



# A Summary of the Old Testament

*within the word*

# Lesson Eight | Judges and Ruth

## Day One

1. Define the word “hero”.

Everyone loves a good hero story. Most often they are not a life-long story but a story of a particular event and the person who rose to the challenge. While looking at these men and women this week we must not look for perfect people, they were not. But they did take a stand even when things were hard.

2. The book of Judges begins with Joshua encouraging the Israelite people to take the land.

Read Judges 2:6-23.

List the steps of disobedience.

We will see that these steps became the cycle for Israel in the book of Judges.

3. According to Judges 2:10, what was the heart of the problem?  
What can we do to avoid passing on this same sin?
4. This would be a good place to stop and read Psalm 106, which beautifully pictures the patience and the love of God and the wandering heart of his people, Israel.

Just as Israel forgot the goodness of God toward them, we too tend to quickly forget the goodness of God. As I write this, we have just celebrated Thanksgiving. There is so much to be thankful for, even in 2020.

Stop and write a prayer of thanksgiving to God for a great deliverance, provision, or gift of grace he has shown you personally. Remembering all God has done will keep us from being drawn away by the distractions of the world. Even though it may not be near Thanksgiving Day when you read this, consider making your dinner conversation one of focused thankfulness, sharing stories of God’s great love.

5. Read Judges 3:5-7 and Joshua 23:12-13.  
What direct disobedience is described in these verses?
6. Israel’s cycle of sin was worshiping idols, God’s displeasure and punishment, the people crying out to God to help them, God sending a judge to rescue them. They would obey for a period but then fall back into idolatry.

Why do you believe it was so easy for them to fall back into the sin of idolatry?  
What should the Israelites have been focused on to free themselves of these temptations?

If we are going to learn from the mistakes of others and avoid the consequences, what would you say is the lesson for us here?

7. The first great leader/judge we are going to look at appears in Judges 3:7-11.

What was this man's name?

What were the Israelites doing?

Because Israel was disobedient, God allowed them to be taken over. Who did God use to oppress Israel?

How long did this oppression last?

What change of heart brought about the deliverance of Israel?

How long did Israel enjoy peace in the land?

8. Read Judges 3:12-30

What were the Israelites doing?

Because Israel was disobedient, God allowed them to be taken over. Who did God use to oppress Israel?

How long did this oppression last?

What change of heart brought about the deliverance of Israel?

How long did Israel enjoy peace in the land?

9. Read Judges 4-5

What were the Israelites doing?

Because Israel was disobedient, God allowed them to be taken over. Who did God use to oppress Israel?

How long did this oppression last?

What change of heart brought about the deliverance of Israel?

How long did Israel enjoy peace in the land?

10. Read Judges 6-8:28

What were the Israelites doing?

Because Israel was disobedient, God allowed them to be taken over. Who did God use to oppress Israel?

How long did this oppression last?

What change of heart brought about the deliverance of Israel?

What was their battle cry? Judges 7:18, 20

Gideon took the gold given to him as spoils and made it into an Ephod. He probably made this as a sign of remembrance for the victory God had given.

Read Judges 8:27.

What did the people do with it?

We often have what we consider a great idea, but do we stop to consider the possible negative consequences?  
What simple act of faith, when followed, can protect us from making a decision we will later regret?  
How long did Israel enjoy peace in the land?

## Day Two

1. Gideon had many wives and had 70 sons, he also had a concubine in Shechem. She bore him a son, Abimelech.

After Gideon's death the Israelites forgot God and God's man. In Judges 9, we read of Abimelech went to the people of Shechem and convinced them to allow him to rule over them. The people agreed since he was a blood relative. They gave him 70 shekels of silver which he used to hire a band of men who had no moral or ethical conscience.

Read Judges 9:5-6.

What did these vile men do under the direction of Abimelech?

Who was the only surviving brother?

What was his parable shared with the people of Shechem? Judges 9:7-21

Did it come true? Judges 9:22-57

2. Who are the next two judges named in Judges 10:1-5?

Judge \_\_\_\_\_ led Israel for \_\_\_\_\_ years.

Judge \_\_\_\_\_ led Israel for \_\_\_\_\_ years.

3. Read Judges 10:6-14

What were the Israelites doing?

Because Israel was disobedient, God allowed them to be taken over. Who did God use to oppress Israel?

Read Judges 10:11-14.

When the Israelites cried out to God how was God's response different this time?

True repentance means a change of attitude and action regarding sin. Hatred of sin turns the repentant person away from his or her sin to God.

What change of heart and actions brought about the deliverance of Israel?

Judges 10:15-16 displayed true repentance and the amazing love of God for his people. How might reading this event help you the next time you are seeking forgiveness?

Read Judges 12:7, how long did Israel enjoy peace in the land?

4. Who are the next three judges named in Judges 12:8-15?  
Judge \_\_\_\_\_ led Israel for \_\_\_\_\_ years.  
Judge \_\_\_\_\_ led Israel for \_\_\_\_\_ years.  
Judge \_\_\_\_\_ led Israel for \_\_\_\_\_ years.
5. The final judge we will be looking at is Samson. Please, read Judges 13-16 together. This is the story of Samson as recorded in God's word. I like to listen to God's word read aloud as I read along. If you have the YouVersion Bible app, it is easy to do this.
6. What repeated behavior and consequences do you see in Judges 13:1?
7. Who are we introduced to in Judges 13:2?  
What do you learn about them?
8. In Judges 13:3 we see an angel appear to Manoah's barren wife and make her a promise.  
  
What was the promise?  
What were the conditions stipulated concerning the future of this promise?
9. As a young man we see "*the Spirit of the LORD began to stir his heart.*"  
What do you believe this meant?

