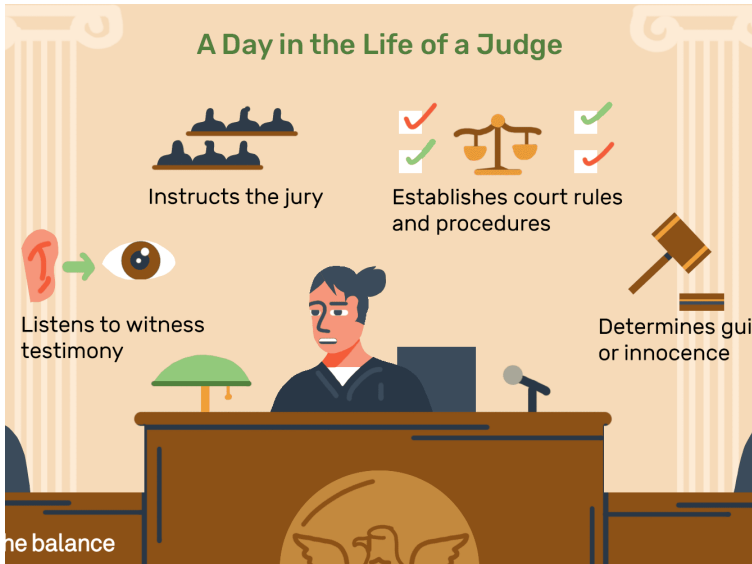


HOOK

Game or activity to introduce kids to judges.



GAME

Mr/Ms Judge

Choose a kid to be the "judge" and put his or her head down on the table/close eyes.

Choose another kid from the class to unmute and disguise his or her voice and say, "Good morning, Mr. (or Ms.) Judge."

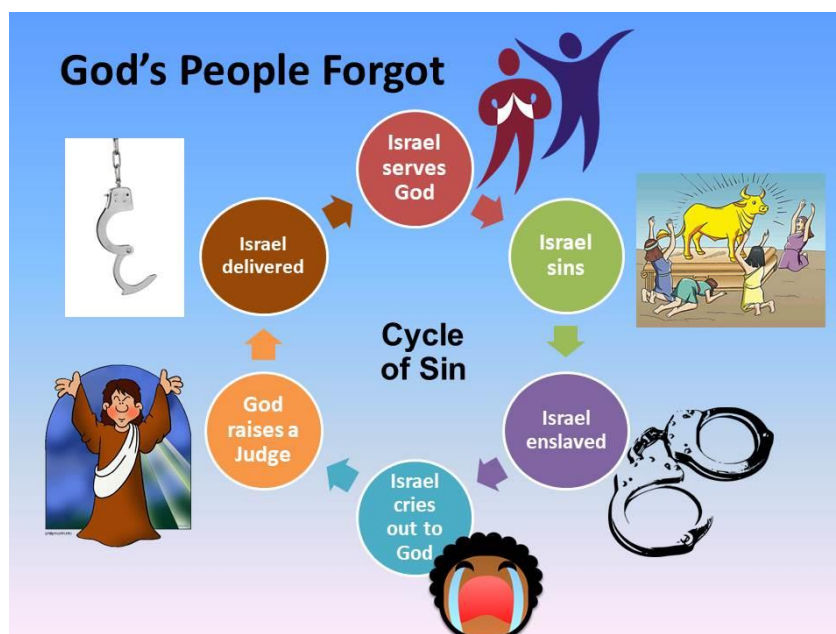
Have the judge look up and try to guess which kid spoke. If the judge is right, the other kid will become the next judge.

INTRO TO JUDGES

- We finished the Book of Genesis last week. Genesis ends with Joseph bringing his entire family over to Egypt. In Egypt, Jacob's sons' family multiplied in number, until the Egyptians felt threatened and made them slaves.
- In another miraculous way, God brought the much-expanded family out of Egypt, through the desert (for 40 years), and into the Promised Land.
- From 12 sons, the Israelites (as they were known) had grown into a young nation. They had no king to lead them — God was their king. But through the years, God would raise up some special leaders called judges to lead His people.
- We will go through the book of Judges over the next few weeks — we'll see how the Israelites were always disobeying God and getting themselves into trouble, and how God always hears and delivers them.

