



# May 21

## The Defeat of Ai

### Large Group

**Big Picture Question:** What does God do when we obey Him?  
God blesses people who obey Him in faith.

**Bible Passage:** Joshua 8

**Christ Connection:** Joshua was a representation of Christ, leading the Israelites to victory in overcoming Canaan as Jesus leads us to victory in overcoming the world.

*Room will be decorated with flags or banners, like ones used in battle. It will be decorated with stone type walls that resemble a fort.*

### Countdown

The countdown video will be showing as kids arrive. It is set to end as Large Group time begins.

### Sing (4 minutes)

Sing **“Our God.”**

### Introduce the Session (2 minutes)

*[Large Group Leader enters the room, intently studying a map. Take several steps before noticing the kids.]*

**Leader:** “Hello, friends! I’m glad to see you are back at our old fort site. I found this really cool map here at the fort. It shows the plans for a battle. Over here you can see the city with a group of soldiers. Over here a group of soldiers is waiting in front of the city. And on this side, the map shows a group of soldiers hiding behind the city waiting for the battle. This map shows an ambush.”

“Did you know there is an ambush in today’s Bible story? Yes, we do have an ambush. Before we turn to our Bible story, let’s review on our Timeline Map to see where we’ve been.

### Timeline (1 minute)

**Leader:** “From the beginning, God planned to send Jesus to rescue us from sin. The Israelites were a part of God’s plan to send Jesus. Let’s review our previous stories by looking at our Timeline Map.

(Review the previous Bible stories....Emphasize the Israelites’ defeat at Ai in the previous week’s story and today’s victory at Ai to help kids see how God blesses obedience of faith.)

### Big Picture Question (1 minute)

**Leader:** In today’s Bible story our Big Picture Question is this, **“What does God do when we obey Him?”** The Israelites have had quite a history of obeying God one time and disobeying God another time. In today’s Bible story, the Israelites chose to obey in faith. We are going to find out what happens when God’s people obey in faith.”

## Bible story Video (9 minutes)

Show the Bible story video *“The Defeat of Ai.”*

**Leader:** “In our last Bible story, the Israelites tried to conquer Ai, but they lost because Achan had sinned. The Israelites ran away in defeat. This time, God instructed Joshua to take his troops and attack Ai. God promised that He would give the Israelites the victory. Joshua’s plan was to make Ai think the Israelites were running away again, but this time they weren’t running away. They planned an ambush.”

“Do you remember our Big Picture Question? ***What does God do when we obey Him?*** The Israelites learned that ***God blesses people who obey Him in faith.*** Read the Big Picture Question and answer with me. ***What does God do when we obey Him? God blesses people who obey Him in faith.*** Now that the Israelites obeyed God in faith, God blessed them. The Israelites won. To bless someone is to provide someone with something good. God blesses His people with something good when they obey Him in faith.

“Does God always bless obedience of faith to His will? Yes. Sometimes we don’t immediately see how God blesses our obedience of faith. God’s blessings aren’t always visible. We usually aren’t fighting battles to conquer cities like the Israelites were. But God does bless our obedience of faith. One of the ways God blesses our obedience of faith is that He is with us, helping us obey Him in faith. The way God blesses our obedience of faith isn’t always the way we think He will bless us.”

“Sometimes He will bless us in a way we don’t really recognize right away. What are some good things God has blessed you with? Sometimes God blesses our obedience of faith in ways we don’t expect.”

“The Bible tells Christians that because of Jesus, we can have a right relationship with God. We can know God, love God, and obey God in faith. We can be victorious over our enemies because of Jesus. That does not mean that everything will always happen the way we want it to. It doesn’t mean that no one will ever be mean to us or hurt our feelings. What it means is that as Christians, we have Jesus on our side helping us endure hard times. Ultimately, Christians will be victorious over sin and spend eternity with Jesus.”

### Key Passage:

“And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.  
**Joshua 24:15**”

### Key Passage (4 minutes)

**Leader:** “We have two more weeks to memorize our key passage. Remember, we have a choice whether or not to follow God. Also remember our big picture question. ***What does God do when we obey Him? God blesses people who obey Him in faith.***”

Read the key passage. Lead kids to say the passage. Invite the boys to say the first word, the girls to say the second word, the boys will say the third word, and so forth.

### Prayer (2 minutes)

**Leader:** “***What does God do when we obey Him? God blesses people who obey Him in faith.*** What are some possible ways God blesses obedience of faith to His will? Good answers. We never know exactly how God will bless our obedience of faith, but God will bless. How did God bless the Israelites in our Bible story? Right, the Israelites were able to defeat the city of Ai.”

“I have enjoyed our time together today. I hope you all will come back next week so we can explore another Bible story about Joshua and the Israelites as they conquer the promised land.”

“After I close in prayer, watch your small group leader for the signal to march to your small group. Close in prayer. Ask God to help boys and girls remember today’s big picture question each time they are faced with the choice of whether or not to obey in faith. Thank God for sending Jesus, the only perfectly obedient One, to die for our sins.”

### Dismiss to Small Groups