WEEK 3
LESSON GUIDE

ALONG the WAY

BIG IDEA

God is bigger than we could ever understand.

BIBLE

God Speaks to Job: Job 38:1–7, 34–41; Matthew 6:25–34

ABOUT THIS WEEK

When we spend time traveling, we come to realize the world is actually so much bigger than we ever dreamed. This week, we'll explore God's response as Job tried to understand what was happening in his life and why. God didn't just give Job an answer, though, but asked him a bunch of questions that help us all recognize that **God is bigger than we could ever understand.**

WHAT? What are we talking about today?

ACTIVITY | Rock Paper Scissors Train

- INSTRUCTIONS: *For this activity, you'll need to pair kids up. To play, have each pair play "Rock, Paper, Scissors." The winner shouts, "All aboard!" and the other player has to stand behind and place their hands on the winner's shoulders. The pair marches around the room, chanting, "Chug-a-chug-a-chug-a-chug-a-choo-choo!" Once they meet another "train," the players in front play "Rock, Paper, Scissors," and the entire losing train has to join the winning train! Keep playing until the final two trains face off and form one long train!*
- It's time to board a train—the *Along the Way Express!* The train started small, with just one person being the engine, but it eventually grew really big and included everyone in the room!
- Today we'll talk about something—or someone—being bigger than we could ever know or understand! *All aboard!*

QUESTION | What would be the most amazing place to visit?

- INSTRUCTIONS: *Ask the following question. Encourage them to dream big! You can have every kid shout their answer but then ask a few kids to share their answers with everyone. Comment briefly on their answers—and have fun with this!*
- What would be the most amazing place to visit?
- Those all sound like amazing places. There's a whole world of adventure to discover, all around us! God created this entire world but still makes time to talk to us and care about us! That's the most amazing of all, right?

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

SCRIPTURE | Job 38:1–7, 34–41 (God Speaks to Job)

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- INSTRUCTIONS: *Read the passage and retell the Bible story using the Scripture segments and talking points provided below. Show a short clip from a video like this one (0:00-1:33), or something like it, to show our beautiful planet before you begin. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cl_kXbhTi8k)*
- Welcome aboard the *Along the Way* Express, everyone! Along the way, you might see towering, snow-capped mountains, shimmering blue lakes, lush green forests, rolling hills, winding rivers, and views of the magnificent sea. And tonight, when the sun goes down, you'll see more stars than you ever knew were in the sky!
    - Isn't God's creation amazing?
    - What is your favorite thing about nature?
- God creates beautiful, wonderful things. God created you and me, and we are beautiful and wonderful, too! Even so, sometimes difficult things happen to us and around us. When they do, we might start to question why God allowed it to happen.
    - That's what was happening with our friend Job. He was going through a pretty tough time. He lost his family and everything he owned, including his health. To make matters worse, his friends, who started off being somewhat of a comfort, turned out to be the worst comforters ever!
    - Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar, and later Elihu started to suggest that Job was suffering because he had done something wrong and deserved to be punished by God. Or maybe God wasn't punishing Job, but trying to use these hard experiences to teach him something. But truth be told, it really wasn't their place to say. They weren't God, and it was only God who could answer Job about why it was happening.
- So God finally spoke. And instead of answering these questions, God asked Job and his friends questions, too.
- Read Job 38:1–3.
    - God was saying, "Who are you to question my plans without knowing all the facts? Get ready to listen, and I'll ask *you* some important questions."
    - It's not because God doesn't want us to ask questions. But their questions showed that they forgot who they were dealing with. They forgot they were talking to God, the same God who knows everything and can do more than we could ever hope to understand.
- Let's read Job 38:4–7, 34–41.
- *Pause after each question mark and invite kids to try and supply the answer.*
    - By asking all these questions, God was trying to show Job and his friends that they could never fully understand God's ways. God is just too big for humans to even imagine, and the Bible says that God's ways are higher than our ways and God's thoughts are higher than our thoughts.
    - But that doesn't mean we mean nothing to God. It's exactly the opposite. God cares about us deeply, delights in us, and wants to know us. While we may not know all the answers, we have a God that is big enough to handle our questions, is patient with us when we don't understand, and we can trust that God has it all under control.
- Even when everything feels like it's going wrong, we can leave it up to God. Even when we don't have all the answers, and we don't understand, God is with us!

