

### May

Thurs 1 Judges 1:1-18  
 Fri 2 Judges 1:19-36  
 Sat 3 Judges 2:1-15  
**Sun 4**  
 Mon 5 Judges 2:16 – 3:11  
 Tues 6 Judges 3:12- 31  
 Weds 7 Judges 4:1-16  
 Thurs 8 Judges 4:17-24  
 Fri 9 Judges 5:1-18  
 Sat 10 Judges 5:19-31  
**Sun 11**  
 Mon 12 Judges 6:1-19  
 Tues 13 Judges 6:20-40  
 Weds 14 Judges 7:1-18  
 Thurs 15 Judges 7:19-25  
 Fri 16 Judges 8:1-21  
 Sat 17 Judges 8:22-35  
**Sun 18**  
 Mon 19 Judges 9:1-21  
 Tues 20 Judges 9:22-38  
 Weds 21 Judges 9:39-57  
 Thurs 22 Judges 10:1-18  
 Fri 23 Judges 11:1-20  
 Sat 24 Judges 11:21-40  
**Sun 25**  
 Mon 26 Judges 12:1-15  
 Tues 27 Judges 13:1-25  
 Weds 28 Judges 14:1-20  
 Thurs 29 Judges 15:1-20  
 Fri 30 Judges 16:1-22  
 Sat 31 Judges 16:23-31

### June

**Sun 1**  
 Mon 2 Judges 17:1-13  
 Tues 3 Judges 18:1-17  
 Weds 4 Judges 18:18-31  
 Thurs 5 Judges 19:1-19  
 Fri 6 Judges 19:20-30  
 Sat 7 Judges 20:1-23  
**Sun 8**  
 Mon 9 Judges 20:24-38  
 Tues 10 Judges 21:1-25  
 Weds 11 Ruth 1:1-22  
 Thurs 12 Ruth 2:1-23  
 Fri 13 Ruth 3:1-18  
 Sat 14 Ruth 4:1-22  
**Sun 15**  
 Mon 16 Proverbs 1:1-19  
 Tues 17 Proverbs 1:20-33  
 Weds 18 Proverbs 2:1-22  
 Thurs 19 Proverbs 3:1-20  
 Fri 20 Proverbs 3:21-35  
 Sat 21 Proverbs 4:1-27  
**Sun 22**  
 Mon 23 Proverbs 5:1-23  
 Tues 24 Proverbs 6:1-19  
 Weds 25 Proverbs 6:20-35  
 Thurs 26 Proverbs 7:1-27  
 Fri 27 Proverbs 8:1-21  
 Sat 28 Proverbs 8:22-36  
**Sun 39**  
 Mon 30 Proverbs 9:1-18

## Summary and Outline of Judges

The Book of Judges covers the period of Israel's history between the death of Joshua and the rise of Samuel, who anointed Israel's first king, Saul. Many Jewish and Christian traditions hold that Samuel is the author of Judges. But the reality is that no one knows for certain. This time is often called the period of the Judges and lasted approximately 300–350 years (roughly 1375–1050 BC).

These were not judges as we know today but were regional, political, and military leaders, a bit like tribal chiefs. The book of Judges is disturbing and violent and there are events as bad as anything one hears on the news today. It tells the tragic tale of Israel's moral corruption, bad leadership, and how they became no different from the Canaanites themselves. The Judges were twelve men and women who God raised up to lead and deliver Israel from its oppressors. They were far from perfect, one was an assassin, another a sexually promiscuous, and one broke all the laws of hospitality. Yet God used them!

### Historical Context

After Joshua's death (around 1400–1375 BC) Israel no longer had a central leadership and also failed to fully conquer the Promised Land. This period is sometimes called The Rule of the Judges (approximately 1375–1050 BC) which was time of repeated cycles of sin, oppression, repentance, and deliverance. It is therefore set in the time after the death of Joshua and before the reign of various Kings, of which Saul was the first. The book ends with increasing moral decay since there was no king in Israel.

### Main Purpose of the Book of Judges?

It shows God's faithfulness to deliver His people when they turn to Him even when constant cycles of rebellion, sin and evil bring bondage into people's life. Humanity's tendency to trust themselves, ignore God and do what is right in their own eyes is very evident. Yet it also reveals truths throughout its accounts of how God can use the unlikely to bring forth amazing things once people submit themselves to God. The historical events contained in this book are therefore a sobering record of the human condition when people forget God and turn to idolatry. It ultimately points forward to God's grace in sending a king who will rescue his people.