CYCLE OF SIN

Throughout the book of Judges, we see a common thread — the Cycle of Sin being repeated over and over again.

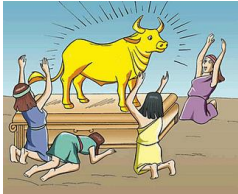


VIDEO: OVERVIEW OF JUDGES

RivChurch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sMe3O3Mb0wU>

Bible Project: Judges <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kOYy8iCfIJ4>

OTHNIEL: Israel's First Judge (Judges 3)



God had asked the Israelites to drive out those living in the Promised Land, but they didn't do so fully. Eventually they were influenced by their neighbours and started serving idols.



As a result, they became a slave to Cushan-Rishathaim, king of Aram Naharaim, for eight years.

Cushan-Rishathaim: "doubly-wicked blackness"
King of Aram: "exalted"



The Israelites cried out to God.



God raised up a deliverer, **OTHNIEL**

- Name means "lion of God"
- Caleb's younger brother
- Spirit of the LORD came upon him
- Overpowered the King of Aram



God delivered the Israelites and they had rest for 40 years.

JESUS BROKE THE CYCLE OF SIN

After 40 years of peace, Othniel died, and the Israelites returned to their wicked ways. The cycle of SIN continued.

God knew that man was trapped in this cycle of SIN. On their own, they could never break out of it or be good enough.

So He sent Jesus to die on the cross and take all our SIN (and its penalties) on Himself. In return, we get TRUE FREEDOM in Him, forever!

ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

THEME SONG

Adam Zarn: Song of Judges <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QBf-JToJVgw>

WORKSHEET (next page)

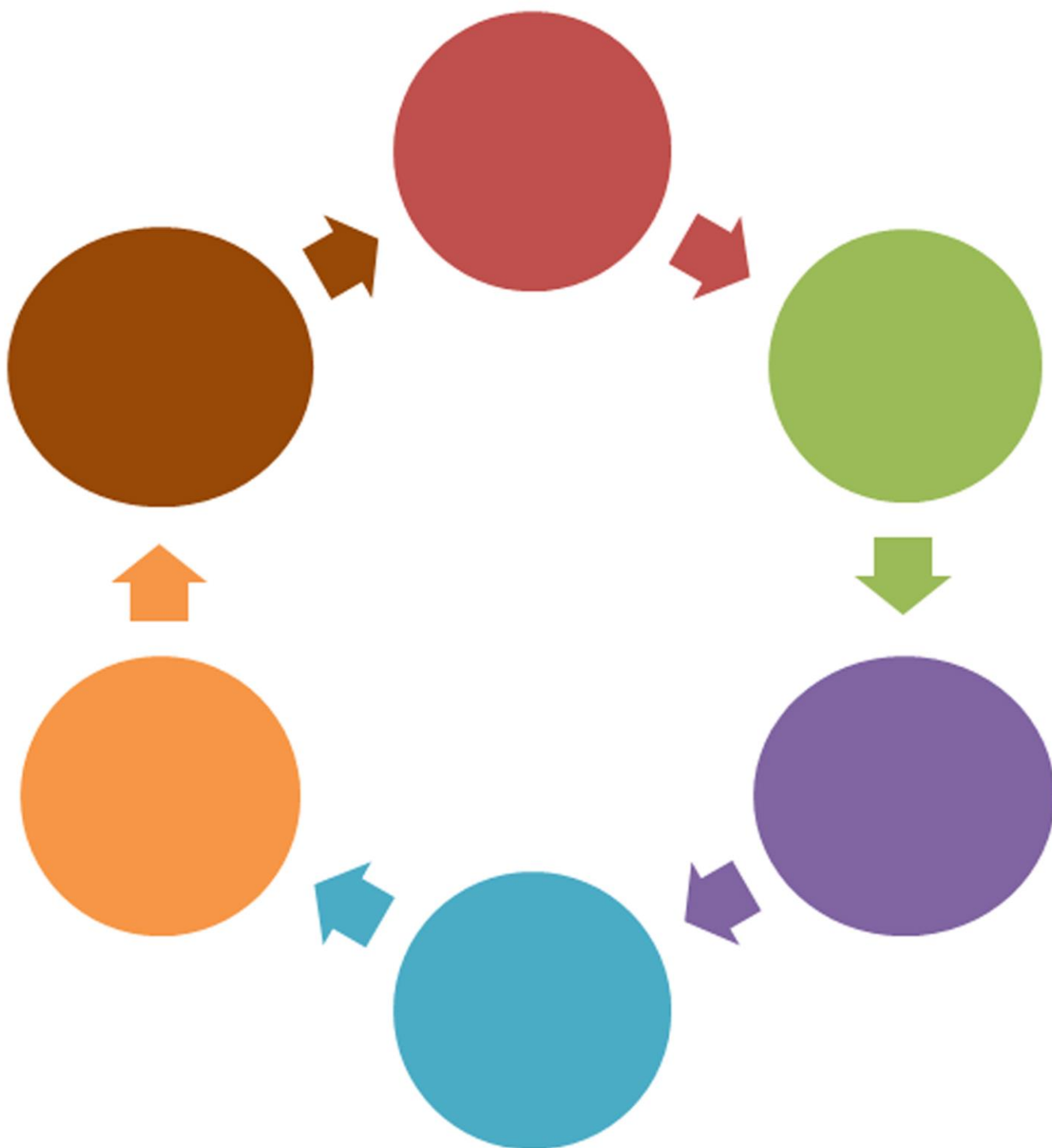
Kids can fill in the Cycle of Sin with text or cut/stick these pix or draw their own pictures.