## Day Three

1. Read Judges 14:1-3  
Samson is now an adult, ready for marriage.  
Who does he see that he wants to marry?  
  
It is very difficult to reason with someone who is led and controlled by sensuality.  
  
Why do you believe his parents disagreed with him marrying this woman?
2. Read Judges 14:4-20  
God can use even our weaknesses to carry out his plans and purposes. While in Timnah the text tells us that the Spirit of the LORD came upon him in power.  
  
What amazing feat of strength did he do when God's power was on him?
3. After a time, Samson came by the place where he had killed the lion and a swarm of bees had made a nest in the carcass. He not only took some of the

honey, but he also later shared it with his parents. There could be several reasons he did not mention where he found the honey.

Why do you believe he kept this information to himself?

4. Read Judges 15

What was Samson's response to the men using his new bride to deceive him?

In the heat of his anger Samson chooses to go back to his home without his wife to cool down before seeing her again.

When he returned sometime later to see her, what bad news did he receive?

5. Now Samson feels justified in his thoughts of revenge. He may have felt twinges of guilt over the last time he was with these Philistines but not this time.

*"This time I have a right to get even with the Philistines; I will really harm them."*

What did he do to get even?

6. Read Deuteronomy 32:35 and Romans 12:19.

Do we have a right to vengeance?

7. The actions of Samson had far reaching consequences for the Israelites.

What did the Philistines plan to do in retaliation?

8. Because of God's spirit and power on Samson, according to Judges 15:14-15, what was he able to do that allowed him to return to his homeland unharmed?

9. How many years did Samson rule over Israel?

## Day Four

1. A great hatred brewed between the Philistines and Samson. One day while visiting the area of the Philistines, Samson fell in love with a woman named Delilah. The Philistines were overjoyed thinking this would be their opportunity for revenge.

Read Judges 16:1-21

Write out the series of events that took place in the defeat of Samson.

2. Read Judges 23:31

The scripture tells us that even though Samson is blind and in prison his hair began to grow again. When the rulers and the people of the Philistines

assembled to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon and to celebrate, they called for Samson to be brought in as entertainment. They were over-joyed to see how this once mighty man had been defeated. Samson prayed and asked God to use him one more time for his glory.

What did Samson do that day while the Philistines laughed and partied?

3. The story of Samson is a strange and very disappointing saga of great potential wasted on a life filled with sensual lusts and vengeance. Sadly, we never read of him understanding the purpose of God on his life.

What do you believe is the value for a believer to study the life of Samson?

4. Which of the judges studied this week were mentioned in Hebrews 11?
5. Judges 21:25, closes the book of Judges by saying, *"In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit."*

Another translation says, *"...everyone did what was right in their own eyes."*

Because there was no one to restrain them or punish them; this accounts for many of the evil things that went on at that time. They each became their own authority, acting on the own opinion of right and wrong.

When we started this study of the judges, we defined the word hero. These men were brave and did accomplish feats of great strength and bravery, but were they truly heroic?

Were they all we would like a hero to be?

Were they really the type of men we want to pattern our life after?

Who can we to pattern our life after without fear or hesitation?

## Day Five

1. Ruth is a short, four-chapter book which opens with the words, *"In the days when the judges ruled."*

Take a few minutes and listen and read along to this amazing story of a kinsman-redeemer.

This might be a fun thing to do at the supper table with your children. It will give you a wonderful story to discuss.

2. We are introduced to several characters in the first chapter.

First, we meet Elimelech, his wife, Naomi and their two sons, Mahlon and Kilion, who have moved to Moab because of a terrible famine in the land of Canaan. Sadly, they are only in Moab a short time when Elimelech died.

In the process of time the sons meet and marry two Moabite women, Orpah and Ruth. But less than a decade later tragedy strikes again when both boys die, leaving the three women to make it on their own. Naomi hears that the famine has passed, and she plans their journey back to Bethlehem.

While on the way she tries to encourage the young women to return home in hopes of finding another man to marry. Orpah is sad, but agrees and returns to her home and her family. Ruth declares her undying love for Naomi and stays with her. She tells her under no circumstances would she ever leave her on her own.

What exactly did she say to Naomi?

3. The two women journey together to Bethlehem. The people rejoice to see Naomi again. Naomi quickly tells them, *“Don’t call me Naomi, call me Mara, for the Lord has dealt bitterly with me.”*

What time of year is it when they return to Bethlehem?

4. Because these women are widows, they may participate in gleaning the edge of the fields. This was the plan to help care for the poor and the needy.

Look up and define gleaning.

5. Notice which field God directed Ruth to glean in. What was the significance of this field?
6. Boaz had no more than arrived and greeted his workers when he spotted this little Moabite woman gleaning and inquired who she is.

How was she described, by her beauty or her character?

7. That evening Naomi instructs her to stay in Boaz’s field, as he told her. Boaz is their next of kin. He is in position to serve as kinsman-redeemer. Naomi instructs Ruth how to let Boaz know she is interested in him fulfilling the right of kinsman-redeemer. Boaz wastes no time sorting out the details with the other relatives and witness. James 5:16 tells us the key to powerful and effective prayers is a heart in tune with God’s heart.

When you are faced with a problem of great need, do you see God moving on your behalf, directing your steps to just the right people?

8. This story ends with an incredibly happy ending. It is a beautiful bright light in this dark period of Israel's story. Is your home a light in the darkness of our world today?
9. Boaz and Ruth marry and have a son. Fill in the list of descendants. Ruth 4:21-22

Boaz became the father of \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_ became the father of \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_ became the father of \_\_\_\_\_,

10. As we have done each week, add God's character qualities that you have seen to your list on **The Character of God** page. Some of His qualities may be repeated from chapter to chapter but you may also see new ones as well.

Please, do not leave this undone. The purpose of our study is to get to know our God.