BIG IDEA | God is bigger than we could ever understand.

- INSTRUCTIONS: *Introduce kids to today's Big Idea.*
- God is bigger than we could ever understand.

ACTIVITY | What You Don't See

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- INSTRUCTIONS: *For this activity, you'll need to glue two pieces of different colored paper back to back. Trim the edges if necessary so that the other color is not visible from any one side. To conduct this activity, split the kids in half, creating a clear space in between the groups. Stand in the middle and present the prepared paper so that each group can only see one side of the paper. You can also do this as an upfront activity with two volunteers standing on either side of the paper.*
- On the count of three, the first team to correctly answer this question is the winner. One, two, three.
    - What color is this paper?
    - Why are you each giving me a different answer?
- It must be because… each side of this paper is a different color! You were both correct and also incorrect because you could only see that one color depending on which side of the room you were on. Only I knew that this paper was two different colors.
- That's the thing about being human. What we know is limited to what we can see and experience for ourselves, which can feel big to us, but it's definitely not as big as everything that's going on in the world. And that's what God sees—everything.
- The world is filled with all sorts of tragedies, disasters, and unrest. And it's natural to wonder and ask God questions. But sometimes when God answers our questions, it may be to show us that we are not seeing things the same way God sees them. And that's what God did with Job.
- God is bigger than we could ever understand. And even though we might never understand, we can trust God's view of the big picture.

SCRIPTURE | Matthew 6:25–34

- INSTRUCTIONS: *Read the passage out loud or invite a volunteer to read for the group.*
- This passage contains one of many teachings of Jesus while he was on earth. People came from everywhere to listen to his words because he revealed truths about God that taught them how to follow God.
- What is one word you heard over and over in this passage? Yup. "Worry." Jesus was teaching the people that worrying won't solve anything. He even asked, *"Can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?"* He wasn't just saying, "Don't worry, be happy!" He understood that when you trust God, you know God will show up for you.
- Jesus was able to tell people not to worry because he knew God. This passage reminds us that God created everything in the universe, and even though God is bigger than we could ever understand, God cares about each and every one of us. When we realize that we are in the hands of our big God, we can stop worrying and turn our focus to God. And when we *"seek first his kingdom and his righteousness,"* God will take care of everything else!

VIDEO | Teaching Video (Week 3)

- INSTRUCTIONS: *Play this week's episode of Grow TV. (https://vimeo.com/928571871/b08bea32e3)If you're short on time, show the illustrated Bible story video. (https://vimeo.com/996231954/79c705e8b2)*

NOW WHAT? What does God want us to do about it?

REFLECTION | What If

- INSTRUCTIONS: *Dim the lights in your space and invite kids to close their eyes.*
- What if God spoke to you right now?
- What do you think God's voice sounds like?
- What are some questions you might have for God?

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- Job went through a terrible situation—many terrible situations, in fact. Even though he still loved and trusted God, he couldn't figure out the "why." Why was this happening? After listening to all his friends give their own (not-so-great) explanations, he knew he could only wait for God.
- But when God shows up, God doesn't say why. Maybe you've experienced something like this before.
    - Have you ever asked a grown-up, "Why?" and had them answer, "Because I said so?"
    - Did you enjoy that response?
    - Yeah, I didn't like it when people said that to me when I was younger, too. (I still don't like it.)
- But if we think about it, the grown-ups who love and care for us probably see a bigger picture than we can.
    - Can we trust them even though we may not fully understand the reason why?
    - It might seem strange when grown-ups don't supply a good enough reason—in our opinion, anyway—but we can trust that they give us instructions meant to help us and protect us.
- God doesn't tell us, "Because I said so," but sometimes the things God does can be pretty mysterious. But because we love and trust God, we don't need to wait for an explanation. **God is bigger than we could ever understand,** and that's awesome!

MEMORY VERSE | Psalm 121:8 (NIV)

- INSTRUCTIONS: *Learn the memory verse together using any combination of the resources provided: memory verse coloring page, sign language motions, or choose from this list of our favorite memorization techniques!*
- "The Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore."

PRAYER

- God, you are amazing. You created everything in this world. You are bigger than we could ever understand, and yet you love us so much. Thank you for taking care of us every day. Amen.

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