

Junior Soldiers

Unit 10 : Lesson 8



Whom shall I fear?

PURPOSE : For the children to explore and understand that they can trust God to help them face their fears.

**‘The Lord is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life—of whom shall I be afraid?’**

Psalm 27:1

Consider & Prepare

Read:

2 Chronicles 20:1–30

Psalm 27:1

Also read through ‘The Main Thing’ section so you are familiar with what you will be talking about and won’t get stuck in the notes while engaging with the children.

From this lesson we want to help the children to:

- Discover the story of Jehoshaphat
- Identify some of the things that might scare them
- Explore some ways that God helps us to be courageous and face our fears

Monster movies aren’t real and the fears we face in scary stories are nothing to be afraid of in real life, even though at the time they can make us pretty scared. When we face real fearful situations within our own lives, we do not have to go it alone. God is with us all the time and so we are able to take our fears to him and he will help us to be strong and courageous as we face them. Heroes of the faith, like Jehoshaphat, show how time and time again, God has proven faithful to those who have trusted him with their fears.

This lesson has been put together not only to help children explore how they can trust God but to also give some teaching around this area of fear during the build up to Halloween. This is a time when there is lots of talk about scary things, including scary images and dress-ups. You may have children in your group that are easily frightened by some of the aspects of the culture surrounding Halloween, so it would be great to engage them in this lesson and help them to put some strategies into place when standing up against things they might be frightened of.

During this lesson, it is important that you allow children to feel safe as they share about things that scare them. We are all frightened of different things and, at times, these fears might seem silly or unjustified to others, so make sure that children will not be made fun of for sharing the things they are scared of. It is really helpful to be able to share these things so that they might not seem so scary and so that we know there are those around us offering support—including God. It’s also important for you to share things that frighten you and how God has helped give you courage in some of those circumstances.

What you will need:

For 'Connecting In'

- Put quiz into PowerPoint presentation (if you choose this option)
- Data projector (if doing the above)

For 'The Main Thing'

- A roll of butchers paper
- Textas
- Drawing pins or tape

For 'Tying In'

- Music for musical statues
- Sound system to play music
- Newspapers to make paper hats
- Sticky tape

For 'Home & Beyond'

- Print off the Home & Beyond sheets for each child.



Connecting In

Quiz time...

For this quiz activity you might like to:

- Ask the questions from the front giving them options a, b, and c to choose from, making sure that you repeat the options.
- They can race to answer individually or in teams
- Or you could put it up on a screen using a data projector, and get the children into small groups and get one person from each group to run up with the answer for the question that is up on the screen. *(Make sure you don't put the asterisk on the screen when displaying, as that is the answer to each question.)*

Do you know these fearless Bible heroes?

1. Who stood up to the giant Goliath and defeated him? *(If you need, you can find the answer in 1 Samuel 17:50.)*

- A. Moses
- B. David*
- C. Saul

2. Who were the three men that refused to bow down to an idol and were cast into the fiery furnace? *(If you need, you can find the answer in Daniel 3:12.)*

- A. Larry, Moe, and Curly
- B. The Three Amigos
- C. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego*

3. Who was thrown to the lions but not eaten? *(If you need, you can find the answer in Daniel 6:16.)*

- A. Daniel*
- B. Noah
- C. Solomon

4. Who risked her life to save the nation of Israel from a plot to destroy them? *(If you need, you can find the answer in Esther 7:3.)*

- A. Mary
- B. Esther*
- C. Ruth

5. Who took on King Ahab and the prophets of Baal and won? (If you need, you can find the answer in 1Kings 18:25.)

- A. Isaiah
- B. Elijah*
- C. Jeremiah

6. Who led the people of Judah to victory over the Moabites and Ammonites? (If you need, you can find the answer in 2 Chronicles 20:27.)

- A. Jehoshaphat*
- B. Hezekiah
- C. Josiah

Link: 'Wow, I wonder how many of them your group got right. There were some people in the Bible that were pretty brave when they were in some scary situations and we've only mentioned a few of them.

- I wonder if you have ever been in a scary situation.
- Is there anything that helps to make you feel better or more brave when you are scared?

'There are a number of verses and stories in the Bible that tell us that if we are 'with God' we don't need to be afraid, or that we are to be strong and courageous because God is with us. Let's look us Psalm 27:1 and see what it has to say about this.

*'The Lord is my light and my salvation whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life of whom shall I be afraid?'*
Psalm 27:1

'Today we are going to look closely at how we can trust God when we are in scary situations and see how some of the people in the Bible trusted God.'

The Main Thing

Halloween...