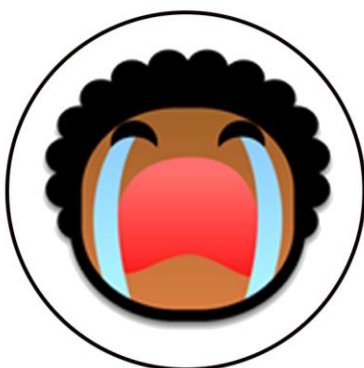
Write in text at bottom: **Jesus broke the Cycle of Sin to give me true FREEDOM!**



SHARE & PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Do you find yourself in the cycle of SIN, trying very hard not to do bad things but falling into old habits or temptations each time? Let's pray for each other and declare that Jesus has broken the cycle of SIN in our lives already!

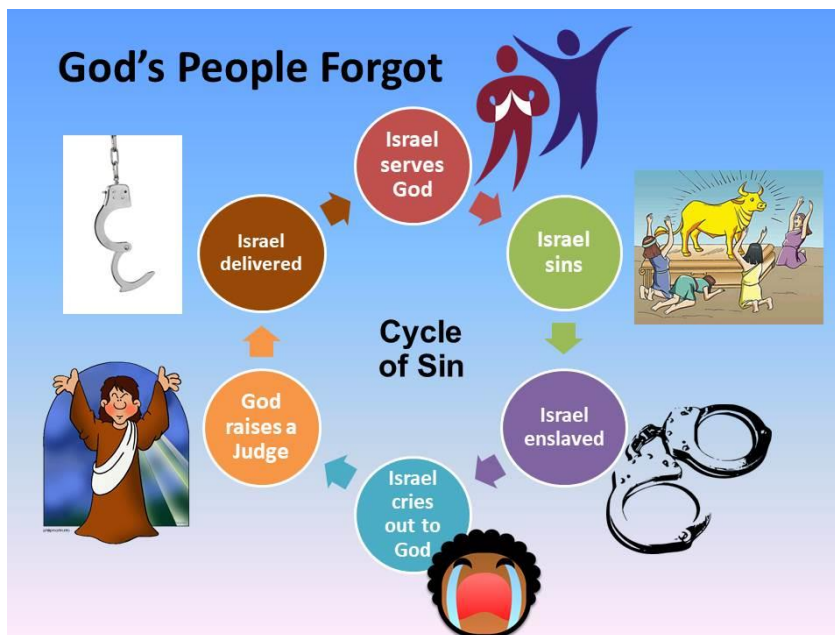




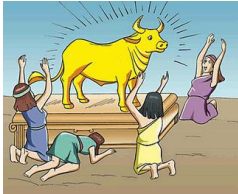
REVIEW OF JUDGES

As we learnt last Sunday, the Israelites had grown into a young nation. They had no king to lead them — God was their king. But through the years, God would raise up some special leaders called judges to lead His people.

