



SOUTHLAND CHURCH

THE BOOK OF
JUDGES

15 Day Devotional



foundations
daily devotional

SOUTHLAND CHURCH

THE BOOK OF
JUDGES

15 Day Devotional

foundations
daily devotional

DAY 1

READ an Introduction to the book of Judges if your Bible has one

Note: There is a map of Israel included on Page 4 of this booklet for you to reference as you read through Judges.

Before launching into Judges, it is important to realize that not everything in the Bible is *prescriptive* – telling us exactly *how* we should live. Much of the Bible, like the book of Judges, is *descriptive* – it describes the events of a particular time in history. Judges just happens to be describing a very dark time in Israel’s history when they were walking further and further away from God. By no means are we to read Judges and think that, because it is in the Bible, every character and every action is good and was approved by God! If you have never read Judges before, you may be surprised that the characters you met in Sunday school, like Gideon and Samson, aren’t quite the upstanding citizens that you remember them to be! The book of Judges tells some of the most ruthless stories in the Bible.

Yet, God purposefully chose to have this book included in Scripture. It gives us a picture of life without God, of what happens when people try to live by their own rules: the result is total chaos. A few times we read the line *“In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”* This is an accurate summary of the book of Judges, and also hints to another purpose of the book: to show the need for a good, godly king in Israel. There is much evidence to believe that Judges was written after David was already king, perhaps written by Samuel; therefore, the horrors of the book are setting the reader up for the necessary establishment of a godly king. Finally, God’s character is revealed throughout the book, both by silence and action. Next to Israel’s debased morality, we see the holiness of Yahweh. Next to Israel’s continual apostasy, we see God’s mercy and faithfulness as He repeatedly inclines His ear to a people who habitually break their covenant with Him.



READ: Judges 1

After Moses died, Joshua led the people into the Promised Land. As He had done when they left Egypt, God performed mighty miracles for this new generation, parting the waters of the Jordan and crumbling the walls of Jericho! They saw God’s power firsthand. They entered the “land flowing with milk and honey”, and each tribe was given their allotment of land; much land was taken and the book of Joshua ended with a nationwide recommitment to Yahweh: “Choose this day whom you will serve!” exhorted Joshua, and the people responded unanimously, “The Lord our God we will serve, and His voice we will obey!” (Jos 24:15, 24) The whole thing leaves the reader feeling satisfied, seeing that Israel is settling united and peacefully into the Promised Land. The peace and unity, however, is short-lived...

The book of Judges begins shortly after the death of Joshua. Right away we are informed of Israel’s disobedience back during Joshua’s time. God had told them to go and take the land He had given them, to destroy peoples and capture cities. God was giving them a homeland, but He was also using His people to execute judgement on the nations. The peoples living in the land – the Amorites, Philistines, Canaanites, etc. – were extremely wicked; their worship rituals were disgusting and demonic, nothing close to the purity God intended for His creation. The Israelites were to destroy these nations, who were now finally being judged for their immorality. But Israel had not fully complied. The beginning

of Judges finds the people inquiring of the Lord about an attack they had long put off. The first chapter already shows us both victory and much defeat as seven of the tribes are unable to drive out the people of the land.



JOURNALING AND PRAYER

1. Ask God to open your heart to whatever He wants to teach you through the book of Judges. Ask Him to give you a word, picture or thought about what He wants to do in you as you go through this devotional.
2. Throughout the book of Judges, we will encounter rampant immorality. Israel is far from the uniquely, set-apart nation God intended her to be. Similarly, the Church in Canada is far from the spotless Bride God has called her to be. Ask God to give you a greater desire for holiness, and a greater heart for Canada, as you read through Judges.
3. We cannot let our thinking go astray when we read Judges; we must remember that God does not approve of much of what happens. However, He remains a faithful Father to His people, whether redeeming or rebuking them. Ask God to remind you how He has been a faithful Father to you. Thank Him for this, and keep this truth about God in mind as you read through Judges.

DAY 2



READ: Judges 2

Chapter two introduces the context of the book of Judges. God shows up in the first few verses, appearing to the people of Israel as the angel of the Lord. God summarizes what has happened among His people and prophesies what will come as a result: because they have broken their covenant to destroy the wicked nations and strike down their pagan altars, their conquest will be difficult and the pagan gods will be a snare to them. This is a sad pronouncement, foreshadowing the miserable road ahead.

The description of Joshua's death is telling: unlike Moses, it seems that Joshua failed to establish a strong successor who would lead the Israelite people within the Promised Land. Thus, after he died, a generation arose that did not know the Lord or the wonders He had performed for His people. This reveals another way that Israel failed in their covenant relationship: Moses had told them to remember what God had done – to write His works on their hands and tie them to their foreheads so that they would not forget. All generations were to teach their children the things Yahweh had done. (See De 6:4-9) Only a few generations later and we see that this command has been ignored.

The chapter goes on to describe the apostasy of Israel: their further abandonment of God and His ways. The words of the angel of the Lord ring true: instead of worshipping the true God, Yahweh, Israel instead turns to the pagan gods of the land, Baal and Ashtoreth. Sometimes when we envision this, we think of people bowing down to wooden statues, but it was much more than that. Baal and Ashtoreth were the god and goddess of fertility. Their worship included a mixture of cult prostitution, sexual orgies and child sacrifice – all in hopes that their god would bless their land and their loins. This was the kind of activity that Israel was participating in; they had turned from God and in turn had lost their moral compass.

Judges is a book of cycles. We see cycle after cycle of sin, supplication and salvation: the people fall deep into sin, which brings great hardship; so they call out to God, begging Him to save them; in His mercy and compassion, God listens and sends a deliverer – called a judge – to rescue the people from their oppression. Unfortunately, the people of Israel do not learn from their mistakes, nor do they fear the Lord, because every time He saves them, they slip back into their old habits; in fact each time they become more corrupt than the last! God is angry with them, yet His mercy and faithfulness is so evident. He is so patient with His people, and He desires to see them follow His ways and receive His abundant blessing for their loving obedience!



JOURNALING AND PRAYER

1. When God said “You shall have no other gods before Me” (Ex 20:3), He said so with a purpose. He alone is God and to worship anything else, to set anything else above Him, is idolatry.
 - a. When we think of idolatry in the Bible, we imagine people bowing down to statues and we tend to think they were really stupid – *Why would they worship blocks of wood?* We think ourselves quite beyond that. But they weren't any less stupid than us; religion and worship were just a large part of their culture. Take some time to think about Israel's cycles of sin and idolatry. Why do you think the pagan gods were so enticing to them? Why might they have abandoned Yahweh to follow these gods of wood and stone?
 - b. Ask God how this translates into our culture today. Our society is becoming less and less “religious” but it is still FULL of idol worship. What are the Baals and Ashtoreths of today? What about in your own life? Ask God to reveal any idols, anything that you have set above Him.
 - c. Repent of any idolatry that is revealed in your life. Take time to pray for our nation, that our eyes will be opened to our idolatry, that we would have repentant hearts and turn from our sins.
2. Israel's fall into idolatry would not have been momentary. It will have been a slow fade, beginning with small compromises and corner-cutting. That and the people did not take the time to teach and remember the things God had done for them. God was not sought or pursued and as a result, He was forgotten. Ask God to open your eyes to any compromises and corner-cutting in your life that could potentially draw you away from Him. Recommit yourself to Him.

