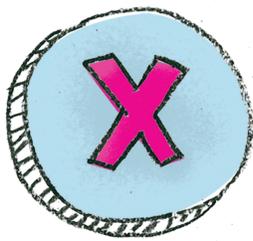


THE
GOSPEL
PROJECT[®]
FOR KIDS

MCCC Kids Ministry
The Gospel Project
Companion Guide
(April 7- July 7, 2019)



APRIL 7: UNIT 7, SESSION 1, JOSHUA AND CALEB



STORY RECAP

The Israelites rebelled against God because they did not trust Him. Jesus trusted God perfectly. He took the punishment we deserve for our sin, or rebellion against God. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin and gives us eternal life.

- FAMILY STARTING POINTS
- We can trust God.
- Twelve men went to look at the promised land.
- Joshua and Caleb trusted God to give His people the land.
- God forgives us when we trust in Jesus.

Dear Parents,

Thank you for choosing to use the Gospel Project for Kids. Your kids have been learning about the Israelites—former slaves in Egypt—as they moved toward the promised land. Before God rescued His people from slavery in Egypt, He promised to bring the Israelites back to the land He had given to Abraham so many years before. (Ex. 3:8) From Egypt, the Israelites crossed the Red Sea and traveled toward Mount Sinai. When they were hungry and thirsty, God provided food and water. (See Ex. 16–17.) Israel spent one year at Mount Sinai, where Moses received God’s law, including the Ten Commandments.

Time and again, the Israelites rebelled against God, Moses interceded, and God pardoned the people. When Israel arrived at the edge of the promised land, God instructed Moses to send scouts into the land. Moses sent out a leader from each tribe. Twelve men, including Joshua and Caleb, traveled through the promised land of Canaan for 40 days. They returned with fruit—grapes, pomegranates, and figs—and gave a report on the land.

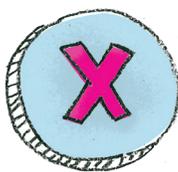
The scouts described the land’s abundance, as “flowing with milk and honey.” They gave an account of the people, various tribes who were physically strong and whose cities were fortified. Caleb’s immediate imperative—“Let’s go up now!”—was met with resistance by most of the group. Assessing their own strength against the strength of the inhabitants, they concluded that to move forward would mean certain defeat.

The Israelites complained: “If only we had died in the land of Egypt, or if only we had died in this wilderness!” Joshua and Caleb tried to persuade the people of God’s presence and protection, but the people would not trust God. So God gave them what they thought was better. He sent them into the wilderness to wander for 40 years. They would die there. Only Joshua, Caleb, and the Israelites’ children would enter the promised land.

Help your kids contemplate the punishment Israel faced for their rebellion. The Israelites rebelled against God because they did not trust Him. Jesus trusted God perfectly. He took the punishment we deserve for our sin, or rebellion against God. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin and gives us eternal life.

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6



APRIL 14:
UNIT 7, SESSION 2, THE BRONZE SNAKE



Dear Parents,

Last week, kids learned that the Israelites believed the discouraging report of the land of Canaan instead of Joshua and Caleb's good report. As a result, God punished the Israelites for their lack of faith. The Israelites had been wandering in the wilderness when they complained to Moses and to God. God had done some pretty amazing things for the Israelites—He rescued them from the hand of Pharaoh, He parted the Red Sea so they could safely cross, and He provided manna for them to eat. But to the Israelites, this wasn't enough.

God disciplined them because He knew their dissatisfaction was a sign of a bigger issue: a heart problem, a sin problem. They stopped believing that God is good. In their hearts, the Israelites believed the same lie that rattled Eve in the garden. Maybe God isn't interested in giving us what is best. Maybe He is holding out on us.

God sent venomous snakes that bit the people and killed many of them. The Israelites repented. They wanted Moses to ask God to take away the snakes.

God provided a solution. He told Moses, "Make a snake image out of bronze and mount it on a pole. When anyone who is bitten looks at it, he will recover."

In John 3:14, Jesus said, "Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up." What was Jesus talking about? Second Corinthians 5:21 says, "He made the One who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." So Jesus invites us, "Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth. For I am God, and there is no other" (Isa. 45:22).

