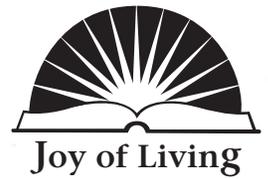


JUDGEL



Judges

Youth Bible Study

by Pat Kampenga

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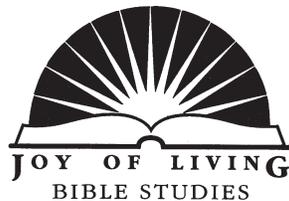
Joy of Living Judges Youth Bible Study

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Judges

Youth Bible Study

by Pat Kampenga



Before you begin

An ideal curriculum for home-school, Bible class, Sunday School or personal Bible Study, **Joy of Living Youth Curriculum** is flexible and easy to use. Each lesson covers the same scripture passage as the adult **Joy of Living Study**.

Age:

This course encourages students of various ages to develop a habit of personal Bible study. Since the study requires reading the Bible and writing answers to the questions, the minimum age should be about 6 years old. Although the questions are geared to about age 10, older students will profit by gaining a basic knowledge of the Bible. Students over the age of 14 may be mature enough to study the adult **Joy of Living** course.

The lessons:

The study is divided into weekly units. Each week is divided into three sections:

- a suggested class schedule including craft and game ideas
- leader's lesson sheets (these contain the answers for the lesson completed by the students during the previous week)
- student questions for the next lesson (these are passed out at the end of the class)

Students complete the written lessons at home and are encouraged to do a few questions each day rather than trying to complete all the questions in one day. This will aid the students in developing a pattern of daily Bible Study. The "HARD" and "RISKY" questions are to inspire the student to think and reason and help them dig deeper into God's Word.

For homeschool or personal Bible study:

The curriculum may be used in a variety of ways. Following are a few suggestions:

- Lessons may be completed by the individual student and graded for accuracy. Discussion time is optional, although it is encouraged.
- Students within the same family or group may work on the lessons together. A discussion time with a parent or other adult is suggested.
- Adults may work one-on-one with the student(s) while they complete the lesson.
- Lessons may be used as part of family devotions. Read the portions of scripture aloud and use the questions to prompt discussion of the Bible passage.

For use with groups:

There is great flexibility in implementing this curriculum. Since each class has its own needs, space, finances, and time frame the class schedule is supplied as a general outline and can be changed to suit specific situations and needs.

Each class session has free time, recreation/snack time, question discussion time, and craft time.

Remember - Keep the pace moving to avoid boredom and trouble, while providing continuity.

Suggested time SCHEDULE to be adapted to individual group:

- 15 - 20 min. - unstructured free time
- 15 - 20 min. - game/snack time
- 15 - 20 min. - discussion time
- remaining time for craft

Helpful Hints for Groups

Facility/Equipment

- Whatever the class size, access to a gym or large game room is worthwhile for team play and group activities.
- If the church has the room, a separate cupboard for supplies is a plus.
- A volleyball or similar ball is good to have on hand for a variety of games.

Discussion Time

- Use the counting off system to divide the class into groups for discussion time. (Avoid, if possible, separating into groups according to age or family.)
- Each discussion group should have an adult leader. Older children should not be used (unless absolutely necessary) as leaders or sitters; they are there for fellowship and learning, too.
- With many of the questions there is no right or wrong answer. The questions are to encourage the student to think and reason and to dig deeper into God's Word. However, since discussion time is also a form of teaching, the leaders are given answers on their question sheets to aid them in the discussion, with occasional commentary insights added in brackets.
- As you discuss the lesson be careful not to belittle a student's opinion or idea. Even if the answer is wrong you can encourage the student by saying something similar to, "I like to see that you're thinking, do you think perhaps....(then give the correct answer)" or "I can see that you are thinking about the question, does anyone else have thoughts on this question?"

Teachers/Leaders/Helpers

- The number of leaders and helpers is determined by the size of the class. The ideal situation is one discussion leader per every 5 children.
- In addition to the main leader, it is helpful to have a game leader, and craft leader.
- Responsibilities are determined within each class structure.
- Parent volunteers may be requested when extra help is needed. If there is a large number of children, the parents have to volunteer only once or twice the entire year.
- Scheduling parents to bring treats is a financial bonus. Keeping cost to a minimum is being a good steward of God's resources.

Game Time

Although board games, puzzles, hidden pictures, crosswords, coloring, and quiet activities do not keep the attention of active children, they should not be ruled out as alternative game time activities. Ball games, races, or tag games are suggested and favored to holding everyone's interest.

Suggestions for obtaining craft ideas & supplies:

Garage/yard/rummage sales

library craft books

children's magazines

YMCA, Park & Recreation Dept., churches (almost every city has a summer program for children, which includes a craft time; they may have leftover craft supplies they would like to donate)

Supplies to have on hand for crafts not in kits:

glue, glue sticks, glue gun

scissors (at least 1 pair for every 2 students)

paint (tempera-washable)

paint brushes

paper towels

newspapers

construction paper

crayons

colored markers

colored pencils

paper cups, napkins (snack time)

various items to pass in relay races

balls, basketball, nerf, etc.

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Judges — Game & Craft List

	Game	Craft	Page
Week 1	Barnyard	Food Day	8
Week 2	Hot Seat	Crayon Sun Catchers	14
Week 3	Over And Under	Invisible Ink Picture Message	22
Week 4	Newspaper Basketball	Kaleidoscope	29
Week 5	Eraser Tag	Scraps & Nature Bouquet	39

JUDGES — WEEK ONE

NO LESSON DISCUSSION

15 - 20 minutes free time — games, fellowship

15 - 20 minutes snack and group recreation: BARNYARD

Divide into two teams, A and B. Each player is given the name of a farm animal, such as chicken, rooster, pig, cow, horse, etc. Use the same farm animals for each team, so there will be a player on each team with the same animal.

The teams stand on opposite ends of the play area. The leader holds the game ball and chooses which team (A) will be first to toss it. A player from Team A must toss the ball into Team B's area while calling a farm animal.

A team member from Team B must catch the ball before it bounces a second time. If it is not caught, the Team B player with the farm animal called is eliminated from play, but sits on Team A's side. If the ball is caught before the second bounce, the Team B player who caught it calls a farm animal while tossing the ball back to Team A's play area. The game continues in this way until time is called, or one team is out of players.

15 - 20 minutes discuss class rules

to end of class CRAFT: FOOD DAY

MATERIALS:

white bread, 1 slice per child	toaster
graham crackers	toaster oven
small marshmallows	microwave oven
HERSHEY'S Chocolate Bars	measuring cups
shredded wheat biscuits	spoons
1/4 cup coconut	measuring spoons
1 tbs. brown sugar	muffin tin
jelly beans	foil
margarine	mixing bowl
milk	food coloring
new, unused paint brushes	small bowls
paper towels	

(continued on next page)

PAINTED TOAST: Pour about 2 tablespoons milk into bowl. Add a drop or two of food coloring. With clean, unused paint brush, paint a design onto white bread. Toast, spread with margarine, and eat. Repeat for each serving.

S'MORES:

Place 1 graham cracker half on paper towel; top with half a chocolate bar and 4 small marshmallows. Microwave at HIGH 10 - 15 seconds or just until marshmallow begins puff. Immediately top with second graham cracker half; gently press together. Repeat for each serving.

BIRD'S NEST:

Crumble 2 shredded wheat biscuits into a mixing bowl. Stir in 1/4 cup coconut, and 1 tablespoon brown sugar. Pour 1/2 cup melted margarine into bowl and stir. Line 6 muffin cups with foil. Press shredded wheat mixture onto the bottoms and up sides of cups. Bake 10 minutes in 350 degree oven, or until slightly brown. Cool nests in cups. Remove nests from cups by lifting up on the foil; then peel off foil. Fill with jelly beans. Save or eat. Cups may also be filled with canned fruit, yogurt, or pudding if desired. Makes 6 servings. Repeat as needed for class size.

