

May 31, 2020 PreK

Bible Passage: Israel's Unfaithfulness / Judges 1–3

Story Point: God's people forgot about Him.

Key Passage/Memory Verse: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us." 1 John 1:9a

Big Picture Question: What is repentance? Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus.

Christ Connection: *After God's people sinned, the judges helped God's people obey God again. But the judges could not change the people's hearts and make them love God. God had a plan. He sent His Son, Jesus, to change His people's hearts and save them from sin forever.*

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* **BIBLE STUDY TIPS FOR PARENTS:**

Following Joshua's death, the Israelites were without a leader. They fell into a cycle of sin that can be seen during each reign of the judges. The cycle is marked by an A-B-C-D-E pattern. Let's look at the first judge, Othniel, to see this pattern.

First, the people fell into **A**postasy. They turned away from God and served other gods. (Judg. 3:7) Next, they experienced a period of **B**ondage. God was angry with the Israelites, and He gave them into the hand of the king of Aram. (v. 8) Third, the people **C**ried out to God. (v. 9) Then, God sent a **D**eliverer to save them. (vv. 9-10) Finally, they had **E**ase in the land. (v. 11) Then Othniel died.

This pattern continued with Ehud. The people had again turned from God. Their apostasy made God angry. He sent them into bondage by strengthening the king of Moab to defeat Israel. The Israelites served the king of Moab for 18 years.

The Moabites were well-fed, especially the king. They enjoyed the fruit of the Israelites' labor while the Israelites went hungry. By thrusting a sword into the king's belly, Ehud disemboweled the king and left him dead on the floor of his room. The fat covered over the handle of the sword so that Ehud could not remove it.

After Ehud delivered Israel, the Israelites struck down the Moabites and there was peace in the land for eighty years. But Ehud would die, and they would need another judge to lead them.

The Israelites needed someone better than a judge; they needed a king who would save them not only from the consequences of their sin, but the sin itself. That was all part of God's plan. God sent a true Deliverer; His Son, Jesus, died for our sin and delivered us forever from the oppression of sin and death.

*** BIBLE STORY:**

Turn to Judges 1-3 with the help of your preschooler.

Say • The Bible is true. Our Bible story today comes from Judges in the Old Testament. The Book of Judges tells about how God chose judges to lead His people. Remind children that all the stories in the Bible fit together to tell an even bigger story. The Bible tells us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

Show the video or tell the Bible story using the provided storytelling tips. Use the bolded version of the Bible story for young preschoolers.

Israel's Unfaithfulness: Judges 1–3

Joshua had died. Without a strong leader, the Israelites disobeyed God. Nothing good ever happened when the Israelites disobeyed God. **God wanted the people to love and obey Him, so he gave them a leader called a judge.**

Othniel (AHTH nih el) was the first judge. God was with Othniel, and **Othniel led the Israelites into battle. God helped the Israelites win. The land was peaceful for many years, then Othniel died.** With no leader, **the Israelites forgot about God again. They worshiped false gods instead. God was unhappy. He let the king of Moab attack the Israelites and defeat them so they would turn back to Him.** The Israelites had to serve the king of Moab for 18 years.

The Israelites remembered how good it had been when they loved and obeyed **God. They cried out to Him, "Save us!" So God chose Ehud (EE huhd) to save them.**

The Israelites sent Ehud to the king of Moab with a gift of money. Ehud made himself a sword. He hid it under his clothes. Then Ehud went to the king of Moab. Ehud said, "I have a secret message for you." **The king told all his attendants to go away so he was alone with Ehud.**

When the king stood up, Ehud reached under his clothes and pulled out his sword. **Ehud killed the king.** Then he ran away, locking the doors of the room behind him.

When Ehud got away, he blew a ram's horn and became the leader of the Israelites. They fought the Moabites and won. They had peace in the land for 80 years.

Ehud died, and the Israelites forgot God again. 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: After God's people sinned, the judges helped God's people obey God again. But the judges could not change the people's hearts and make them love God. God had a plan. He sent His Son, Jesus, to change His people's hearts and save them from sin forever.