As you talk to your kids this week, help them understand that the Israelites faced a huge problem because of their sin. God sent snakes to punish Israel, but anyone who was bitten could look at the bronze snake on the pole and live. Because of our sin, we face a huge problem: we are separated from God. We deserve to die, but anyone who looks to Jesus on the cross and trusts in Him will live forever with God.

STORY RECAP

The Israelites faced a huge problem because of their sin. God sent snakes to punish Israel, but anyone who was bitten could look at the bronze snake on the pole and live. Because of our sin, we face a huge problem: we are separated from God. We deserve to die, but anyone who looks to Jesus on the cross and trusts in Him will live forever with God.

FAMILY STARTING POINTS

- We can trust God.
- God did not leave His people when they complained.
- God healed His people.
- God sent Jesus because He loves us.

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6

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APRIL 21:

UNIT 8, EASTER LESSON, JESUS' CRUCIFIXION AND RESURRECTION



STORY RECAP

The death and resurrection of Jesus is the center of the gospel. We deserve to die because of our sin, but Jesus died in our place. Because Jesus is alive, we do not need to fear anything. Those who trust in Jesus have forgiveness and eternal life, and we can joyfully obey Him.

FAMILY STARTING POINTS

- God is always with us.
- People put Jesus on a cross, and He died.
- God made Jesus alive again.
- God sent Jesus to rescue us.

Dear Parents,

This week, kids learned that the events leading up to Jesus' death were terrifying for the disciples. Judas, their supposed friend, betrayed their Lord. Jesus was arrested, beaten, and killed. Though Jesus had plainly told the disciples that He would die and rise again on the third day, they did not understand. In fact, they were afraid to ask about it. (See Mark 9:31-21.) They had believed that Jesus was the One who would rescue God's people, but how could He if He was dead?

Then, on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead. When Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to the tomb, Jesus wasn't there. An angel of the Lord appeared. The guards were so afraid, that they fainted. But the angel said to the women, "Don't be afraid." The angel reassured the women that Jesus' body hadn't been stolen; in fact, "he has risen, just as he said" (Matt. 28:5-6).

The women left the tomb with fear (perhaps because they did not fully understand what was happening) and great joy (because they had heard Jesus was alive!) to tell the disciples the news. As they were leaving, Jesus also greeted them: "Do not be afraid."

Fear exists when there is a perceived danger or threat. When Jesus rose from the dead, He eliminated the threat of eternal separation from God for all who trust in Him. Even real dangers like suffering and persecution need not be feared because nothing—neither life nor death—can separate us from the love of God that is in Jesus. (Rom. 8:38-39)

As you talk about this story with your kids, emphasize the gospel: The death and resurrection of Jesus is the center of the gospel. We deserve to die because of our sin, but Jesus died in our place. Because Jesus is alive, we do not need to fear anything. Those who trust in Jesus have forgiveness and eternal life, and we can joyfully obey Him.

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6



APRIL 28:
UNIT 7, SESSION 3, BALAAM AND BALAK

Dear Parents,



God's people, the Israelites, were in the wilderness. They had arrived at the promised land decades earlier, but the people had rebelled—refusing to trust God to give them the land. They believed it would be better to die in the wilderness than follow God (Num. 14:2), so God sent them into the wilderness for 40 years (vv. 28-29). In time, all of the adults died except for Joshua, Caleb, and Moses. The children grew up and more children were born. The Israelites disobeyed God time and again, but God still provided for them. He planned to keep His promise to give Israel the promised land.

STORY RECAP

Balaam could not curse God's people. God had blessed the Israelites, so Balaam blessed them too. Fourteen hundred years after Balaam announced God's promise, Jesus was born. God sent Jesus to bless the whole world by rescuing people from sin.

As the Israelites traveled, God gave them victory over attacking armies like the Canaanites and Amorites. Not surprisingly, when Israel set up camp in the plains of Moab, on the east side of the Jordan River, Balak—the king of Moab—was terrified. The king knew he could not defeat the Israelites on his own, so he called on Balaam, a pagan prophet, to put a curse on them.

Though Balaam did not follow God, he knew of God and God spoke to him. God told Balaam, "You are not to curse this people, for they are blessed." God's plan all along was to bless humanity (Gen. 1:28), specifically through the nation of Israel (Gen. 12:3). So each time Balaam spoke over Israel, God did not allow him to curse the Israelites. Instead, Balaam spoke in four clear messages, insisting that God would bless the Israelites.

