

Investigating

God's Word...

Year Three

Judges, Ruth

Sunday School Curriculum

Winter Quarter

Lesson Sequence

Winter Quarter

The **Lesson Sequence** gives the teacher an overview of the entire quarter.

The central goal of the ***Investigating God's Word...*** curriculum is to enable children the opportunity to read and study the entire Bible—from Genesis to Revelation—by the time they “graduate” from 6th grade.

Week One	Judges 1:1-2:10
Week Two	Judges 2:11-3:31
Week Three	Judges 4-5
Week Four	Judges 6
Week Five	Judges 7-8
Week Six	Judges 9-10
Week Seven	Judges 11-12
Week Eight	Judges 13-14
Week Nine	Judges 15-16
Week Ten	Judges 17-18
Week Eleven	Judges 19-21
Week Twelve	Ruth 1-2
Week Thirteen	Ruth 3-4

Spring Quarter: I Samuel 1-15



Lesson One

Judges 1:1-2:10

Suggested Schedule

Welcome <i>Proverbs 13:13</i>	2-3 min.
Drill Time <i>Book of Joshua</i>	5 min.
W.O.W! <i>Generation</i>	5 min.
Historical Context <i>Timeline</i>	2-3 min.
Bible Investigation <i>Judges 1:1-2:10</i>	20-30 min.
Lesson-At-Home <i>Psalms 78:4</i>	2-3 min.

Overview

The Book of Judges picks up where the Book of Joshua left off. The Book of Joshua began with the death of Moses. The Book of Judges begins with the death of Joshua. Yet again, Israel is in need of Godly leadership. Will they follow the LORD?

Judges 1 chronicles the possession of the land of Canaan. The LORD has instructed all of the tribes to take their land and drive out the remaining Canaanites. He has even promised them that He will be with them to give them the power to do it. The tribes of Judah and Simeon are the first to obey, making quick work of God's enemies. Unfortunately, many of the rest of the tribes do not drive out the Canaanites, leaving them as either their slaves or worse—as their neighbors.

Judges 2 opens with a scathing rebuke from the LORD. He accuses Israel of breaking covenant with Him by making covenants with the people of Canaan. The consequence will be that these pagan nations would always be a snare to God's people. Then comes the very sad verse 10: "...another generation grew up, who neither knew the LORD nor what He had done for Israel..." The generation after Joshua and the elders had failed to teach their children to follow the LORD.

Preparation

Read and meditate on Judges 1-2 this week. You may want to re-read the end of Joshua 24 as well.

Teaching Encouragement

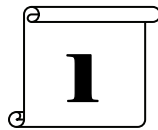
The Book of Judges begins with very bad signs—pagan folks living amongst God's people, and a new generation growing up not knowing the LORD. These sorts of times have occurred throughout the ages, as Christians fail to be truly set apart to God and to teach their children to do the same. But be encouraged! The very fact that you are using this curriculum with a group of children means you are not falling into this trap! We teach the entirety of God's Word to our covenant children so that they have the opportunity to grow up knowing Jesus. Praise the LORD that He has given you the desire to teach and train the next generation!

The **Welcome** serves as both an opportunity to greet the children as well as an effort to help them get focused on God's Word.

Each week, you will begin with a passage out of the Psalms or Proverbs as an exhortation to study God's Word.

Drill Time gives the children the opportunity to recall and rehearse what they have been taught in the past—at home, school and/or church.

This element allows the **Investigating God's Word...** curriculum to cover much more Biblical "ground," since time is not expended repeating the same Bible stories over and over again from year to year.



Welcome

Greet the students. Welcome visitors. To prepare the students for class today, read Proverbs 13:13.

¹³ He who scorns instruction will pay for it, but he who respects a command is rewarded.

Say: *Think about this proverb—this wise saying from the LORD. To “scorn” instruction is to ignore it and even hate it. To “respect” a command is to obey it and even love it! So you have two choices when you hear God’s commands—you can hate them or love them. What is the only way to gain a great reward? By loving God’s Word! Let’s respect God’s Word today.*



Drill Time

Now, let’s move on to DRILL TIME—our weekly opportunity to review what we have learned in the past. Are you ready?

