

Journal Page

The Israelites forgot about God, and God allowed their enemies to defeat them. List a few things you want to remember about God.



FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS

- What happened when a judge died?
(*The Israelites forgot about God.*)
- Why did the Israelites disobey God?
(See Judges 2:10.)
- How can your family remember what God has done?

FOLD



The First Judges

Judges 3:7-31

MAIN POINT: GOD'S PEOPLE TURNED FROM HIM TO WORSHIP IDOLS.

Joshua had died. Without a strong leader, the Israelites began to disobey God and worship false gods. God let an enemy king take over the Israelites.

Then the Israelites remembered how good they had it when they loved and obeyed God. They cried out to Him, "Save us!" God raised up Othniel to rule over them as the first judge. The land was peaceful for 40 years, then Othniel died.

Again, Israel forgot about God. God gave the king of Moab power to attack the Israelites and defeat them. The Israelites remembered how good they had it when they loved and obeyed God. They cried out to Him, "Save us!" So God raised up Ehud to save them.

The Israelites sent Ehud to the king of Moab. 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. Ehud escaped down the porch, locking the doors of the room behind him. The king's servants came in and found their king dead!

When Ehud escaped, he blew a ram's horn and he became the Israelites' leader. There was peace in the land for 80 years.

When Ehud died, the Israelites 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, 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.

Who's There?

Color in the even-numbered spaces. Then turn the page sideways to discover the name of one of Israel's first judges.

3	2	32	20	11
40	37	65	61	42
62	17	63	59	4
6	48	52	22	24
39	19	21	29	43
8	72	50	76	74
5	27	41	35	54
86	26	88	90	56
47	7	57	33	13
80	46	10	18	82
25	23	28	9	15
44	30	68	78	84
69	53	55	67	45
70	51	14	31	58
12	49	38	1	60
66	34	36	64	16



First Judges Quiz

Read Judges 2:6-10; 3:7-31. Circle the correct answers.

1. The Israelites needed a new leader because (Moses / Joshua) had died.
2. God raised up (Othniel / Samson) to rule as the first judge.
3. Each time a judge died, the Israelites (remembered / forgot about) God.
4. The king of Moab was a very (fat / thin) man.
5. Ehud killed the king of Moab with a (hammer / sword).
6. After Ehud escaped, he became the Israelites' (leader / servant).
7. The Israelites experienced (war / peace) for 80 years.
8. After Ehud died, God sent a third judge named (Peter / Shamgar).

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Write a short prayer or poem, confessing your sin to God and asking for His forgiveness.



FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS

- Who was responsible for the victory? (See Judges 4:6-7.)
- What does it mean to give glory to God? (*to acknowledge His greatness and to honor Him*)
- What do we need to be rescued from? Whom did God send to rescue us?

FOLD



Deborah and Barak

Judges 4-5

MAIN POINT: GOD'S PEOPLE NEEDED SOMEONE TO RESCUE THEM FROM THEIR ENEMIES.

Ehud and Shamgar had been judges over Israel. After they died, the Israelites forgot about God. So God allowed the king of Canaan to overtake them. The commander of the king's army was named Sisera. Sisera was cruel to the Israelites for 20 years. God's people remembered how good they had it when they loved and obeyed God. They cried out to God, "Save us!"

Deborah was the judge over Israel at this time. One day, Deborah called for Barak and said, "God wants you to gather 10,000 men. God will help you defeat Sisera."

Barak said to Deborah, "I will go if you will come with me. If you won't come, I'm not going."

"I'll go," Deborah said. "But you will receive no honor for the battle."

"Barak, go! God will help you defeat Sisera today," Deborah said. Barak and his 10,000 men moved down the mountain toward Sisera and his army. The Lord confused Sisera and all of the army. Barak chased the chariots and the army. None of them survived, but Sisera had escaped!

Sisera went to the tent of Jael. Jael gave Sisera something to drink and covered him with a rug. Sisera was so exhausted that he fell into a deep sleep. Jael knew that Sisera was an evil man, an enemy of God. She killed him while he slept.

That day, God allowed the Israelites to defeat the Canaanites. The Israelites had won the battle! Deborah and Barak sang a victory song. They praised God for helping them beat the Canaanites. The land was peaceful for 40 more years.

Christ Connection: 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 bring about our ultimate good: salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ.