One of the ways God would bless the Israelites is found in Numbers 24:17: "A star will come from Jacob, and a scepter will arise from Israel." Balaam told of a powerful future king who would be victorious over his enemies. This prophecy referred to and was ultimately fulfilled by Jesus.

Teach your kids that God protects His people. His promises are sure. Balaam could not curse God's people. God had blessed the Israelites, so Balaam blessed them too. Fourteen hundred years after Balaam announced God's promise, Jesus was born. God sent Jesus to bless the whole world by rescuing people from sin.

FAMILY STARTING POINTS

- We can trust God.
- Balak wanted Balaam to speak against Israel.
- Balaam could only bless God's people.
- Balaam said that God would send His people a king.

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6

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MAY 5: UNIT 7, SESSION 4 MOSES' FAREWELL



Moses reminded the people to keep God's covenant.

ROBERT

STORY RECAP

Moses was a good leader for God's people. No other prophet in Israel was like Moses—until Jesus came. The Bible says Jesus deserves more glory than Moses. Jesus is our perfect leader. He died and was raised so that Moses and every believer in all of time can enter the promised land of God's kingdom.

FAMILY STARTING POINTS

- We can trust God.
- Moses led God's people to the promised land.
- Moses reminded God's people to love and obey God.
- God promised to be with His people.



Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6



Dear Parents,

Decades had passed since God used Moses to rescue the Israelites from slavery and lead them toward the promised land. The Israelites had not trusted God then and had refused to enter the land.

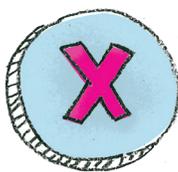
After 40 years of wandering in the wilderness, the Israelites were once again at the edge of the promised land. But this time, it was a whole new generation of Israelites—many of whom had not even been born when the people left Egypt and came to this land the first time. Their leader, Moses, was 120 years old.

Moses wrote the Book of Deuteronomy to tell the people all that God had done for them and to repeat the laws and instructions that God had given His people. At the end of the book, God told Moses that Moses would soon die, never setting foot in the promised land because of his disobedience. (See Num. 20:12.) Instead, God chose Joshua to lead Israel into the land.

God also revealed to Moses that even though Israel had just endured 40 years of punishment for not trusting Him, the people would abandon God again. Having the laws written out would not be enough to keep the Israelites from breaking their covenant with God. Moses emphasized that obedience would lead to blessing and life, but disobedience would lead to curses—namely, exile from the land.

Moses went up to a mountain where he could see the land that God had promised to give to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Then Moses died there.

Emphasize to your children that Moses wasn't perfect, but Moses was a good leader for God's people. No other prophet in Israel was like Moses—until Jesus came. The Bible says Jesus deserves more glory than Moses. Jesus is our perfect leader. He died and was raised so that Moses and every believer in all of time can enter the promised land of God's kingdom.



MAY 12:
UNIT 8, SESSION 1, CROSSING THE JORDAN



STORY RECAP

God went ahead of Joshua and the Israelites into the promised land. He showed His power to them so they would trust in Him. When Jesus came to earth, He showed His power so people would trust in Him and be saved from sin.

FAMILY STARTING POINTS

- God is always with us.
- God promised to be with Joshua.
- God made the Jordan River stop.
- The people set up stones to remember what God had done.

Dear Parents,

Thank you for choosing to use the Gospel Project for Kids. You and your children have been learning about the Israelites' wandering in the wilderness. Forty years later, it was time for the next generation to enter the land. Only one geographical barrier separated the Israelites from the promised land of Canaan: the Jordan River. When the Israelites arrived, the Jordan River was flooded due to spring rains and snowmelt. Any other time, the river would have been manageable, but crossing the swollen river would have been as daunting as crossing the Red Sea. (See Josh. 4:23.)

The Israelites had mourned Moses' death for 30 days (Deut. 34:8), but now this new generation looked to Joshua to lead them into the promised land. God had chosen Joshua and promised to be with him. Joshua prepared the people to cross the Jordan River, and they agreed to obey him as they obeyed Moses.