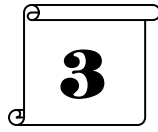
Today’s questions: *Who led Israel into the Promised Land after Moses died? What was the name of the city that God made its walls fall down? How were the Gibeonites able to deceive Joshua and the elders? What tribe of Israel did not get any land, because they were God’s priests? Before he died, what did Joshua tell the people he and his family would do?*

Call on volunteers or select students to make attempts.

Answers:

1. Joshua.
2. Jericho.
3. Because Joshua and the elders did not seek the LORD.
4. The Levites.
5. As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

Say: *That’s just a short review of the Book of Joshua. The LORD was with Joshua and made him into a great leader of His people. But who would lead the Israelites after he dies? We will find out in a moment.... Now for the Word of the Week!*



W.O.W!

The **W.O.W!** is the **Word of the Week**.

This element is included to help the children build their theological and Biblical vocabularies. These words are vital to the Christian's understanding of God and His World.

Our *W.O.W!* (*Word of the Week*) this week is **GENERATION**. Has anyone heard that word before? One place we find this word in the Bible is in Psalm 24:6. **Read it to the children.**

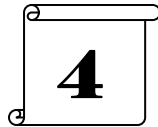
Psalm 24:6

⁵Such is the **generation** of those who seek him, who seek your face, O God of Jacob.

A *GENERATION* is a group of people who are all about the same age, and live at the same time in history. For example, your parents and I are probably all a part of the same *GENERATION*. All of you are part of another *GENERATION*. So, you and I are members of different *GENERATIONS*.

The word *GENERATION* is found throughout the Bible. God looks at each *GENERATION* to see if that particular *GENERATION* will follow Him. Do you think that you are a part of a *GENERATION* who will follow God?

Watch for our *Word of the Week* in our reading today, and see if a *GENERATION* is following the *LORD*.



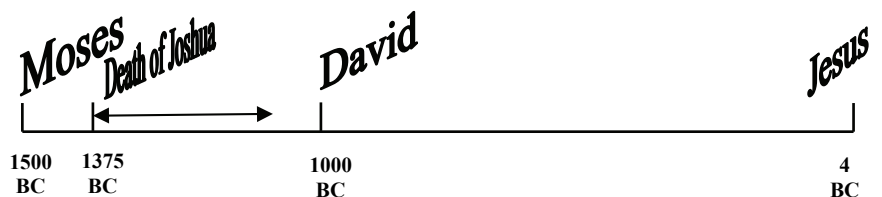
Historical Context

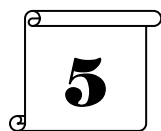
Each week, the Bible Lesson will be placed in **historical context** by use of a timeline.

It is essential that the children learn how the story of redemptive history fits together. Bible stories must not be viewed as detached scenes—they are to be shown as a part of a much bigger picture. The timeline is a useful tool toward that end.

As you begin your study of Judges today, draw this timeline on the board. Always remember that the students need to understand God's Word in its historical context.

When events in the Book of Judges took place





Bible Investigation

The **Bible Investigation** time is the heart and soul of the lesson. It plunges the student directly into God's Word, not simply a paraphrase of a Bible story.

All Scripture text included in the curriculum is from the New International Version (NIV).

The Bible reading is taken in short sections, separated by times of **discussion**, **questions**, and **application points**.

This format allows ample opportunities to stop, think about and discuss what is being read.

Have the students turn in their Bibles to Judges 1.

Introduction: *The Book of Judges comes right after the Book of Joshua in our Bibles. In the Book of Joshua, the people of God fight for and take the land that God has given them—the land of Canaan. Now that the land has been taken, it has to be truly possessed by the Israelites. This is where we pick up in Judges 1.*

Let's begin reading together. Read Judges 1:1.

¹ After the death of Joshua, the Israelites asked the LORD, "Who will be the first to go up and fight for us against the Canaanites?"

Discussion: *The Book of Exodus began with the death of Joseph. The Book of Joshua began with the death of Moses. The Book of Judges now begins with the death of Joshua. What happens when the great leaders of God's people die? God's people must find new leaders, right? That's what is happening here at the beginning of Judges—the Israelites need someone to lead them.*

Application: *Who is the true leader of God's people, who will never die? [God is!] Yes, and God has given us Jesus Christ as our forever leader. Isn't that great!*

Let's see what happens to Israel. Read verses 2-4.