'Every October, the world gets a little silly and somewhat scary. We hear scary music and songs about monsters. We see a lot more scary movies on television and TV shows have a scary theme to them. Some people even decorate their houses with spooky skeletons, ghosts, spiderwebs etc. It all leads up to the last night of the month, 31 October, when sometimes boys and girls dress up as superheroes, princesses and, yes, creepy and spooky monsters so they can go and collect lollies by going door to door!

'It's kind of strange how some people dedicate one night a year to all things spooky and scary. There is a part of us—well, for many of us—that enjoys being scared by watching scary movies or going into haunted houses at theme parks and sometimes even when people play practical jokes on us and are trying to give us a fright. Not only have scary stories and monsters been a part of books and stories for centuries, but horror films are the most popular movies in the world! A good scary story can give us a release: when we jump and get surprised it's kind of a stress reliever. We get the enjoyment of a fun, thrilling story, we get to laugh at ourselves with our friends, and best of all... we can walk away from it knowing it was all make believe!

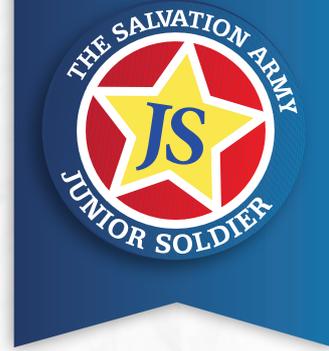
'Despite what some silly or unkind people might tell you, there is no such thing as a vampire, zombie, Frankenstein monster, werewolf or creature from the Black Lagoon. It's pretend; made up stories to make people scared and give them a fright. In the movies it used to be someone dressed up to play the part but with the technology of today these made up characters are created using computer animation. It's not real, and it's not going to come crashing into your room at night because you happened to watch a particular movie or television show.'



Crazy monster musical statues...

For this activity you will need some groovy music, the 'Monster Mash' by Bobby Pickett would work well (it's on iTunes), and help you have fun while playing the game.

- Have the children dance or move around to the music while it is playing.
- When the music stops you are going to call out a made up creature or character for the children to pretend to be (see list below for suggestions but you might like to add some of your own).
- When you have finished the list you will call out the last creature/character for the children to be: 'Hop like a six-headed snake with 12 legs and a curly horn growing out of its head!'
- 'What? There's no such thing!' You're right, six-headed snakes with 12 legs and curly horns don't exist. But then neither do zombies or werewolves or dancing skeletons. It's all made up. It's all pretend.



Creature/character list

Walk like a zombie

Howl like a werewolf

Dance like a skeleton

Pull a face like Frankenstein

Show your teeth like a vampire

Pose like a ghost

'It would be nice if all our real life scary situations were like a horror movie, just pretend. Unfortunately, we all have fears that are very real. Sometimes our fears might feel small, like a fear of the dark or a pop quiz at school that you are NOT prepared for. But some fears might feel much bigger, like bullies that give us a hard time everyday at school or a serious illness in the family. The good news is that we do not need to fear these things either. There is someone who wants to help us to face these fears, and that's God! He can send people to help us or people to talk to if we're scared; we can pray and talk to him, and we can read stories in the Bible of people who were scared but found courage.

'If you read the Bible, there are so many stories about people who faced their fears with God's help. There was the young boy who took down a mighty giant. There were the three young men thrown into a fiery furnace when they refused to bow down and worship an idol. And there was the faithful prophet who was tossed into a lion's den for praying to God. Time and time again we can read of people who asked God for help—and God helped! Sometimes he made the scary situation go away, and sometimes he made the person feel braver, so they weren't scared anymore.

'Today, I want to explore the situation of one of the heroes in the Bible that you may not have heard about. He was the king of a nation called Judah and he was not only facing his own doom, but the end of his entire nation. A great army was on the move, ready to destroy him and his people. Everyone was terrified, but when fear gripped his nation, good King Jehoshaphat knew exactly how to face it.'

(You should have already pre-read 2 Chronicles 20:1–30 so that you are familiar with the story)

Have everyone make a paper hat (using newspaper and sticky tape) because they are all about to become soldiers in a war.

When they're ready, they can all put on their hats. Pick someone to be Jehoshaphat and split the rest into the two opposing armies on different sides of the room (Moabites and Ammonites to one side, Judah to the other). Jehoshaphat goes in the middle (pick someone with a bit of character who will act the part) and everyone does as the narrator says. Narrator: emphasise the underlined words, and prompts are enclosed in the brackets below for what your cast should do.