God gave Joshua a promise and a command. First, He promised to go before them and drive out all the people of the land. Then God commanded him to tell the priests to carry the ark of the LORD (a symbol of God's powerful presence) into the waters of the Jordan. Then the waters of the river would be cut off from flowing, and the waters coming down from above would stand in one heap. When this happened, all of Israel would know that God was with Joshua.

All of the people passed over on dry ground. Joshua set up 12 memorial stones as a reminder of God's faithfulness in bringing Israel safely across the Jordan into the promised land.

The Israelites could do nothing apart from God. He was with them, and He was going to fight for them. In John 15:5, Jesus said, "You can do nothing without me."

As you go through this week, emphasize with your kids that God was still at work with His people. God went ahead of Joshua and the Israelites into the promised land. He showed His power to them so they would trust in Him. When Jesus came to earth, He showed His power so people would trust in Him and be saved from sin. The cross is our reminder of what Jesus has done for us: a miraculous saving we could never do for ourselves.

"It is the LORD who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed."
Deuteronomy 31:8

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MAY 19:

UNIT 8, SESSION 2, THE BATTLE OF JERICHO



STORY RECAP

By faith Rahab believed God would win the battle, and she asked the spies to show mercy to her family and keep them safe. When the Israelites attacked Jericho, Rahab and her family received mercy and became part of God's people. Jesus has won against sin and death. Everyone who trusts in Jesus receives mercy and becomes part of God's family forever.

FAMILY STARTING POINTS

- God is always with us.
- Rahab hid the spies.
- God made the walls of Jericho fall down.
- God used Rahab's family in His plan to send Jesus.

"It is the LORD who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed."

Deuteronomy 31:8

Dear Parents,

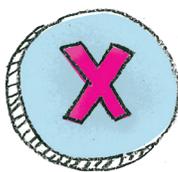
The Lord brought His people into the promised land. Now they had a task set before them: conquer the people living in the land. Before the Israelites crossed the Jordan River, Joshua—in the way Moses had done decades before—sent scouts into the land. (See Num. 13:2-3.) The first city the Israelites came to was Jericho. God told Joshua that He had handed the city over to Israel.

The Lord's reputation went ahead of the Israelites, creating fear in the people of Jericho. With the exception of one woman, the people of Jericho wanted nothing to do with God.

Rahab was unique among the inhabitants of Jericho. She wanted to be on God's side. Hebrews 11:31 says that by faith, Rahab "welcomed the spies in peace." Rahab didn't hide the spies and help them escape from the city because she was especially courageous or because she had a strong desire to live; Rahab acted by faith. By faith Rahab believed God would win the battle, and she asked the spies to show mercy to her family and keep them safe. When the Israelites attacked Jericho, Rahab and her family received mercy and became part of God's people. Jesus has won against sin and death. Everyone who trusts in Jesus receives mercy and becomes part of God's family forever.

Rahab wasn't the only one trusting in God. The Israelites fought the battle of Jericho by faith. (See Heb. 11:30.) Israel did not focus on what was going on inside the city of Jericho; they focused on doing what God had instructed. They obeyed even when it seemed nothing was happening. On the seventh day, the troops shouted, the trumpets sounded, and the wall around Jericho collapsed.

Joshua gave the people specific instructions to destroy everything in the city except for Rahab and her family. The Israelites were not to keep anything for themselves. The Lord would provide for all of their needs, so they had no reason to plunder Jericho. When the Israelites attacked Jericho, Rahab and her family were safe. They joined God's people. (Josh. 6:25) By faith, we believe Jesus has defeated sin and death. Everyone who trusts in Jesus is safe and becomes part of God's family forever.



**MAY 26:
UNIT 8, SESSION 3, TAKING THE LAND**

Dear Parents,



STORY RECAP

Joshua's name means "The LORD is salvation." God fought for Joshua and the Israelites, saving them and giving them victory over their enemies. Sinners can look to God for victory over sin and death. God brought us salvation by sending His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross and rise again.

FAMILY STARTING POINTS

- God is always with us.
- God made the sun stand still.
- God helped His people take the promised land.
- God always keeps His promises.

