



UNIT 9 | SESSION 1

THE PEOPLE KEPT SINNING

JUDGES 2

KEY PASSAGE:

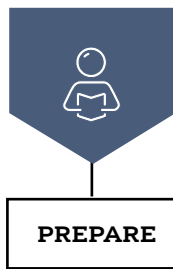
Romans 6:23

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

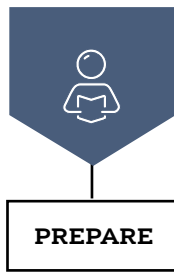
created things more than the Creator?

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



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- ☐ “The Cycle of Life” activity page



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- ☐ countdown video

Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- ☐ Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- ☐ “The People Kept Sinning” video
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- ☐ “Unit 9, Session 1” questions from kids video

Missions Moment

- ☐ “Short-Term Students” missions video

Key Passage Activity

- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ “Eternal Life (Romans 6:23)” song
- ☐ worship song of your choice (optional)



LOVE

Discussion & Bible Skills

- ☐ Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- ☐ yarn

Reflection and Prayer

- ☐ Bible Story Coloring Page (optional)



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. ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “Wow, it sure is great to see you! Each week, we gather to study God’s Word together. Did any of you bring a Bible today? **[Allow responses and distribute Bibles to any kids who need one.]** We study the Bible because it is God’s holy Word. We can trust the Bible completely to tell us what is true about God and ourselves. Reading God’s Word is a great habit to build.

Can you think of any other good habits? What about bad habits? Have you ever eaten too much candy and then felt sick to your stomach? I definitely have! And you know the funny thing? Even though I know I won’t feel good, I do it again and again. I eat too many sweets again and get sick again! Today, we’re going to read in the Book of Judges how the Israelites were in a cycle of sin. Sin is worse than a bad habit; it keeps us from God.”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

SAY “Are you ready to learn a new big picture question and answer? Our big picture question is, **What is the fair payment for sin?** Let’s think about that for a moment. A fair payment would be like the money an employer owes you for the work you do. The Bible teaches us that sin earns death. That’s our big picture answer: **The fair payment for sin is death.**

We are all born in sin. Sin is thinking, speaking, or behaving in any way that goes against God and His commands. Because we sin, we deserve death. To help us understand the big picture question and answer, let’s look at what sin did to the Israelites after their leader Joshua died.”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “Let’s look at our timeline. Since Adam and Eve sinned, we’ve learned that all people have disobeyed God. God chose Abraham and made his family into a special nation—the Israelites—but even they sinned again and again. God rescued His people from slavery in Egypt, gave them His law, provided for them in the desert, and conquered the promised land for them. Still, they still could not obey Him. That’s where our story today picks up.”



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.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

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



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

explain why. Pray and ask God to help kids stay focused on what is most important.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Romans 6:23 together.

SAY “Our key passage tells us that sin is serious. God must punish sin. The punishment for sin is death. But God gives us the gift of life through Jesus.”

Invite the kids to help create hand motions for key words in the key passage. Consider adapting sign language, or use the suggestions below. Say the key passage with hand motions several times. Suggested motions:

- “death” – Position hands in front of you at about waist level. Face one palm up and one palm down, then flip hands over.
- “gift” – Position hands in front of you at about waist level, with both palms facing up, then push them away from yourself, as if passing a gift.
- “life” – Use your thumb and forefinger to make an L shape with each hand. Position hands a bit above your waist, with forefingers pointed slightly down towards the stomach. Move hands up to chest level, pointing forefingers slightly toward the head.
- “Jesus” – Position hands in front of you at about waist level. Touch each middle finger to the opposite palm.

Lead kids to sing “Eternal Life (Romans 6:23).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “God, thank You for sending Your Son to be our Deliverer. Thank You for allowing Jesus to die in our place for our sin so we can have forgiveness and life with God forever. Amen.”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





LOVE

THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles. Guide boys and girls to open their Bibles to Judges 2. Point out that Judges is the seventh book in the Old Testament and the second book in the History division. Show kids to find all the books between Joshua and Esther. Explain that the Book of Judges comes after Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt and Joshua led the Israelites into the promised land. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Judges 2:11-23 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud. Consider pointing out the location of Canaan (G9) on the Old Testament Mediterranean Map.

SAY “God had been faithful to lead the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt, across the Red Sea, through the wilderness, and into the promised land. But the people of Israel forgot God’s faithfulness. The Israelites fell back into sin. The judges couldn’t fix the people’s sin. We can’t fix our sin. But God loves us and sent Jesus to save us from sin.”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “Why did the generation after Joshua worship false gods?”

Lead kids to discuss how the Israelites forgot what God had done for them. Previous generations had seen God’s power and faithfulness through His miracles and the leadership of Moses and Joshua. After Joshua died, the people forgot God.

SAY “Why did God send judges to Israel?”

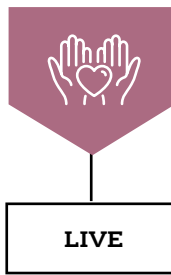
Guide kids to recall that the Israelites were in a pattern of sin. God gave judges to rule the nation of Israel and save them from the enemies who repeatedly attacked them. The judges led the people to obey God. The judges helped the Israelites with their consequences of sin, but couldn’t save them from their sin. Only Jesus can save us from our sin.

SAY “How can we avoid cycles of sin in our lives?”

Point out that we can’t save ourselves from our sin, but God loves us and sent Jesus to save us from our sin. Everyone who has faith in Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection is forgiven and made new. The Holy Spirit lives in Christians, helping us understand the Bible, remember God’s goodness, and live for His glory. The Holy Spirit convicts us of sin so we don’t enjoy sin like we did before we knew Jesus.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

☐ **OPTION 1: WEB OF MISSIONS**



Before the session, write Germany, Spain, Italy, Tanzania, China, France, Russia, America, and Ecuador on a separate piece of paper. Hang the papers around the room. Label another page Home and place it in the center of the room.

Guide the kids to choose a country and stand next to its sign. Stand at Home and hold the end of the yarn. Toss the ball of yarn to the kids standing at one of the countries. They will pinch the line of yarn and throw the ball of yarn to the kids at another location. Continue until the yarn creates a web across the whole room.

SAY “ God’s people kept getting themselves tangled up in sin, but this tangle we’ve made represents the solution to sin in the world: the spread of the gospel! Imagine what this room would look like if we had every country in the world represented by a sign on the wall! The gospel goes across distances, cultures, and languages. It all starts at home with people like you who give to missions, pray about missions, or go work with missionaries. ”

☐ **OPTION 2: THE JUDGE SAYS**



Choose one kid to be the Judge. Instruct the Judge to go to the front of the room and the rest of the kids to spread out, facing the Judge. The Judge will lead the group to mimic her actions.

Every few minutes, announce that Judge has “died”; she will rejoin the group and kids will each choose their own actions, without a leader. Continue playing by assigning a new Judge.

SAY “ The Israelites forgot God and chose to worship false gods. God allowed the Israelites to be ruled by their enemies, and the Israelites cried out to Him. God raised up judges to lead the Israelites to obey God. But when there wasn’t a judge ruling Israel, the people did whatever they wanted. The judges couldn’t save the people from their sin. Only Jesus can save us from our sins and give us the power to love and obey Him. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.