SAY • When they did not have a strong leader, **God's people forgot about Him** and began to worship false gods. After God's people sinned, God sent judges who helped God's people obey Him again. But the judges could not change the people's hearts and make them love God. God had a plan. He sent His Son, Jesus, to change His people's hearts and save them from sin forever.

KEY PASSAGE

Key Passage: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us." 1 John 1:9a

SAY • God forgives all our sin when we trust in Jesus. Our key passage tells us what to do when we disobey God. We should tell God that we sinned and that we are sorry for disobeying.

*** PRAYER**

*** ACTIVITY:**

ACTIVITY PAGE & COLORING PAGE:

Guide preschoolers to circle the children who are obeying God's rules and to draw an **X** on the children who are not obeying. Comment that when we obey our parents and help others, we are obeying God.

Say • When we forget about God, we disobey God. Disobeying God is called sin. God wants us to repent, to turn away from our sin and turn back to Him. Obeying God shows that we love Him. What are some other ways we can obey God's rules? In today's Bible story, **God's people forgot about Him**. Listen to what happened.

ACT OUT THE JUDGES CYCLE

Lead preschoolers in acting out the judges cycle using the following statements and motions.

God's people forgot about Him. [Put palm on forehead.]

God let Israel's enemies defeat them. [Make a crying face and slump shoulders.]

God's people cried out to Him for help. [Cup hands around mouth and shout "Help!"]

God sent a judge to help His people. [Put fists on hips and puff out chest.]

God gave His people peace. [Lay down on the floor as if resting.]

Say • God's people forgot about Him, so God let Israel's enemies defeat them. God's people cried out to Him for help, and God sent a judge to help His people.

MAKE PLAY DOUGH HEARTS

Set out play dough and play dough tools (if you have it). Invite kids to form hearts with their play dough, either with your help or with a play dough cookie cutter.

Say • We each have a heart that pumps in our chest, but the Bible tell us that we have another kind of heart that you cannot see or touch. Our heart is the part of us that loves God or not. **God's people forgot about Him**, and the judges helped God's people obey God again. But the judges could not change the people's hearts and make them love God. God had a plan. He sent His Son, Jesus to change His people's hearts and save them from sin forever. When we trust in Jesus, God changes our heart to love Him.

LOCKS & KEYS

Provide several locks and keys and puzzles with locks and latches if you have them. Encourage the children to explore the locks and latches and try to open and close them. Consider using matching colored dot stickers to help preschoolers match the correct lock to the correct key.

Say • In our Bible story, Ehud locked the door behind him. The servants waited before they opened the locked door, and then they found the king. **God's people forgot about Him**, but God used Ehud to help His people repent of their sin and turn back to Him. Later, God sent Jesus to change people's hearts and save them from sin forever.

BUILD BIBLE SKILLS

Print two copies of the "Genesis–Ruth" printable. Cut the book names apart. Set aside Ruth to be used in session four. Tape one set of book names in order to form a long strip. Lay the strip on the floor. Tape the other set to small blocks. Encourage preschoolers to lay the matching block on the strip in the appropriate place. Point out the images for younger preschoolers. Read the book names. Mix up the blocks and play again. Show children where Judges is in the Bible.

Say • Our Bible story today is from the Book of Judges. Judges tells us how **God's people forgot about Him**. When they remembered God, they called to Him for help. God chose people as judges to lead His people. But the judges could not change the people's hearts

and make them love God. God sent His Son, Jesus to change His people's hearts and save them from sin forever.

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

- When Joshua died, what did the Israelites do? (**God's people forgot about Him.**)
- When the Israelites remembered how good it had been when they loved and obeyed God, what did they do? (***They cried out to God, "Save us!"***)
- How did God answer His people's cries for help? (***He sent a judge to help the people obey Him again.***)
- What did the Israelites do after Ehud died? (***They forgot God again.***)
- ***What is repentance? Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus.***