



K-1st Lesson

Review

Refer to Lesson 68 Flip Chart. In the last lesson, we saw how God was faithful to keep his promise to give the Israelites the land of Canaan. Joshua divided the land for each of the families, or tribes, of Israel. God let them move in and enjoy living in the cities that they didn't have to build and eating fruit from trees they didn't have to plant—they were already there!

Some of their enemies were still living in the land, so there were still some battles that had to be won. God even helped Caleb fight the giants for his land in the hill country.

After the Israelites lived in the land of Canaan for a while, something happened—and it kept happening over and over, for many years. It was a cycle.

- What does that mean—a cycle? Allow discussion.

I'm going to pass out some pictures to some of you to help us understand what we mean by the word cycle.

Pass out the Cycle Pictures to several students. Use the Cycle Pictures and instructions to discuss the idea of a cycle (repeating the same actions over and over). Then continue with the lesson.

Israel's Cycle in Judges

Joshua stayed faithful to God for his whole life, and then he died at the age of 110. The Israelites followed the Lord, too, as long as Joshua and the other leaders were alive. But as the younger people grew up, they were not taught about all the miracles God had done. Sadly, they did not know or trust the Lord.

God still loved them and wanted them to obey his commandments. He had chosen the Israelites as his people and wanted them to worship him, love him, and serve him faithfully.

Some of the people from Canaan were still living in the land. They worshipped idols and false gods, and they invited the Israelites to worship their idols, too. Then it happened—the Israelites began worshipping these idols, and soon they turned away from the one true God who had helped them so much.

Judges 2:14–15

Refer to the Books of the Bible Poster. Let's read from the book of Judges. I'm going to read from chapter 2. Have the student bring up the Bible and open it to the sticky note.

- How did God feel when Israel worshipped these false gods? He was angry.

God was angry because of Israel's sin. Because he is holy and just, God had to punish them. God did not help Israel fight their enemies anymore. Instead, God brought enemies against Israel to attack them and come in and steal their food and all their things. It was awful! They were in terrible trouble!

Judges 2:16

But listen to this. Tell me what God did when the Israelites turned back to him and cried out for help. Read Judges 2:16.

- Who would God raise up to save the people? Judges.

These judges weren't like a judge in a courtroom. They were leaders God chose to rescue the Israelites by fighting against their enemies. God was merciful, so he helped the judge save the people when they turned back to God.

Refer to the Flip Chart. This was a cycle that happened over and over: 1) The Israelites sinned by worshipping false gods; 2) God became angry and sent enemies to punish them; 3) The Israelites cried out to God to forgive them; 4) God chose a judge to rescue them from their enemies; 5) The Israelites thanked God for saving them and giving them peace.

But, guess what! It didn't end there. Whenever God gave the Israelites peace and safety, they would forget what God had done for them and turn back to worshipping idols. This started the whole cycle again—round and round, over and over!

- How many years do you think this went on? Any guesses? Write guesses on the board.

The Israelites kept doing these same things again and again, for about 300 years! Write 300 on the board.

Judges 3:7

I'm going to read about the very first judge God chose to lead the people. Listen for the parts of the cycle on the Flip Chart. Read Judges 3:7.

- Refer to picture #1 on the Flip Chart. The people of Israel did what in the sight of the Lord? Evil.
- Who did they forget? The Lord their God.

Judges 3:8

Then what happened? Listen to the next verse. Read verse 8.

- How did God feel about this? He was angry.
- Yes. God loved Israel and wanted them to obey him. So when they disobeyed, he punished them—not to be mean but to help them learn that they should not sin so they would turn back to him.

- Refer to picture #2 on the Flip Chart. This time, God punished Israel by sending the king of Mesopotamia to come and take over. How long did this king rule over Israel and make them serve him? Eight years.

Judges 3:9

Now let's hear about the next part of the cycle. Listen to this verse. Read verse 9.

- What did the people finally do? Who did they cry out to? The Lord.

Refer to picture #3 on the Flip Chart. Israel cried out to the Lord. That means they prayed and asked God for forgiveness and help. That was what God was waiting for.

- Refer to picture #4 on the Flip Chart. God raised up a judge, or deliverer. What was his name? Othniel.

This first judge God raised up was Othniel. God chose Othniel to go to war against the king of Mesopotamia. Othniel led the Israelites in battle, and God helped them win again!

Refer to picture #5 on the Flip Chart. After that, Othniel led Israel for 40 years of peace and rest.

But was that the end of it? No. This went on for 300 years, over and over again.

Idolatry Today

Show the Lesson Illustration. Do you remember the Ten Commandments? The Israelites kept going back to their idols and forgetting about God. They were breaking the first two commandments. Let's read those together. Read the text under the first two and repeat them together.

The Israelites were not putting God first; they turned away from him. And they were not worshipping the one true God like they should. They were bowing down to idols and worshipping false gods.

This was a terrible thing they did, wasn't it? But did you know that we can do the same thing? We have the same sin problem. We may not worship or bow down to statues like the Israelites did, but we can have idols if we're not careful. Whenever we make anything more important than God, it can become an idol, and we can end up breaking God's commandments, too.

- Let's think about some idols we might have today. Who would like to help me? Choose volunteers to take the items out of the box one at a time. Discuss how each item could become an idol.

These things are not bad—God often blesses us with many of them. But we must be careful not to let them turn into something we care about more than we care about God.

This is a good lesson we can learn from the Israelites. In the time of the judges, they let other things become more important than God. We don't want that to happen to us. So, let's ask God to help us be very careful to make sure God comes first in our lives every day.

Limited license to copy issued to Calvary Chapel Morgantown, Morgantown, WV