Last week, kids learned that God fought for His people at the battle of Jericho. When Moses was the leader of Israel, God gave His people instructions about entering the promised land. Among those instructions was the command to drive out the nations living in the land of Canaan. (See Deut. 7.) These nations were corrupt, and God would judge them for their sin. (Lev. 18)

In the first battle, Israel marched around Jericho and the Lord gave them the city. As Israel moved to take the rest of the land, God pledged His presence to Joshua and reminded Israel of what He required: If you want to be successful in the land, you must obey Me. (See Josh. 1:7.) The Israelites learned from experience that disobedience to God would result in certain defeat, as Achan's sin brought about their downfall during the battle of Ai. (Josh. 7)

During the battles the Israelites faced in Canaan, Joshua was not in charge; the Lord was. God determined whom Israel battled and how Israel would win. Joshua 10–11 describes Israel's defeat of five kings who attacked Gibeon, an ally of Israel. Miraculously, God sent hailstones and stopped the sun. He gave Israel the victory. God was with Israel as they conquered the rest of the land. Then He gave His people years of peace and rest.

Help your kids see the bigger picture beyond Israel's individual battles against the Canaanites. Joshua's name means "The LORD is salvation." God fought for Joshua and the Israelites, saving them and giving them victory over their enemies. Sinners can look to God for victory over sin and death. God brought us salvation by sending His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross and rise again.

"It is the LORD who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed."

Deuteronomy 31:8

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JUNE 2:

UNIT 9, SESSION 1, ISRAEL'S UNFAITHFULNESS



STORY RECAP

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.

FAMILY STARTING POINTS

- God helps us obey Him.
- God's people did not always obey Him.
- God sent judges to rescue God's people.
- God sent Jesus to be our Judge.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9



Dear Parents,

Thank you for choosing to use the Gospel Project for Kids. 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 Apostasy. They turned away from God and served other gods. (Judg. 3:7) Next, they experienced a period of Bondage. God was angry with the Israelites, and He gave them into the hand of the king of Aram. (v. 8) Third, the people Cried out to God. (v. 9) Then, God sent a Deliverer to save them. (vv. 9-10) Finally, they had Ease 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.

As you talk with your kids this week, discuss that the Israelites needed someone better than a judge. 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.



JUNE 9:
UNIT 9, SESSION 2, DEBORAH AND BARAK



STORY RECAP

God does what is for His glory and our good. (Psalm 115:3; Romans 8:28) God fought for the Israelites and used Deborah, Barak, and Jael to defeat Canaan. In a similar way, God uses people and events to not only save us from our enemies, but to teach us about our ultimate good: salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ.

FAMILY STARTING POINTS

- God helps us obey Him.
- God's people asked God to save them.
- God used Deborah and Barak to help His people.
- God sent Jesus to rescue us from our wrong choices.

Dear Parents,

This week, kids learn that the time of the judges continued after the death of Ehud. The Israelites fell into a continuous cycle of sin, bondage, deliverance, and peace. Every judge was imperfect, yet God worked through the judges. At the time when the Israelites were oppressed by the king of Canaan, Deborah was the judge of Israel. Deborah sent for Barak and encouraged him to take up an army and fight the army of Canaan and its leader, Sisera.

Deborah reminded Barak that God would hand Sisera and his troops over to him. (Judg. 4:6-7) Barak agreed to go, but only if Deborah went with him. Deborah went, but she informed Barak that he would get no glory for the battle.

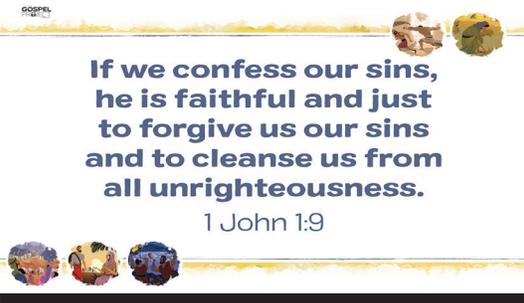
When Barak went down from Mount Tabor with 10,000 men, "The Lord threw Sisera and all his army into confusion with the sword before Barak" (Judg. 4:15). Everyone in the army died, but Sisera escaped on foot.

Sisera fled to the tent of Jael, who invited him inside and gave him a drink. While Sisera slept, Jael drove a tent peg through his temple and he died.

Judges 5 records a victory song Deborah and Barak sang on that day, praising God for defeating the Canaanites. The land had rest for 40 years.

