



# Leader Guide

Judges, Kings, and  
Prophets

## Judges, Kings, & Prophets

### Story of God- Leader Info

#### Big Idea:

God wants to rescue his creation and bring them back to himself. He will go to amazing lengths to accomplish this.

#### Scripture:

Story: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, 2 Samuel, 2 Kings  
Prophecies: 2 Sam 7; Isa 7, 9, 40, 53, 61; Ps 22; Mic 5; Zac 12

#### Memory Verse:

Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the LORD your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the LORD is your life...  
Deuteronomy 30:19-20

He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he.  
Deuteronomy 32:4

Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.  
Joshua 1:9

Kids' City is changing up the lessons a little bit! We are starting on a journey together to understand the Story of God, and grow closer to Him and know Him better along the way! The lessons each week will now be chronological stories from the Bible told to the kids orally in a Story-formed way.

Stories are the most powerful form of communication we have. Stories speak to the mind, the body, and the emotions —our spirits. In a story, we can identify with situations we have never been in. Every culture and society of people that have ever existed has been this way. We are all storytellers and we all LOVE stories.

#### Jesus was a GREAT storyteller!

The disciples came up and asked, “Why do you tell stories?” Jesus replied, “You’ve been given insight into God’s kingdom. You know how it works. Not everybody has this gift, this insight; it hasn’t been given to them. Whenever someone has a ready heart for this, the insights and understanding flow freely. But if there is no readiness, any trace of receptivity soon disappears. That’s why I tell stories: to create readiness, to nudge the people toward receptive insight.”  
*Matthew 13:10-13 (The Message)*

#### Goals of Telling the Story

**-To understand, experience, and intersect with God’s story.**

-To become a ‘story-formed’ kids and people whose lives are daily shaped by the truths of the Story.

-To make disciples of Jesus who make disciples.

-To see and experience God’s “Redemptive Arc” throughout history as found in the Bible—seeing the connection between all of the stories— and seeing the Bible as one big story.

-To be moved by a Story that points to a God who constantly pursues us and desires to know us.

-To see the intersection of ours’ and the kids’ stories with God’s Story.

-To understand our identity differently in light of God’s story, who he is, and who he created us to be.

-To “live in the gospel”, seeing the world differently, seeking to further God’s Kingdom - to live missionally.

-To become excited about the biblical narratives, reading and learning more about them in the Bible.

-To learn to retell these stories and help others to see how they can find themselves in God’s story.

## Introduction in Small Groups

### Intro

Questions for the Kids about their week and to get them thinking about the lesson they will be going over.

1. What happened this past week that was really awesome?
2. What happened this past week that was a bummer?
3. What is your favorite story we have told so far in Kids' City? And Why?

### Expected Behaviors

Go over the Expected Behaviors for the kids while they are in small group before Large Group begins.

1. Be respectful of others
2. Only one student speaks at a time
3. Listen quietly when others are speaking
4. Keep hands and feet to yourself
5. Follow the directions given by your leaders

## Large Group

### Game

Have the kids play a game of Simon says before the lesson begins.

### Prayer, Offering, and Communion

Pray for the kids as they begin a new lesson, and ask the kids if they have anything specifically they would like to pray about! Pray for their requests during the week. Collect the offering if the kids have any, after the prayer. For the kids that have been baptized they can take communion at this time. Explain to the children that communion is a time for us to remember the sacrifice Jesus made for us on the cross and thank Him for all He has done for us!

### Review the Story from Last Week

**Review the last stories a bit, focusing more on the most recent story, Sacrifices.**

What patterns do you notice about God in these stories?

What sacrifices happened during Passover?

How did God share the instructions for his covenant with Moses and the people of Israel?

What do you remember about "atonement"?

**Tell the Story** (Don't just read it—know it and bring it to life!)

The people of Israel continued on their journey back to the Promised Land. God covered the Tabernacle with a cloud during the day that changed to a pillar of fire at night. When this cloud moved they followed it and set up camp wherever it stopped.

But when the people of Israel got closer to Canaan, they would not enter the land because they were afraid of the people who lived there. God's punishment for not trusting him was to make them wander in the desert for 40 years. This was a time filled with struggle and complaints against Moses and God.

As Moses neared the end of his life, he reminded the people of Israel of all of God's promises, laws, and commandments. Moses challenged them, "You must love God with all of your heart, mind, soul and strength... for he is your life!"

Then Moses said to Joshua in front of all of the Israelites, "Be strong and courageous! Now you will lead these people into the land God promised us. Do not be afraid or discouraged; God will never leave you or forget about you." (If you remember from a previous story, Joshua was Moses' assistant that went up the mountain with him to meet with God.)

After Moses died, Joshua became the new leader of Israel and led them to recapture the Promised Land from their enemies. As the Israelites entered the land, God told them to drive out all of the people who lived there because they were full of evil. But the Israelites didn't listen and eventually started worshipping the false gods of the people who remained in Canaan. This led into many other sins. Because of their disobedience, God removed his protection and allowed other nations to come into Canaan and overpower them.

As they were defeated, the people of Israel began to suffer, so they begged God for help and forgiveness. God once again forgave them and sent leaders, called judges, to lead them in defeating their enemies. (These are not like judges we have today, but more like generals). Battle after battle, Israel conquered their enemies at every border. In victory the people would worship God, but soon after that the people would turn away from God again and live their own way.

Unfortunately, this became a pattern from generation to generation... the people of Israel would come to God and worship him when they needed help, but when things were going well, they returned to worshipping other things. This was a time where everyone did what was right in their own eyes.

