

Lesson Two: God Made Me Special (Preschool/Elementary)

Lesson Theme:

God created me as unique—I am one-of-a-kind! He has a special purpose for my life, so I will give my life to Him.

Theme Verse:

“I praise you [God] because of the wonderful way you created me... Even before I was born, you had written in your book everything I would do.” Psalm 139:14a, 16b CEV

* If you have extra time, have the students come up with motions for the theme verse from today.

Bible Story – Othniel from the Book of Judges

Ice-Breaker Activities

ACTIVITY #1: WHO I AM

- This activity may not be applicable to younger students.
- The goal of this activity is to help students see their unique characteristics as tools to be used by God for His glory!
- Be aware that some children are very self-conscious of how they are different from others.
- Be attentive to each group’s activities and guard against anyone becoming embarrassed or insecure.

What You Need:

- Transparency! Not the kind that you put on an overhead, but the kind of transparency that enables you to reveal something about yourself.
- These unique characteristics may be things that the students do not like about themselves. Be prepared to share a personal story about something you used to dislike about yourself, but that God has helped you overcome and see as a strength He can use for His glory!

What To Do:

- Divide the students into small groups of 3 to 4.
- In each small group, ask the students to share one characteristic that is unique about them—these can be based on their appearance, traits, likes/dislikes, etc.
- After each student has shared one, ask them to go around the circle two more times and share other characteristics or flaws that they have.
- After about 5 minutes, bring all the students back together and have each student share one of the things that makes them unique.
 - If any other students had the same answer, have them raise their hand when that characteristic is mentioned.
 - Examples: I'm left-handed, I don't like chocolate, I like math, I have red hair, etc.
- Explain to the students how that we each have unique talents, abilities, and traits that God purposefully gave to us.
- In our story today, God used what many considered a flaw of the second judge of Israel to bring about His purpose!

ACTIVITY #2: ACTIVE LISTENING ACTIVITY

- This activity will be used during the Bible story-telling time.
- The goal of this activity is to give the students 'key words' to listen for so they know when to act out that part of the story. This will encourage them to be more attentive to the overall story.

What You Need:

- Some sort of “sign” to designate each of the main characters.
- Assign the following characters and props to various students.
 - King Eglon Crown w/his name on it
 - Ehud the Judge Treasure & Short sword
 - Group of Israelites Star of David Sign
 - Group of Moabite Soldiers Swords
 - Group of Moabite Advisers Scrolls of the Law
- Instructions for making the Star of David Sign can be found in the **Lesson 2 – Activity Sheet Packet**.
- Instructions for making the Ancient Scrolls can be found online at: <http://www.the-red-kitchen.com/2012/02/diy-ancient-scrolls-tutorial.html> or in the **Lesson 2 – Activity Sheet Packet**.
- The scrolls could also be used to display each of the daily theme verses—you will need at least four to do this, but that would enable you to have four royal court members too!
- Utilize an adult to be King Eglon so that no student is being asked to portray the obese king.

What To Do:

- As you share the Bible Story Paraphrase, each character should stand when the story mentions them.
- Set up a portion of your room to be the inner chamber of the king. You may use the additional students as the wall around this room.
- As you approach the end of the story, have the characters playing Ehud and Eglon act out the action as you read the paraphrase.

Bible Story – God Chooses to Use a Leader because He Is Unique—Ehud

Lesson One Review

In our last class time, we studied about Othniel and the Israelites—a very special group that God called his “chosen” people. The Israelites were

loved very much by God, but in our story this morning, we found out that they had forgotten God, and were living their lives in disobedience to Him! God sent them a deliver, a judge, who defeated the king of Syria and led the people of Israel into 40 years of peace.

We also learned about the “Cycle of Sin” in our class this morning. **[Use the “Cycle of Sin Wheel” as you describe this process.]** This cycle always begins with **SIN**—what the Bible refers to as doing “what was evil in the sight of the LORD.” This causes **GOD’S ANGER** to be poured out upon His people and then He allows **PUNISHMENT** to occur through another nation of people. This is a very difficult time for the Israelites, so they cry out to God and **REPENT** of their sins. God hears their cry and sends someone to **RESCUE** them. This person is called a Judge! After the judge delivers the people of Israel through the power of God, they experience **PEACE** until the death of that judge—at which time, they would start again to do “what was evil in the sight of the LORD.” This is what we call the “**Cycle of Sin.**”

Does anyone remember the name of the first judge of Israel?

Othniel

After the death of Othniel, the Bible tells us that the Israelites once again turned to sin. Notice the first steps of this cycle in this next passage:

“Once more the Israelites started disobeying the LORD. So he let them be defeated by King Eglon of Moab, who had joined forces with the Ammonites and the Amalekites to attack Israel. Eglon and his army captured Jericho. Then he ruled Israel for eighteen years and force the Israelites to pay heavy taxes. The Israelites begged the LORD for help, and the LORD chose Ehud...” (Judges 3:12-15a CEV)

[As you are reading these verses, spin the “Cycle of Sin Wheel” from one step to the next as you describe this cycle.]

In the 40 years of Othniel’s time in power, the Israelites experienced peace; but right after Othniel died, they started disobeying the LORD. The same thing often happens when a child does something wrong, gets punished for it (e.g. being grounded, no video games, etc.) and then gets their privileges back. A child will usually obey for a while—as long as they have a reminder in front of them to do what is right—but as soon as that reminder is gone, they will disobey again.

Has this ever happened to you? Do you sometimes struggle to obey?

