

Bible Stories for Adults

Judges Rule Israel

Judges 1 - 9

Opening

Gathering: How has God felt present when you have been faithful, but seemed distant when you have strayed?

Today's Focus: God is just and punishes us for our sin, but He is merciful and forgives us when we repent.

Key Verses: *The Lord is with you, mighty warrior.* Judges 6:12

If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all - how will He also, along with Him, graciously give us all things? Romans 8:31-32

Opening Prayer

Lesson

Rated R for Violence (*Romans 1:18-32*)

What did God command of Israel before they crossed the Jordan River into the Promised Land?
Numbers 33:50-53

How were the Israelites to *drive out all the inhabitants of the land*?
Deuteronomy 2:24-25, 32-34

How could a loving God condone and even command such violence?
Romans 1:18, 21, 28-32

What had God told Abraham that touches on why the inhabitants of Canaan were treated so harshly?
Genesis 15:16

What types of sins could draw out such wrath from God?
Deuteronomy 18:9-12

Was it really punishment for sins, or was it God's excuse to give the land to His chosen people?
Leviticus 18:24-30

A Separate People (*Joshua 23*)

Why was it important for Israel to *drive out all the inhabitants of the land*?
Numbers 33:55-56

Were the Israelites able to conquer the entire territory under Joshua's leadership?
Joshua 13:1

What did Joshua tell the Israelites about these unconquered peoples before he died?
Joshua 23:7-13

Half-Hearted Janitors (*Judges 1*)

Did the Israelites continue to work to *drive out all the inhabitants of the land*?
Judges 1:1-4, 17 (1-26)

Did Israel heed Joshua's warning and continue to drive out the remaining peoples?
Judges 1:19, 27-28 (27-36)

How did this set the stage for the stories of the Judges?
Judges 2:1-5

Bible Stories for Adults

Judges Rule Israel

Page 2

Faithfulness (*Judges 2:7-13*)

What were Joshua's last words to the Israelites before sending them home?

Joshua 24:14-15

How did the Israelites respond to Joshua's call?

Joshua 24:24

How faithful did the Israelites remain?

Judges 2:6-7, 10-13

Baal

Ashtoreth & Asherah

Also called *Ishtar* - Babylon, *Ashtarte & Aphrodite* - Greek, *Venus* - Roman

Why did the Israelites continue to fall from God?

Judges 3:5-6

Judges (*Judges 2*)

How did God handle this?

Judges 2:14-15

How did God respond to Israel's cries of distress?

Judges 2:16, 18

Did the judges have a lasting effect on Israel's faithfulness?

Judges 2:19

What did God decide as a result of this response?

Judges 2:20-22

The Cycle of the Book of Judges

Sin - Judgment - Grace Cycle

Alphabet Cycle:

Apostasy

Battered

Cry Out

Deliverer

Emancipate

Forget

Leadership (*Judges 21:25*)

What kind of leadership did Israel have after Joshua?

Judges 21:25

What was the Israelites' opinion of a king?

Judges 8:22-23

How tight was the confederacy between tribes?

Judges 6:35 (1:3; 1:17; 20:1)

Judges 20:35 (5:17; 8:1; 12:1)

Who were Israel's enemies?

Judges 3:8, 12, 31; 4:2; 6:1; 10:6; 13:1

Who were the judges?

Exodus 18

Hebrews 11:32-34

Bible Stories for Adults

Judges Rule Israel

Page 3

Othniel (*Judges 1:11-15, 3:7-11*)

Who was Othniel and where was his first victory?

Judges 1:12-13

Who did Othniel defeat when God called him as a judge?

Judges 3:9-11

Ehud (*Judges 3*)

Who was Israel's next oppressor?

Judges 3:12-14

Who did God raise as a judge and what did he do?

Judges 3:15, 20-22

Why did Ehud have so much time to get away?

Judges 3:24-26

How did Ehud then conquer 10,000 Moabites?

Judges 3:27-30

What judge did God raise during Ehud's time to deal with a different oppressor?

Judges 3:31

Deborah (*Judges 4-5*)

Who was the oppressor at Deborah's time?

Judges 4:1-4

How did God use Deborah to respond to the oppression of the Canaanites?

Judges 4:6-7

How did he respond to the call and what was wrong with his response?

Judges 4:8-9

How did this story turn out?

Judges 4:15-17, 21-23

Judges 5 - Song of Deborah

Midianites (*Judges 6:1-6*)

Who was Israel's next oppressor?

Judges 6:1-2

What led to the battle 200 years earlier when the Israelites defeated this people?

Numbers 22:7; 31:1-2, 7

How did this group of people now oppress the Israelites?

Judges 6:3-6

Gideon (*Judges 6:11-24*)

Who did God raise up to save Israel and how was His call accepted?

Judges 6:11, 14-15

How did God tell Gideon that he had all the power and might he needed?

Judges 6:16

Did this satisfy Gideon?

Judges 6:17, 20-21

Did this convince Gideon that this visitor really was from God?

Judges 6:22-24

Bible Stories for Adults

Judges Rule Israel

Page 4

Jerub-Baal (*Judges 6:25-32*)

How did God test Gideon's faithfulness to his calling?

Judges 6:25-26

How did the town react when they saw what had happened the next morning?

Judges 6:28-30

How was Gideon protected and what nickname was he given?

Judges 6:31-32

More Signs (*Judges 6:33-40*)

What did Gideon ask of God when he got nervous before an impending battle?

Judges 6:36-38

Did this satisfy Gideon that God was with him?

Judges 6:39-40

The Right Stuff (*Judges 7:1-8*)

Why did God reduce Gideon's army from 32,000 to 10,000?

Judges 7:2-3

How were the troops further weeded down and to how many?

Judges 7:5, 7

How did God encourage Gideon in the face of 300 versus countless Midianites (v12)?

Judges 7:10-11, 13-14

The Attack (*Judges 7:16-25*)

What was Gideon's attack plan?

Judges 7:16-18

How could just making some noise at midnight result in defeating the Midianites?

Judges 7:20-22a, 23-24a

How did Gideon reply to the Israelites' request to become their leader?

Judges 8:22-23

Despite his faithfulness, what did Gideon do that hindered Israel's faithfulness?

Judges 8:27

Judges 9 – Abimelech

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. When have I judged others without recognizing that I likewise deserve God's punishment?
(*Judges 2:1-3:7; Leviticus 18:24-30; Joshua 23:6-16; 2 Samuel 12:1-13; Matthew 7:1-5; Romans 2*)
2. When have I fallen into sinful behaviors of people around me? How could I have avoided them?
(*Judges 2:10-13, 17; Matthew 16:5-12; 1 Corinthians 5; Galatians 5; James 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17*)
3. When have I completed and when have I failed to complete the tasks God gave me?
(*Judges 1:27-2:5; Matt 21:28-32; Acts 20:24; Romans 15:17-33; Col 4:17; Heb 10:36; James 1:4*)
4. How often do I remind myself what God has done for me and how I am to serve Him?
(*Judges 2:10, 19; Deuteronomy 4:9-14; Joshua 24; John 13:12-17; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26*)
5. How has God delivered me from troubles and oppression?
(*Judges 2:18; 2 Samuel 22; 2 Corinthians 1:8-11; 1 Timothy 4:16-18; James 5:15-16*)