



UNIT 9 | SESSION 1

THE PEOPLE KEPT SINNING

JUDGES 2

KEY PASSAGE:

Romans 6:23

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What is the fair payment for sin? The fair payment for sin is death.

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.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

In the Book of Judges, we see a cycle of sin, oppression, repentance, rescue, obedience, and then back to sin. The condition of man's heart when left to himself will "do what is right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25). Our own hearts lead us to sinful behavior that leads to enslavement to sin. Judges reveals who we are apart from God's grace.

The Book of Judges also uncovers what God is like. He is rich in love and quick to restore those who turn to Him. He is gracious; every time the people of Israel repented and turned from their sins, He sent deliverance. He restored Israel from the edge of destruction. God also revealed Himself as able to save no matter how difficult or deep the captivity. In fact, we see God's mercy clearly when He sent the judge Samson when the people didn't even ask for deliverance. In these warrior-deliver stories, God showed that what His people really needed was a king— not just any king but a perfect king who would rule His people with perfect justice and mercy.

It is easy for us as modern readers to judge the people of Israel harshly. How could they turn away from a God who delivered them from their enemies over and over again? But how easy is it for us to be tempted away from love for God and love

created things more than the Creator?

What gives us hope and comfort is that in a world where it feels like there is chaos all around us, we know that God in His mercy is a God who rescues. He didn't send a flawed warrior to deliver us from the effects of our sin temporarily. He sent His only Son to defeat sin and death and restore the relationship that sinners could never fix on their own.

Today as you prepare to teach, rest in the knowledge that God has gone before you. Prepare your heart to point kids to Jesus over and over as the true Deliverer and the true peace for which their hearts desperately long.

TERMS TO KNOW

Judges: different leaders God gave the Israelites between Joshua's death and Samuel's anointing Saul as Israel's first king



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “ I am so happy you are all here this morning. Do you have any habits that you practice? Some habits may be good, like brushing your teeth at least twice a day. Some habits can be kind of icky, like biting your fingernails. And some habits are downright sinful, like lying to avoid consequences. Today we will learn about the sinful ways of God’s people after Joshua died. ”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “The Cycle of Life” on the activity page.

SAY “ Most of the plants and animals in our world have life cycles. The life cycle doesn’t ever stop; it keeps going and going, generation after generation. That is a lot like the cycle of sin in the Old Testament. The Israelites would sin, repent, obey God, and then sin again—generation after generation. ”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: PATTERNS

Provide each kid with a piece of paper and crayons or markers. Invite the kids to create their own patterns. Remind kids that a pattern is any set of items that repeats itself over and over. When everyone is finished, allow each kid to present her pattern to the class. Allow the class to complete the pattern at the end.

SAY “ You all created some very beautiful patterns. Sometimes patterns can be beautiful like the life cycle of a butterfly and sometimes patterns can be less like the wilting of flowers. In the Old Testament, the Israelites were stuck in a pattern of sin and forgetting what God had provided for them. ”

OPTION 2: SINFUL ACTIONS



Form groups of two or three kids. Invite the kids to discuss within their groups ways that kids sin against their parents, siblings, friends, and other people in our lives.

Challenge the groups to choose one sinful action to share with the whole class by acting it out. Provide a few minutes for the groups to practice acting out the sinful action. Allow each group to present their sinful action to the class. Choose two or three classmates to try and guess the sinful action.

SAY “ We all sin. We are born with sin in our hearts. On our own, it is impossible for us to obey God, and we often struggle with some sins over and over. Today, we will hear about a time God’s people kept sinning against Him. ”



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Judges 2. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “The People Kept Sinning.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

THE PEOPLE KEPT SINNING

“**God had led the Israelites** out of Egypt, and He was with them as Joshua led them **into the promised land** of Canaan (KAY nuhn). There, the Israelites lived in family tribes—12 tribes in all. **God made a covenant with them, saying, “I will keep My promises, but this is what you must agree to: Never make a covenant with the people living in this land. Tear down their altars to their false gods.”**

The Israelites had agreed, and they were supposed to take over the land. **But that’s not what happened. After Joshua and the older generation of Israelites died, the Israelite children grew up and did not remember God** or everything He had done for them. **They did what was evil** in the sight of the Lord.

The Israelites fell into a cycle of sin that went like this: First, **the Israelites would disobey God** and worship the false gods of the people living around them. They’d forget about the one true God. **God would** grow angry. He would **let an enemy king take over the Israelites, and** the people would have to serve the king. **They would suffer greatly.**

Then the Israelites would remember how good they had it when they loved and obeyed God. **They would cry out to Him, “Save us!”** God wanted the people to love and obey Him, so **He would raise up a leader from the Israelites to deliver them from their enemies** and rule as a judge. **The people would obey God as long as the judge was alive.**

But when the judge died, the Israelites would turn away from God and the cycle would begin again: Sin, oppression, repentance, rescue, obedience, and then back to sin. **This is the story of the Book of Judges.**

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. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Form tribes: Form 12 groups of kids. Spread the groups around the room. Travel from group to group as you teach.

Use facial expressions: Invite the kids to use facial expressions. When you teach about sin, they will look sad. When you teach about obedience, they will look happy.

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY ““ The twelve tribes of Israel were God’s people. God agreed to keep His promises if they agreed to not make or worship false gods. The Israelites agreed to worship God alone. But after Joshua died, the children of Israel grew up and didn’t remember what God had done for His people. They disobeyed God and made false gods. So God allowed the Israelites to suffer under enemy rulers. While suffering, the Israelites would cry out to God to rescue them. God loved His people, so He provided a leader, called a judge, to help them. Then the Israelites would obey the judge for a while and experience peace. But in time, they forgot God again, and the cycle of sin would repeat.

This cycle of sin isn’t just a problem the Israelites faced. Apart from Jesus, we are all stuck in sin. We can try to do what is right, but sin has power over us. **What is the payment for sin? The fair payment for sin is death.** We need God to free us from the power of sin.

And that’s just what God did. God sent His Son, Jesus, to earth as a human to live the perfect life we fail to live. Jesus then died the death we deserve, and He rose from the dead. When we trust in Jesus, we are freed from sin so we can live for God. ””

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY ““ 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. ””

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 9, Session 1” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. If Christians have changed hearts, why do we still sin?
2. What are some ways we become more like Jesus over time?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

SAY ““ In our Bible story, the Israelites sinned over and over—even after God rescued them again and again! Without God’s help, we all are trapped in sin. That’s why the most important thing everyone needs is a relationship with Jesus. ””

Play the missions video.

SAY ““ One day, God may call you to be a missionary like the high school and college students in that video. Or, God may call your whole family to be missionaries together. But even if God never calls you to be a missionary, you can still live on mission by supporting missionaries, showing people God’s love, and telling people about Jesus wherever you are. ””

Ask the kids if they would want to go meet and work with a missionary. Invite them to