**The structure of the book** reflects a repetitive cycle of Sin and Deliverance

1. Sin – The Israelites 'do evil' in the sight of the Lord - usually idolatry.
2. Oppression – God hands them over to be conquered and oppressed by their enemies.
3. Repentance – In their distress the people cry out to God for mercy, help and deliverance.
4. Deliverance – God raises a saviour in the form of a 'judge' to rescue them.
5. Peace – A period of rest occurs before again they 'do evil' and the cycle then repeats.

**The book concludes** by showing a society in moral chaos. The Israelites become increasingly corrupt and there is a clear message that without faithful and righteous leadership from a just and righteous king, the people will always fail. The last verse sums up the problem *"In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes."*

NB the events are not necessarily completely chronological but rather show a deepening period of moral decline. As the book progresses, Israel's spiritual condition worsens. In chapters 17-21 especially we see quite shocking moral failures that show what invariably happens when people either individually or collectively abandon and reject God.

### How to read Judges

There are many lessons to learn for today but note not all of them are necessarily to be copied today. So as you read through Judges always keep asking questions like:

- What does this teach me about the nature of God?
- What does this teach me about my own nature and that of other people?
- What do I need to learn and apply to my life today?
- I recommend that you underline or highlight verses that serve as warnings for us today. Do the same also with verses that give encouragement.
- You will probably find a few verses that stand out to you and become favourites. One of mine is *"His hair began to grow again"* Judges 16:22 Samson had messed up big time but there was renewed hope

## Five Warnings to Learn from Judges

1. Without strong leadership, people easily go astray

*"In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes."* Judges 21:25

*Warning:* When there is no moral or spiritual guidance, people turn to their own values. This shows us the importance of wise leadership, which leads to self-discipline.

2. Compromise with evil leads to destruction

Israel regularly failed to drive out the pagan nations and over time adopted their idols and practices. Their compromises seemed small at first, but they eventually led to disobedience and turning away from God.

*Warning:* A little compromise with wrong can open the door to much bigger compromise.

3. Forgetting God leads to oppression

Every time Israel forgot the Lord and worshiped other gods, they ended up being conquered or oppressed by enemies. They lost God's protection when they abandoned their relationship with God.

*Warning:* Spiritual forgetfulness leads to spiritual defeat.

4. God is merciful, but repeated sin has consequences

Even though God rescued the Israelites again and again, their constant rebellion brought greater suffering each time. His mercy is deep, but He also brings consequences to teach and correct.

*Warning:* Don't abuse grace; learn from your mistakes.

5. Charismatic leaders aren't always godly

Some judges (like Samson) had great power but lacked spiritual maturity. Their personal flaws brought trouble not just for themselves but for the people they led.

*Warning:* Integrity in leadership is more important than charisma or gifting.

## Five Encouragements to Learn from Judges

1. God is always ready to forgive

Despite Israel's repeated rebellion, every time they cried out, God answered with mercy. He raised up judges to rescue them again and again.

*Encouragement:* No matter how far you've fallen, God hears and responds to a genuine cry for help.

2. God uses ordinary, broken people

Judges like Gideon who was insecure, Deborah, a female leader in a patriarchal culture, and Samson who had many faults, show that God doesn't wait for perfect people. He equips and uses those that are willing.

*Encouragement:* If God could use them, He can absolutely use you.

3. God fights for His people

Throughout Judges, it's clear the victories weren't about human strength, but rather God's power. He reduced Gideon's army to 300 just to prove it.

*Encouragement:* You're never alone in the battle. The real strength comes from God.

4. God sees potential where others see weakness

Gideon called himself *"the least in my family"*, but God called him a *"mighty warrior"*. God looks beyond our insecurities and speaks to who we truly are in Him. How God sees you is the most important.

*Encouragement:* God sees the real you and who you are becoming, not just who you've been.

5. God remains faithful even when we are not

The entire book is a picture of God's long-suffering love. Even when Israel messed up repeatedly, God never gave up on His people.

*Encouragement:* God's faithfulness isn't based on your perfection, it's based on His unchanging nature