JUDGES — LESSON 1

Before you begin your lesson:

- a. Pray for God's Holy Spirit to help you answer the questions.
- b. Some questions may be too hard; it's ok to write "I don't know."
- c. Think about what God's Word is telling you for today.
- d. With some questions, it might be helpful to write the scripture verse on your paper.

Read Judges chapter 1, verses 1, 2, 19-22, 28-31 and chapter 2, verses 8-23.

1. What do you learn about Joshua from these verses?

Numbers 13:1,2,8,16

Deuteronomy 31:7,8

Joshua 1:1; 24:29

2. **HARD:** Read Deuteronomy 7:1-6. It is important for us to know why Israel fought so many battles. Through God's power they were able to conquer the nations living in the Promised Land.
 - a. What were the Israelites to do to the nations God had helped them to conquer?

b. Why were the Israelites to break down, destroy, and burn the heathen altars, obelisks, images and idols?

3. What do these verses say will happen to the Israelites if they disobey God?

Numbers 33:55,56

Deuteronomy 11:26-28

4. These verses sound as if God is being unfair to the nation of Israel. But He truly loves them and wants what is best for them. What does Lamentations 3:31-33 say that tells of God's everlasting love?

5. **RISKY:** Did the Israelites obey God? See Judges 1:28-31 for your answer.

6. What does Judges 2:10,11 say about the generation who were living after Joshua's death?

7. God's love for His people is stronger than the love parents have for their children. When you disobey your parents, you have to suffer the punishment. That doesn't mean they no longer love you, or even that they love you less. God punishes His children too, but that doesn't mean He no longer loves them. What does Judges 2:16 say is the way God helped His people, His children, to get back on track with Him?

Read Judges chapter 3, verses 6,7 and Judges chapter 4, verses 1-10.

Othniel was Israel's first judge. God's spirit came upon him. With God's help Israel had peace for 40 years. Othniel died and Israel did evil in God's eyes. For 18 years they were slaves to the king of Moab. Ehud was the next judge. He ruled 80 years. Israel sinned against God and were slaves again for 20 years. Then came Deborah.

1. Using the years listed above, how many years had passed from the time Othniel became judge until the time Deborah became judge?
2. What do you learn about Deborah from Judges 4:4,5?
3. Barak knew God gave the command to capture Sisera, but his faith for winning the battle was weak. Sometimes we think God's commands are too hard for us to do. Our faith is weak. What does Philippians 4:13 say to help us remember where we get our strength?

Read Judges chapter 5, verse 31b, and chapter 6, verses 1-10.

1. Where did the Israelites go to hide from the cruel Midianites?

2. **CHALLENGE:** Why were the Israelites afraid?
3. What does Judges 6:10 say that is a possible reminder to the Israelites as to why these bandits are robbing them?

Read Judges chapter 6, verses 11 - 23.

The place where Gideon meets the Angel of the Lord is very important. A winepress is a large vat in which grapes are crushed and the juice is used to make wine. It is usually located at the foot of a hill, below the vineyard, because it is easier to carry a heavy load down hill than it is to carry it up hill. The thrashing floor is located on the top of the hill so that the wind catches the chaff, the part of the wheat that can't be used, and carries it away from the grain that can be used. Gideon is found threshing wheat on the floor of the winepress, at the bottom of the hill, hoping the bandits won't see him. This is very hard work because it is likely the wind doesn't blow down there as hard as it does on the top of the hill.

1. What does Gideon say about his family and himself?
2. **PERSONAL:** Is there something you think is too hard for you to do? Do you just say "I can't"? Where does strength come from according to Zechariah 4:6b?
3. **PERSONAL:** Which verse did you chose to memorize this week? Did you chose one that helped you to trust the Lord in a new way?

JUDGES — WEEK TWO

DISCUSSION — LESSON ONE

15 - 20 minutes free time — games, fellowship

15 - 20 minutes snack and group recreation: HOT SEAT

Double the number of players, then subtract one. Place this number of chairs around the room. Place a book on the seat of half the chairs (same number as the number of players). These are the “HOT SEATS”.

Choose IT; remaining players sit on a “COOL SEAT” (one without a book). IT stands in front of the room. When IT calls “Change!” all players must exchange seats and IT tries to get a seat. Sitting on a “HOT SEAT” is not allowed. The player not finding a “COOL SEAT” becomes IT, and game is repeated.

15 - 20 minutes discuss LESSON 1

to end of class CRAFT: CRAYON SUN CATCHER

MATERIALS:

waxed paper, 6” x 6”, 2 per student
crayon shavings
florist wire, yarn, or string
cloth
glitter

iron
grater or peeler
ironing board
paper plates
tissue paper

Cut tissue paper into confetti pieces. Shave crayons onto paper plates. Place a sheet of waxed paper on the ironing board. Sprinkle shavings, glitter, and tissue paper onto it. Cover with another sheet of waxed paper. Lay the cloth over this. Press with a warm iron until the crayon is melted. Remove carefully. When cool, cut into shapes if desired, or leave whole. Punch a hole at either end, or two holes in the middle, and attach the florist wire, yarn, or string to hang.

JUDGES – LESSON 1 ANSWERS

Read Judges chapter 1, verses 1, 2, 19-22, 28-31 and chapter 2, verses 8-23.

1. What do you learn about Joshua from these verses?

Numbers 13:1,2,8 “The Lord now told Moses, ‘Send **spies** into the land of Canaan. This is the land I am giving to Israel. Send one leader from each tribe.’ **Hoshea, son of Nun, from the half-tribe of Ephraim.**” [We learn in Numbers 13:16 that Hoshea’s name was changed to Joshua, one of the 12 who went to spy on the people living in the Promised Land.]

Deuteronomy 31:7,8 “Then Moses called for **Joshua**. He spoke to him as all Israel watched. He said, ‘Be strong! Be brave! For you **shall lead these people into the land promised by the Lord** to their ancestors. See to it that they conquer it. Don’t be afraid. For **the Lord will go before you and will be with you. He will not fail or forsake you.**”

Joshua 1:1; 24:29 “So Moses, the Lord’s servant, died. After that **God spoke to Moses’ helper**. His name was **Joshua**. He was the son of Nun. Soon after this [the things recorded in the book of Joshua] **he died at the age of 110.**”

2. **HARD:** Read Deuteronomy 7:1-6. It is important for us to know why Israel fought so many battles. Through God’s power they were able to conquer the nations living in the Promised Land.

a. What were the Israelites to do to the nations God had helped them to conquer? Verses 2,3: “The Lord your God will turn them over to you **to be destroyed**. When he does, do a complete job of it. **Do not make any treaties or show them mercy. Wipe them out completely. Do not let your sons and daughters marry their sons and daughters.**”

b. Why were the Israelites to break down, destroy, and burn the heathen altars, obelisks, images and idols? Verses 4,6: “That would surely **cause your young people to start worshiping their gods**. Then the anger of the Lord would be hot against you. He would surely destroy you. For you are a holy people. You have been dedicated to the Lord your God. He has chosen you from all the people on the face of the whole earth. You are his own chosen ones.”

3. What do these verses say will happen to the Israelites if they disobey God?

Numbers 33:55,56 “But you might refuse to drive out the people living there. **If you refuse, those who are still there will be like hot coals in your eyes**. They will be like thorns in your sides. And **I will destroy you** as I had planned for you to destroy them.”

Deuteronomy 11:26-28 “I am giving you the choice today between God’s blessing or God’s curse! There will be blessing if you obey the commands of the Lord your God that I am giving you today. But there will be **a curse if you refuse** to do them. You will be cursed if you worship the gods of these other nations.”