The Israelites' sin had resulted in 20 years of defeat. God fought for the Israelites and used Deborah, Barak, and Jael to accomplish the Israelites' victory over Canaan. As you talk to your kids this week, highlight the actions of Deborah and Barak, who willingly served God and used their gifts for His glory.

Use the Christ Connection to emphasize that God does what is for His glory and our good. (Psalm 115:3; Romans 8:28) God fought for the Israelites and used Deborah, Barak, and Jael to defeat Canaan. In a similar way, God uses people and events to not only save us from our enemies, but to teach us about our ultimate good: salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ.



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JUNE 16:

UNIT 9, SESSION 3, GIDEON

Dear Parents,

Last week, your kids learned about Deborah and Barak. This week, Judges 6 starts out in a familiar way: “The Israelites did what was evil in the sight of the Lord.” The period of Judges was not a good time for the Israelites. Their cycle of sin, bondage, deliverance, and peace clearly showed the law alone could not save them from sin.

The Israelites were oppressed by the Midianites, and they cried out to God for help. God chose a man to save them, and his name was Gideon. Gideon was an unlikely leader, and he knew this. Gideon said, “Please, Lord, how can I deliver Israel? Look, my family is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the youngest in my father’s house” (Judg. 6:15).

God doesn’t need the biggest and the best to accomplish His plan. In fact, He often uses the weakest and least of people to fulfill His plans because that is what gives Him the most glory. God had a plan to empower Gideon in his weakness: “But I will be with you,” He said. (Judg. 6:16)

Gideon and an army of men assembled. God told Gideon he had too many men. God didn’t want the men to think they had the power to defeat the Midianites themselves. When the army was reduced to just 300 men, they prepared for battle. (See Judg. 7:1-7.)

The men ran toward the Midianites’ camp, blowing their trumpets and shouting. God turned the swords of the Midianites against each other. They ran away, but Gideon and his army chased after them and killed them.

God was with the Israelites when they went to battle. The Israelites did not win the battle themselves; God fought for them. As you reflect on this story with your kids this week, point out that the Israelites cried out to God because they knew they could not save themselves. Even Gideon was not enough to save them; God used Gideon to help His people, but God fought the battle for them. The people needed someone who was mighty to save. Jesus Christ came to save us from sin because we cannot save ourselves. Only God, through Christ, can save us.



STORY RECAP

The Israelites cried out to God because they knew they could not save themselves. Even Gideon was not enough to save them; God used Gideon to help His people, but God fought the battle for them. The people needed someone who was mighty to save. Jesus Christ came to save us from sin because we cannot save ourselves. Only God, through Christ, can save us.

FAMILY STARTING POINTS

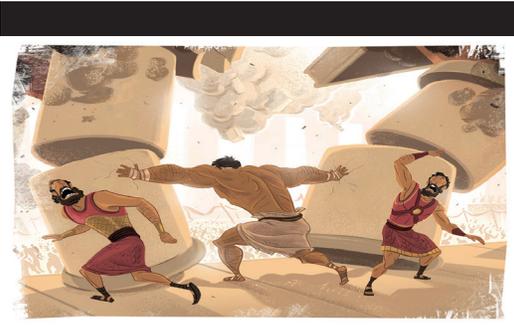
- God helps us obey Him.
- God’s people turned away from Him again.
- God was with Gideon and gave him courage.
- God sent Jesus to be with us forever.

**If we confess our sins,
he is faithful and just
to forgive us our sins
and to cleanse us from
all unrighteousness.**

1 John 1:9



JUNE 23:
UNIT 9, SESSION 4, SAMSON



Dear Parents,

Samson was the last of the major judges of Israel. He was born to parents who dedicated him to the Lord as a Nazirite after the Angel of the Lord announced that Samson would be born to save the Israelites from the power of the Philistines. Samson grew up, and God blessed him with great strength. But when Samson requested to marry a Philistine woman, his parents were confused. Samson was supposed to deliver the Israelites from the Philistines. Why would he want to marry one of them? But God had a plan in all of this. (See Judg. 14:4.)

STORY RECAP

Samson's sin led to his own death, but God used his death to save the Israelites from their enemies. Samson's story reminds us of Jesus. Jesus never sinned, but God sent Him to die on the cross and rise again to rescue people from sin and give them eternal life.