Throughout the book of Judges, we see a common thread — the Cycle of Sin being repeated over and over again.



EHUD: The Left-handed Judge (Judges 3:12-28)



Last week, we learnt how Othniel rescued the Israelites from the King of Aram. But once again, the Israelites failed to fully trust in God and started worshipping idols.



God gave King Eglon of Moab, a very, very fat king, control over Israel because of their evil. And the Israelites served Eglon of Moab for 18 years.



But when the people of Israel cried out to the LORD for help, the LORD again raised up a rescuer to save them.



His name was **EHUD**.

What do we know about Ehud?

- Son of Gera, the Benjamite
- Left handed (why was this significant?)
- Made a double-edged sword about a cubit long
- Brought a tribute to the King and stabbed him until the whole sword went into the king's belly and was covered by fat.
- Ehud led the Israelites to attack the Moabites and defeated them.
"Follow me, for the Lord has given you victory over Moab your enemy."



God delivered the Israelites and they had rest for 49 years.

VIDEO

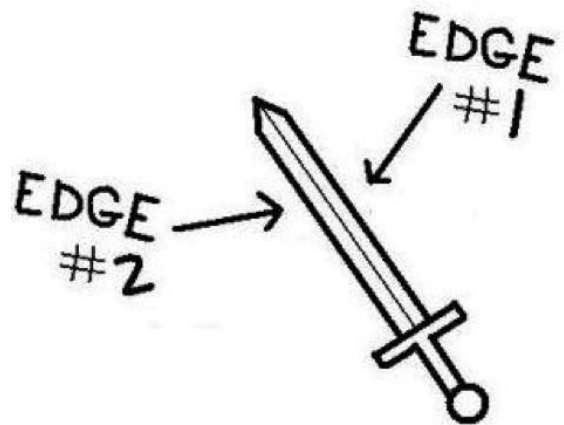
BimBam <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kjTocODJH9g>

Victory Kids <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QdtRrVkuYxQ>

DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD

The Bible is very specific in its details ... it noted that Ehud was a left-handed man and that he made a double-edged dagger about a foot long. Because Ehud was left-handed, he strapped his sword on his right thigh (again very specific). Normally guards would check the left thigh for weapons of those going to see the king, so they didn't find the sword.

Ehud's sword penetrated straight into the very fat king. It reminds us of another powerful sword — the Word of God, which penetrates deep into us. *For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.* (Hebrews 4:12)



Hence, we should also carry our sword — the Word of God. In times such as this, only the Word of God, will give us the hope and peace in the midst of this lockdown, pandemic and economic turmoil. Let's not be too engrossed in social media or news reports, but soak ourselves with the Word of God. Be like Mary, who sat down at Jesus feet and heard the Word, as opposed to Martha, who was worried and troubled with many things.

REMINDER

It's easy to be caught and trapped in the cycle of sin and despair. But remember, Jesus has broken the cycle of sin by His finished work on the Cross. Let's focus on Him and experience His deliverance and freedom in our lives!

ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

THEME SONG

Adam Zarn: Song of Judges <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QBf-JToJVgw>

RELATED CRAFT



SHARE & PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

What challenges do you face? Let's take time to read the Word of God and pray for each other and declare that Jesus has broken the cycle of SIN and DESPAIR in our lives already!

