



**Mustard Seed Sunday School Lesson for October 1, 2006
Released on September 27, 2006**

"God Sent Leaders for the People"

GOLDEN TEXT: - "The Lord raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them" (Judges 2:16).

SUMMARY OF SCRIPTURE LESSON TEXT:

The Lord raised up leaders to save Israel from their enemies.

SCRIPTURE LESSON TEXT: Judges 2:16-23

Judges 2:16 Nevertheless the LORD raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them.

17 And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the LORD; *but* they did not so.

18 And when the LORD raised them up judges, then the LORD was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented the LORD because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them.

19 And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, *that* they returned, and corrupted *themselves* more than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them; they ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way.

20 And the anger of the LORD was hot against Is'ra-el; and he said, Because that this people hath transgressed my covenant which I commanded their fathers, and have not hearkened unto my voice.

21 I also will not henceforth drive out any from before them of the nations which Josh'u-a left when he died:

22 That through them I may prove Is'ra-el, whether they will keep the way of the LORD to walk therein, as their fathers did keep *it*, or not.

23 Therefore the LORD left those nations, without driving them out hastily; neither delivered he them into the hand of Josh'u-a.

NOTES ON THE LESSON

God's covenant dealings are evident throughout the book of Judges, which covers a period of around three hundred years, recording the time between Joshua and Samuel (expert opinions vary on the exact number of years). It shows God's discipline for disobedience and His love in the events of history.

As the Israelites settled in the Promised Land, a cycle of obedience and disobedience persisted. Judges 2:11 begins the cycle, which is repeated over and over (3:7, 12; 4:1; 6:1; 10:6; 13:1). Each time the people sinned, God withdrew His protection; but in His mercy, He raised up judges to lead them back to God and His protection. The judges received spiritual power from God, which gave them authority. They led the people to tell God they were sorry. When they repented, God gave them victory over their enemies. When a judge died, the cycle began again.

THE OBJECT IN VIEW: Teach the children that God raises up leaders to help us obey God.

TRUTHS TO STRESS:

1. Leaders are important in God's plan.
2. God's leaders remind us when we do wrong.
3. We should express thanks to God for our leaders.

PLANNING VISUAL AIDS

For *Beginning the Lesson*, you need pictures of leaders (check internet, local Christian bookstore, or simply draw characters). Make a time line by writing "Judges-Kings" at the top of the sheet of paper and "Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, and Ezra" at the bottom.

For *Telling the Lesson*, everyone needs a Bible.

For *Telling How to Live*, you need to know the chorus of "Standing on the Promises" (which can be found in most hymnals).

For *Helping to Remember*, you need modeling clay or a picture of an idol to illustrate how Israel turned from God to worship useless statues.

BEGINNING THE LESSON

(Gather the children around the time line. Show pictures of leaders. Ask the following questions about each leader.) What is his name? What does he do? What makes him a good or bad leader? (Point to the time line.) Joshua is the sixth book in the Bible. It tells how Joshua led the people into the Promised Land. It tells how the land was divided among the twelve tribes. (show the time line.) The Bible tells us about judges and kings. We will talk about judges today.

TELLING THE LESSON

(Gather the children around a table with Bibles.) Turn to the front of the Bible to the list of books. Find and point to the book of Joshua. Follow along as I read the titles of the books of Joshua to Esther. (Read the titles of the books.)

Find Judges 2:1 in your Bible. (Help the children find the book.)

Question: "What do you think of when you think of the word "Judge?" Possible

Answers: A judge is someone who is makes decisions that settle arguments between people in court; someone who protects the rights of innocent people; an attorney or lawyer who serves the community; someone who enforces the law; someone who punishes people when they do wrong.

Now help the children to find the eight-letter word that we talked about before (covenant).

Question: What does covenant mean?

Answer: Promise.

Joshua was a good leader. When he died, things changed. Find Judges 2:11. (Read verses 11 and 12 as the children follow in their Bibles.

Write "evil," "forsook," and "Baalim" on the chalkboard.) "Evil" is another word for sin.

Question: What is another word for "sin or evil."

Possible Answers: wrong; disobedience; wickedness; rebellion.

"Forsook" means they stopped obeying God. "Baalim" is the plural of "Baal," who was a false god. The people of Israel often stopped listening to or obeying God, and instead chose to worship and follow false gods.

Question: How did God feel about the people obeying false gods?

Answer: Look for a word that shows how God felt about this in verse 14. *He was angry.* The people broke the covenant promise. In the covenant, God promised to care for them if they obeyed Him. God let the enemy armies come into the land when the people broke the covenant. God still loved them, though. He sent leaders to help them. The leaders are called judges in the Bible. These leaders helped the people obey God. The people asked God to forgive them, and He did.

When the leader died, the people turned from God to idols again. He withdrew His protection, and enemy armies came in to give the Israelites a hard time. God pitied His people. He still loved them. He once again raised up a leader who drove out the enemy and led them back to God. This happened over and over.