4. These verses sound as if God is being unfair to the nation of Israel. But He truly loves them and wants what is best for them. What does Lamentations 3:31-33 say that tells them of God’s everlasting love? “**For men are not cast off by the Lord forever. Though he brings grief, he will show compassion so great is his unfailing love. For he does not willingly bring affliction or grief to the children of men**” (NIV).
5. **RISKY:** Did the Israelites obey God? See Judges 1:28-31 for your answer. No, verse 28: “But they never did force them to leave the country.” Verse 30: “And the tribe of Zebulun did not kill all the people of Kitron or Nahalol.” Verse 31: “The tribe of Asher did not drive out the people of Acco, Sidon, Ahlab, Achzib, Helbah, Aphik, or Rehob.”
6. What does Judges 2:10,11 say about the generation who were living after Joshua’s death? “But finally all that generation died. And the next generation **did not worship the Lord as their God. They did not care about the mighty miracles he had done** for Israel. They did many things that the Lord had told them not to do. This included **worshipping heathen gods.**”
7. God’s love for His people is stronger than the love parents have for their children. When you disobey your parents, you have to suffer the punishment. That doesn’t mean they no longer love you, or even that they love you less. God punishes His children too, but that doesn’t mean He no longer loves them. What does Judges 2:16 say is the way God helped His people, His children, to get back on track with Him? “The Lord raised up judges. They were chosen to save the Israelites from their enemies.”

Read Judges chapter 3, verses 6,7 and Judges chapter 4, verses 1-10.

Othniel was Israel’s first judge. God’s spirit came upon him. With God’s help Israel had peace for 40 years. Othniel died and Israel did evil in God’s eyes. For 18 years they were slaves to the king of Moab. Ehud was the next judge. He ruled 80 years. Israel sinned against God and were slaves again for 20 years. Then came Deborah.

1. Using the years listed above, how many years had passed from the time Othniel became judge until the time Deborah became judge? 158
2. What do you learn about Deborah from Judges 4:4,5? “Israel’s leader at that time was **Deborah. She was a prophetess. She was the one who brought the people back to God. She was the wife of Lappidoth. She held court** at a place now called ‘Deborah’s Palm Tree.’ It was between Ramah and Bethel, in the hill country of Ephraim. **The Israelites came to her to solve their problems.**”

3. Barak knew God gave the command to capture Sisera, but his faith for winning the battle was weak. Sometimes we think God's commands are too hard for us to do. Our faith is weak. What does Philippians 4:13 say to help us remember where we get our strength? "I can do everything God asks me to with the help of Christ. He gives me strength and power."

Read Judges chapter 5, verse 31b, and chapter 6, verses 1-10.

1. Where did the Israelites go to hide from the cruel Midianites? Verse 2: "The Midianites were very cruel. They were so cruel that the Israelites fled to the mountains. They lived in **caves and dens.**"
2. **CHALLENGE:** Why were the Israelites afraid? Verses 3,4: "Every year, the Israelites planted their seed. But bands of **thieves** from Midian, Amalek, and other nations came. They **destroyed their crops and plundered** [looted, raided, robbed] **their land**. They did this as far away as Gaza. They left the Israelites nothing to eat. **They even took away all their sheep, oxen, and donkeys.**"
3. What does Judges 6:10 say that is a possible reminder to the Israelites as to why these bandits were robbing them? "He told you that he is the Lord your God. He warned you not to worship the gods of the Amorites who live around you on every side. But **you have not listened to him.**"

Read Judges chapter 6, verses 11 - 23.

The place where Gideon meets the Angel of the Lord is very important. A winepress is a large vat in which grapes are crushed and the juice is used to make wine. It is usually located at the foot of a hill, below the vineyard, because it is easier to carry a heavy load down hill than it is to carry it up hill. The threshing floor is located on the top of the hill so that the wind catches the chaff, the part of the wheat that can't be used, and carries it away from the grain that can be used. Gideon is found threshing wheat on the floor of the winepress, at the bottom of the hill, hoping the bandits won't see him. This is very hard work because it is likely the wind doesn't blow down there as hard as it does on the top of the hill.

1. What does Gideon say about his family and himself? Verse 15: "But Gideon replied, 'Sir, how can I save Israel? My family is **the poorest** in the whole tribe of Manasseh. And **I am the least** thought of in the whole family!'"
2. **PERSONAL:** Is there something you think is too hard for you to do? Do you just say "I can't"? Where does strength come from according to Zechariah 4:6b? "'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the Lord Almighty."
3. **PERSONAL:** Which verse did you chose to memorize this week? Did you chose one that helped you to trust the Lord in a new way?

JUDGES — LESSON 2

Before you begin your lesson:

- a. Pray for God's Holy Spirit to help you answer the questions.
- b. Some questions may be too hard; it's ok to write "I don't know."
- c. Think about what God's Word is telling you for today.
- d. With some questions, it might be helpful to write the scripture verse on your paper.

Read Judges chapter 6, verses 24 - 27.

1. What do you find out about Gideon from these verses? The first one is done for you.

Verse 24 he built an altar to the Lord

Verse 25

Verse 27

Verse 27

Verse 27

2. What did God tell Gideon to do?

3. Whom did Gideon fear?

4. Sometimes you may feel afraid. It might be people you fear, like a big bully. Sometimes it's a chore you don't want to do but you know you have to do it. What does God tell Jeremiah about the Babylonian king in Jeremiah 42:11? Why not put what you are afraid of in place of the "king of Babylon"?
5. What does 2 Timothy 1:7 say about fear?

Read Judges chapter 6, verses 28 - 40.

1. Did the men of the town know who destroyed their altar?
2. Did they ever find out?
3. What did the men of the city want to do to the one who destroyed their altar?
4. How did Gideon call Israel to help him against the Midianite army?

Read Judges chapter 7, verses 1 - 7.

1. Why did God have Gideon send some men away?

3. Gideon was often afraid. But that didn't stop him from obeying God. What do these verses say that can help you when you are afraid?

Joshua 1:9

Psalm 34:15

Isaiah 41:10

4. **PERSONAL:** Which verse did you chose to memorize this week? Why not challenge your parents to see who can memorize the most verses during this study?

JUDGES — WEEK THREE

DISCUSSION — LESSON TWO

15 - 20 minutes free time — games, fellowship

15 - 20 minutes snack and group recreation: OVER AND UNDER

Each team has a blown-up balloon. All balloons should be close to the same size. Form teams standing in lines. At the signal, the first player in each line passes the balloon over his head to the second player who passes it between his legs to the third. The balloon is passed over and under until the last player in line receives it. He then runs to the front of the line and play resumes until the balloon is in the hands of the original first player. The team finishing first wins.

15 - 20 minutes discuss LESSON 2

to end of class CRAFT: INVISIBLE INK PICTURE MESSAGE

MATERIALS:

magazine picture of faces	glue
white paper	paint brushes
bowls	lemon juice
iron (for revealing message)	

From the magazine pictures cut out eyes, noses, mouths, ears, and heads of hair. Mix them up then let students select pieces and glue them onto a sheet of paper. Pour lemon juice into bowls. Using paint brushes, each student writes a riddle or a funny sentence on his paper (not one that would be hurtful).

Gather all the pictures, then redistribute to the students. With hot iron, press the written area and then try to guess who wrote the riddle. Or, the papers can be taken home and pressed at home.

JUDGES — LESSON 2 ANSWERS

Read Judges chapter 6, verses 24 - 27.

1. What do you find out about Gideon from these verses? The first one is done for you.

Verse 24 he built an altar to the Lord

Verse 25 at night God told him to destroy his father's idols

Verse 27 he had 10 of his servants help him

Verse 27 he was afraid

Verse 27 he obeyed God

2. What did God tell Gideon to do? Verses 25,26: "That night the Lord spoke to Gideon. He told him to hitch his father's best ox to the family altar of Baal. He was to pull it down. He was also to cut down the wooden idol of the goddess Asherah that stood nearby. 'Replace it with an altar for the Lord your God. Build it here on this hill. Lay the stones with care. Then sacrifice the ox as a burnt offering to the Lord. Use the wooden idol as wood for the fire on the altar.'" [This altar may have been in Gideon's backyard.]
3. Whom did Gideon fear? Verse 27: "So Gideon took 10 of his servants. He did just as the Lord had told him. But he did it at night for fear of the other **members of his father's family**. He also feared the **men of the city**. For he knew what would happen if they found out who did it."
4. Sometimes you may feel afraid. It might be people you fear, like a big bully. Sometimes it's a chore you don't want to do but you know you have to do it. What does God tell Jeremiah about the Babylonian king in Jeremiah 42:11? Why not put what you are afraid of in place of the "king of Babylon"? "Don't be afraid of the king of Babylon anymore. For **I am with you** to rescue you. **I will keep you safe** from his hand."
5. What does 2 Timothy 1:7 say about fear? "The Holy Spirit doesn't want you to be afraid of people. He wants you to be wise and strong, and to love them."

