

EHUD

Judges 1-3

Lesson Memory Verse: Proverbs 28:1 – “The wicked flee when no man pursues, but the righteous are as bold as a lion.”

Lesson Aim: Teach the children to be bold for God and try to do mighty things for Him.

Lesson Plan: Use the KEY – HE – SEE – WE – BE plan (explained in the Introductory Notes.)

KEY (for Attention): Let's play a little word game. When I give you a word, you give me the name of some creature (animal, bird, fish or insect) that you think of when you hear that word.

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| 1. Dirty as a (pig) | 7. Wise as an (owl) |
| 2. Busy as a (bee) | 8. Stubborn as a (mule) |
| 3. Soft as a (kitten) | 9. Strong as an (ox, horse) |
| 4. Sly as a (fox) | 10. Friendly as a (dog) |
| 5. Quick as a (cat) | 11. Bold as a (lion). Use this last word to tie in with your memory verse. |
| 6. Slippery (as an (eel, fish) | |

HE (for Authority): In our memory verse for today (Proverbs 28:1), we learn about some people who are as “bold as a lion.” These people are the righteous. Who are the righteous? The righteous are the people who belong to God because they have been saved from their sins. Now they are **right** in the sight of God. How can you be saved from your sins? You can be saved by asking Jesus to cleanse you from all of your sins by His blood that He shed on the cross. Then you will be righteous and can trust God to make you bold as a lion. In our lesson today I will teach you about three men who were “bold as a lion.” But we will also learn about those who were afraid. Why are some people afraid? Our verse tells us the answer; they are wicked. When you do something wrong, you are afraid, aren't you? That is what our memory verse says: the wicked flee when no man is chasing them. That is what happened to Israel.

SEE (for Apperception) and ME (for Application): Be sure to read this story from the Bible many times before reading these notes.

I. Joined with Sin (Judges 1-2)

A. The tribes of Israel took over part of the land that God had commanded them to take, but they did not trust Him enough to take all of it. They failed to be “bold as a lion.” They became afraid of their enemy and quit before their job was done (Judges 1).

WE: We must trust God to be “bold as a lion” and obey Him no matter how hard it is.

B. What made them afraid of the wicked people in their land? They had sinned by joining themselves with these wicked people. They also sinned by refusing to destroy their altars to false gods (2:2). Instead, they began to worship these false gods (2:11, 13, 17, 19). This made God angry with them (2:12, 14, 20), so He said that He would not drive out the wicked people (2:3, 21-23). Instead, He let wicked people rule over Israel from time to time to teach them a lesson that sin brings misery (2:14, 15). When Israel suffered for a while they cried out to God for mercy and God made them free (2:16, 18). After a while they went back to their sins and they got into trouble with God again (2:17, 19-21). Joining with sinful people and practicing their sinful ways made them as bad as their wicked neighbors.

WE: We must not live in sin or we will have all kinds of trouble: God will be against us; our enemies will fight against us and win; and we will be fearful. We must confess our sins to God right away so we can be **right** with Him (1 John 1:9).

C. Here is an outline of Israel during the times of the judges: (1) they **sinned**; (2) they became **slaves** to other nations; (3) they were **sorry** and cried out to God for help; and (4) He **saved** them.

II. Judges against Sin (Judges 3)

A. Othniel (3:1-11)

Israel's **sin** (3:7) made God angry and He let them become **slaves** (3:8) to the king of Mesopotamia for eight years. Finally Israel had **sorrow** for their sin and then God **saved** them by Othniel, Caleb's younger brother (3:9). Four words describe Othniel:

1. He was Great (1:12, 13; 3:9, 10)

He was great because he was brave. Earlier he had taken the city of Debir away from the wicked people and saved it for God's people. He now conquered the wicked king of Mesopotamia and saved Israel from his terrible rule over them.

2. He was Gifted (Joshua 14:12, 13; 15:13-18; Judges 3:8, 10)

When he went out to fight against the enemy and he won. He fought against some tough foes. The Anakims at Debir were giants, but he won. The people from Mesopotamia had ruled for eight years, but again he won. He knew how to inspire his men to trust God and how to fight hard on the battlefield.