² The LORD answered, "Judah is to go; I have given the land into their hands." ³ Then the men of Judah said to the Simeonites their brothers, "Come up with us into the territory allotted to us, to fight against the Canaanites. We in turn will go with you into yours." So the Simeonites went with them. ⁴ When Judah attacked, the LORD gave the Canaanites and Perizzites into their hands and they struck down ten thousand men at Bezek.

Discussion: *God is still leading Israel. He tells the tribe of Judah to go and possess their land. Who has given them their land? [God has!] The tribe of Judah received help from the tribe of Simeon, but it was the LORD who defeated the Canaanites, wasn't it? God was still at work in Israel.*

Let's read more. Read verses 8-11.

⁸ The men of Judah attacked Jerusalem also and took it. They put the city to the sword and set it on fire. ⁹ After that, the men of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites living in the hill country,

the Negev and the western foothills.¹⁰ They advanced against the Canaanites living in Hebron (formerly called Kiriath Arba) and defeated Sheshai, Ahiman and Talmai.¹¹ From there they advanced against the people living in Debir (formerly called Kiriath Sepher).

Discussion: *The tribe of Judah continues to drive out all of their enemies and possess the land. How are they able to do it? [Because God is giving them the land.]*

Let's continue. Read verses 17-19.

¹⁷ Then the men of Judah went with the Simeonites their brothers and attacked the Canaanites living in Zephath, and they totally destroyed the city. Therefore it was called Hormah.¹⁸ The men of Judah also took Gaza, Ashkelon and Ekron—each city with its territory.¹⁹ The LORD was with the men of Judah. They took possession of the hill country, but they were unable to drive the people from the plains, because they had iron chariots.

Discussion: *Who was with the men of Judah? [The LORD.] Only because the LORD was with them could they take possession of their land. But, we have one bad sign. What is it? [They could not remove the people from the plains, because they had iron chariots.] Is God stronger than iron chariots? [Yes!]*

Let's read more. Read verses 20.

²⁰ As Moses had promised, Hebron was given to Caleb, who drove from it the three sons of Anak.

Discussion: *Do you remember Caleb? He was one of the two spies (Joshua was the other) who trusted God when it came to entering the Promised Land. The LORD blessed Caleb and his family with his own land because he was faithful to God.*

Now for some bad news. Read verse 21.

²¹ The Benjamites, however, failed to dislodge the Jebusites, who were living in Jerusalem; to this day the Jebusites live there with the Benjamites.

Discussion: *God commanded the Israelites to drive out ALL of the people of Canaan. The tribe of Benjamin failed to follow God's commands! They did not drive out the Jebusites. They allowed them to live in Jerusalem. This is bad news, boys and girls.*

Application: *When God gives you a command, He also gives you the strength to obey it. The Benjamites could have driven out God's enemies, but they didn't. They did not use the strength of the LORD to obey Him.*

This grey sidebar found on all pages is for the teacher to write notes as he or she prepares the lesson.

Other teaching tips or important exegetical information may also appear on the sidebar.

What about Joseph's family? Read verses 22-26.

²² Now the house of Joseph attacked Bethel, and the LORD was with them. ²³ When they sent men to spy out Bethel (formerly called Luz), ²⁴ the spies saw a man coming out of the city and they said to him, "Show us how to get into the city and we will see that you are treated well." ²⁵ So he showed them, and they put the city to the sword but spared the man and his whole family. ²⁶ He then went to the land of the Hittites, where he built a city and called it Luz, which is its name to this day.

Discussion: *This is good news! The two tribes of Joseph obeyed God and drove out the people of Bethel. How did they have the strength to do this? [Because the LORD was with them.]*

Oh no, more bad news. Read verses 27-30.

²⁷ But Manasseh did not drive out the people of Beth Shan or Taanach or Dor or Ibleam or Megiddo and their surrounding settlements, for the Canaanites were determined to live in that land. ²⁸ When Israel became strong, they pressed the Canaanites into forced labor but never drove them out completely. ²⁹ Nor did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites living in Gezer, but the Canaanites continued to live there among them. ³⁰ Neither did Zebulun drive out the Canaanites living in Kitron or Nahalol, who remained among them; but they did subject them to forced labor.