DAY 3



READ: Judges 3

The first six verses conclude the introduction of the book of Judges. Israel had been sufficiently warned of what would happen if they broke their covenant with the Lord; they knew full well what they were getting into when they said “yes” to Yahweh. And so God tested them in the Promised Land to see if they really would obey His word, as they had promised to do. But the snares of the nations of the land – their gods, their daughters, their customs – were appealing, and the people compromised. Verse six highlights Israel's intermarriage with the pagan nations – something God had forbidden, knowing that such marriage would lure His people into idolatry. In a sense, Israel was to be married to

Yahweh; this intermarriage was an act of blatant adultery towards Him.

This ushers in the remainder of the book, which highlights the specific judges whom God used to deliver Israel. Whenever Israel genuinely cried out to God for help, He turned His ear towards them and brought them deliverance. God did this through judges. Not gavel-wielding rulers of court, but men (and a woman!) who were given the anointing of the Holy Spirit to deliver Israel from their enemies. There are patterns here as well: when Israel sins, they become slaves to pagan nations for a number of years; they cry out to God who raises up a judge and there is peace in the land for many years; when the judge dies, the people sink deeper into sin and idolatry, which leads them back into years of oppression and servitude. The judges themselves, though called by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit, are not paragons of virtue. They are not *leaders* so much as they are deliverers. Unlike Moses and Joshua and some of the kings and prophets of the future, the judges do not lead the people into repentance or holiness. Again, this is to show the reader that there is a need for godly leadership in Israel.

In chapter 3 we are introduced to the first three judges. Othniel was from the tribe of Judah and delivered the people out of the hand of the king of Mesopotamia, whom they had been serving for 8 years. Othniel brought a welcome 40 years of peace to the land. Ehud was from the tribe of Benjamin and was raised up to deliver the people from the hand of the Moabites. Of course, the people were under the domain of Moab because they had committed much evil before the Lord. Ehud's story gives the reader a good taste of the honest descriptions in Judges – we are spared no gore in these pages! Ehud was crafty and resourceful, using the advantage of his left-handedness to assassinate the Moabite king, Eglon, who was so obese, that Ehud's blade was lost in his fat! The people killed 10,000 Moabites that day, and there was peace in the land for 80 years! Lastly, we're told of Shamgar who saved Israel from the Philistines, killing 600 of them with an oxgoad (a stick used to prod oxen)!

God's sovereignty is very evident in the pages of Judges. He is in control and He has authority over the nations, whether or not they acknowledge Him. He causes Israel to fall into the power of other nations, and He delivers Israel out of those nations when He sees fit. And as always, everything He did was ultimately for Israel's good and His glory, and we can trust that this is true for our lives as well!



JOURNALING AND PRAYER

- Take another look through Judges 3 and take note of everything mentioned about the Lord. What do you notice about who God is? What is He like? What matters to Him?
 - How have you known these things to be true about God?
 - In worship, tell God what you love about Him. Thank Him for his goodness in your life. Thank Him for His sovereignty.
- We often read the phrase "Israel did what was evil *in the sight of the Lord*." They could not see God with their eyes, but their actions and their hearts were in plain view for Him to see. Meditate on this truth – that God is all-seeing and all-knowing. How does this affect you? How does this affect how you want to live today? Ask God to help you to live for His glory today.
- What is something that you are struggling with right now? Ask God how He wants to work for your good and His glory in this situation.

DAY 4



READ: Judges 4 & 5

Here we meet Israel's fourth and only female judge, Deborah. While the events of the story are as gory as is normal in Judges, Deborah herself is a breath of fresh air within the book. She has chosen to go against the grain of her people, who have turned to other gods and done evil before God (4:1, 5:8); she has chosen to listen and obey the voice of the Lord. She is a prophetess – one to whom God reveals His plans. While the other judges told about in the book were raised up by God and occasionally given His Spirit, none were given the title of prophet, quite possibly because none had a genuine relationship of loving obedience to God. But Deborah was different. It is clear from her song that she loves God. She delights in giving Him glory and she takes joy when people rise up to God's calling in their lives (5:2, 9).

True to the cycle, Israel's sinful practices have caused them 20 years of grief under the cruel authority of the Canaanites and they are now crying out to Yahweh for deliverance. God has chosen to send Barak, son of Abinoam, to fight and conquer the army of Jabin, King of Canaan, and Sisera, the commander. But when Deborah calls Barak to this task, he shirks back, saying he'll only go if she promises to come with him. That a man would beg a woman to accompany him into battle shows us something about Deborah and the rapport she had among the people. In her victory song, she refers to herself as "a mother in Israel" (5:7) – she is honoured and respected, a woman of wise council and compassion. She doesn't condemn Barak for his faintheartedness; she agrees to go with him and speaks what she hears from the Lord – that because Barak has not trusted the word of the Lord, the sweetest victory (the defeat of the army commander, Sisera), will be taken from Barak and given to a woman. And just how this happens is made graphically clear: Jael, an apparent ally of Sisera, drives a tent peg through his head! Deborah's prophecy is shown true, and the people of Israel continue on in victory until they have destroyed Jabin, the king of Canaan.

Deborah and Barak respond with a song of triumph, highlighting the events of the battle and uplifting those who took part in the victory. The song is one of praise to the Lord, and is the only thing of its kind to be found in the book of Judges. Deborah and Barak truly give praise and glory to God for delivering Israel. In the song, we also see that this battle is one of the most nationally unifying events in the entire book. Barak calls all Israel to join in the battle at Mount Tabor, and five and a half tribes respond: Ephraim, Benjamin, Zebulun, Issachar, Naphtali and Machir (western Manasseh). And the story extends past the battle on Mount Tabor. The Israelites are heartened to continue on until they defeat the king himself, and they experience 40 years of peace! This victory and unity gave the people a glimpse of the blessings Yahweh had promised if only they would choose to obey Him and follow His ways in wholehearted devotion.



JOURNALING AND PRAYER

- Barak did not fully trust God, even though God had called him and promised him victory. God didn't abandon Barak or take away his calling, but he did miss out on a good victory because of his lack of trust. God is a good Father, merciful and patient towards His children, even when they struggle to trust Him.

- a. What has helped you learn to trust God in your life? Thank God for the mercy and patience He has shown to you as you've learned to trust Him.
- b. Ask God how He would like to deepen your faith and trust in Him at this point in your life. Write down what He says to you.

2. What did you notice about Deborah as you read the chapters in Judges? What do you admire about her life and leadership? What might God want you to take from this for your own life?
3. Music was a large part of Israelite culture, and in worship, their songs publically proclaimed God's power and deliverance. Make it a point to proclaim God's works in the things you say today. Bless the Lord by speaking about His hand in your life. In prayer, invite God into your conversations today. Ask Him to help you to glorify and bless His name through your words.