Cross It Out

Cross out every third word. Then unscramble the remaining words to find the answer to the big picture question.

How does God accomplish His plan?

and	glory	Lord	our
people	plan	uses	for
battle	good	His	not

God

Who Am I?

Match each description to the person from the Bible.



Barak

I ruled as judge over Israel.



Sisera

God called me to go to battle.



Deborah

I killed an enemy of the Israelites.



Jael

I was the commander of the Canaanite army.

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Write down something you like to do—even if you are not the best at it. Then write a few sentences about how you might do that task for the glory of God.



FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS

- How many men went to battle with Gideon? (See Judges 7:7.)
- Who was really responsible for the Israelites' victory?
- Read Ephesians 2:8-9. Who saves us from our sin?



Gideon

Judges 6–8

MAIN POINT: GOD USED GIDEON'S WEAKNESS FOR HIS GLORY.

The Israelites did what is evil in the sight of the Lord, so God allowed them to be ruled by their enemies, the Midianites. The Midianites were very mean to them, so the Israelites cried out to God, “Save us!”

The Angel of the Lord appeared to a man named Gideon and said, “The Lord is with you, mighty warrior!”

The Lord chose Gideon to deliver the Israelites from the power of their enemy. He assured Gideon, “I will be with you.”

Some time later, Israel's enemies gathered together. So Gideon blew the ram's horn. An army of men gathered behind Gideon, ready to fight. Gideon still wanted a sign from God. “If You will deliver Israel by my hand, as You say, I will put fleece on the ground. If the fleece is wet with dew, but the ground is dry, I will believe You.”

That is exactly what happened! Again, Gideon asked for a sign. This time, the fleece was dry and the ground was wet.

God told Gideon that he had too many people with him. God made a test for the people. All of them were to go to the river to drink the water. Anyone who knelt to drink water was sent home, but whoever lapped the water with his tongue stayed. Three hundred men remained.

The next day, the army carried torches, blew their trumpets, and shattered pitchers before running toward the camp of Midianites. God gave Israel the victory. But after Gideon died, the Israelites did not remember the Lord, who had delivered them from the power of their enemies.

Christ Connection: 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 save 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.

A Name for Gideon

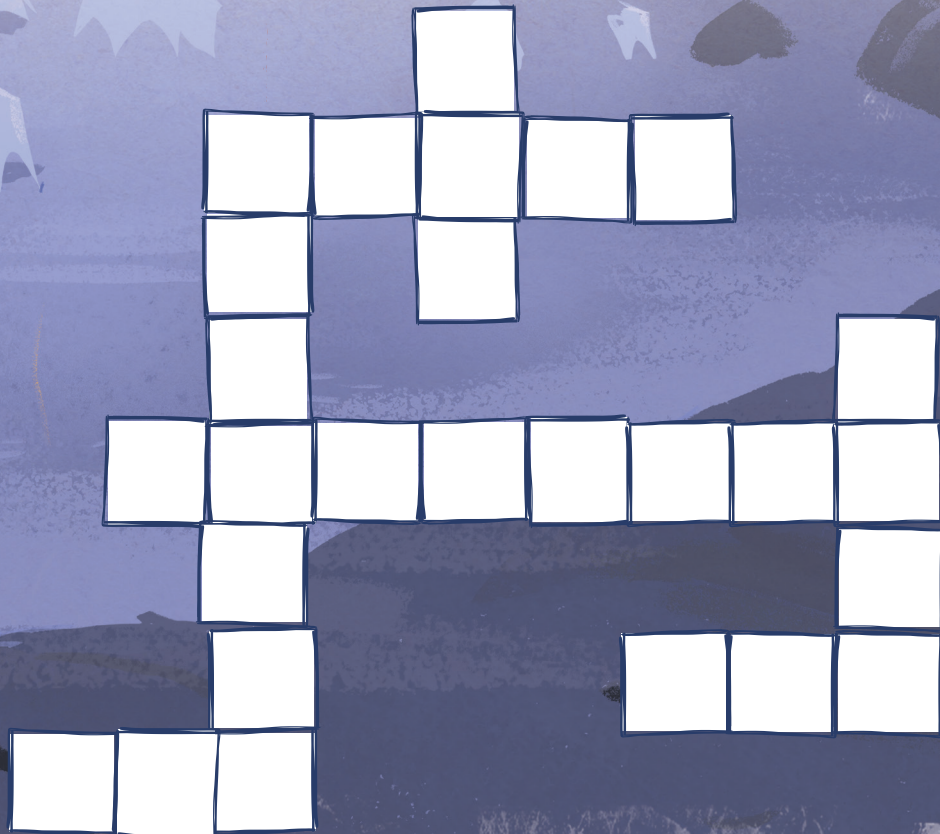
Solve the code to discover how the Angel of the Lord called to Gideon.
Each number matches up with a letter of the alphabet. (1 = A, 2 = B, 3 = C, and so on)

"The Lord is with you, _____."