Read Judges chapter 6, verses 28 - 40.

1. Did the men of the town know who destroyed their altar? No. Verse 28: "Early the next morning someone found the altar of Baal broken down. And the idol beside it was gone too. A new altar had been built instead. And the remains of a sacrifice were still on it."
2. Did they ever find out? Yes. Verse 29: "'Who did this?' everyone demanded. Finally they learned that it was **Gideon, the son of Joash**." [Gideon's father was an idol worshipper, yet he defended Gideon on the grounds that if Baal were the god everyone thought he was, he would be able to defend himself against a mere man. It is also interesting that God called a man from an idol worshiping family to serve Him.]

3. What did the men of the city want to do to the one who destroyed their altar? Kill Gideon. Verse 30: “‘Bring out your son!’ they shouted to Joash. ‘He must **die** for insulting the altar of Baal! He must be **punished** for cutting down the Asherah idol.’”
4. How did Gideon call Israel to help him against the Midianite army? Verses 34,35: “Then The Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon. **He blew a trumpet as a call to arms.** And the men of Abiezer came to him. He also sent messengers throughout Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali. He called out their fighting forces. All of them quickly came.”

[Gideon’s faith was weak, so he needed assurance that God would be with him and that God would give him the strength to do what was asked.]

Read Judges chapter 7, verses 1 - 7.

1. Why did God have Gideon send some men away? Verse 2: “The Lord then said to Gideon, ‘There are too many of you! I can’t let all of you fight the Midianites. For then **the people of Israel** will boast to me. They **will think that they saved themselves by their own strength!**”
2. Gideon started with about 32,000 men. What two ways did God make Gideon’s army smaller? Verses 3,5. Verse 3: “Announce now to the people. ‘**Anyone who trembles with fear** may turn back and leave Mount Gilead.’ So twenty-two thousand men left, while ten thousand remained.” Verse 5: “So Gideon took the men down to the water. There the Lord told him, ‘Separate those who **lap the water** with their tongues like a dog from those who kneel down to drink” (NIV).
3. How many were left? 300.
4. Gideon knew God would help him have victory over his enemies. Your enemies may not be the same as Gideon’s, but you can depend on God to help you have victory over your enemies too. What does Psalm 108:12,13 say to show you God will help you, too? “Oh, help us fight against our enemies. For men are useless helpers in a fight. **But with the help of God we shall do mighty acts.** For he walks over our enemies.”

Read Judges chapter 7, verses 8 - 22.

1. What did Gideon learn when he sneaked into the Midianite camp? Verses 13,14: “Gideon crept up to one of the tents. As he did, a man inside wakened from a bad dream. And he told his friend, ‘I had this strange dream,’ he was saying. ‘There was a huge loaf of barley bread. It came tumbling down into our camp. It hit our tent and knocked it flat!’ The other soldier replied, ‘Your dream can mean only one thing! **Gideon, the son of Joash, the Israelite, is going to come. He is going to destroy all the armies of Midian!**” [“Barley bread aptly described the poverty-stricken Israelites, and the tent referred to the nomadic Midianites” (Walvoord/Zuck).]

2. **CHALLENGE:** In your own words, what is God’s plan for Gideon to follow? Verses 16-22: “Dividing the three hundred men into three companies, he placed trumpets and empty jars in the hands of all of them, with torches inside. ‘Watch me,’ he told them. ‘Follow my lead. When I get to the edge of the camp, do exactly as I do. When I and all who are with me blow our trumpets, then from all around the camp blow yours and shout, “For the Lord and for Gideon.”” Gideon and the hundred men with him reached the edge of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, just after they had changed the guard. **They blew their trumpets and broke the jars** that were in their hands. The three companies blew the trumpets and smashed the jars. Grasping the **torches in their left** hands and **holding in their right hands the trumpets** they were to blow, **they shouted**, ‘A sword for the Lord and for Gideon!’ While **each man held his position** around the camp, all the Midianites ran, crying out as they fled. When the three hundred trumpets sounded, the Lord caused the men throughout the camp to turn on each other with their swords. The army fled to Beth Shittah toward Zererah as far as the border of Abel Meholah near Tabbath” (NIV). [The middle watch is 10:00 p.m. Those guards getting off duty would still be roaming about the camp. It was at this moment when the Israelites blew their trumpets, broke their jars, and gave their shout. It is interesting to note that although they said, “A sword for the Lord and for Gideon,” the Israelites had no swords. Since they were under the Midianite rule, they were not allowed to have any weapons. “Their battle cry indicated their confidence in the Lord and also identified them to the Midianites and aroused fear in them” (Walvoord/Zuck). The trumpets were “made from animal horns (and) gave a sharp, shrill sound. The jars were pitchers probably made of clay. The confusion in the Midianite camp was unbelievable as they imagined a much larger Israelite force attacking them and as they perhaps mistook their own retiring guards for Israelites. This divinely planned confusion caused the Midianites to turn on each other with their swords while the Israelites apparently watched in safety around the camp” (Walvoord/Zuck).]

3. Gideon was often afraid. But that didn’t stop him from obeying God. What do these verses say that can help you when you are afraid?

Joshua 1:9 “Be brave! Be strong! Don’t ever be afraid or doubt! God is with you wherever you go.”

Psalm 34:15 “For the Lord sees those who live good lives. And he listens when they cry to him.”

Isaiah 41:10 “Don’t be afraid, for I am with you. Do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you. I will help you. I will uphold you with my strong right hand.”

4. **PERSONAL:** Which verse did you chose to memorize this week? Why not challenge your parents to see who can memorize the most verses during this study?

JUDGES — LESSON 3

Before you begin your lesson:

- a. Pray for God’s Holy Spirit to help you answer the questions.
- b. Some questions may be too hard; it’s ok to write “I don’t know”.
- c. Think about what God’s Word is telling you for today.
- d. With some questions, it might be helpful to write the scripture verse on your paper.

Gideon lived a long time. He fought some wars. Then Israel had peace for 40 years. Gideon had 70 sons and many wives. He also had a concubine (an unimportant wife) whose son was Abimelech. After Gideon died, Israel stopped worshipping God. They worshipped idols. Abimelech appointed himself the next judge. He killed his 70 half-brothers, but one escaped (Judges 9:5). Abimelech ruled 3 years.

Read Judges, chapter 9, verses 50 - 57.

1. Where did the citizens of Thebez hide?

2. What happened to Abimelech at the tower?

3. **RISKY:** What did Abimelech’s armor-bearer do? Why?

Read Judges chapter 10, verses 1 - 18.

If someone owned a donkey, that meant he had money and power. Jair was very rich. He owned a donkey for each son. This would be like every driver in your family owning a new car. Your neighbors would think you were important and wealthy.

1. **CHALLENGE:** How many years passed between the death of Gideon and the death of Jair?

2. What happened after Jair's death?

3. What did the Israelites do when God said He wouldn't save them any more? Which verse did you use?

4. What was God's response to them in Judges 10:16?

5. **CHALLENGE:** God wants all people to call to Him for help. But the most important prayer anyone can make is to ask God to save them through the power and shed blood of Jesus Christ. The following verses are steps to salvation. How would you number them?

John 14:15 "If you love me, obey me."

