



ISRAEL'S UNFAITHFULNESS

JUDGES 1-3

Instructions

The curriculum we use for elementary aged children goes through the Bible chronologically. Currently we are finishing up the book of Deuteronomy. So that your child can continue their journey through the Bible we will be putting together VERY basic Bible lessons for you to do at home. Below you will find a summary of this week's Bible passage. All you have to do is read it with your kids. Then you will see two different sets of discussion questions. One for older kids (3rd-4th grade range) and one for younger kids (Kinder-2nd grade range). Read the discussion questions with your kids. Remember, discussion is not one sided, it's different people talking together. Give your kids the opportunity to think and speak. I pray the Lord speaks to you and your family as you dive into His word together.

Tell the Bible Story

Joshua had died. Without a strong leader, the Israelites disobeyed God and worshiped false gods. They ignored and forgot about the one true God. God was angry. He let an enemy king take over the Israelites, and they served that king for eight years.

Then the Israelites remembered how good they had it when they loved and obeyed God. They cried out to Him, "Save us!" God wanted the people to love and obey Him, so God raised up Othniel (AHTH nih el) to rule over them as the first judge.

Othniel led the Israelites into battle against the king of Aram, and God helped the Israelites win. The land was peaceful for 40 years. Then Othniel died.

Again, Israel ignored God and forgot Him. God gave the king of Moab power to attack the Israelites and defeat them. The Israelites served the king of Moab for 18 years. The Israelites were



sad. They remembered how good they had it when they loved and obeyed God. They cried out to Him, “Save us!” So God raised up Ehud (EE huhd) to save them.

The Israelites sent Ehud to the king of Moab, who was a very large man. Ehud had a double-edged sword under his clothes. Ehud said, “I have a secret message for you.” The king dismissed all his attendants so he was alone with Ehud.

When the king stood up, Ehud pulled out his sword. He pushed it into the king’s belly. The sword was swallowed up by the king’s fat. Ehud couldn’t even pull it out! Ehud escaped down the porch, locking the doors of the room behind him. Ehud was gone when the king’s servants came in. The door was locked and they thought he was using the bathroom. They waited, but the king never opened the door. The servants got worried, so they unlocked the door and found their king dead on the floor!

When Ehud escaped, he blew a ram’s horn and he became the Israelites’ leader. “God will help us defeat our enemies, the Moabites,” Ehud told them. So the Israelites battled the Moabites and took control over them. There was peace in the land for 80 years.

When Ehud died, the Israelites ignored and forgot God again. They turned away from Him. When they remembered how good they had it when they loved and obeyed God, they cried out to Him, “Save us!” God sent a third judge, Shamgar (SHAM gahr), to save them.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

The judges saved the people from the consequences of their sin, but not the cause of it. God’s plan was to one day send a true Deliverer—Jesus, His own Son—to be the King of His people. Jesus saves people from sin forever.

Discussion & Bible Skills - Older

Guide your kids to open their Bibles to Judges 2. Explain that today’s Bible story comes from Judges 1–3. Explain to kids that the Book of Judges is the second of twelve books of Old Testament History. No one knows for certain who wrote down the words of Judges, but these words are God’s words.



Read aloud Judges 2:18-19. Ask the following questions:

1. What cycle of behavior were the Israelites in?

Guide your kids to recall that every time another nation ruled the Israelites, the Israelites would cry out for the Lord to deliver them. God would then raise up a judge to save them from the enemy. As the years went by, they forgot, went back into sin, and were captured by their enemies. This cycle of loving God, forgetting Him, doing evil, being captured, and then being delivered was repeated.

2. What did the Israelites need to be rescued from their enemies?

Lead your kids to discuss how the Israelites needed a Savior who could deliver them once and for all. They needed a Savior who would deliver them from their sin, not just their enemies.

3. How does Jesus deliver sinners?

Help your kids understand that Jesus is the only person who can free us from our sin. The Israelites continued to battle their enemies and the sin within until God sent the true Deliverer—Jesus. We are controlled by sin until we trust Jesus to deliver us from it. Jesus sets us free from sin, so we can stand against sin and can become more like Jesus.



SAY:

Each time the Israelites ignored and forgot about the one true God, God allowed Israel's enemies to overtake them. God raised up Othniel to deliver Israel from the king of Aram. He raised up Ehud to deliver them from the king of Moab.

Discussion & Bible Skills - Younger

Help your kids use the table of contents to find the Book of Judges. Explain that Judges, like Joshua, is in the Old Testament in the History division. Judges contains the history of Israel after they were in the land but before God gave them a human king to lead them.

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

1. What did the Israelites do that angered God?

They forgot about His commands, worshiped other gods; Judg. 1:11-12

2. Did God abandon the people for their sin?

No, He provided judges to rescue them when they repented; Judg. 1:16



3. Who were the judges we learned about today?

Othniel, Ehud, and Shamgar; Judg. 3

4. Why do you think the people kept turning from God?

Guide your kids to discuss the sin nature we are all born with. We naturally drift away from God. We think we know what is best for us, and we tend to distrust God. We cannot save ourselves.

5. What makes Jesus different from the judges in the Old Testament?

Guide your kids to discuss the fact that Jesus is not just a man; He is also the Son of God. Jesus lived a perfect life and died for us to make the way to live with God. Jesus can change our hearts to repent, love God, and obey Him. The judges could not change people's hearts but only remind them of God's laws.

6. How do we know God still loves us even when we sin?

Guide your kids to discuss the fact that God sent His Son to die for sinners. Remind them that, in Jesus, God declares us righteous. Jesus' perfect obedience is given to us because He took on our sin. Our sin will not stop God's love. We repent because we love God, not to earn God's love. Sin is not best for us—God is.



SAY:

God's people repeatedly turned from Him. They did not have new hearts. The judges could not change their hearts. In Jesus, we have new hearts that want to repent, love God, and obey Him.