DAY 5

 **READ:** Judges 6:1-32

The next Judge introduced to us is Gideon. His story includes perhaps the most miraculous event since the walls of Jericho tumbled down.

Of course, the people of Israel had reverted back to their wicked ways and were now subject to the Midianites. This was a particularly hard time for the people of Israel. To be subject to another nation was not always horrible. Often, as long as a vassal nation paid the allotted tribute to the ruling nation, they were left alone; it depended on the mercy of the ruling nation. The Midianites were cruel, ravaging the land of Israel for their own gain. We are told how the people of Israel had to hide in the mountains for their survival. Again, they cry out to God, but His response is quite different this time. God is not a machine to be turned on and off at man's will. This time, He responds by sending a prophet with a word of rebuke for His people. He has been so good to them, yet they will not give their lives to Him. They do not deserve His mercy, but God still has not written them off. Generations before He had made a promise to make Abraham into a great nation through whom *all the nations of the world* would be blessed. He would remain faithful to His promise.

The man God has chosen to deliver the Israelites from Midian is Gideon, son of Joash. Like everyone God chooses, there is nothing special about Gideon. He's just a boy working on his father's farm, and he certainly does not seem like your average warrior-type. Upon introduction, we find him hiding in the winepress. Given the aforementioned pillaging of the Midianites, Gideon was doing his best to hide his father's wheat crop by beating it out in the winepress rather than on the threshing floor where it would be visible to marauders. It is here in the winepress where Gideon is doing his day-to-day work that God appears to him as the angel of the Lord, saying "The Lord is with you, O mighty man of valour." When we are insecure and down on our weaknesses, we would do well to remember Gideon's encounter with the angel of the Lord. God calls him "mighty man of valour" before he has done anything mighty. God knows what Gideon can and will accomplish and calls him this as a prophetic proclamation. What God sees in us is beyond what we see in ourselves; God sees what we can be if only we will step out in faith and follow where He leads!

Gideon is skeptical. He has heard of the great deeds of Yahweh, but has never witnessed them. His faith is weak, if anything. Yet God calls him to save the Israelites from the hands

of the Midianites. After seeing the power of the Lord displayed in verse 21, Gideon believes his visitor and accepts God's call. Before leaving, the angel of the Lord gives Gideon his first order of business: to destroy the altar of Baal and the Asherah poles that belong to his father. Always God's purpose in saving His people is to draw their hearts back to Him. This was a test of faith for Gideon, who knew that tearing down an altar in such a religiously polluted culture was asking for trouble. But he obeys the Lord, and God protects him.



JOURNALING AND PRAYER

1. What is most obvious about Gideon thus far is his weakness; he is fearful. He is young, his clan is weak, he doubts the Lord, he fears the Midianites, he hides under the cover of darkness – yet he is the one God has chosen to be the deliverer of his people.
 - a. What are some of the weaknesses you have that make you feel inadequate for God's service? Write these down.
 - b. Ask God what He has to say about each of these areas. What does He think about you? How does He want to use you *in* these weaknesses?
 - c. God called Gideon "mighty man of valour" when he was hiding in the winepress. Thank God that He counts you as valuable. Thank God that He wants to use you in your weaknesses. Ask Him to be your strength and to help you to release your weakness to Him.
 - d. Ask God for a step of obedience He wants from you today – something He wants of you *even* though you feel weak and inadequate. Ask Him to help you to act accordingly.

DAY 6

 **READ:** Judges 6:33 – 7:25

The time has come for Gideon to rise up to the Lord's call. The Midianites and their allies have gathered in Jezreel, and the Spirit of the Lord comes over Gideon, filling him with courage and zeal, and empowering him to muster up an army from four of the tribes. Yet even with the Lord clearly on his side, Gideon struggles with doubt and unbelief. Though he received a clear sign when his offering was burned up before the angel of the Lord, he now asks for two more signs! God is merciful and allows Gideon his requests, proving both times that He will surely help Gideon to win the battle. Gideon's story is an example of how God works alongside us in our fears and weaknesses. He is not angry at our shortcomings, but He wants to lead us into a place of deeper trust.

What happens next is a true test of faith for Gideon. With an army of 32,000 he sets out to attack the Midianites. But while encamped at the spring of Harod, God whittles his army down to a mere 300 men! God is going to do things His own way. His greater purpose in this victory is His own glory – that those who see Gideon's army win this battle will know that it was the Lord God of Israel who gave the Midianites into Gideon's hand. Gideon wasn't appointed to leadership because of some deep inner strength hidden somewhere inside himself. God wasn't there to inspire Gideon to "find himself" within. Gideon was nothing without the Lord; on his own he had no might or courage. God called him "mighty man of valour" because He knew what Gideon could do with *God's* might and *God's* power working *through* Him. And it seems that Gideon has learned something through his encounters with God because we don't even hear him question the Lord here; those whom God tells him to send home he sends home.

God is so merciful to Gideon. Though Gideon has been obedient, God sees the fear that lingers in his heart and sends him to listen in on a conversation between two Midianite soldiers. Gideon is so encouraged that he worships the Lord right there and then runs back to camp with a battle plan. The attack that ensues is quite remarkable. The plan is bizarre: 300 men blowing trumpets and smashing jars to defeat an army that is so huge it is likened to the sand on the seashore! But it works! In fact, the Midianite army turns against itself and the soldiers start attacking one another! The battle is indeed the Lord's!



JOURNALING AND PRAYER

1. The passages you read today declare truths about God's character: He is merciful, He is mighty, He is sovereign, etc. Spend some time meditating on what you read today and ask God to reveal more about Himself to you. Thank God for who He is. Thank Him that you can trust Him to be these things *all the time*.
2. Our culture is quick to tell us that we have everything we need *inside of us*, that we have power within to accomplish anything we want to do. Certainly God has gifted His children in many wonderful ways, but if we are to do the work of the kingdom, we're going to need a lot more than the power within ourselves!
 - a. Ask God to show you how you have relied on your own strength to accomplish something. Confess your lack of dependence and ask God to show you what *His way* is in this situation.
3. The words of the prophet Isaiah ring true through Gideon's battle: "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways" (Is 55:8-9). His thoughts and ways are higher than ours.
 - a. Meditate on this. What does it mean to say that God's ways and thoughts are *higher* than ours?
 - b. What is troubling you today? Ask God to give you His *higher* perspective.

DAY 7



READ: Judges 8

This chapter sees Gideon deal shrewdly with some accusational brothers. The Ephraimites are offended that they were not invited to join the battle against the Midianites, but Gideon's wise answer curtails a potential civil war.

The chapter moves on to illustrate the downward slope that follows Israel's miraculous victory over the Midianites. Gideon is now in pursuit of the Midianite kings, Zebah and Zalmunna. Though God had commanded Gideon to defeat the Midianites, the motivation behind Gideon's pursuit seems to have shifted in the first 21 verses. It appears that Gideon's intent is no longer the destruction of Israel's enemy, but a personal vendetta of vengeance. We see retaliation on three accounts, not for the sake of the Lord, but for the sake of Gideon.

