

Handwriting on the Wall

By RLD Editorial Team

for use as
STEP 1 

Lesson 11**Focus:**

Nations that defy God
are in danger.

Lesson 11**Bible Basis:**

Daniel 5:1-18, 20,
21b-31

Lesson 11**Memory Verse:**

“If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” —2 Chronicles 7:14

Your students will watch a news story about Nigerian children and discuss the dangers of ignoring God’s commands.

Materials:

Internet access

➤ **Have any of you visited another country?** (Allow students to share about any other countries where they have lived or visited.)

Sometimes when we grow up in one place, we don’t always know what it’s like to live in a very different culture. Nigeria is one country that is often in the news for being targeted by terrorist attacks.

➤ **What have you heard about Nigeria?** (Allow your students to share. If they haven’t heard anything about Nigeria, you might say something like: **Nigeria is a country in West Africa that is at war with an Islamist terrorist group called Boko Haram. Both sides of the war recruit children to fight as soldiers. The children do not have a choice, and if they try to resist becoming soldiers, it could cause devastating harm to them or their families.**)

Let’s watch a quick news report about child soldiers in Nigeria being released.

Play the following video [2:17; stop at 1:40 to avoid descriptions of children’s soldiering tasks]:

Title: Nearly 900 child recruits released from Nigerian militia

Source: CNN.com

URL: <https://www.cnn.com/videos/world/2019/05/10/anti-boko-haram-militia-releases-900-child-recruits-nigeria-mckenzie-vpx.cnn>

Short Description: The Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF), a Nigerian militia dedicated to fighting ISIS-affiliated terrorist group Boko Haram, have released 894 children it recruited as soldiers, UNICEF said.

After your class has watched the news video, discuss the following questions together:

➤ **What bothered you the most about seeing this video?** (Students answers will vary. Some may comment about how the students bowed to the statue, or how they didn't know what Facebook was, etc.)

Nigerian Christians face persecution for their beliefs. By meeting at churches and by professing their faith, these Christians risk attacks from Boko Haram.

➤ **Do you think the leaders of the Nigerian army want the best for their citizens? Why or why not?** (The armies employ child soldiers, they use violence, and they don't use helpful methods for gaining peace.)

The Bible shows us many examples of nations refusing to obey God's commands. It is important for leaders to obey the principles of God's Word, even when it's hard. A country who defies God should be prepared for a lot of trouble.

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher's guide; your Step 4 appears below.)

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Materials:

- Pens/pencils (1 per student)
- Index cards (1 per student)

If your class is meeting online, have teens come to class with index cards and pens/pencils.

It can be difficult to learn what is happening in the world around you—especially when you’re young! But even if we can’t change everything about government, we can put God’s action plan into place over our own lives.

Hand out index cards and pens/pencils to your teens. If your class is meeting online, invite teens to have their cards and pens/pencils ready.

We’re going to pretend that you are each the ruler of a country. Choose a name for your country and write it at the top of your index card. Keeping in mind God’s commands, we’re going to decide the best way to govern this new world.

➤ **What are three rules that your country should follow? Write them in your index card below the country name.** (Let students figure out some biblical principles that are relevant to their age group and life experience. For example, rules like TREAT OTHER PEOPLE WITH LOVE or PROTECT THOSE WHO ARE WEAK would still make sense for a middle schooler. Have them write out the rules for their country on the map.)

➤ **What things can help people successfully follow the country’s rules?** (It’s easier to follow these rules by reading the Bible, learning from more experienced elders, praying regularly, spending time with other Christians, learning from past mistakes, going to church, etc.)

➤ **How can we apply this activity to our own lives at home?** (Help students grasp that national obedience starts in the hearts of individual people.)

If you have time, let students share their country names and rules with the entire class. Challenge your students to take home their maps and display them where they can easily be seen. Ask them to assess how their country measures up each day this week by evaluating whether they lived by the rules they established for their country, and whether or not their actions defied or honored God.

Close in prayer, praying specifically for the wisdom and obedience of government leaders around the world.

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