1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, he can be depended on to forgive us. He will cleanse us from every wrong. It is proper for God to do this because Christ died for our sins."

John 1:12,13 "But to all who received him he gave the right to become God's children. All they needed to do was to believe in him. All those who believe this are reborn! This is not a physical rebirth. It doesn't result from human passion or plan. This birth comes from the will of God."

Luke 15:10 "In the same way there is joy among the angels of God when one sinner repents."

1 Peter 1:4 "God has reserved for his children the priceless gift of eternal life. It is kept in Heaven for you. It is pure and spotless. It is beyond the reach of change and decay." [God's promise.]

Read Judges chapter 13, verses 1 - 25.

About 312 years have passed between the death of Joshua and the birth of Samson. Much history has taken place. There were 279 years of peace when Israel worshiped God and was ruled by judges. Between the times of their obedience to God and peace were about 103 years of sin, idol worship and oppression by other nations.

1. What did the Israelites do that allowed the Philistines to rule them for 40 years? See Judges 13:1.
2. **RISKY:** How do you know Manoah and his wife believed the Angel of the Lord? Judges 13:12 holds the clue.
3. The Angel of the Lord gave Manoah's wife instructions about how she was to live before the baby was born. She was told he was to be a Nazirite. That's someone who is set apart to serve God. From Numbers 6:3,5,6 what else do you learn about the ways a Nazirite must live?

Read Judges chapter 14, verses 1 - 20.

Whenever the Bible says "the Spirit of the Lord came upon Samson," or something like that, it means that Samson is God's man for whatever job needs to be done. The Israelites had become very content living under the rules and laws of the Philistines. God used Samson to cause trouble so that Israel would see they were God's people and needed to live by His laws and rules.

1. Samson's parents were not happy about his choice for a wife. They wanted him to marry an Israelite. What does 2 Corinthians 6:14 say about marriage?
2. **RISKY:** Read Numbers 6:6. Why do you think Samson didn't tell his parents where he got the honey?
3. **HARD:** How did Samson's riddle get solved?
4. Where did Samson get his strength to kill thirty Philistines?
5. What does Luke 24:49 say about the Holy Spirit's power?

JUDGES — WEEK FOUR

DISCUSSION - LESSON THREE

15 - 20 minutes free time — games, fellowship

15 - 20 minutes snack and group recreation: NEWSPAPER BASKETBALL

Wad 30 sheets of used **newspapers** into balls. Divide children into teams of two or three members, and have teams stand around the edge of a circle. Place a **clothes basket**, or small trash can in the center of circle.

The leader chooses one team (A) to be first. Team A picks up all the newspaper balls, and returns to their place at the edge of the circle. At the signal, they toss the newspaper balls into the basket. Try tossing them all at once. If this doesn't work, give the opportunity to toss them one at a time.

When all newspaper balls have been tossed, the number in the basket are counted as points. Then another team tries. The team with the most "baskets" is the winner. If there are not enough players to make teams, reduce the number of newspaper balls, and each player is his own team.

15 - 20 minutes discuss LESSON 3

to end of class CRAFT: KALEIDOSCOPE (by Dee Hale, used by permission)

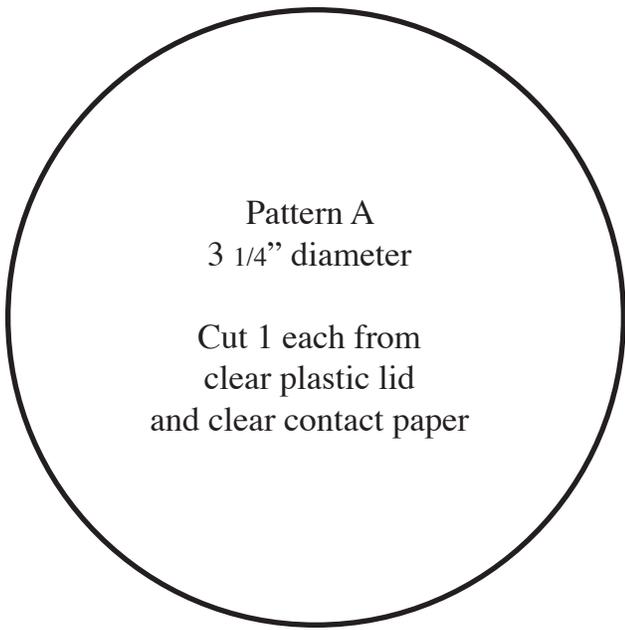
MATERIALS:

1 paper towel tube	white paper
wrapping paper 11" x 6 1/2"	straight pin
cardboard from cereal box	transparent tape
shiny confetti, glitter	glue and glue stick
clear contact paper	
clear plastic lid (clear mylar may be substituted)	
shiny chrome or silver-coated card stock (shiny silver mylar banner may be substituted)	
Patterns (see page 31)	

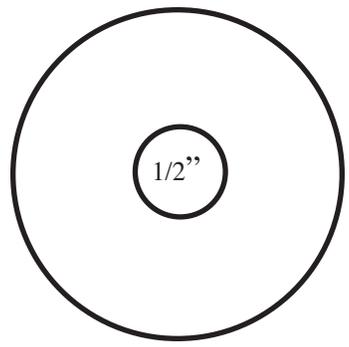
1. Using large pattern A (3 1/4") cut one circle each from clear contact paper and from clear plastic lid.
2. Using small pattern B (1 3/4") cut one circle from cardboard. Fold slightly in half (like a taco). Cut out and remove center 1/2" hole.

(continued on next page)

3. Using medium pattern C (2 1/4") cut one circle from white paper. Fold slightly in half (like a taco). Cut out and remove center 1/2" hole.
4. Cut silver card stock or shiny mylar into 1 1/16" x 11" strips. See Diagram 1 on page 31. Lay 3 strips side by side, long edges together, and place tape across close to the top, close to the bottom, and in the middle. See Diagram 2. Bring the two outside long edges together, shiny side in, and tape these together, making a long, skinny, triangle.
5. Slip chrome triangle into tube. Tape one side to the back end to secure in place.
6. See Diagram 3 on page 31. Lay the small cardboard circle on top of medium white paper circle, lining up center holes. Trace a pencil line on the white paper circle around the edge of small cardboard circle. Remove small cardboard circle. Make cuts about 1" apart from edge of white paper circle toward center to pencil line, forming edge tabs.
7. Put very small dots of glue onto each edge tab of the white paper circle. Place the cardboard circle at the top end of the tube with the white paper circle over it, glue-dot-side down, and fold down tabs onto edges of tube, making sure center circle holes are lined up.
8. Cover tube with wrapping paper, using the glue stick.
9. Peel off paper backing from clear contact paper circle. Sprinkle glitter and shiny confetti to within 1/4" from edge.
10. Carefully lay clear plastic circle over the glitter and shiny confetti and firmly press together.
11. Place clear plastic/glitter and confetti/clear contact paper piece on bottom end of tube and attach by sticking a straight pin through the center of the plastic piece and through the edge of the tube.
12. Look through 1/2" hole at top of tube, turn glitter/confetti circle, and see your kaleidoscope.