JUDGES

TNCC
CHILDREN'S
CHURCH

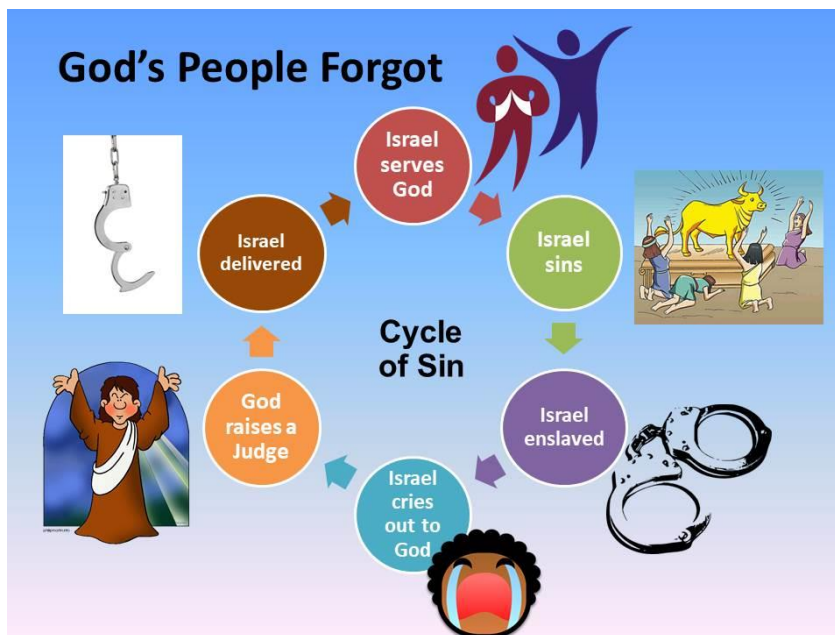
TWO FORMIDABLE WOMEN

HOOK

REVIEW OF JUDGES

As we learnt last Sunday, the Israelites had grown into a young nation. They had no king to lead them — God was their king. But through the years, God would raise up some special leaders called judges to lead His people.

Throughout the book of Judges, we see a common thread — the Cycle of Sin being repeated over and over again.



DEBORAH: The Prophet & Judge (Judges 4-5)



Last week, we learnt how Ehud rescued the Israelites from Eglon of Moab. But once again, the Israelites failed to fully trust in God and did evil.



God gave them into the hands of Jabin, King of Canaan. The commander of his army was Sisera, who had 900 iron chariots and cruelly oppressed the Israelites for 20 years —e.g. taking their crops and sheep and cattle, running over them with his chariots etc.



Once again, the people of Israel cried out to the LORD for help, and the LORD again raised up a rescuer to save them.

Her name was **DEBORAH**.



- A prophet, wife of Lappidoth
- Sat under palm tree and helped the Israelites settle their disputes/arguments
- Told Barak: *'Go, take with you ten thousand men of Naphtali and Zebulun and lead them up to Mount Tabor. I will lead Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his troops to the Kishon River and give him into your hands.'*
- Barak said he will only go if Deborah goes with him. Deborah agreed, but said that the honour of killing the commander (Sisera) will be given to a woman, instead of him.
- Barak defeated Sisera's army of 900 iron chariots at the Kishon River, but Sisera fled to the tent of a woman called Jael and was killed there.



God delivered the Israelites. Deborah and Barak celebrated in song. The Israelites had rest for 40 years.

LESSON

GOD USES ORDINARY PEOPLE

God uses ordinary people to fulfill His plan and purpose in life. He qualifies the ordinary. Similarly, God can use all of us to fulfill His plans and purpose that He has in store for our lives.

Deborah was a prophet and a judge. Barak was a military commander of Israel, but even he was afraid when told to go up against Sisera, the commander for the King of Canaan. But God raised another woman, Jael, who was just minding her own business in her tent, to defeat Sisera and deliver Israel.

Jael also used whatever she had at hand (a jug of milk, a tent peg, a hammer). Similarly, we can be used by God with whatever talents and resources that He has blessed us with to do great things for God and be a blessing to others.

GOD HAS GONE BEFORE US

"Go! This is the day the Lord has given Sisera into your hands. Has not the Lord gone ahead of you?"