As Samson prepared for the wedding, he gave a riddle to the men with him about an event that occurred on his way to Timnah. (See Judg. 14:9-14.) Days passed, and the men convinced Samson's wife to tell them the answer to the riddle. This action sparked a series of events that would eventually lead to the death of Samson.

When the men solved his riddle, Samson was so angry that he torched the fields of the Philistines. He used the jawbone of a donkey to kill 1,000 men, and he left his wife. The Philistine leaders determined to kill Samson. When Samson fell in love with a woman named Delilah, the leaders bribed her into telling them where Samson's strength came from.

FAMILY STARTING POINTS

- God helps us obey Him.
- God made Samson strong to help God's people.
- Samson made wrong choices, but nothing could stop God's plan.
- God sent Jesus to be our Judge.

A man came and shaved the braids from Samson's head. He lost his strength and became helpless. The Philistines gouged out his eyes and took him prisoner. They had him stand between the pillars of a pagan temple. In a final plea to God, Samson asked for his strength back. God gave him strength, and Samson knocked over the pillars, collapsing the temple. In his death, Samson killed more Philistines than he had killed in his life. (Judg. 16:30)

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
1 John 1:9

Though Samson disobeyed God, God used him to accomplish His purpose of delivering the Israelites from the Philistines. As you talk to your kids about this story this week, remind them that Samson's sin led to his own death, but God used his death to save the Israelites from their enemies. Samson's story reminds us of Jesus. Jesus never sinned, but God sent Him to die on the cross and rise again to rescue people from sin and give them eternal life.

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JULY 7:

UNIT 9, SESSION 5, RUTH AND BOAZ

Dear Parents,

Only two books in the Old Testament bear the name of a woman: Ruth and Esther. Ruth's story occurs at the time when judges ruled over Israel. God's people were characterized by rebellion and immorality. At a time when the Israelites desperately needed a king to lead them back to God, Ruth's story of faithfulness points us to Jesus Christ, a coming Redeemer who will make all wrong things right again.

Ruth was the daughter-in-law of Naomi, a woman from Bethlehem who settled in Moab with her husband and two sons to escape a famine. Naomi's husband died, and her two sons married Moabite women, Orpah and Ruth. They lived in Moab for 10 years; then Naomi's sons died.

Naomi heard that the Lord had provided food for His people during the famine, so she decided to go back to Judah. Naomi encouraged Orpah and Ruth to return to their families. Orpah returned home, but Ruth clung to Naomi. Ruth said, "Wherever you go, I will go ... your people will be my people, and your God will be my God" (Ruth 1:16). So Naomi and Ruth traveled back to Bethlehem together.

Naomi permitted Ruth to gather fallen grain in a field. The owner of the field was Boaz, a relative of Naomi's late husband and a family redeemer. A family redeemer was someone who would help his close relatives if they were in trouble. Boaz noticed Ruth and told her she could safely gather grain in his field. At Naomi's urging, Ruth sought to be redeemed by Boaz. Boaz bought back the land Naomi and Ruth had lost when their husbands died, and he married Ruth. They had a son named Obed, whose grandson would be King David.

Boaz was a family redeemer. He helped his close relatives who were in trouble. Boaz cared for Ruth and Naomi because their husbands had died. In a similar way, Jesus is our Redeemer. We need help because we sin. Jesus bought our salvation for us by taking our punishment when He died on the cross. God gave Ruth—a foreigner—a special place in the lineage of Jesus Christ. As you talk about this story with your kids, introduce them to Jesus, our Redeemer. He bought for us salvation, paying the price with His very own blood.



STORY RECAP

Boaz was a family redeemer. He helped his close relatives who were in trouble. Boaz cared for Ruth and Naomi because their husbands had died. In a similar way, Jesus is our Redeemer. We need help because we sin. Jesus bought our salvation for us by taking our punishment when He died on the cross.

FAMILY STARTING POINTS

- God helps us obey Him.
- God used Boaz to take care of Ruth and Naomi.
- God sent Jesus to earth through Ruth's family.
- Jesus died on the cross and came back to life to redeem us.

**If we confess our sins,
he is faithful and just
to forgive us our sins
and to cleanse us from
all unrighteousness.**

1 John 1:9



NOTES



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