Pattern B
 1 3/4" diameter
 Cut 1 from cereal-box cardboard



Pattern C
 2 1/4" diameter
 Cut 1 from white paper

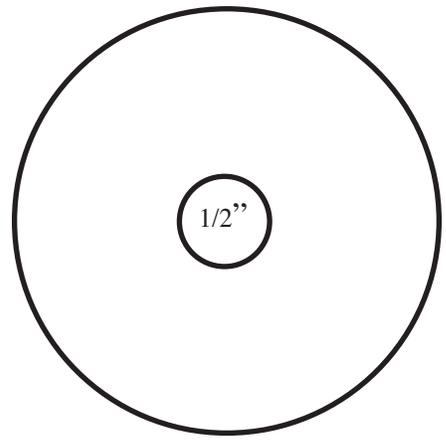


Diagram 1

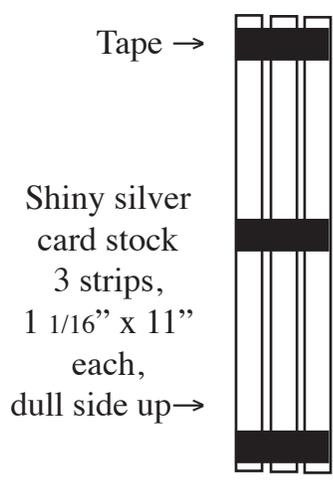


Diagram 3

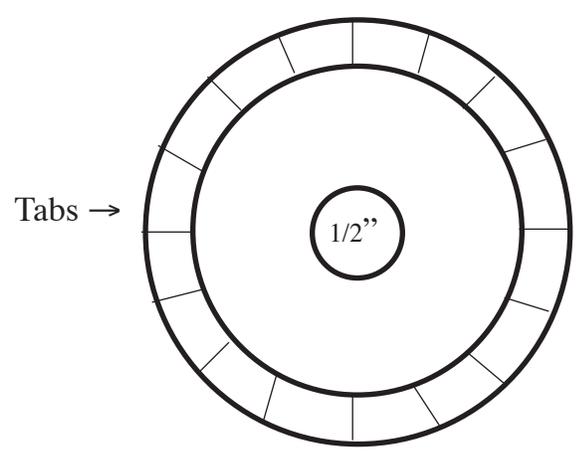
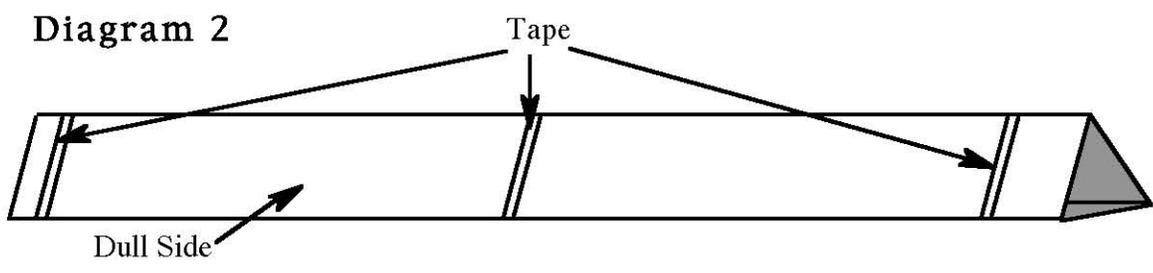


Diagram 2



JUDGES — LESSON 3 ANSWERS

Gideon lived a long time. He fought some wars. Then Israel had peace for 40 years. Gideon had 70 sons and many wives. He also had a concubine (an unimportant wife) whose son was Abimelech. After Gideon died, Israel stopped worshipping God. They worshipped idols. Abimelech appointed himself the next judge. He killed his 70 half-brothers, but one escaped (Judges 9:5). Abimelech ruled 3 years.

Read Judges, chapter 9, verses 50 - 57.

1. Where did the citizens of Thebez hide? Verse 51: “But there was a **fort inside the city**. All the people ran into it. They blocked the gates and climbed to the rooftop to watch.”
2. What happened to Abimelech at the tower? Verse 53: “But a woman on the roof threw down a millstone. It landed on Abimelech’s head and crushed his skull.”
3. **RISKY:** What did Abimelech’s armor-bearer do? Why? Verse 54: “‘Kill me!’ He groaned to his armor bearer. ‘**Never let it be said that a woman killed Abimelech!**’ So **the young man stabbed him** with his sword, and he died.”

Read Judges chapter 10, verses 1 - 18.

If someone owned a donkey, that meant he had money and power. Jair was very rich. He owned a donkey for each son. This would be like every driver in your family owning a new car. Your neighbors would think you were important and wealthy.

1. **CHALLENGE:** How many years passed between the death of Gideon and the death of Jair? Abimelech ruled for 3 years (9:22), Tola ruled 23 years (10:2), and Jair ruled 22 years (10:3) for a total of 48 years.
2. What happened after Jair’s death? Verse 6: “Then the **people of Israel turned away from the Lord** again. They worshiped the heathen gods Baal and Ashtaroth. They also bowed to the gods of Syria, Sidon, Moab, Ammon, and Philistia. But not only this; they no longer worshiped the Lord at all.” [It can be assumed that when Israel previously worshiped other gods, they continued to worship God, too. But this time, it seems as if they turned completely away from God.]
3. What did the Israelites do when God said He wouldn’t save them any more? Which verse did you use? Judges 10:11,16a. “But they pleaded with him again. They said, ‘We have sinned. Punish us in any way you think best. Only save us once more from our enemies.’ Then they destroyed their foreign gods. And they worshiped only the Lord.”

4. What was God's response to them in Judges 16:b? "And he felt sorry for them when he saw their suffering."
5. **CHALLENGE:** God wants all people to call to Him for help. But the most important prayer anyone can make is to ask God to save them through the power and shed blood of Jesus Christ. The following verses are steps to salvation. How would you number them?

Luke 15:10 "In the same way there is joy among the angels of God when one sinner **repents.**"

1 John 1:9 "If we **confess our sins**, he can be depended on to forgive us. He will cleanse us from every wrong. It is proper for God to do this because Christ died for our sins."

John 1:12,13 "But to all who **received him** he gave the right to become God's children. All they needed to do was to believe in him. All those who believe this are reborn! This is not a physical rebirth. It doesn't result from human passion or plan. This birth comes from the will of God."

John 14:15 "If you love me, **obey me.**"

1 Peter 1:4 "God has reserved for his children the priceless gift of **eternal life**. It is kept in Heaven for you. It is pure and spotless. It is beyond the reach of change and decay." [God's promise.]

Read Judges chapter 14, verses 1 - 25.

About 312 years have passed between the death of Joshua and the birth of Samson. Much history has taken place. There were 279 years of peace when Israel worshiped God and was ruled by judges. Between the times of their obedience to God and peace were about 103 years of sin, idol worship and oppression by other nations.

1. What did the Israelites do that allowed the Philistines to rule them for 40 years? See Judges 13:1. "Once again **Israel sinned by worshiping other gods**. So the Lord let them be conquered by the Philistines. They ruled Israel for 40 years."
2. **RISKY:** How do you know Manoah and his wife believed the Angel of the Lord? Judges 13:12 holds the clue. "So Manoah asked him, 'Can you give us any special orders? Can you tell us how we should raise the baby after he is born?'" [Manoah did not question the baby's birth, but asked how he was to live.]
3. The Angel of the Lord gave Manoah's wife instructions about how she was to live before the baby was born. She was told he was to be a Nazirite. That's someone who is set apart to serve God. From Numbers 6:3,5,6 what else do you learn about the ways a Nazirite must live? "He must abstain from wine and other fermented drink and must not drink vinegar made from wine

or from other fermented drink. He must not drink grape juice or eat grapes or raisins. During the entire period of his vow of separation no razor may be used on his head. He must be holy until the period of his separation to the Lord is over; he must let the hair of his grow long. Throughout the period of his separation to the Lord he must not **go near a dead body**" (NIV).

Read Judges chapter 14, verses 1 - 20.

Whenever the Bible says “the Spirit of the Lord came upon Samson,” or something like that, it means that Samson is God’s man for whatever job needs to be done. The Israelites had become very content living under the rules and laws of the Philistines. God used Samson to cause trouble so that Israel would see they were God’s people and needed to live by His laws and rules.