WE: We need to use our talents for God and for ourselves. Only what's done for God will last.

3. He was Gracious

Othniel did not complain or boast. He simply did the job that God gave him to do in a very quiet, yet confident way.

WE: We need to do God's work without complaining or boasting, but be gracious and humble.

4. He was Godly (3:9-11)

(a) He was God's chosen man to deliver Israel (3:9).

(b) He was anointed by the Spirit of the Lord (3:10). This was a special anointing for power. By itself, this anointing was not a sign of godliness, but in this context, it seems an indication of it. He used the power of the Spirit for God's work and not for selfish reasons (as Samson did).

(c) He was used of God to give the land rest for forty years after his victory (3:11). His godly influence over the nation after this victory seems to be at least one reason for this lengthy time of peace.

WE: We must learn to depend on the Spirit to help us work for God because our strength is not enough.

B. Ehud (3:12-30)

Israel **sinned** again (3:12) and this time He made them **slaves** of Eglon, the King of Moab, for 18 years (3:14). When Israel truly **sorrowed** for their sins, God **saved** them by Ehud (3:15). This is how God used Ehud to save Israel (3:16-29):

1. He had a Plan. God choose Ehud to destroy Eglon, the king (3:15). Since God chose him, it is assumed that He put a plan in Ehud's mind that would work.

WE: We are blessed with a plan from God when He chooses us to do a work for Him. We must follow God's plan as He shows it to us. Many times that plan will be suggested by what we read in the Bible.

2. He was Prepared. Ehud **prepared** himself to do God's work (3:16).

WE: We need to prepare ourselves by careful Bible study; the Bible is our sword (Heb. 4:12; Eph. 6: 17).

3. He was Persistent. Ehud was **persistent**. It seems he was supposed to kill wicked King Eglon when he and other Israelite men brought their present (taxes) to this king. For some reason he could not do it and so he and his friends started to go home. Ehud got an idea from God and he bravely obeyed God by returning and destroying this wicked king (3:178-19).

WE: We must persist in doing what God tells us to do and not give up.

4. He had a Plot. Ehud's **plot** against Eglon worked; God blessed it. Nothing went wrong (3:19-26).

WE: We can be assured that God will bless our work if we obey Him.

5. He Pressed On. Ehud **pressed on** until the job was finished. Many Moabites were destroyed because Ehud kept going until his men took control of the crossing places of the Jordan River. Ten thousand wicked men were destroyed.

WE: We must press on until the whole job is done. Too many people quit when they have one victory. God wants to give us many victories.

6. He brought Peace. Ehud brought eighty years of **peace** to Israel.

WE: We need to be bold for God and defeat Satan (our enemy); this will bring peace to God's people.

C. Shamgar (3:31)

1. A less important judge that God used to help Israel was Shamgar. He lived after Ehud and put down 600 Philistines who were giving problems to Israel. This probably took place during the eighty years of rest.

WE: We should be satisfied wherever God uses us, whether it is a very important job or a less important job. All jobs done well are important to God.

2. The weapon that Shamgar used was an ox goad, a farmer's tool. An ox goad was a wooden pole about 8 feet long with a sharp point on one end to prod the oxen when they slowed up or stopped. On the other end was a chisel to clean the plow from dirt that stuck to it. God gave Shamgar a job to do and he did it with the thing he already had in his hand. He gave no excuses.

WE: We should not make excuses, but use what God has already given to us. He will add His power to what we use and we will accomplish whatever He wants done.

BE (for Action): Do you want to be "bold as a lion" for God? If so, be like Othniel, Ehud and Shamgar and win some battles for God against Satan. God will use you if you hate your sins, confess them to God and leave them with Jesus Christ. Can you think of any sins you must get rid of? If not, ask Jesus to bring to your mind whatever any sin you have done and not confessed to Him (Ps. 139:23, 24). When all is well between you and God, ask Him to give you His power to do what He wants you to do. Be "bold as a lion." If you want me to pray about something special that God wants you to do, meet me after class and I will pray with you about it.