Twice, Deborah reminded Barak that God had already given him the victory — *God has given him into your hands; has not the Lord gone ahead of you?*

Whatever we are faced with today, and whatever God has called us to do, know that Jesus has already gone before us, with His death on the cross He has broken the cycle of sin, and He has already won the victory for us! *We are more than conquerors through Him who loves us. (Romans 8:37)*

VIDEO

Crossroads: Deborah (Younger Kid Version) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GakKDNn2_YE

CartoonWorks <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jxwhdb-WdgU>

ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

THEME SONG

Adam Zarn: Song of Judges <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QBf-JToJVgw>

RELATED CRAFT

with MEMORY VERSE: *We are more than conquerors through Him who loves us.* **(Romans 8:37)**

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HOOK

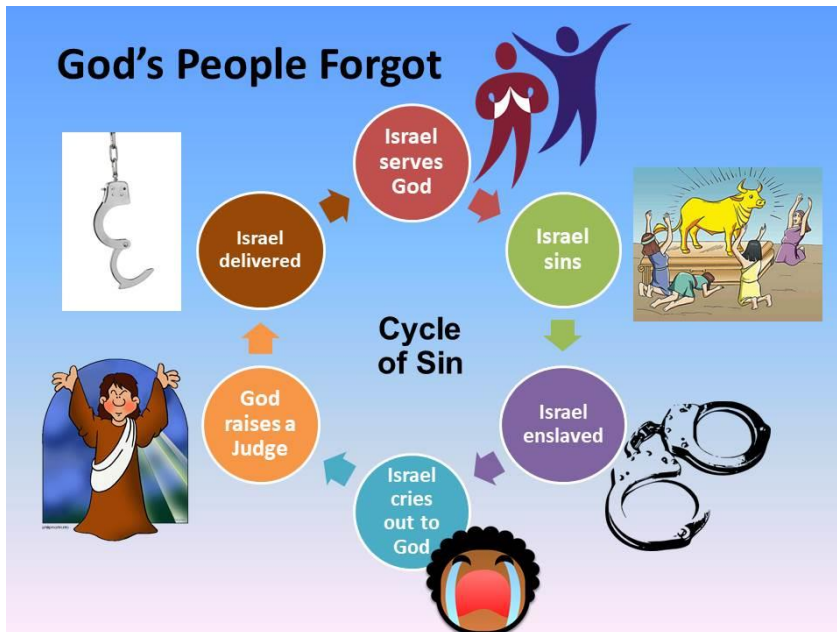
SMALL, SMALLER, SMALLEST

Any icebreaker to introduce the concept of “small”, which ties into our lesson on Gideon being the smallest in his family and from the smallest clan and tribe.

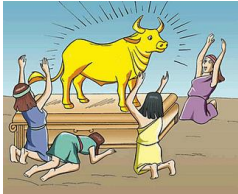
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GIDEON: Smallest of the small (Judges 6-7)



Last week, we learnt how Deborah and Barak rescued the Israelites from Jabin, King of Canaan, and his commander Sisera (who had 900 iron chariots). But once again, the Israelites failed to fully trust in God and worshipped the gods of the Amorites. *"I said to you, 'I am the Lord your God; do not worship the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you live.' But you have not listened to me."* (Judges 6:10)



So God gave them into the hands of the Midianites. The Midianites kept destroying the Israelites' crops for seven years! This made the Israelites very hungry and fearful, and drove them to hide in the mountains and caves. (And that's where Gideon was first introduced ... threshing wheat secretly so the Midianites will not find him.)



"Midian so impoverished the Israelites that they cried out to the Lord for help." (Judges 6:6) So the LORD, once again, raised up a rescuer to save them.



His name was **GIDEON**, who was a very reluctant deliverer.

- The least in his family; from the weakest clan in Manasseh (the smallest tribe of Israel).
- Needed a lot of convincing: asked God for 2 signs.
- Finally, when he assembled an army to go against the Midianites, God reduced his army from 32,000 men to just ... 300!
- Armed with trumpets and empty jars, Gideon and his 300 men defeated the enemies with the Lord's help.