'The Moabites and the Ammonites had come to fight, hear them roar ('Roar!') and the people of Judah knew they didn't have a chance to beat them, they were chickens (chicken noises). Jehoshaphat was a brave king (stand tall, show muscles etc.) who could have sent his army off to do battle. He could have looked (hand above eyes, looking around in the distance) for another nation to help. He could have been mad at God (look angry, shake fist etc.) for allowing such a dangerous enemy to come after them—especially since Jehoshaphat

was one of the rare kings who truly loved God! Instead, Jehoshaphat proved faithful to God and gave us the secret to facing our fears.

'When Jehoshaphat heard the Moabites and Ammonites roar ('Roar!') and he realised his people were chickens (chicken noises), he took his fears to the Lord. As soon as he knew his nation was in trouble, he went to his knees (on to knees to pray) and asked God for help. Too many times our first instinct is to try to fix things on our own, but when we try to take matters into our own hands, we usually make a bigger mess. God wants us to go to Him when we are afraid.

'Second, Jehoshaphat did what God said to do. God told Jehoshaphat that the battle was His to win and to be brave (stand tall, show muscles etc.). He told the king to tell his army to be brave (J. tells them, they all look brave) they were going to march straight at the enemy—wait, not yet—even though they knew they didn't stand a chance. It took great courage to do what God required, but Jehoshaphat and his people prepared to do just that.

'Finally, Jehoshaphat expected God to give him victory, he was happy (big smile from Jehoshaphat) because he knew with God they could win. Expecting a victory gave Jehoshaphat and the people of Israel the courage to obey God. Jehoshaphat knew the story of David and Goliath, and he knew that God had always proven faithful when the people obeyed him.

'That's why he led Judah into battle—wait, not yet—and God gave him the victory. This time his army roared ('Roar!') and the enemy ran away like chickens as the Judeans marched at them—okay, now, go! (J. and Judah march at Moabites and Ammonites who, theoretically, run away like chickens.)

All come and sit down.

'Future generations would not only have David's story of defeating Goliath, but Jehoshaphat's story, too, to give them courage in the face of fear. How blessed we are that we have these stories and so many more reminding us that we do not need to be afraid: God is with us, and God can help us through our fears.

'It takes courage to stand up for Jesus, to defend the weak, and to take a stand against sin. But if we turn to God, He will not only give us direction, he will also use our courage to show others His faithfulness—like he did for the boy who faced the giant, the three men in the fiery furnace, the prophet in the lion's den and the king with the chicken army!

'Whatever fears you have today, let me encourage you to face them by first seeking the Lord. Trust God with your fears, and trust him to give you direction on how to face them. Most important, trust him enough to obey when he tells you to act. Remember the story of Jehoshaphat, and all the great heroes of the Bible. God was faithful to every one of them, and if you trust God with your fears, he will be faithful to you!'

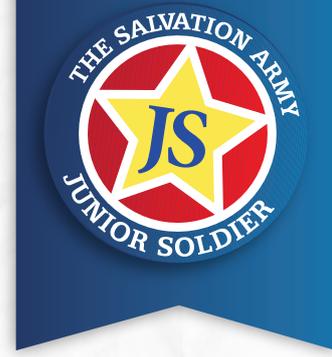


Tying In

Giants against fear...

For this section you will need a roll of butchers paper that you can cut off into child-sized portions. You will need it to be big enough for children to lie down on and trace their outline on it.

- Encourage each of the children to lie down and have a leader trace around them or, if you have a large group, you can divide up into small groups and choose one child to trace around.
- Encourage the children to add some detail to their outline.
- When they have finished adding some details, get them to write some names—as many as they can think of either from the Bible (perhaps some you have spoken about today) and also from real life—of people who have God in their lives and have stood up against fear.



'The stories in the Bible tell us about real people with real fears in real situations. These people are heroes not because they overcame fear by themselves, but because they trusted God with their fears. If we have God with us, we can be heroes that can stand up and be courageous in scary situations.'

- We chatted briefly earlier about some of the things that we are scared of, I get frightened when...
- I wonder what things you are scared of or that frighten you. *(Allow children some time to share, helping to create a safe environment – without ridicule – for them to share about the things that scare them.)*
- Let's write or draw some of these things under the feet of our giants
- *(Pin or tape up the people outlines (giants) around the room a little higher than the children so as to create a sense that they are bigger, like giants surrounding them.)*
- Stand in a circle near the giants that are hanging in the room.

'Wow, how does it feel to have a whole heap of others around you, supporting you. It is so much better than facing things on your own. This is sort of like how we can feel when we know that God is with us in scary situations or when we are frightened about something. God has supported all those people that you have put inside the outline and he will be there to support you, too. The things that we are scared about and that frighten us have all been put underneath the feet of the cutouts, where they belong. God can help us to feel like there is an army of giants around us, strong and supported and help us to keep our fears down where they belong and not take over how we feel.'