1. Samson’s parents were not happy about his choice for a wife. They wanted him to marry an Israelite. What does 2 Corinthians 6:14 say about marriage? “Don’t be teamed up with those who do not love the Lord. What do the people of God have in common with the people of sin? How can light live with darkness?” [In choosing this woman, Samson sins against God. Also, Philistines did not practice circumcision as other Near Eastern nations did. Yet, God will use all of Samson’s lustful desires to bring about the fall of the Philistines. His request for his parents to get her for him was part of the prearranged marriage custom of the day.]
2. **RISKY:** Read Numbers 6:6. Why do you think Samson didn’t tell his parents where he got the honey? [Numbers reads: “Throughout the period of his separation to the Lord he must not go near a dead body.” Samson knew he had done wrong, but he didn’t want his parents to know about his sin.]
3. **HARD:** How did Samson’s riddle get solved? Verse 17: [She was threatened] “So she cried when she was with him. She kept it up for the rest of the feast. At last, on the seventh day, he told her the answer. She, of course, then gave the answer to the young men.” [This feast is literally a drinking party. Probably something like today’s “bachelor parties.” Another violation of the Nazirite vow. The 30 men, although considered “friends of the bridegroom,” were chosen by the Philistines. This feast was held in the bride’s home. As we would do fun things when we have friends visit, riddles were considered entertainment, and something fun to do. The thirty men could not have answered the riddle because they hadn’t seen Samson with the lion. Clothes were considered a gift of great value.]
4. Where did Samson get his strength to kill thirty Philistines? Verse 19: “Then **the Spirit of the Lord came upon him in power.** He went down to Ashkelon, struck down thirty of their men, stripped them of their belongings and gave their clothes to those who had explained the riddle. Burning with anger, he went up to his father’s house” (NIV). [God will use the killing of the thirty as a means to bring Israel out from under the rule of the Philistines. God’s plan is to destroy the Philistines.]

5. What does Luke 24:49 say about the Holy Spirit's power? [Jesus is speaking, just before His ascension.] “And I am going to send the Holy Spirit upon you. It will happen just as my Father promised. Don't begin telling others yet. Stay here in the city until **the Holy Spirit** comes. He **will fill you with power from Heaven.**”

JUDGES — LESSON 4

Before you begin your lesson:

- a. Pray for God's Holy Spirit to help you answer the questions.
- b. Some questions may be too hard; it's ok to write "I don't know."
- c. Think about what God's Word is telling you for today.
- d. With some questions, it might be helpful to write the scripture verse on your paper.

Read Judges chapter 15, verses 1 - 8.

1. When did Samson go to see his wife?

2. What did Samson do to the Philistine wheat harvest?

3. What did the Philistines say to Samson's wife in Judges 14:15 which came true in Judges 15:6?

4. You may have trouble understanding how God could use someone like Samson. God used him to destroy the Philistine nation. What does Isaiah 55:9 say about God's ways?

-

Read Judges chapter 15, verses 9 - 20.

1. What did the Philistines want from the men of Judah?

2. How many men from Judah went to get Samson?
3. What happened to the ropes the men of Judah used to tie up Samson? How did this happen?
4. What happened next?
5. **RISKY**: Samson was thirsty. God gave him water from a hole in the ground. What else was refreshed besides his thirst?
6. What do these verses say about the water Jesus gives?

John 4:10

John 4:14

John 6:35

Revelation 21:6

Read Judges chapter 16, verses 1 - 22.

1. What did Samson do to the Philistine city of Gaza?
2. What was Delilah asked to do?

3. These are the ways Samson could lose his strength. Which one worked?

Tied with fresh thongs [probably animal intestine], verse 7.

Tied with new rope, verse 11.

Seven braids woven into a loom, verse 13. “In ancient Israel the number seven had symbolic significance. Seven was the ‘perfect’ number—indicating completeness or fullness” (QUEST, NIV).

Cut his hair, verse 17. Uncut hair was the outward sign to show someone had made a Nazirite vow. Cutting it showed disobedience to the Lord.

Read Judges chapter 16, verses 22 - 31.

1. **HARD:** Many times Samson didn't use the power God gave him in the right way. God's punishment was to let Samson be captured by the Philistines. What two things did God give to show Samson He would rescue him?
2. One of the rules when taking the vow to be a Nazirite was to be pure. What does Psalm 119:9 say is the way a person stays true to his promise to God?
3. **PERSONAL:** Are you reading God's word and memorizing it? Are you having trouble keeping true to God? Are your thoughts, words, and actions pleasing God? Do you do things you wouldn't do if Jesus were with you in person? Remember He sees, hears and knows everything you say, do and think. Do you need to confess any sin to Him? No one needs to know except you and Him. Why not talk to Him right now about anything that is troubling you?

JUDGES – WEEK FIVE

DISCUSSION - LESSON FOUR

15 - 20 minutes free time - games, fellowship

15 - 20 minutes snack and group recreation: ERASER TAG

Players are scattered over play area. One player is chosen to be the “runner,” and carries an **eraser** as he runs away from the “chaser.” At the start signal, the leader calls another player’s name. He is the “chaser” who chases the “runner.” The “runner” may, at any time before being tagged, hand the eraser off to another player, who then becomes the “runner.” No one can refuse the eraser when it is handed off. If the “chaser” tags the “runner,” that player becomes the new “chaser” after giving the eraser to another player. The “chaser” allows the new “runner” a chance to get started before giving chase. Boundaries may need to be set before start of game.

15 - 20 minutes discuss LESSON 4

to end of class **CRAFT: LEFT-OVER SCRAPS & NATURE BOUQUET**
[This craft takes about 60 minutes; you may wish to adjust your schedule to accommodate your class size and structure.]

MATERIALS:

large glass jar (mayonnaise) or tin can	
tempera paints	newspapers
eyes (see “Bouncy Bug” directions)	yarn
green, orange, black pipe cleaner	paint brush
construction paper (colored)	Kleenex tissue
twigs, various sizes	leaves (optional)
bowls for paint	wrapping paper
green florist’s	
foam (optional)	glue

Plan a nature walk to pick up twigs, leaves, and other items for your bouquet. In class, spread newspapers on work area. Strip twigs of loose bark; paint one color; allow to dry. Meanwhile, make “bouncy bugs,” butterflies, and flowers (see instructions page 40). When first color is dry, paint twigs with stripes, diamonds, etc. in a contrasting color; let dry.

BOUNCY BUG: Wrap yarn around 4 fingers (with a space between 2nd and 3rd fingers) about 30 times. Grab in center of yarn, pull from fingers, and tie in the center with a short piece of yarn. Cut the folded ends so that yarn is shaggy. Glue eyes to yarn so that it looks like a face. Wrap one end, about 1", of green pipe cleaner around center. Set aside.

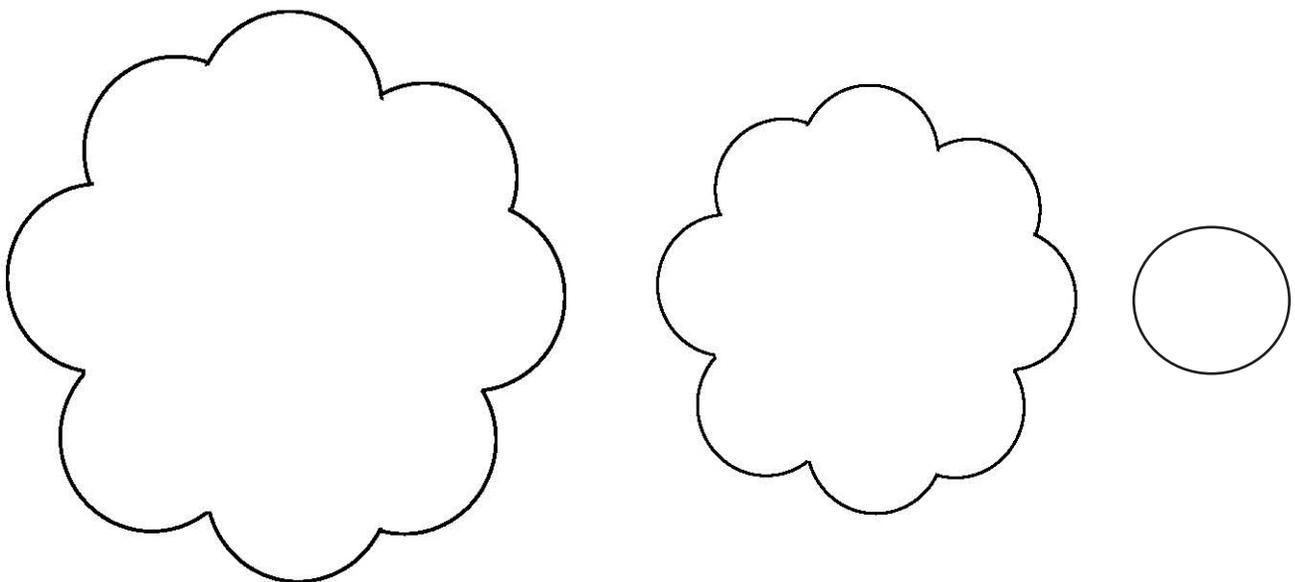
BUTTERFLY: Fold 3" x 4" piece of wrapping paper in half. Trace fingers from knuckle to fingertip along the fold. Cut around finger pattern; open; glue black or orange pipe cleaner in center of butterfly. Set aside.