The land had peace for 40 years.

VIDEOS

Crossroads – God's story <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U68cIMZSgvQ>

Saddleback <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c3CDZjpDKU>

Crossroads Kids God's people: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CjglS78eYAg>

PursueGod Kids <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GWFI9SMMQII>

LESSON

GOD'S STRENGTH

Gideon was just a normal guy. There wasn't anything special about him. He wasn't a great warrior. Despite being the smallest of small, God still chose Gideon to defeat the enemy. Why?

Gideon started with an army of 32,000 men to go against the Midianites. But God slowly whittled down the army to 10,000. And then he reduced it even further. God gave Gideon's men a little drinking test — those who bent down to drink on their knees (like a dog) were sent back; only those who scooped up the water in their hands to drink were kept.

[prop: bowl of water to illustrate drinking styles]

Finally how many men were left? 300

300?! Who fights a powerful enemy with only 300? God does!

Why? So that His power may be revealed and no one can claim the victory from their own strength.

"You have too many men. I cannot deliver Midian into their hands, or Israel would boast against me, 'My own strength has saved me.'" (Judges 7:2)

"With the three hundred men that lapped I will save you and give the Midianites into your hands. Let all the others go home." (Judges 7:7)

So though we may feel small or inadequate, remember, we have Jesus living in us, and His strength is more than enough! No matter what your challenge, know that Jesus always gives us His strength to carry us through.

GOD'S VICTORY

[prop: trumpet/torch/jar: can use picture cut-outs]

In fact, in the end, Gideon didn't have to draw a sword. He and his 300 men just blew their trumpets, broke their jars and held up their torches with a battle cry. Nobody moved or ran into the Midianites' camps to attack. They just stood there. But the enemy got confused and ran away crying in fear and fighting each other. Gideon and his men got to watch God defeat the Midianites.

When we were facing Satan, the enemy who may have seemed big and powerful, Jesus came as a small, helpless baby, growing up as a little boy. Through His life, he showed us His real strength and power ... living holy and blameless as a man and going to the cross to take the sins of the world on Himself!

Like Gideon and his men, we can stand and watch His victory for us. We can declare His praise and let His light shine in our lives to all around us!

ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

THEME SONG

Adam Zarn: Song of Judges <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QBf-JToJVgw>

RELATED CRAFT

with the words: *I will be with you!* (Judges 6:16a)

SHARE & PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

What challenges do you face? Do you feel small and helpless? Let's pray and remind each other that God is with us and He gives us the strength and the victory!

HOOK

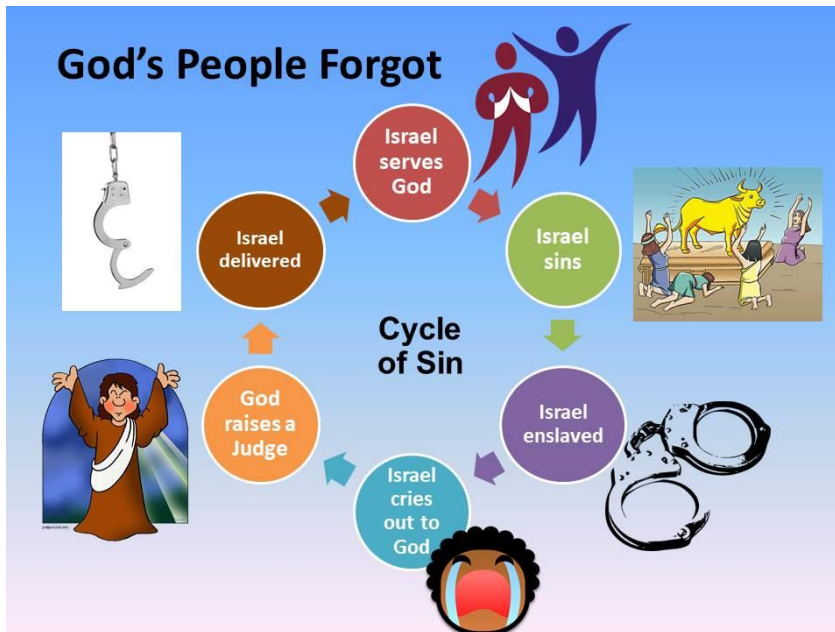
An icebreaker or illustration about strength or who is strongest etc.