Because other nations were ruled by kings, the people of Israel complained to God saying, "We want a human king that we can see to rule over us." So God appointed a king named Saul to rule Israel. However, because of his disobedience, God eventually removed Saul as king.

Then God searched for a king who would love him and live in his ways. He chose a young boy named David.

When David grew up and was made king, God blessed him and the Israelites greatly. David deeply loved God and tried to live in his ways. God told David, "One of your descendants will rule Israel forever—his kingdom will never end!"

Solomon succeeded his father David and became the wisest and richest king in history. Solomon prayed to God, "Give me your wisdom so I can rule the people the right way."

God answered his prayer and gave Solomon great wisdom; in fact, rulers traveled from all over the world just to hear him. Solomon wrote books like Proverbs and Ecclesiastes that are full of the wisdom that God gave him.

Under Solomon's leadership the people of Israel enjoyed peace and great prosperity. The Temple was built in the capital city of Jerusalem to replace the Tabernacle. This Temple was a more permanent symbol of God's presence remaining with the people.

But later on, Solomon married foreign wives that led him into worshipping false gods. Because of Solomon's failures, God allowed civil war to break out and the Israelites divided into a northern kingdom called Israel, and southern kingdom called Judah. Eventually kings that worshipped false gods led both of these kingdoms.

Because of their rebellion, God removed his protection from both Israel and Judah and allowed other nations to come in and conquer them. The Israelites were forced out of the Promised Land and many were taken away to be slaves once again.

During the time of these kings, God sent prophets as messengers, calling people to return to his ways and follow his commandments. These prophets warned the Israelites what would happen if they continued to rebel against God. They also told people about a coming king, one who would rule forever and save them—a Messiah. God gave the prophets visions of what this Messiah would be like. (Listen carefully to these as they will tie into some future stories).

Prophets like Isaiah told them that ...

...He will be a descendant of King David.

...A virgin will give birth to him in Bethlehem.

...A messenger from the wilderness will challenge people to prepare for his coming.

...He will bring good news and healing to the poor, brokenhearted and the sick.

...He will do no wrong, living a life without sin.

...He will be beaten, whipped, and wounded—all so we can have peace, healing and forgiveness.

...He will be silent when faced with accusations. He will be put on trial and thrown in prison.

...His hands and feet will be pierced. He will be killed like a criminal, then buried in a rich man's tomb.

...God will lay the punishment and guilt for all of our sins on him. His life will be made an offering for us.

...Because of him, many will be made right with God.

After these prophets, God did not speak to humans again for 400 hundred years ...

## Small Groups

## Retell the Story

This may seem redundant, but it is very effective in helping your kids remember and own the story. You will want to help them retell the story by giving them leading questions like: So, where did the story begin? Who are some of the leaders of the Israelites? What were some of the prophecies about the coming King? What does God do for the Israelites along the way?

## Dialogue

Remember **this is a dialogue, not a quiz**. The questions are a good start to draw out observations about the story, and the “answers” are just there to help you guide kids toward some key ideas.

1. **Why did God tell the Israelites to drive out everyone who lived in Canaan? What happened?**
2. **What is the pattern that the Israelites got into?**
3. **What was the role of the prophets? What did the prophets foretell about the Messiah? FROM ALL OF THE STORIES SO FAR...**
4. **What have you seen for the first time in these stories?**
5. **What common themes run through all of the stories?**

God wants us to live closely with him—listening and obeying.

He provides the best possible way of life for us to live.

God wants to rescue his creation and bring them back to himself. He will go to amazing lengths to accomplish this.

Our sins require sacrifice—a life for a life.

6. **What have we learned about what humans are like? Where have we seen that?**
7. **What have we learned about what God is like? Where have we seen that?**

He does what is good, right, and perfect—he is holy.

He is powerful, creative, knows all things, has control over the elements, punishes rebellion, keeps his promises, does not allow evil to remain with him, provides a way of forgiveness, loves his creation, provides us with the best way to live, wants to protect us and bless us, wants us to continue his blessings, and much more!

## Application (Optional questions that may help apply the story)

8. **What questions do you have about the story? What do you wonder about?**
9. **What will you remember most about this story?**
10. **How does this story make a difference in your life?**
11. **Are we like the Israelites? What patterns do we get into that are not good?**
12. **When you think of your future what do you put the most hope in?**
13. **From all of the stories so far which person is most like you? Why?**
14. **What does it mean for you to live in God's ways right now?**

## Activity

The kids are going to do a timeline activity after the lesson. There are sheets of paper that have the major events and stories we have covered up to this point and the major portions of the story we just covered. Some of the kids may be far more knowledgeable about the chronology of these stories than others. Make sure every kid gets to participate and get a chance to help out. The kids can color on the sheets about what happened in each story after they have lined the stories up. Ask if any of the kids could tell all the stories in one by looking at the timeline. Here is the order of the timeline:

1. Creation
2. Adam & Eve
3. Cain & Abel
4. The Tower of Babel
5. The Flood
6. Abraham
7. Isaac
8. Jacob & Esau
9. Joseph & Egypt
10. Moses
11. The Passover
12. God Gives the Law
13. Sacrifices & the Tabernacle
14. 40 Years of Wandering in the Wilderness
15. Joshua- Capture of the Promised Land
16. Judges
17. King Saul
18. King David
19. King Solomon
20. Israel's Rebellion & Captivity
21. Prophets
22. 400 Years of Silence

## Extra Time Activities

If there is extra time, have the kids look up the passages from the story and read them out loud.