Allow one or two of the students share a story of their struggles if they want to. Be careful to not allow their stories to go very long or promote their disobedience as something for others to imitate.

[If using the “Active Listening Activity,” start it now!]

Judges 3 (Paraphrase)

After Othniel—the first Judge of Israel—died, the **Israelites (+)** sinned against the LORD by disobeying Him. This made the LORD angry, so he used a very fat man, **King Eglon (+)**, to punish the **Israelites (+)**. **King Eglon (+)** and his **Moabite Soldiers (+)** conquered the **Israelites (+)** and ruled over them for eighteen years and even made them pay taxes to **King Eglon (+)**.

All of the **Israelites (+)** despised **King Eglon (+)** and all the **Moabite Advisors (+)** for being so cruel to them. The **Israelites (+)** cried out to God and begged Him to send someone to rescue them from **King Eglon (+)**. God heard their prayer and the Lord chose **Ehud (+)** to rescue the **Israelites (+)**.

So one day, when it was time to pay the taxes, **Ehud (+)** went with a group of Israelites to see **King Eglon (+)** and all his **Advisors (+)**. God had a special plan to defeat **King Eglon(+)**. He instructed **Ehud (+)** to make a short, double-edged sword as a weapon.

Ehud (+) was unique because he was left-handed. That meant that Ehud would carry his sword on his right side instead of his left. When **Ehud(+)** and the **Israelites(+)** went in to see **King Eglon (+)** and his **Advisors (+)**, the **Moabite Soldiers (+)** checked all of them for weapons. They did not find any weapons, so **Ehud (+)** and the **Israelites (+)** were allowed in to take their taxes to **King Eglon (+)**.

After giving the treasure to the king's **Advisors (+)**, the **Israelites (+)** began to leave. **Ehud (+)** turned back and told **King Eglon (+)**, "I have a secret to tell you, king!" Then **King Eglon (+)** sent everyone out of the room—all the **Israelites (+)**, his court **Advisors (+)**, and even the **Moabite Soldiers(+)**.

"I have a message for you from God!" **Ehud (+)** said. Then he pulled out the dagger with his left hand and shoved it so far into **King Eglon's (+)** stomach that the whole sword disappeared in **King Eglon's (+)** fat belly and he died. Immediately, **Ehud (+)** locked the doors and climbed out a window to escape.

The death of **King Eglon (+)** ended the reign of the Moabites. And the **Israelites (+)** experienced peace for 80 years!

Bible Story Review – The Cycle of Sin

Why did God allow the Moabites to conquer His "chosen" people?

They sinned against the Lord by disobeying Him.

Who did God use to punish the Israelites? What was unique about him?

He allowed the king of Moab to defeat them. The king's name was Eglon. Eglon was an extremely fat man!

What did the Israelites do that convinced God to rescue them?

They cried out to God. They begged Him to intervene. This is called repentance—turning away from sin toward God.

Who did God send to deliver Israel from Moab? Why was he able to do it?

Ehud. Ehud was uniquely qualified for this mission because he was left-handed—the guards did not check the right side of the body for weapons. God created him for a special purpose!

In what ways has God created you to be special? Do you think God can use you for a special purpose too?

Say today's theme verse again with the motions you created:

"I praise you [God] because of the wonderful way you created me... Even before I was born, you had written in your book everything I would do." Psalm 139:14a, 16b CEV

Application Activity:

OPTION #1: SOMEONE SPECIAL

What You Need:

- Large box
- Mirror
- Towel or blanket

What To Do:

- Stand a large box on its side, and set a mirror inside it. Drape a towel or blanket over the open side of the box.
- Tell the children that there's someone special inside the box.
- Allow them to take turns lifting the towel and looking inside the box.
- Make sure others don't see inside the box until it's their turn.

- Children will be delighted to see themselves in the mirror.
- Be sure to have each child whisper and tell you what special person he or she saw.
- Remind them that “God Made Us Special.”

OPTION #2: MADE FOR GOOD WORKS

Illustration:

- What was special about the pig in the movie “Babe”?
 - He was a pig with some extraordinary intelligence.
 - His master, the farmer, worked with him and trained him to be a sheep pig. Normally, a pig would have done nothing more than eat, get fat, and become bacon.
 - But Babe, because he was special and unique, was chosen by the farmer to do a specific job. Fortunately, Babe obeyed the farmer.
- In spite of the laughter of the crowd at the sheep dog contest at the thought of a pig participating, Babe showed the farmer and the world that he could do the job.

Explanation:

- God wants all of us to be like Babe — to listen to what He says and follow His instructions.
- Our purpose is not just eating, drinking, getting fat, and dying.

Application:

- You are as unique as Babe. You may laugh, and the people around you may laugh, but God has some extraordinary task for you to do.
- You may seem out of place, and your ministry may be a little weird, but God has already got the details worked out, so just listen to what God tells you.

Activities & Crafts

COLORING SHEETS:

- Download the **Lesson 2 – Activity Sheets Packet** for coloring sheets and other activities for your students.

CRAFT: REMEMBERING GOD AND HIS WORD

- The Bible tells us that the Israelites “forgot” God and did what was evil in his sight. In fact, the Bible says, “I treasure your word above all else; it keeps me from sinning against you” (Psalm 119:11 CEV)
- This is the same craft from Lesson 1. It is likely that your students did not have enough time to complete this craft in the earlier lesson. This time could be set aside for that purpose.
- Have the students write out and add the theme verse for Lesson 2 to their treasure chest.