TELLING HOW TO LIVE

God gives some people the gift of leadership. Good leaders lead others to God. They remind the people about His promise. They remind us to obey Him.

When we belong to God and love Him, we want to obey Him. That does not mean that trouble never comes to those who obey God. It means that He will help believers through the problems. (Sing the chorus of "Standing on the Promises." Review the meaning of the chorus.) This chorus means believing God's promises. It means reading God's Word, the Bible, and doing what it says.

HELPING TO REMEMBER

Show the modeling clay of an idol, or picture of an idol. Explain that the people of Israel turned from God and worshiped statues of Baal, a god that is not real. God called the statues idols.

When the statues are formed, **ask these questions:**

What can this idol do?

Answer: Nothing, really.

Can it answer prayer?

No.

What did the judges tell the people to do with their idols?

Answer: They told the people to destroy their idols.

Smash the statue, or rip the picture. We must throw away anything that keeps us from obeying God.

EXPLAINING THE GOLDEN TEXT

"The Lord raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them" (Judges 2:16).

The word "spoiled" means "hurt." Many times their enemies marched through Israel's cities, stealing and killing. Food was taken from the people. Some were made slaves. They were forced to work hard.

When this happened, the people cried to God for help. Even though the people had broken the covenant, God still loved them. He felt sorry for them. God sent good leaders, who said, "Throw out the gods of wood and stone. Tell God that you are sorry. Start obeying Him."

God has provided us all with leaders to protect and guide us. The leaders God has put in our lives are there to help us to learn about what is right and how to obey God's word, rules, or laws, so that we do what is right, which protects us from harm and punishment.

Today's Mustard Seed Lesson Activity:

'Leaders + obedience = Protection + blessing'

Based on Judges 2:16-23

Instructions:

- a. **Fill in the blank to remind yourself of the main way that judges in the Bible delivered the people of Israel out of the hand of their enemies:
1. They _____ the people when they were doing wrong and encouraged them to repent and obey God.**
- b. **True or False? Each time the people sinned, God withdrew His protection.**
- c. **True or False? Whenever the people were sorry and repented, God gave them victory over their enemies.**
- d. **True or False? Whenever one of God's judges died and the people were without a leader from God, the people stopped obeying God**
- e. **True or False? Every time the people of Israel sinned and God removed His hand of protection (after one of His judges died), an enemy army would attack Israel.**
- f. **Check each God-given leader that is in your life:
Parent Next door neighbor TV Star
Pastor Sports Star Best friend Teacher Sister Brother
Aunt Uncle Cousin Niece Nephew Grand-parents Usher
Deacon Coach Baby-sitter President**
- g. **Who is the number one leader in your life? (Think)
God Your mother Your father You**

Remember to listen to the God-given leaders in your life, and do what is right according to God's word, so that you will have God's protection.

Puzzle Activity:

God Sent Leaders for the People

I D Q N Q V S S E G D U J X J
S S E R P D I T Y M E O N J P
R L M S O P N G Y J R O Y O Z
A O R G S A E Y O B E Y I N G
E D Q O N E S O S W V R G P V
L I C E K J R D P P I Y S N K
T A V Q I L O G M L L V G R Q
Q O D P O D E A S X E U I F L
C X E O A J C X E N D S E N L
E B O V N Z K J N A A E F H Q
F V G O Q W O L X D D R W I C
Q E R E R S B A S Y S U T E L
W O R E H T Q F V F W A F A R
E K R U S L Z Y K G U Y D G T
O J A N D Y U A S I P W P O L

COVENANT
IDOLS
JUDGES
SERVE

DELIVERED
ISRAEL
OBEYING
TRANSGRESSED

GODS
JOSHUA
PEOPLE

11 of 11 words were placed into the puzzle.

God Sent Leaders for the People Solution

I D + + + + S S E G D U J + +
S S E + + D + T + + E + + + +
R L + S O P N + + + R + + + +
A O + G S A E + O B E Y I N G
E D + + N E + O + + V + + + +
L I + E + + R + P + I + + + +
+ + V + + + + G + L L + + + +
+ O + + + + + S + E + + + +
C + + + + + + + N D + + + +
E + + + + + J + + A + + + +
+ V + + + + O + + + + R + + +
+ + R + + S + + + + + T + +
+ + + E H + + + + + + + + + +
+ + + U S + + + + + + + + + +
+ + A + + + + + + + + + + + +

(Over, Down, Direction)

COVENANT (1, 9, NE)

DELIVERED (11, 9, N)

GODS (4, 4, NE)

IDOLS (2, 6, N)

ISRAEL (1, 1, S)

JOSHUA (8, 10, SW)

JUDGES (13, 1, W)

OBEYING (9, 4, E)

PEOPLE (6, 3, SE)

SERVE (5, 14, NW)

TRANSGRESSED (13, 12, NW)

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