13 9 7 8 20 25 23 1 18 18 9 15 18

Main Point Word Maze

Use the words of today's main point to fill in the crossword puzzle.



Journal Page

List three things you are good at. Thank God for your talent. Then write a few sentences about how you might use your skills to glorify God. (We glorify God when we show others how great He is.)



FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS

- Samson was supposed to rescue the Israelites from what people? (*the Philistines*)
- What was Samson not supposed to do? (See Judges 13:5.)
- Talk about a time you disobeyed. What were the consequences?

FOLD



Samson

Judges 13–16

MAIN POINT: GOD GAVE SAMSON POWER.

The Israelites disobeyed God, so God let the Philistines rule over them. One day, the Angel of the Lord appeared to Manoah and his wife. He told them they would have a son who would save the Israelites from the Philistines. God had special instructions for their son: He should never cut his hair.

Manoah's wife named her son Samson. God blessed Samson and made him strong. When Samson grew up, he saw a Philistine woman he wanted to marry. He went to meet the woman. On the journey, a young lion jumped out at Samson. Samson killed the lion. When Samson and his parents returned for the wedding, Samson found the lion. Some bees had made honey in the lion's body.

Some Philistine men came to help Samson prepare the wedding feast. Samson told the men a riddle: *Out of the eater came something to eat, and out of the strong came something sweet.* The riddle was about the lion and the honey, but the men could not figure it out. They asked Samson's new wife for help. Samson told his wife the answer to the riddle, and she told the men. Samson had been tricked! He was angry, and he left his wife. When he went back to get her, she was gone.

Later, Samson fell in love with a woman named Delilah. The Philistines offered Delilah money if she would find out why Samson was so strong.

Finally, Samson told Delilah, "If you cut my hair, I will not have my strength." So when Samson was sleeping, the Philistines cut his hair. Samson wasn't strong anymore. The Philistines grabbed him and took him away in chains.

Samson's hair began to grow back. One day, the Philistines made Samson stand between two pillars in their temple. Samson cried out to God, "Lord, please strengthen me once more." So God strengthened Samson. Samson pushed on the pillars and collapsed the temple. Samson and everyone in the temple died.

Christ Connection: Samson's sin led to his own death, but God used his death to deliver 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 believers from sin and give them eternal life.

Samson in Action

Look up each passage in your Bible. Write a short caption and illustrate the scene to complete the comic strip.


Judges 14:5

Judges 16:17-19

Judges 16:29-30

Who Am I? Riddles

Can you solve these riddles about people in the Bible? Look up the verses to check your answer!



THIS MAN MET WITH EGLON,
KING OF MOAB.
HE PULLED OUT HIS SWORD
AND GAVE HIM A JAB.
GOING ONTO THE PORCH
AND LOCKING THE DOOR,
HE LEFT THE KING THERE,
DEAD ON THE FLOOR!

WHO AM I? (SEE JUDGES 3:15-25.)

THERE ONCE WAS A WOMAN
WHO LIVED IN A TENT.
GOD USED HER FOR GLORY
IN ONE BIG EVENT.
WHEN THE ARMY COMMANDER
CAME IN FOR A SNOOZE,
SHE GAINED ISRAEL'S VICTORY
AND CANAAN DID LOSE.

WHO AM I? (SEE JUDGES 4:17-24.)

AN ANGEL APPEARED
UNDER A TREE
AND TOLD THIS MAN,
"A MIGHT WARRIOR YOU'LL BE!"
THIS MAN TESTED GOD,
PUTTING FLEECE ON THE GROUND.
GOD CLEARLY WAS WITH HIM;
HE WAS ALWAYS AROUND!

WHO AM I? (SEE JUDGES 6:11-12.)