Were Gideon's actions right? The cities of Succoth and Peniel *had* denied the army food and shelter. God *had* called Gideon to defeat the Midianites, which surely included the kings who had brutally oppressed Israel for 7 years. Yet the spirit behind Gideon's actions is one of revenge. Perhaps Gideon did what was right, but for the wrong reasons. Scripture is clear that revenge belongs to the Lord (Ro 12:29) and that to seek it for ourselves is to sin (Ps 19:18). Even if Gideon's actions were right, his heart was not, and that made Him guilty of sin.

Unfortunately, he only continues to move further from God's ways. When the people beg Gideon to rule over them, he refuses, reminding them that the Lord is to be their King. His actions, however, speak much louder than his words. He takes the crescent ornaments and purple garments worn by the Midianite kings as his own. Furthermore, Gideon names one of his sons Abimelech, which incidentally means "my father is king." Though he verbally refused the title of king, Gideon must have taken on the role to some extent if he was open enough to give his son such a name! Gideon goes on to fashion an ephod – a model of the ceremonial garment worn by the high priest according to Mosaic Law. The ephod was to be used to inquire of the Lord, as a "breastpiece of judgement" (Ex 28:15), and there was to be only one in all Israel. Whether or not Gideon's original intent was to point people towards God and away from himself, the ephod became a snare, both to him and to the people of Israel, and they worshiped it rather than God. Verses 28 and onward show that, though God saved them from the oppression of their enemies, the people have come full circle: their hearts are still wicked and rebellious and they have wandered far from God.



JOURNALING AND PRAYER

1. Like Gideon, we often do the right thing for the wrong reasons. Perhaps we agree to volunteer for something because we know it will make us look good. Or we make a "good" decision based on what we think others will think of us. We do good things out of duty and obligation rather than love and service. We punish our children out of anger instead of love. We tell the truth knowing that we are also allowing ourselves to gossip. These are all so subtle that it is easy to fall into such sins. But God sees the heart and it is so important to deal with these things.
 - a. Spend some time on this, asking God to search your heart on this issue. In what ways are you doing the right thing for the wrong reasons? Confess the wrong heart motives that the Spirit reveals to you.
 - b. Obviously doing the right thing is very important, but the motive of the heart is equally important! What do you need to do in response to what the Spirit revealed to you?
2. Throughout the book of Judges, we see the people of Israel fall back into sin over and over again. They do not learn anything from God's salvation. Reflect upon the last few years of your life. What lessons have you learned? How have you grown and changed through your relationship with God. What are some areas of sin that you have had victory in? Thank God for these lessons that you have learned. Thank Him for His continued faithfulness in your life.

DAY 8



READ: Judges 9

Chapter 9 tells us the story of Gideon's son, Abimelech. We are told at the end of the previous chapter that Gideon was a man of many wives, and also had a concubine (a lesser wife, probably a servant). It was with this concubine that he fathered Abimelech, thus bringing much woe to his family and his tribe.

Abimelech was not a judge. Never was he appointed by God or anointed with the Spirit; yet his story is in the book because he did rule over the people of Israel for three years, and his life teaches a valuable lesson. There really is nothing good about Abimelech. He

coerces his relatives into making him “king” (he was never a true king, though, since he was not appointed by God, nor did he rule the entire nation) and killing his own brothers, he hangs out with a sordid crowd, and he brutally destroys a city for the sake of his own pride. Jotham – the only one of Gideon’s sons to escape the slaughter – is the only good guy in the story, while Abimelech, Gaal and Zebul are nothing but meatheads trying to prove their power and status. At the end of the day, much blood is shed for nothing. Jotham’s fable (v 8-21) becomes fate: Abimelech (the bramble) is rejected by Shechem (the trees), and the leaders of Shechem are destroyed by the fire of Abimelech (v 46-49).

It really is a sad story. Abimelech’s selfish actions sow discord among his family and his tribe. Perhaps we see the stamp of generational sin here as well. Gideon had *said* “no” to the offer of kingship, but his actions showed that he accepted the role anyways, at least to some degree. Such lack of integrity was emulated by his son, who saw being king as something worth killing for. It is evident that Gideon did not train his child in godliness, and that his own issues – his hunger for power, and retaliation on his enemies – affected his son in a most terrible way. Generational sin is a very real thing (see Ex 34:6-7, Je 32:18). If not confessed and dealt with, the sins and weaknesses of one generation can be passed on to the next. We see this throughout Scripture: Abraham had a lying problem that spread to the next three generations. David’s sins of adultery and murder had grave effects on his offspring. Gideon did some good things for Israel, but those good things didn’t cover over the sin in his life or the effect of his sin. Our goodness can never make up for our sinful nature. Thank God that we can put our faith in Jesus and repent of our sinful ways, and He will save us by His great grace and mercy!



JOURNALING AND PRAYER

1. Generational sin and bondage is very real. The enemy uses whatever means possible to steal, kill and destroy from mankind, but through Jesus we can find abundant life (Jn 10:10)! Right now, ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you during this time – to reveal things in your family that you may not know of, or that you may have forgotten.

Write down the names of your birth (or adopted) parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents.

- a. What are some of the problems, weaknesses and areas of sin that seem to be reoccurring in your family tree, or very serious in certain family members? (See list below – this list is not exhaustive, but may trigger other things that you will need to mark down.) Write down those things that you see as issues in your family line, whether or not you see them in yourself.

Health: Cancer; migraines; mental or physical disabilities; depression; eating disorders; diabetes; heart trouble; post-traumatic stress; traumatic pregnancies or births; mental illness; allergies; etc.

Severe Trauma: committed or attempted suicide; tragic deaths (accidents, untimely death, murder, etc.); traumatic events with effects passed onto family (ex. drowning resulting in a fear of water among family members); committed or participated in an abortion; miscarriages; abandonment; etc.

Attitudes & Behaviours: anger; lying; jealousy; lust; negativity; pride; materialism; hatred; unbelief; argumentative; judgemental; laziness; perfectionism; self-pity; unforgiveness/bitterness; etc.

Additions: alcohol; drugs; smoking; pornography; excessive computer use; eating disorders; credit cards; gambling; idolatry; media/TV; etc.

- b. Take your list before Jesus. In prayer, thank Him for you who are as His child. Thank Him that you belong to Him and that He has authority in your life.
 - c. Take the list of sins and struggles that you wrote down and confess these things to God on behalf of you and your family. In Jesus’ name, take authority over the powers of darkness that have been at work in your family.
 - d. Ask God for His forgiveness, His protection, and His victory in your life and the lives of your family members. Ask Him to bring freedom and healing to you and your family.
2. Ask God to make you aware of who is watching you (kids, co-workers, family, etc.). Ask Him to help you to influence people for His kingdom today.