Take time to go around the circle and pray for each other and some of the things that the children are scared of. Pray that God will give each of us strength and courage as we face difficult situations in our everyday lives.

Home & Beyond

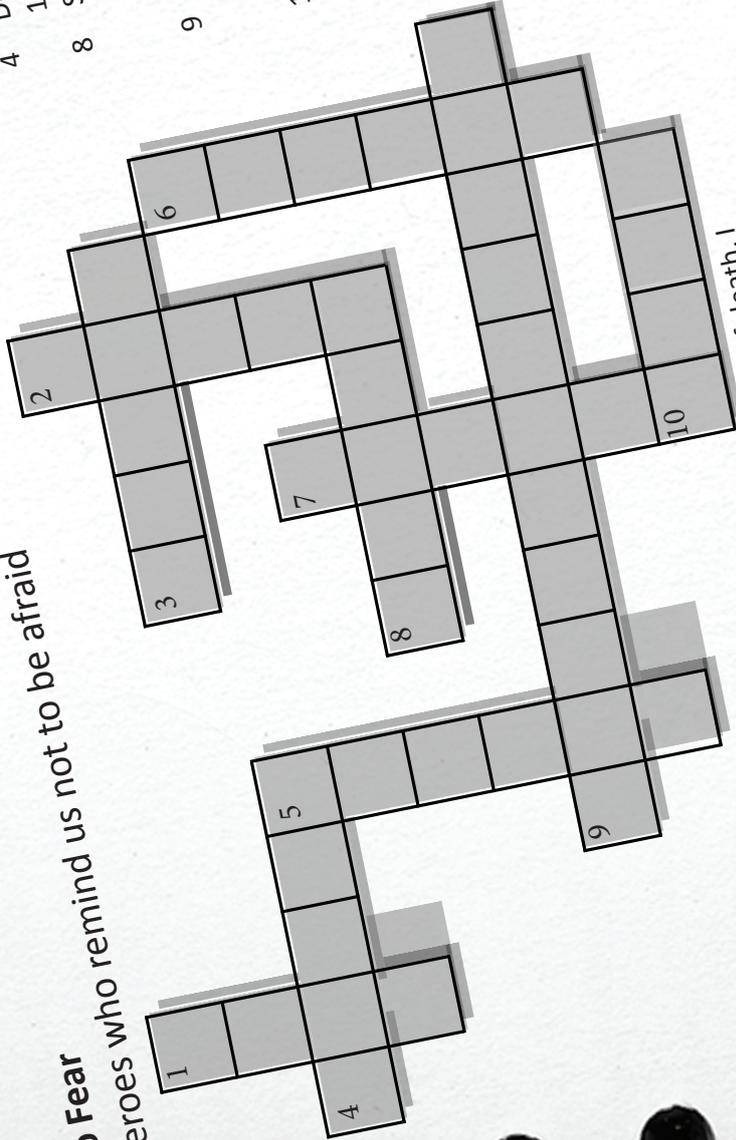
Print off the 'Home & Beyond' cards attached. The children might like to keep these in their journals or notebook where they could write or stick the challenges, reflect, answer questions or complete activities each week.

Standing against fear...

- Hand out a 'Home & Beyond' sheet for each child with the crossword puzzle.
- Encourage the children to have a go at this puzzle with members of their family or their Big Bud.
- Bring it back next time to check out the answers together.

Home & Beyond

No Fear
 Heroes who remind us not to be afraid



- ACROSS**
- 3 Denied Jesus because he was afraid, but later faced death and prison (Luke 22:61)
 - 4 Defeated a mighty giant (1Samuel 17:50)
 - 8 Stood up to Pharaoh even though he was afraid of public speaking (Exodus 7:1-2)
 - 9 Trusted God when the Moabites and Ammonites tried to invade Judah (2 Chronicles 20:27)
 - 10 Left her home land behind to be with Naomi (Ruth 1:16)

Have a go at this puzzle with your family or Big Bud and bring it back next time to share your answers.



Junior Soldiers

- DOWN**
- 1 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will _____ no evil (Psalm 23:4)
 - 2 Did not want to die, but went to the cross for our sins (Mark 15:37)
 - 5 Was thrown to the lions but unharmed (Daniel 6:16)
 - 6 Stood up to King Ahab and the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18:25)
 - 7 A queen and a Jew who risked her life to save her people (Esther 7:3)



