

SEPTEMBER 27-OCTOBER 3

FOR PARENTS

After the people of God received the 10 Commandments, built the portable sanctuary known as the Tabernacle, and the Ark of the Covenant into which they placed the laws, Moses led them near the land God had promised. Once again, the people showed their distrust and lack of faith in God, and fear kept them from entering the promised land. **The people did not keep their covenant with God. Though some remained faithful, the people too often worshiped other gods and did not love each other as God commanded. They showed us how much we all disobey God's law.**

Moses died and Joshua rose to leadership. God then brought Israel into the land that God had promised. After settling in the Promised Land of Canaan, Israel had no king and no one in charge for 200 years. People forgot to worship God and did whatever they wanted. When things went really wrong, God sent a judge to help. Judges were warriors, leaders, and strong helpers.

These first four commandments teach us how to live rightly with God. Jesus summed them up with the commandment he called the first and greatest: *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind and strength.*

You shall have no other gods before me. **No loyalty comes before our loyalty to God. We should worship and serve only God; expect all good from God alone; and love, fear, and honor God with all our hearts.**

You shall not make for yourself an idol. **First, when we treat anything other than God as though it were God, we make it an idol. Second, when**

we assume that our own interests are more important than anything else, we make them into idols, and in effect we also make an idol of ourselves.

You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God. **We should use God's name with reverence and awe. God's name is holy and deserves the highest honor from us. It is insulted when used carelessly, as in a curse or a pious cliché.**

Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy. **God requires a special day to be set apart so that worship can be at the center of our lives. It is right to honor God with thanks and praise, and to hear and receive God's Word.**

KID CONNECTION

Trust is essential in all relationships. Trust is first built with children when their needs are met as newborns. Parents build trust each time they offer a listening ear, a needed hug, and boundaries for safety. God's people didn't trust the God of Abraham and Jacob because they didn't have experience with needs being met until they spent time in the desert. Slowly and through lots of errors and wrong turns, they learned that God, who led them out of slavery in Egypt, was a God that could be trusted.

Our children need to learn to trust that God cares for them, loves them, and is with them in all places and circumstances. That trust is learned through parent example and times of worship and prayer. Worship connects us with God. When we worship as community, we show children what it means to be faithful to a God who is faithful to us.

REMEMBER 1 THING

Deborah was a brave and wise leader who followed God. Will you do the same?

READING PLAN

Day	Chapter Titles <i>From Read and Learn Bible</i>	Scripture
9/27	God's Holy Place (repeat)	Exodus 33-40
9/28	The Big Mistake	Numbers 13-14
9/29	Into the Promised Land	Joshua 1-6
9/30	Gideon's Army	Judges 6-8
10/1	Samson	Judges 13-16
10/2	Naomi and Ruth	Ruth 1-4
Sunday	Deborah and the Judges	Judges 4

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

Instructions and discussion tips are available on the church website.

Choose one or more activities that will interest your family as you make this week's stories your own.

Play the Game: Is It Fair?

Just as Deborah was called on to judge situations between fellow Israelites, family members will have a chance to be the judge. Present different scenarios for family members to decide if the characters are acting fairly.

Telephone

Deborah and the Judges called upon God to guide them in their decision-making. They had to listen carefully for God's word. Use plastic cups and string to make a telephone system for family members to listen for messages from each other.

Women Judges

Invite your older children to do research about women judges of today.

September 27-October 3

Is it Fair?

The role of a judge is to make decisions about justice for the people. What is fair? Invite your children to practice deciding what is fair and introduce them to or reinforce with them that fair does not always mean equal.

Play a game called “Is it fair?”

Invite family members to stand across from each other. Present a scenario and if the family members think the situation is fair, they take a step forward. If they don’t, they stay in place. The hope is they will meet in the middle at some point, and you can invite them to shake hands for a job well done.

Some scenarios might be (or create your own)

- Big sister doesn’t want little sister in her room unless big sister is there.
- The teacher makes everyone stay in for recess because one person made a mess in the coat room.
- Bob who is 10 has two chores to do each day. Little brother only has one job to do each day.
- Everyone finishes their dinner so everyone gets dessert.
- Alice is 13 and gets to ride in the front seat with Dad when they run errands.
- You made friends with someone who is different from everyone else. Another friend tells you to stop seeing this person or they won’t be your friend anymore.
- You give a wrong answer in class, and the other children start laughing at you.

Dig deeper into the fairness/justice issue with your children using this resource:

Writer, educator, and parent Lisa VanEngen has written an outstanding resource for speaking with kids about justice issues, including racism, creation care, health care, disabilities, hunger, and more. Her book, [*And Social Justice for All: Empowering Families, Churches, and Schools to Make a Difference in God's World*](#) includes conversation starters, action ideas, recommended library books, and more.

Telephone:

Supplies Needed: two plastic cups, about 20 inches of string, tool to puncture the bottom of the cup to put the string through to connect the two cups.

Make an old-fashioned telephone. Poke a hole in the bottom of each cup. Put the string through the hole in the bottom of the cup and knot it on the inside. Do the same with the other cup on the other end of the string. Invite one a family member to speak into the cup while the other person puts the cup on the other end to their ear to hear what is being said. If your children are interested in science, talk about how you are using vibrations to make the telephone work. Experiment with how taunt you must hold the string to make it work.

Remind the children that Deborah and all the judges of Israel had to listen carefully to God to know what God wanted them to do for the people. Just like the hearer on your homemade telephone listened intently, we are called to listen for God speaking to us.

Check out this article about helping children pray listening prayers:

Women Judges:

If you have older children, invite them to learn about women judges of our time. Even today, women judges are unusual and make up less than 36% of judges in federal courts. Are there any women judges serving in Tennessee?