DAY 9



READ: Judges 10 & 11

Judges 10 gives us the vague history of two minor judges and then launches into a depressing description of Israel’s continued apostasy. The nation has forsaken the Lord and turned to a host of other gods. This is really bad – not only have the people adopted the major Canaanite gods, but they have embraced the gods of every nation they’ve come into contact with! From time to time we read that Israel “whored after” other gods – the word gives a gross but accurate depiction of Israel’s unfaithfulness to the Lord. They had entered into a *covenant* with Yahweh – *He* was to be their God, *they* were to be His people – but like an unfaithful spouse, they prostituted their hearts to other gods who were not worthy of their affection. Verses 10-16 teach us something about repentance: it is not enough to confess our sin to the Lord – to *admit* that we are doing wrong; God wants that we would make effort to *turn away* from our sin! Israel admitted their sin but did nothing to turn from it (v 10) and received a solid rebuke from the Lord. Only once they “put away the foreign gods from among them and served the Lord” (v 16) did God “become impatient with the misery of Israel”. We are shown the incredible long-suffering love and faithfulness of the Lord, who desires all people to come to Him for salvation.

Israel is under the hand of the Ammonites and the Philistines, and in chapter 11 the Ammonites encamp at Gilead to fight against the Israelites there. The Gileadites call for their half-brother, Jephthah, to come and fight against the enemy. If he does this, they say, they will make him their leader. Until now, God has always been the One to raise up a deliverer for Israel, but this is the first time that we see the people themselves choosing a judge from among them – another sign of how far they have walked from the Lord. Jephthah’s story is a controversial one, the thought that he actually fulfilled his vow being very hard to swallow. There are different views on the matter: some believe that Jephthah did not literally sacrifice his daughter, knowing that child sacrifice was an abomination to God (Le 20:2; Dt 12:31); rather, she was being offered for permanent religious duty, never to marry and never to have children. This would have been terribly tragic for Jephthah, as his daughter was his only child and his only hope of future descendants. But many believe that the clearest conclusion of the text is that Jephthah did indeed sacrifice his daughter as a burnt offering. Considering the spiritual condition of Israel, it would not be shocking to believe that he committed such an act, though if he did, the offering was entirely

unacceptable to the Lord who considered such acts an abomination (remember – Judges is *descriptive* but not *prescriptive*). Either way, Jephthah was foolish to make such a rash vow. It is unnecessary and unwise to make deals with the Lord. He is sovereign and trustworthy and we do not need to negotiate a trade with Him. What God desires is our *obedience*.

Jephthah is most remembered throughout history for his rash vow, yet Scripture remembers Him for another reason. Hebrews 11 is what is known as the “Hall of Faith”, listing the names of men and women throughout biblical history who portrayed strong faith. Jephthah’s name is among them, listed in Hebrews 11:32-34: *“And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson and Jephthah, about David and Samuel and the prophets, who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies.”* Though Jephthah was not entirely to be admired for his actions, he evidentially was a man of great faith, and this is a quality we can admire.

JOURNALING AND PRAYER

1. It’s easy to make quick commitments only to find out later that you really don’t want to, or don’t even plan to, follow through. Whether the commitment is to God or to man, broken or rash commitments show a lack of integrity. Ask the Holy Spirit to search your heart for rash commitments or ways that you have not followed through on your word. Jephthah would have done well to consult God before sacrificing his daughter! Spend some time asking God what He wants you to do in light of what He has revealed to you.
2. With Hebrews 11:32-34 in mind, glance over Jephthah’s story again, looking for examples of his faith. What do you notice?
3. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you a situation in which you need greater faith. What will this require? What will you need to set aside so that you can depend fully on God? Ask the Holy Spirit to give you the power to obey any steps God gives you by stepping out in faith, even if you feel weak.

DAY 10

 **READ:** Judges 12

Judges 12 describes yet another conflict with the Ephraimites. We already witnessed Gideon douse a fire in chapter 8 and now we see them raise their jealous heads again. They are upset with Jephthah because he did not invite them to battle the Ammonites. Unlike the peaceful resolution of Gideon, civil war breaks out and 42 000 Ephraimites die at the hands of their brothers.

One purpose of the book of Judges is to make known the need for godly leadership in Israel – the book does this well, leaving the reader aching for someone who truly loves the Lord to direct the people towards heartfelt repentance and lasting commitment to Yahweh. Judges was likely written sometime *after* David became king, and therefore the writer also seeks to show Judah as more of a “good guy” tribe, knowing that David (and the promise of the Messiah) will come from Judah. We know from 1 Kings that because of Solomon’s

sin, the unified kingdom of Israel splits into two, the north called “Israel” and the south “Judah”. Israel is entirely wicked and is overthrown by the Assyrians, the people of Israel dispersed forever. Judah, only slightly less wicked, is eventually taken into Babylonian captivity, but returns to the land, rebuilds the temple and – though earthly kingship is not restored – the tribe sticks around long enough for the King of kings to be born in Bethlehem!

The idolatry of God’s people was great, particularly within the kingdom of Israel. As a central tribe in the kingdom, the name “Ephraim” was sometimes representative of the northern kingdom of Israel as a whole (Hosea uses “Ephraim” as a reference to the whole kingdom 35 times in his prophetic book.) Ephraim as an individual tribe was known to be hot-headed and jealous, and the portrayal of these characteristics as seen in Judges 8 & 12 subtly points the reader to embrace the tribe of Judah and the promise that lies in her.

The fate of Ephraim is sad and teaches us a profound lesson. When we read the list of sealed tribes in Revelation chapter 7, Ephraim’s name (and also Dan’s) is missing from among the twelve. Both Ephraim and Dan fell into deep idolatry in the Old Testament, playing important roles as centres of idol worship within the kingdom of Israel. In the New Testament, the areas that once were called “Dan” and “Ephraim” are considered to be non-Jewish territories. Ephraim and Dan were among God’s chosen tribes, but their insistence to walk their own ways and worship their own gods – direct disobedience and rebellion against Yahweh – was their undoing; He allowed them to go where their feet carried them. They experienced the curse of Deuteronomy 28:45-48 (NLT): *“If you refuse to listen to the Lord your God and to obey the commands and decrees He has given you, all these curses will pursue and overtake you until you are destroyed. These horrors will serve as a sign and warning among you and your descendants forever. If you do not serve the Lord your God with joy and enthusiasm for the abundant benefits you have received, you will serve your enemies whom the Lord will send against you. You will be left hungry, thirsty, naked, and lacking in everything. The Lord will put an iron yoke on your neck, oppressing you harshly until He has destroyed you.”* And because they did not turn back to the Lord, this was their ultimate end.

