servant's eyes to see horses and chariots of fire around Elisha! **What would you do now?** Let children wave their flags. Elisha went up to the blind Aramean army and told them they were in the wrong place and that he would take them to where they needed to go. He led the blind army straight to the king of Israel, who was delighted and surprised to see Elisha leading the blind army to him.

"What should I do?" The king asked Elisha. What would you do if you were the king? Wave red for put them all in prison and green for let them go. "Do not kill them," Elisha replied. "Feed them a great feast and then let them go home." The king of Israel did this and the army of Aram stopped raiding Israel. The Israelites could now be free from the worries and fears of being attacked.



ASK THE GROUP:

- What was surprising about the story?
- Why do you think the Arameans were fed and sent home instead of being killed?

SAY • God chose to fight differently than we might expect. God didn't want to hurt the Arameans. Instead, He wanted to show His power and protect the people of Israel.

ASK THE GROUP:

- How do you think Elisha felt when he was surrounded by enemies?
- How do you think Elisha's servant felt?
- Why did Elisha feel differently than his servant? What did he know that kept him from being afraid?

SAY • God was protecting Elisha the entire time. God let Elisha's servant see that an army of fire - an army of light - protected them. God protects us with his armor because he loves us. **God's armor frees us from fears and worries.**

REVIEW ACTIVITY & PRAYER

<p>Soldier of Light EASY - NO PREP</p>	<p>Protection Prayer NO PREP</p>
<p>Give each child a copy of the soldier drawing and a black crayon. Have the kids trace the soldier several times, pressing firmly with the crayon.</p> <p>When done ask them to stare at their picture for about 60 seconds, then tell them to look away at a blank wall or on the back/white side of their sheet. Children will experience an optical illusion that causes their eyes to see a yellow, glowing image of the soldier.</p> <p>SAY • A glowing soldier has appeared instead of the soldier you had traced. He is wearing the bright armor of light instead of the dark armor of the first soldier. Just like the army Elisha's servant saw, you can now see your soldier has put on the armor of light. This is a fun way for us to begin thinking about the armor of God. God's armor frees us and protects us.</p>	<p>Before you pray show children the motions:</p> <p><i>Shield:</i> Place arms over your chest like an X <i>Protect:</i> Place one arm at an angle over your head as if protecting yourself from a blow <i>Block:</i> Swiftly move left hand in an angle as if deflecting a punch.</p> <p>Invite children to do motions at the appropriate time during the prayer</p> <p>SAY • Dear Lord, please use your love to Shield (<i>motion</i>) us from things that can hurt us. Protect (<i>motion</i>) us from our fears and things that can take us away from you. Block (<i>motion</i>) the efforts of those who want to hurt us, tempt us, or harm us. In Jesus' name, amen.</p>

CHECKOUT PROCEDURE:

- As parents begin to arrive, open the door and have one leader stand just outside the classroom door with the attendance sheet.
- Take the parent's security sticker and call loudly for the child to come.
- While you wait for the child to come, tell the parents something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the service and distribute the preschool big picture cards for families.
- Before you let the child leave the classroom, look to see that the parent and child security codes match and remove the sticker from the child's shirt as they leave.

Note: If a parent lost their security sticker, send them to the Service Lead to receive a temporary sticker; never allow a child to go to a parent unless they have the security sticker.

LOOP KIDS LEADER CLEANING GUIDELINES

Immediately after each service, clean the classrooms according to the posted cleaning guidelines.