Discussion: *The tribes of Manasseh, Ephraim and Zebulun disobeyed the LORD and did not drive out the Canaanites. They made them slaves, but God did not tell them to do that, did He?*

Let's continue. Read verses 31-35.

³¹ Nor did Asher drive out those living in Acco or Sidon or Ahlab or Aczib or Helbah or Aphek or Rehob, ³² and because of this the people of Asher lived among the Canaanite inhabitants of the land. ³³ Neither did Naphtali drive out those living in Beth Shemesh or Beth Anath; but the Naphtalites too lived among the Canaanite inhabitants of the land, and those living in Beth Shemesh and Beth Anath became forced laborers for them. ³⁴ The Amorites confined the Danites to the hill country, not allowing them to come down into the plain. ³⁵ And the Amorites were determined also to hold out in Mount Heres, Aijalon and Shaalbim, but when the power of the house of Joseph increased, they too were pressed into forced labor.

Discussion: *Did the tribes of Asher or Naphtali drive the enemies of God out of the Promised Land? [No.] Do you understand that this meant that they had to live around these people that did not follow God? God wanted His people to only be neighbors with His*

people. Instead, many of these tribes became neighbors with people who worshipped other gods. Do you think this is good? [No!]

Application: *It is very important to surround ourselves with people who follow God. You need people to influence you in the right ways, not the wrong ways. God's people must stick together so we can be a true witness to the fallen world!*

Let's move quickly to Judges 2. Read Judges 2:1-4.

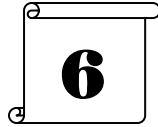
¹ The angel of the LORD went up from Gilgal to Bokim and said, "I brought you up out of Egypt and led you into the land that I swore to give to your forefathers. I said, 'I will never break my covenant with you,' ² and you shall not make a covenant with the people of this land, but you shall break down their altars.' Yet you have disobeyed me. Why have you done this? ³ Now therefore I tell you that I will not drive them out before you; they will be thorns in your sides and their gods will be a snare to you." ⁴ When the angel of the LORD had spoken these things to all the Israelites, the people wept aloud, ⁵ and they called that place Bokim. There they offered sacrifices to the LORD.

Discussion: *Did you hear that? Because God's people did not keep the covenant and drive His enemies out, they would always be a snare—a trap—to the Israelites. This isn't good!*

Let's finish our reading for today. Read verses 7-10.

⁷ The people served the LORD throughout the lifetime of Joshua and of the elders who outlived him and who had seen all the great things the LORD had done for Israel. ⁸ Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of a hundred and ten. ⁹ And they buried him in the land of his inheritance, at Timnath Heres in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash. ¹⁰ After that whole generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation grew up, who knew neither the LORD nor what he had done for Israel.

Conclusion: *There's our W.O.W! After Joshua and that whole GENERATION died, what happened? [Another GENERATION grew up who did not know God.] What sad words! Joshua had led the people to know God and follow God. All Joshua's GENERATION had seen amazing things from God. God had given them this land! But, their children grew up NOT knowing God. What happened? We'll talk about that next time. What we do know is that God's way is for each GENERATION to tell the next GENERATION about the greatness of our LORD. That's what I'm doing right now for you!*



Lesson-At-Home

The **Lesson-At-Home** section is the closing time each week. Bookmarks are given to the students that include the Scripture memory verse and a lesson review. The lesson review contains words and phrases that can spark memories as well as conversation with parents.

Distribute the “Lesson-At-Home” bookmarks. Read the Scripture Memory verse (Psalm 78:4) together.

Psalm 78:4 (NIV)

⁴We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD...

Say: *Do you hear our Word of the Week? It seems as though a GENERATION of adults did not tell the next GENERATION of children about the LORD in the Book of Judges. The Psalmist here tells us to make sure to tell all GENERATIONS about God and His power and might. Will you tell the next GENERATION or will you hide Jesus from them?*

Review the verse a couple of times.

Direct the students’ attentions to the bottom half of the bookmark. It includes reminder points of today’s lesson that can be discussed with their parents and reviewed during the week.

Close in prayer and dismiss the students.