JOURNALING AND PRAYER

1. Spend some time thanking God for the forgiveness and compassion He has shown to you throughout your life. Thank Him for making these things available to *all* people who desire to follow Him.
2. Ephraim experienced a sad end, but her beginnings were just “innocent little sins” like jealousy and anger... Sin is rebellion, and continued sin brings increased apathy and greater consequence. Ephraim did not serve the Lord with joy and enthusiasm for the abundant benefits they had received; rather they were argumentative, angry and covetous for glory. Ask God how He wants to speak to you personally through what happened to Ephraim.
3. Pray now for Canada. Our nation continues to fall further and further from the values and beliefs that she was built upon. And the church in Canada needs to return to her first Love. Like Israel, God has called His Church to be representative of Him in the culture. Ask Jesus to light a fire in the Canadian church, bringing people to their knees in repentance. Pray that Christians would recognize their deep need for Christ and start to make Him *functional* Lord of their lives.

DAY 11

 **READ:** Judges 13-15

Next we are introduced to another prominent judge, Samson. Samson's story is perhaps the most watered-down childhood Bible story out there! Sunday school teachers always seem to leave out the gore and disaster, which encompasses much of the story.

Samson has an interesting lot in life. Before his birth, the angel of the Lord announced that he would be a Nazirite. This was a rare occurrence. Normally, any man or woman could *choose* to take the Nazirite vow in order to be set apart for the Lord for a certain amount of time. But in Samson's case, his vow was neither voluntary nor temporary. *God* set him apart with a purpose: to deliver the people from the hand of the Philistines. Like most of our friends in Judges, Samson was no shining example of holiness. Again, we must remember that the book is giving an account of Israel's history during the time of the Judges; there are many lessons to learn from it, but the characters themselves are not to be looked at as spiritual giants.

Despite his parents' best efforts, Samson grows to be a rather self-absorbed, stubborn young man. This is made blaringly clear in chapter 14 when he takes a Philistine bride. When encouraged by his father to find an Israelite wife, Samson demands, "Get her for me, for she is right in my eyes." Samson seems to embody the rebellious nature of all Israel, who has become accustomed to doing whatever seems fit to each individual. This same example points out another of Samson's shortcomings: his unruly attraction to women, which will be his undoing on more than one occasion. Samson shows incredible foolishness, taking as a wife a woman from the very enemy he is destined to destroy! However, God is at work in Samson's life and is determined to use him for *His* purposes, whether or not Samson will submit himself personally to the Lord.

Samson's life is very interesting to observe. It is obvious that God is using him at times, for we read how he is empowered by the Spirit of the Lord to kill a lion (14:6), 30 Philistines (14:19) and to escape from ropes and kill 1000 Philistines with a donkey's jawbone (15:14-17)! However, we also see him respond out of anger and retribution, killing and retaliating *without* the outpouring of the Spirit. His disregard for his calling is also evident. He was called by God to be a Nazirite and defender of Israel, but he did not respond willingly. He desecralized himself and his calling by breaking its requirements. His life is a testament to what happens when we despise God's calling on our lives.

 **JOURNALING AND PRAYER**

1. Samson's life – his attitude and actions – show a resemblance to our culture as a whole. What do you see in Samson that you see in the culture around you?
2. Ask God how He wants to specifically use you as a light in this culture?
3. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any ways that you are being sucked into the negative culture around you. Is there anything that is causing you to have a bad attitude towards God's calling in your life? If so, share your heart with the Lord. Tell Him how you are feeling and give the burden of your struggles to Him. Confess anything you need to and spend some time in prayer.

DAY 12

 **READ:** Judges 16

Chapter 16 describes Samson's continued spiral downward. Unlike in the previous chapters of his life, there is no longer any mention of the Spirit of the Lord. Samson seems to be on his own trajectory, and has us rolling our eyes at verse 1 already. Samson's insistence to pursue the enemy's women shows bonds of rebellion and lust. His final relationship with Delilah completely blinds him – even literally!

James 5:8 says "*Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.*" The same outcome can be expected if we draw near to the enemy. Samson kept the enemy close – due to sin, not strategy – and in doing so, he kept the devil close as well. He was blatantly disobeying God's commandment not to intermarry (let alone to fornicate!) with people of pagan nations (see Dt 7:1-6). In fact, the words that Joshua spoke to his leaders before he died seem quite fitting for Samson: "*But if you turn away and ally yourselves with the survivors of these nations that remain among you and if you intermarry with them and associate with them, then you may be sure that the Lord your God will no longer drive out these nations before you. Instead, they will become snares and traps for you, whips on your backs and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land, which the Lord your God has given you.*" (Jo 23:12-13) This seems to describe Samson's situation to a T. By walking contentedly in sin and rebellion, Samson was inviting the enemy (the Philistines *and* the devil) into his life and pushing Yahweh out. He became foolish and gullible, sacrificing his calling for sensuality. Joshua's words become a reality: Delilah becomes a snare and a trap and Samson is played into the hands of the Philistines where he is beaten and blinded.

Like Jephthah, Samson is noted in Hebrews 11 for his faith. He does show faith in verse 28 when he calls on God for strength and topples the temple of the Philistines. However, selfishness permeates his motives: he asks God for strength, not so that he can finally fulfill his God-given calling to defeat the Philistines, but so that he can have vengeance on those who blinded him. Though used by God to defend Israel from the Philistines, Samson never allowed God Lordship in his own heart, making his personal story a tragic one.

 **JOURNALING AND PRAYER**

1. 1 Corinthians 6:18 says "*Flee from sexual immorality.*" And Ephesians 5:3 says, "*But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people.*"
 - a. We are to have not even a *hint* of sexual immorality or impurity of *any kind*. Meditate on these truths and what God wants to say to you through them. Are you living according to God's word here?
2. When you think of Samson's life as a whole, what do you think was his greatest area of weakness?
 - a. What is an area of weakness in your life that God has you working on? How is He transforming and growing you? Ask God for a word of encouragement or challenge.
3. On day 1, you asked God to give you a greater heart for holiness as you read through Judges. Have you seen growth in this area throughout the month? Ask God to help you to draw near to Him today. Ask Him to help you to set yourself far from the enemy – to say "no" to your sinful nature and to flee from unrighteousness.

DAY 13 **READ:** Judges 17 & 18

The remainder of the book describes truly horrific events, revealing the deep-seated wickedness within the hearts of the people of Israel. In four of the five remaining chapters we will read “In those days, there was no king in Israel” making it abundantly clear that the nation is in dire need of leadership.

We meet Micah: an idolatrous thief who builds a shrine, outfitting it with idols and an ephod, and even ordaining one of his own sons as priest. Micah has no regard for God’s ways; rather he enacts his own way of worship. This act is in direct defiance of Yahweh, who called for there to be one place for His people to gather for worship – that was at the Tabernacle, which was in Shiloh during the years of the judges (Jo 18:1). Micah’s shrine is a new level of apostasy – not only is he worshiping the gods of the land, but he is essentially creating his own “house of worship” and his own religion, a mixture of pagan and Yahweh worship.

Micah meets a Levite and invites him to take on the role as priest. This is an example of the religion-mixing that was going on. According to Mosaic Law, the Levites were set aside for service in the Temple. In fact, they weren’t even allotted tribal territory, but were instead given 48 cities scattered among all the tribes of Israel. Micah is under the impression that if he follows this part of God’s command – to have a Levite as a priest – he will prosper. We are so easily deceived when living by half-truths! Micah is *not* blessed by the presence of the Levite; rather, the Danites end up robbing him of his priest, idols and ephod (and consequently, his mother’s fortune which he used to craft these things)!