CARNATION: Fold Kleenex tissue in half. Fold accordion style; wrap green pipe cleaner around center. Holding pipe cleaner, cut off folded edge. Separate sheets; fan out. Hand drawn flowers may also be used.

PANSY:

Use large flower pattern (below) to cut a flower from one color construction paper. Use small flower pattern to cut a flower from contrasting color construction paper. Cut a small circle (flower center) from another piece of construction paper. Glue the center in the middle of the small flower. Put a dab of glue in the center of the small flower and glue it to the center of the larger flower. Poke one end of pipe cleaner through center of all three pieces.

When all pieces of bouquet are complete, arrange in "vase" (mayonnaise jar or tin can). Vase can be decorated or painted, if desired. You may wish to put florist's foam at bottom of vase to help hold bouquet in place.



JUDGES — LESSON 4 ANSWERS

Read Judges chapter 15, verses 1 - 8.

1. When did Samson go to see his wife? Verse 1: “Later on Samson took a young goat as a present to his wife. He went **during the wheat harvest**. He wanted to sleep with her. But her father would not let him in.” [This is after he killed the 30 Philistines. The father had annulled the marriage because Samson left before consummating it, which happens on the seventh night. Apparently, the type of marriage Samson had was one in which the wife remained with her parents, and the groom made periodic visits. The gift was an expected part of such visits.]
2. What did Samson do to the Philistine wheat harvest? Verses 4-5: “So he went out and caught 300 foxes. He tied their tails together in pairs. And he tied a torch between each pair. Then he lit the torches. He let the foxes run through the fields of the Philistines. This burned their grain to the ground. All the sheaves and shocks of grain were burned up. It also destroyed their olive trees.”
3. What did the Philistines say to Samson’s wife in Judges 14:15 which came true in Judges 15:6? Judges 14:15: “On the fourth day they spoke to his new wife. They said, ‘Get the answer from your husband. If you don’t, **we’ll burn down your father’s house with you in it**. Were we invited to this party just to make us poor?’” [The 30 men would face financial ruin if they had to fulfill the wager.] Judges 15:6 “‘Who did this?’ the Philistines demanded. ‘Samson!’ was the reply. ‘He did it because his wife’s father gave her to another man.’ So the Philistines came and got the girl and her father. **They burned them alive.**”
4. You may have trouble understanding how God could use someone like Samson. God used him to destroy the Philistine nation. What does Isaiah 55:9 say about God’s ways? “For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, my ways are higher than yours. And my thought are higher than yours.”

Read Judges chapter 15, verses 9 - 20.

1. What did the Philistines want from the men of Judah? Verse 10b: “And the Philistines replied, ‘We came to capture **Samson**. We want to do to him as he has done to us.’”
2. How many men from Judah went to get Samson? 3,000. [From the response of the men of Judah, they didn’t want Samson to make trouble for them. They were happy the way things were.]
3. What happened to the ropes the men of Judah used to tie up Samson? And how did this happen? Verse 14: “Samson and his captors went to Lehi. As they got there, the Philistines shouted with glee. But then **the strength of the Lord came upon Samson. The ropes with which he was tied snapped** like thread! They fell from his wrists!”

4. What happened next? Verse 15: “Then he picked up a donkey’s jawbone that was lying on the ground. And he killed 1,000 Philistines with it.”
5. **RISKY:** Samson was thirsty. God gave him water from a hole in the ground. What else was refreshed besides his thirst? Verse 19: “So the Lord caused water to gush out from a hollow in the ground. And **Samson’s spirit** was revived as he drank. Then he named the place ‘The Spring of the Man Who Prayed.’ That spring is still there to this day.” [This water is a picture of the Holy Spirit. “Although he (Samson) was arrogant and violent, Samson was engaged in battle against God’s enemies. The En Hakkore springs restored his strength and revived his life—necessary if he was to continue as a protector of God’s people against their oppressors” (QUEST, NIV).]
6. What do these verses say about the water Jesus gives?

John 4:10 “He [Jesus] replied, ‘You don’t know who I am. And you don’t know God’s great gift for you. But if you knew these things you would ask me for some **living water.**’”

John 4:14 “But those who drink the water I give them will **never be thirsty.** It becomes a spring of water inside them. And it waters them forever with eternal life.”

John 6:35 “Jesus replied, ‘I am the Bread of Life. No one coming to me will ever be hungry again. **Those believing in me will never thirst.**’”

Revelation 21:6 “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to **drink without cost** from the spring of the water of life” (NIV).

Read Judges chapter 16, verses 1 - 22.

1. What did Samson do to the Philistine city of Gaza? Verse 3: “Samson stayed in bed with the girl until midnight. Then **he went out to the city gates. He lifted them,** with the two gateposts, **right out of the ground. He put them on his shoulders. And he carried them to the top of the mountain** across from Hebron!” [This was the city’s security gate. With it locked, the townspeople felt secure. By removing it, Samson insulted their security zone.]
2. What was Delilah asked to do? Verse 5: “The five leaders of the Philistine nation went to see her. They told her to find out from Samson what mad him so strong. That way they would know **how to capture him and keep him tied up.** ‘Each of us will give you \$1,000 for this job,’ they promised.”
3. These are the ways Samson could lose his strength. Which one worked?

Tied with fresh thongs [probably animal intestine], verse 7.

Tied with new rope, verse 11.

Seven braids woven into a loom, verse 13. “In ancient Israel the number seven had symbolic significance. Seven was the ‘perfect’ number—indicating completeness or fullness” (QUEST, NIV).

Cut his hair, verse 17. Uncut hair was the outward sign to show someone had made a Nazirite vow. Cutting it showed disobedience to the Lord.

Read Judges chapter 16, verses 22 - 31.

1. **HARD:** Many times Samson didn’t use the power God gave him in the right way. God’s punishment was to let Samson be captured by the Philistines. What two things did God give to show Samson He would rescue him? Verses 22,28; verse 22: “But the **hair** on his head **began to grow** again after it had been shaved.” Verse 28: “Then Samson prayed to the Lord. ‘O Sovereign Lord, remember me. O God, please **strengthen me** just once more, and let me with one blow get revenge on the Philistines for my two eyes.’” [“The new growth (of hair) suggested that God’s plan to deliver Israel from the Philistines had not been abandoned. It also reminded Samson that God continued to care for him”] (QUEST, NIV).
2. One of the rules when taking the vow to be a Nazirite was to be pure. What does Psalm 119:9 say is the way a person stays true to his promise to God? “How can a young person stay pure? By reading your Word and doing what it says.”
3. **PERSONAL:** Are you reading God’s word and memorizing it? Are you having trouble keeping true to God? Are your thoughts, words, and actions pleasing to God? Do you do things you wouldn’t do if Jesus were with you in person? Remember He sees, hears and knows everything you say, do and think. Do you need to confess any sin to Him? No one needs to know except you and Him. Why not talk to Him right now about anything that is troubling you?