

## Questions / Answers

1. What did the huge stone that Joshua set up remind the people?  
*That they had promised to love and obey God.*
2. What should each tribe have done to the wicked people who lived in their land?  
*They should have destroyed them.*
3. Who would have helped them to destroy all the wicked people? *God would have helped them if they had faith.*
4. What happened when the Israelites loved and obeyed God?  
*God blessed them with good harvests and peace in the land.*
5. What happened when the Israelites turned away from God and worshipped idols?  
*God punished them with famine and enemies attacking them.*
6. Who did God send to help the Israelites when they turned back to Him?  
*God sent judges to save them from their enemies.*
7. About how long did the time of the judges last?  
*About 400 years.*
8. How were Deborah and Barak able to conquer the Canaanites?  
*God sent a tremendous storm and their chariots stuck in the mud.*
9. Why was Samson so strong? How did he kill 3,000 Philistines?  
*He never cut his hair. He pulled down the temple on them.*
10. What happens when everyone does what is right in their own eyes?  
*There is chaos, violence, wickedness and suffering.*

### Memory verses

Judges 21:25 James 4:4

### Discussion

Why is it important to obey God's laws? What happens if we all just please ourselves? How did God help the Israelites when they were oppressed? How does God help us when we turn to Him?

### Writing

Describe how God saved the Israelites through Gideon and his 300 men.

# CBM Senior Lessons

## Lesson 18 The time of the Judges



**READING** Judges 1:19 & 27—33; Judges 21:25; Judges 7:19—22

### LESSON

When Joshua was a very old man, he called all the people to meet him at Shechem. Joshua reminded the people about all the wonderful miracles which God had done for them. He reminded them how God had given them the Promised Land.

Joshua reminded the people that God had chosen them to be His special people. If they obeyed God then God would bless them in the land. They must keep separate from the nations around them - they must not marry people from the other nations or worship their idols. If they disobeyed God then God would punish them - there would be famine in the land and their enemies would conquer them.

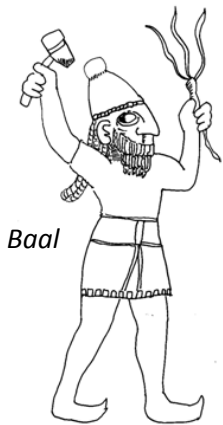
Joshua told the people that they must decide whether or not they would love God and obey His laws. The people promised to love and obey God and to remember all His love for them. Joshua wrote this agreement in a book and set up a huge stone at Shechem to remind the people about their promise. Joshua died when he was 110 years old. Then the people soon forgot the promises they had made.



Joshua had led the Israelites to conquer the land. They had destroyed cities and crushed the power of the nations living in the land. Joshua had given an area of land to each tribe to live in. It was the duty of each tribe to complete the work of destroying the wicked people who lived there. God said they must completely destroy all the wicked people who worshipped idols. Each tribe should have completed the work in the area they were given. If they had obeyed God there would have been no idols left in the land.

Judges 1:19 tells us that Judah could not drive out all the people because they had chariots of iron. The real reason was that the men of Judah did not have faith in God. If they had trusted in God they would have been able to destroy all their enemies. Judges 1 verses 27—33 is a sad account of the failure of the other tribes to obey God and complete the work of destroying the wicked people and their idols.

The Israelites never finished conquering all their land. Instead, they made friends with the people of the land and started to worship idols instead of God. The time of the judges is a repeated cycle of events. Firstly, God sent judges to teach the Israelites His laws. When they loved and obeyed God, He blessed them with good harvests and peace in the land.



*Baal*

Then the Israelites made friends with the wicked people left in the land. They started to worship their idols—Baal, Dagon and Ashteroth. When they disobeyed God, He punished them—there was famine in the land and their enemies attacked them. When the Israelites were suffering under the attacks of their enemies they turned back to God again. He sent judges to help the people and teach them God’s ways. This pattern continued for about 400 years and there were 12 judges who taught Israel about God and who saved them from their enemies.



*Dagon*

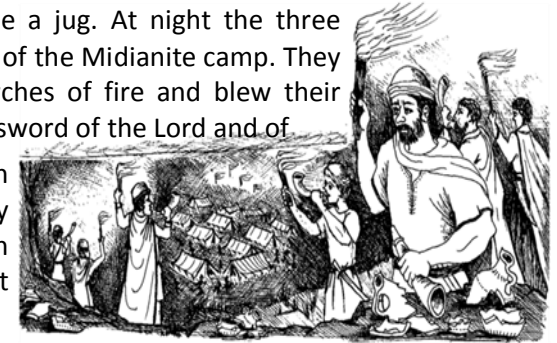


*Ashteroth*

One time when the Israelites turned away from God, the Canaanites oppressed the Israelites for twenty years. Then they turned to God for help. God sent Deborah, a prophetess who judged Israel. She went with Barak to fight against the Canaanites. Barak only had 10,000 men against the many thousands of the Canaanites and their 900 iron chariots. God sent a tremendous storm and the chariots got stuck in the mud. The Canaanite army fled. God brought a great victory for Israel and they obeyed God and had peace for 40 years.

Later the Israelites turned away from God again. Then the Midianites oppressed Israel and made their lives a misery. When they turned to God for help, God chose Gideon to be their judge. Gideon only had an army of 300 men to fight against the army of the Midianites which was so vast it could not be counted. God told Gideon to divide his men into three groups. Each man had a trumpet and a torch of fire inside a jug. At night the three groups spread out around the edge of the Midianite camp. They broke their jugs, held up their torches of fire and blew their trumpets. Then they shouted, “The sword of the Lord and of

Gideon.” The Midianites woke up in fright. They were confused and they all started to fight each other, then they all ran away. So God brought another victory for Israel.



Later the Israelites turned away from God again. The Philistines oppressed the Israelites for forty years. When the Israelites turned to God for help He made Samson their judge. God said that Samson must never cut his hair and God gave him great strength to fight against the Philistines. Samson told a woman called Delilah why he was so strong. Delilah shaved off Samson’s hair and the Philistines captured him, made him blind and put him in prison. When his hair had grown again Samson prayed to God for his strength and he pulled down a temple and killed himself and 3,000 Philistines. Again God brought victory to the Israelites.

The last verse in the book of Judges sums up the time of the judges, “In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.” God’s laws bring peace and righteousness, but when everyone does what they want to do then very soon everything is chaos, violence, wickedness and suffering. This is what happened in the time of the judges.

But there were times when the Israelites turned back to God. Then He sent a judge to save them from their enemies and to bring them back to Him.