



Welcome To The Book of Judges!

Judges reveals the dangers of forgetting God, the destructive cycle of sin, and the desperate need for godly leadership and a true King. Altogether, it reveals a longing that is only fully realized in rule and Reign of Christ.

Structure: The book of Judges is commonly divided into three main parts.

1. **Introduction (Judges 1:1–3:6):** This section explains Israel's failure to fully drive out the Canaanites, setting the stage for the cycle of disobedience that follows.
2. **The Cycles of the Judges (Judges 3:7–16:31):** The heart of the book, where Israel repeatedly falls into sin, suffers oppression, cries out to God, and is delivered by a judge raised up by the Lord (such as Deborah, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson).
3. **Epilogue (Judges 17–21):** These stories show the depth of Israel's spiritual and moral decline, summed up in the refrain, *"In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes."*

Key People

- **Judges (deliverer-leaders)** – raised up by God, not kings, to rescue Israel in cycles of oppression.
 - *Othniel* – first judge, model of faithfulness.
 - *Ehud* – left-handed deliverer who killed the Moabite king Eglon.
 - *Deborah* – prophetess and judge who led Israel with Barak.
 - *Gideon* – called in weakness, led 300 men to victory over Midian.
 - *Jephthah* – a rejected outcast who delivered Israel from Ammonites, but made a tragic vow.
 - *Samson* – a Nazirite with great strength but plagued by moral weakness.
- **Other Figures** – Rahab's descendants, Abimelek (the anti-judge "king"), Micah the idol-maker, and anonymous Levites play important roles in the decline of Israel.

Key Moments

- Israel fails to fully drive out the Canaanites (Judges 1).
- Cycle of sin: Israel falls into idolatry → oppression by enemies → cries out to God → deliverance by a judge → peace → relapse into sin.
- Deborah and Barak defeat Sisera (Judges 4–5).
- Gideon's 300 achieve victory through God's power (Judges 6–8).
- Jephthah delivers Israel but makes a rash vow (Judges 11).
- Samson defeats Philistines but succumbs to Delilah, dying in a final act of strength (Judges 13–16).
- Civil war against Benjamin after the horrific story of the Levite's concubine (Judges 19–21).
- Repeated refrain: *"In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes"* (Judges 17:6; 21:25).

Key Lessons

- **Human weakness & God's strength** – God delivers through unlikely people and small numbers.
- **The danger of compromise** – failing to drive out sin/idolatry leads to repeated bondage.
- **Cycles of sin** – highlight the need for a greater, lasting Savior and King.
- **Leadership matters** – when Israel had godly leadership, there was peace; when not, chaos reigned.
- **Pointing to Christ** – Judges shows the failure of human leaders and stirs longing for the true King, Jesus.

21 DAY READING PLAN

Day 1 – After Joshua

Today's Passage: Judges 1

Further Reading: Psalm 20:7

Personal Reflection: Where are you tempted to rely on your own strength rather than the Lord?

Day 2 – A Generation That Forgot

Today's Passage: Judges 2

Further Reading: Deuteronomy 6:10–12

Personal Reflection: How can you guard yourself from spiritual drift and forgetting God's works?

Day 3 – Othniel, Ehud, and Shamgar

Today's Passage: Judges 3

Further Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:27–29

Personal Reflection: How does God use unexpected people and means to bring deliverance?

Day 4 – Deborah and Barak's Victory

Today's Passage: Judges 4

Further Reading: Psalm 118:6–7

Personal Reflection: What fears could God be asking you to face with courage and trust?

Day 5 – The Song of Deborah

Today's Passage: Judges 5

Further Reading: Exodus 15:1–2

Personal Reflection: How does worship help you remember and celebrate God's victories?

Day 6 – Gideon Called

Today's Passage: Judges 6

Further Reading: 2 Corinthians 12:9–10

Personal Reflection: Where do you feel weak, and how might God's strength be displayed through you?

Day 7 – Gideon's Small Army

Today's Passage: Judges 7

Further Reading: Psalm 33:16–18

Personal Reflection: How is God teaching you to depend on Him rather than numbers or resources?

Day 8 – Gideon's Victory and Failures

Today's Passage: Judges 8

Further Reading: Galatians 6:9

Personal Reflection: How do you guard against pride or weariness after spiritual victories?

Day 9 – Abimelek the Usurper

Today's Passage: Judges 9

Further Reading: Psalm 146:3–4

Personal Reflection: How does trusting in human power instead of God lead to destruction?

Day 10 – Minor Judges, Major Mercy

Today's Passage: Judges 10

Further Reading: Psalm 106:43–45

Personal Reflection: How have you experienced God's mercy in repeated cycles of failure?

Day 11 – Jephthah's Leadership

Today's Passage: Judges 11

Further Reading: Hebrews 11:32–34

Personal Reflection: What can Jephthah's story teach you about faith, vows, and God's deliverance?

Day 12 – Jephthah and Other Judges

Today's Passage: Judges 12

Further Reading: James 1:19–20

Personal Reflection: How can you pursue peace and humility rather than quarrels with others?

Day 13 – Samson Set Apart

Today's Passage: Judges 13

Further Reading: Luke 1:13–17

Personal Reflection: How does God's calling on your life shape your obedience today?

Day 14 – Samson’s Early Feats

Today's Passage: Judges 14

Further Reading: Proverbs 16:32

Personal Reflection: Where do you need greater self-control to walk faithfully with God?

Day 15 – Samson’s Strength and Struggles

Today's Passage: Judges 15

Further Reading: Psalm 18:1–2

Personal Reflection: How do you handle moments when others wrong you—by vengeance or by faith?

Day 16 – Samson and Delilah

Today's Passage: Judges 16

Further Reading: 2 Corinthians 6:14–15

Personal Reflection: What compromises might be weakening your walk with God?

Day 17 – Micah’s Idol

Today's Passage: Judges 17

Further Reading: Exodus 20:3–5

Personal Reflection: What “idols” of comfort, success, or security tempt your devotion away from God?

Day 18 – A Priest for Hire

Today's Passage: Judges 18

Further Reading: 2 Timothy 4:3–4

Personal Reflection: How do you guard against twisting God’s Word to fit your desires?

Day 19 – A Levite’s Tragedy

Today's Passage: Judges 19

Further Reading: Romans 1:28–32

Personal Reflection: What does this dark story reveal about the cost of abandoning God’s ways?

Day 20 – Israel’s Civil War (Part 1)

Today's Passage: Judges 20

Further Reading: Hosea 8:3–4

Personal Reflection: How does sin bring division, and how can you be an agent of healing?

Day 21 – Israel’s Civil War (Part 2)

Today's Passage: Judges 21

Further Reading: Judges 21:25 / Revelation 21:3–4

Personal Reflection: How does the brokenness at the end of Judges make you long for the true King, Jesus?