The tribe of Dan is also highlighted in these chapters. Like Ephraim, Dan is excluded from the list of sealed tribes in Revelation chapter 7. Dan had been allotted a small but fertile portion of land nestled between Benjamin on the east and the Mediterranean Sea on the left, flanked also by Judah, Ephraim and West Manasseh (Jo 19:40-48). But they failed to drive out the Canaanites who inhabited the land (Jg 1:34-35). Judges 18 finds the tribe of Dan wandering around Israel seeking new land for themselves. Rather than obeying God’s original command and taking the land allotted them, they go seeking land way up north in the allotment of East Manasseh. Laish – a city of peaceful, unsuspecting people – appeals to them and they brutally attack and conquer it, renaming it Dan and taking it as their own allotment and setting up Micah’s shrine as a place of worship there. Dan was seeking a land of safety and prosperity. Ironically, when the Assyrians moved in from the north in the early 700s BC, Dan was one of the first cities to pass to Assyrian control.

The chapter ends on a very sad note. The name of the Levite is revealed – Jonathan – and is found to be from Moses own family line! Idolatry seems to have infected every part of Israel. The final verse juxtaposes the shrine at Dan with the house of God at Shiloh, showing the temptation of idolatry as a very real contender to the truth of Yahweh. If someone had told the Israelites when they were gathered before the Lord and Joshua at Shechem (Jo 24) that they would be where we find them now in the book of Judges – spiritually depraved and morally corrupt, in total disobedience and rebellion to Yahweh – they would likely be shocked. They would probably deny that such a thing could happen. But one compromise and act of disobedience lead to another until the people found themselves far from God... and OK with it.

**JOURNALING AND PRAYER**

1. Discontentment is a dangerous place to be in. Through it we fall into all sorts of other sins – envy, jealousy, negativity, impatience, anxiety, bitterness, anger, etc.
 - a. Ask God to reveal any spirit of discontent in your heart. Has this caused you to sin in other ways? Take some time to repent of sins you discover.
 - b. Spend some time in thanksgiving, thanking God for some of the countless ways He has blessed you. Ask that a spirit of thanksgiving would fill areas where you have been discontent.
2. Have you witnessed a slow fade in your life? Do you lack passion and zeal where you once felt so passionate for the Lord? Ask God to show you any areas of compromise in your life. When He shows you something, repent for following your own ways and commit that you will follow *His* way in this. Ask Him to light a fire in your heart.
3. Spend some time in quiet meditation, thinking about who God is and how He has revealed Himself to you. How has He made Himself real to you? Thank Him for these truths. If you are struggling with doubt or apathy, ask Him to give you joy for the things He has shown you in the past and ask Him to reveal Himself in a real, fresh way today.

DAY 14 **READ:** Judges 19

Judges is not all chronological. Chapters 19-21 describe events that quite likely occurred sometime earlier in the time of the judges (see 20:27-28). The author is writing by theme, ending the book with a prime example of Israel’s extreme apostasy. The book concludes with a terrible story: a young woman is raped to death, triggering massive civil war. There are so many things wrong about this story – that the men of Gibeah would be so corrupt as to demand sex from the old man’s guests, that the Levite could be so callous as to throw his concubine into the hands of these corrupt men, that the people of Israel could be so angered over this sin while ignoring the sins in their own lives! The people are shocked that such a thing could happen (v 30), yet horrific things have already been happening in Israel for years. This act is nothing more than the obvious outplaying of a sinful society. In fact, every Israelite has played a part in this crime by wandering away from Yahweh and embracing other gods.

Within this story we find an eerie resemblance to our current culture. The people have allowed and embraced pagan gods, which they were *commanded* to destroy. They have abandoned God for their own desires. They have (or at least will) invited corrupt governance (chapter 9). They have sacrificed their children to the flames of Baal. They have engaged in every variety of sex as an act of worship to Ashtoreth. And now they cry out for justice because someone’s wife has been raped and the husband “gets on the news” by informing the tribes in a most gruesome way.

Have we not done the same? Our society has wandered away from God and embraced idols of self, wealth, materialism, sexuality, etc. We have invited corrupt governance – people who will help us to do what is right in our own eyes. We have sacrificed our children through abortion. We have engaged, encouraged and taught every form of sex under the sun as a “sacrifice” towards individual freedom. Today our society jumps on

bandwagons called “social justice” and “equality” getting up in arms about the very things that we ourselves have caused through our denial of sin and our love for self-gratification.

Who can say what is right or wrong if God is not Judge? What allows us the right to get offended or enraged at “injustice” if there is no one to tell us where the line between just and unjust, right and wrong, lies? Who in Israel was able to condemn the men of Gibeah for actions that their own pagan religions encouraged and justified? Without God, mankind is lost. There is no moral compass pointing us in the direction of what is right. We have nothing to go on but our own feelings and desires, and we determine that whatever seems good to us is “right”. But there is no peace in this. To truly live according to each man’s desires only brings chaos and sorrow. Our God is Yahweh – the great I AM – who has always been and always will be. *He* is the moral compass for our times; right and wrong spring from *His* nature. No matter what our society teaches us, we can be confident Christians, knowing that truth is found in God’s Word and that life is found through Jesus Christ alone. We have much hope to offer the world; let us be bold to proclaim it!

 **JOURNALING AND PRAYER**

1. Call out to Jesus on behalf of our culture. Confess the sins of our culture and ask the Lord to redeem us. Ask Jesus to open our eyes to the reality of sin – that sin is *real*, that it is rebellion against a holy God, and that we need forgiveness. Pray for God’s mercy, and pray that many will turn to Jesus and be saved.
2. What makes you confident as a Christian? Proclaim your confidence and your joy by thanking God for these things. Thank God for how He has stirred in your heart today.
3. Ask Jesus: What message of hope do I have to bring to others today? How have I experienced Your hope and how can I bring this to others?