Last week, we learnt about Gideon who was the smallest of the small. Today, we learn about someone who was the strongest of the strong, yet he chose to depend on his own strength instead of God.

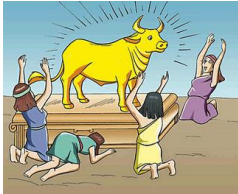
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SAMSON: The Final Judge (Judges 13-16)



Last week, we learnt how Gideon delivered the Israelites from the Midianites with just 300 men and the land had peace for 40 years. But time and time again, the Israelites failed to fully trust in God and worshipped other gods.



God gave them into the hands of the Philistines for 40 years.



And though it's not specified, the Israelites would have called onto God to save them.



God prepared a deliverer for them. His name was **SAMSON**.

- Parents: Manoah & wife – childless;
The angel of the LORD appeared to them. *"You are going to have a son."*
- Boy = Nazirite; set apart for God
Special rules: No wine, no unclean food, no razor on his head.
- *"He will take the lead in delivering Israel from the hands of the Philistines."*(Judges 13:5)
- Samson had supernatural strength from God.
- But Samson was a bad judge and did everything he was NOT supposed to do.
- Finally, the Philistines caught him, gorged out his eyes and threw him into prison.



However, God still used Samson. When Samson died, he killed many of the Philistines and their rulers. He was Israel's last judge.

VIDEOS

CartoonWorks <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pkOVBXQQo5Y>

LESSON

SAMSON'S WEAKNESS

The Spirit of the Lord came upon Samson and gave him great strength and power. He could kill lions with his bare hands. He could kill 1,000 men with just a donkey's jawbone.

However, his strength was a result of a promise made with God, to be set apart for Him. But Samson lived very differently from how God told him to.

- **Samson did what pleased his eye:**
He married a Philistine woman (one of the "enemy", not part of God's covenant people); he broke some of God's rules, e.g. touching dead body of the lion; he got involved with a prostitute
- **Samson lived without accountability to his parents:**
Despite his parents' protests about him marrying a Philistine woman, Samson insisted and demanded his parents get her as a bride for him.
- **Samson placed his confidence in the flesh:**
He acted recklessly, making bets and then exacting revenge; he attributed his great strength to his hair, instead of the real source, God.

In many ways, Samson was a failure as a judge. He ended up blind and in prison. Yet, God in His grace, used Samson to deliver Israel from the Philistines (as He told his mother). And in his death, Samson *"killed many more when he died than while he lived"* (Judges 16:30).

JESUS: OUR TRUE STRONG CHAMPION

Unlike Samson,

- **Jesus lived to please God**
"Not my will, but Yours be done." (Luke 22:44)
- **Jesus lived fully accountable to His Father**
"Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" (Luke 2:49)
- **Jesus' confidence was in His Father, even to the point of death!**
"Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." (Luke 23:46)

JESUS, OUR FINAL JUDGE

Samson was the final judge we read about in the Book of Judges. But Jesus is our final Judge!

Unlike Samson and all the other judges we've learnt about so far, Jesus is the perfect judge, who is fair and just.

He is the One who has been *appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead*. (Acts 10:42)

"... the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son." (John 5:22)

Jesus first came to the world to save us from sin and to break the cycle of sin through His finished work on the Cross.

But He will come again one day to *judge the living and the dead* (2 Timothy 4:1), rewarding those who believe in Him (1 Cor 4:5, 2 Cor 5:10), and pronouncing eternal judgement on Satan (John 12:31).

Thank you Jesus!

ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

THEME SONG

Adam Zarn: Song of Judges <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QBf-JToJVgw>

RELATED CRAFT

with the words: *Jesus is our true Champion Judge*

e.g. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gOcjnW0pgg0>

<https://members.10minutesofqualitytime.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Samson-Bible-Craft.pdf>

SHARE & PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

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