DAY 15

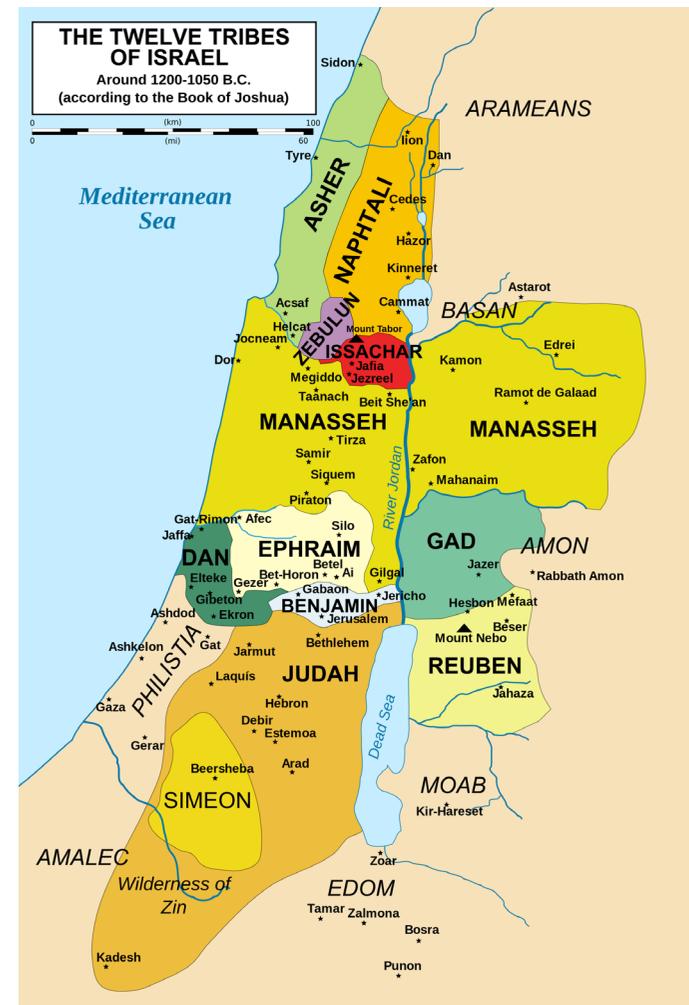
 **READ:** Judges 20 & 21

Due to the horrendous acts described in Judges 19, massive civil war breaks out. Eleven tribes gather against the Benjamites, who choose to harbour the men of Gibeah – choosing to defend the perpetrators rather than to obey God’s law. The result is quite a massacre: 40 030 people of the eleven tribes are killed and the tribe of Benjamin is almost entirely wiped out, including women and children; only 600 men remain, leaving Benjamin in a sorry state – 600 bachelors being a real problem for tribal survival. The other tribes suddenly feel sorry for the brothers they’ve just tried to wipe out, and concoct a plan to get wives for the Benjamites. More bloodshed ensues as the Benjamites run with the plan, killing the people in Jabesh-Gilead (located in the tribal allotment of Manasseh), save 400 virgins whom they take as wives. The remaining 200 women are kidnapped from Shiloh.

The story shows the people of Israel again doing things their own way. There is some fasting and seeking of the Lord before the battle with the Benjamites, but as a whole, the people continue to do things without the direction and confirmation of Yahweh. Everyone is left with blood on his hands and we are reminded once more of the theme of the book of Judges: “*In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.*” But these words are spoken as a glimmer of hope, as we look forward to seeing renewal and redemption sweep through Israel under the rule of a godly king.

 **JOURNALING AND PRAYER**

1. Thank God that He always has a plan and a purpose. Thank Him for showing us this through His Word. Thank Him for including the book of Judges in the Bible to teach us about the effects of sin and also about the faithfulness of God.
2. Is there a situation in your life that has left you feeling hopeless, or anxious, or broken? God has a purpose and a plan for you, and God is good. Read Psalm 25, and notice what it says about hope/trust.
 - a. How is God speaking to you through this?
 - b. Use this psalm to help you pray for your struggle.
 - c. Perhaps you know someone else who needs to put their hope and trust in Christ. Use this Psalm to pray for them.
3. What has stuck out most to you as you have read through the book of Judges? Ask God to show you what He wants you to take away from your study of the book. Ask Him how you can apply this truth to your life today.



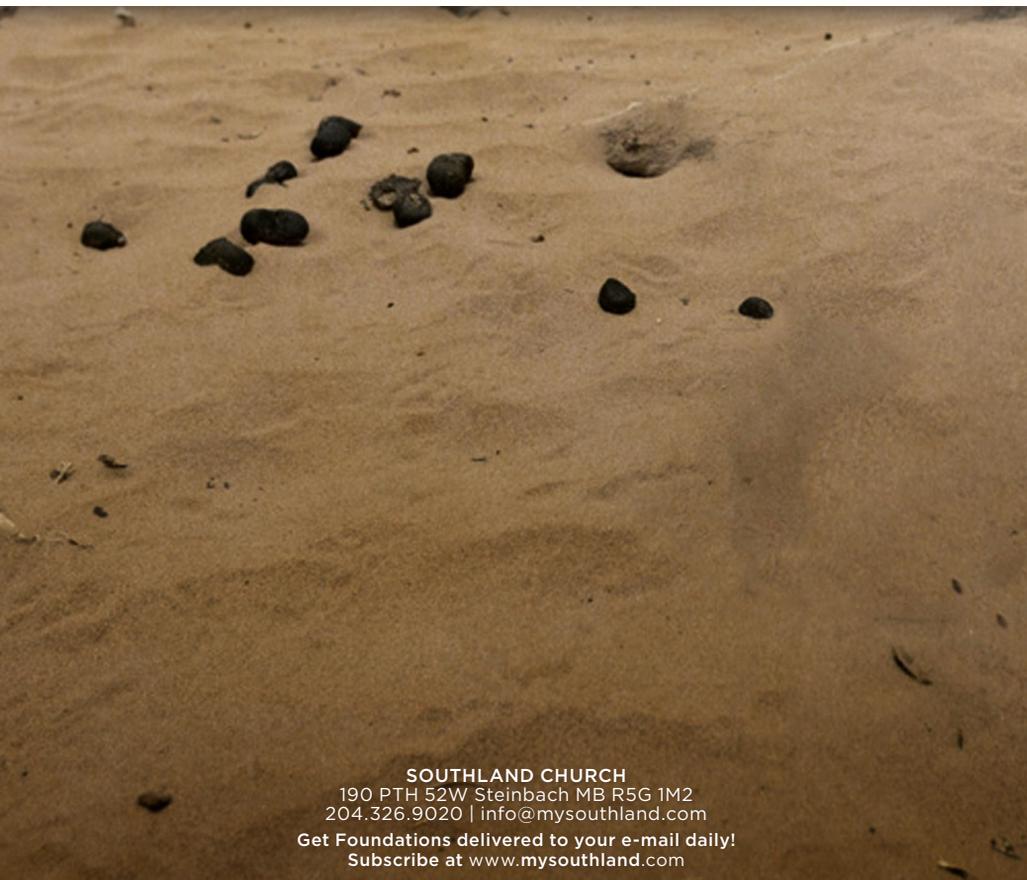


The Book of Judges

The book of Judges describes the moral bankruptcy of Israel as they abandon their commitment to God and seek to do whatever seems right in their own eyes. It is a sad book, full of stories of Israel's unfaithfulness, showing clearly that Israel is desperately in need of godly leadership. Yet, amid all of the sin and idolatry, God remains faithful to His covenant. We see His steadfast mercy as He continues to offer salvation to His people, undeserved as they are.

Judges 21:25 (ESV)

"In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes."



SOUTHLAND CHURCH

190 PTH 52W Steinbach MB R5G 1M2
204.326.9020 | info@mysouthland.com

Get Foundations delivered to your e-mail daily!
Subscribe at www.mysouthland.com