



# BIBLE STUDY

## MAJOR CHARACTERS OF THE BIBLE



<https://campus.cru.org/college/bsu/community-group-material/>

STUDY **09**

# JUDGES

# JUDGES

## OVERVIEW

### What Do I Need to Know About the Passage?

#### JUDGES 4

In the previous book, Joshua finally led the tribes of Israel into the promised land, calling on them to be faithful to their covenant with God by obeying the commands of the Torah and being an example to other nations. The book of Judges begins with the death of Joshua and, unfortunately, tells the story of Israel's total failure.

The book's name comes from the types of leaders Israel had in this period. Before they had any kings, the tribes of Israel were ruled by judges. Don't think of a courtroom here, because these were regional, political, and military leaders, more like tribal chieftains. Now, be warned, the book of Judges is disturbing and violent. It tells the tragic tale of Israel's moral corruption, bad leadership, and how they became no different than the Canaanites themselves.

However, this sad story is also meant to generate hope for the future, which you can see illustrated in the book's design. There's a large introduction in chapters 1-2 that sets the stage for Israel's failure as they don't drive out the remaining Canaanites like they were told to. The large, main section of the book ([Judg. 3-16](#)) has stories of the growing corruption of Israel's judges. The progression here shows how Israel's leaders went from pretty good to okay to bad to worse. The concluding section ([Judg. 17-21](#)) is really disturbing and shows the corruption of the people of Israel as a whole. Let's dive in and explore each part a bit more.

The book of Judges explores humanity's tendency to trust themselves over God and do what is right in their own eyes. This habit highlights humanity's need for God's grace and a future king who will rescue people from their self-centeredness. -The Bible Project

### Group Context Questions

#### WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHY AND HOW?

**Who:** are the Judges in the Bible?

**What:** did the Judges do in the Bible?

**When:** are the Judges first seen in the Bible?

**Where:** are the Judges at in the Bible?

**Why:** should we know about the Judges?

**How:** do the Judges and their story impact us?

### VOCABULARY WORDS

#### Judge

- What exactly was a judge? Who were they and what did they do? Times of crisis call for men and women of action. The Israelites, newly settled in the Promised Land, found themselves in those times. As enemy nations attacked and oppressed the tribes, they cried out to God for help. He, in turn, sent them men and women of action—known as judges.

### CONTEXT QUESTIONS

Allow your group to share some of their prior knowledge of who this character is and their significance. Familiarize yourself with this character so you can also answer. Make sure to do this in a way that is inclusive of those who may not have any prior knowledge.

CONTINUE ONTO NEXT PAGE ►

Watch This Video With Your Group

VIDEO LINK HERE: [JUDGES VIDEO](#)



This video is a general overview of the entire book of Judges. It will be very helpful regarding context and background info.

Allow your group to discuss what they gathered from the video. What stuck out to them? Eg. “If you were to take notes over this video what would be some of the main ideas you write down?”

## VIDEO

- Feel free to share these videos with your group so they can also watch. You may also find any other outside sources that you might think to be valuable to their understanding of the Word.

## What Are the Questions?

### JUDGES 4

#### LAUNCH

Have you ever had an experience in your life where you were surprised by how something turned out? How did whatever happened subvert your expectations?

#### JUDGES 4: 1-3

1. What sticks out to you? What are some repeated words or ideas?
2. How long was Israel oppressed?
3. What does Israel’s repentance look like?
4. Who allowed Israel to be given into the hands of Canaan? What does this tell us about who is *really* in control?

#### JUDGES 4: 4-10

5. Who does God raise up in verse 4? What is this Judge like and how are they different from others?
6. Who is Barak? What do you notice about him?

7. What does Barak and Deborah’s conversation tell us about God? About man? About their convictions?

#### JUDGES 4: 11-16

8. Why is verse 11 here? Who is Heber?
9. Who is responsible for the victory in this section?
10. What was the battlefield like and who had the advantage? What does this say about Israel?

#### JUDGES 4: 17-24

11. What prophecy does Jael’s action fulfill?
12. Was Jael right or wrong in what she did?
13. How is God as a warrior different from how we usually view Him?

# JUDGES

## QUESTIONS

### What Are the Questions? (Continued)

#### ROMANS 16:20

#### NEW TESTAMENT CORRELATION

In light of this passage, how can we look at these New Testament passages and better understand the character of Christ? How can we use these passages and interpret scripture using other scripture?

#### ROMANS 16:20

14. What sticks out to you?
15. How does this passage correlate with the Judges passage?
16. What do you think this verse means by “...will soon crush?” Is Genesis 3:15 completely fulfilled?
17. How do you feel about “the God of peace” being a God who crushes His enemies under His feet? What does this dichotomy teach of God?
18. Where is Christ in the Judges passage? How is He a greater Judge?

#### APPLICATION

19. What are times of your life or situations in your own lives that you are like Israel, slowly drifting away from the Lord? How about asking God to save you from the consequences of sin and not the sin itself?
20. Have you ever had something in your life you should have done but were too scared to do or feared the consequences of? How ought we act in those moments and how can this passage inform what we ought to do in those moments?
21. When looking at verse 11, what small seemingly insignificant detail may be a part of God’s plan for your life or someone else’s life?

#### FALLEN CONDITION

“What do these passages reveal about our fallen condition?”

- Help your group understand and identify the broken state of humanity due to our sin and where we see that evident in these passages.

#### CHRIST CENTERED SOLUTION

“What do these passages tell us about Christ’s response?”

- Amidst our broken, sinful nature, what does Jesus offer as a solution? Where do we see a solution in these passages?

#### GRACE ENABLED RESPONSE

“What do these passages teach us about how we should live?”

- How should we live now with these two truths in mind? Develop a one or two sentence long summary of each section to form a summary of what you can learn from these passages.

### What Are the Answers?

1. Allow your group to discuss.
2. They were oppressed for twenty years (v. 3).
3. Allow your group to discuss.
4. God did (vs. 2) and it shows that he is still sovereign.
5. Deborah (v. 4). She is a female whereas the other judges are males, she has a prophetic role in Israel rather than a military role like other Judges, and she does not deliver Israel like other judges do. So Deborah is an exception rather than the norm.
6. Have the group discuss. Barak is put in authority over Deborah (5:12), and God uses Barak to judge how other judges in Israel like Samson and Gideon judged (through battle).
7. Have the group discuss. Note Barak's fear and/or hesitation.
8. Heber of Hobab moves north. He will come into the story later through his wife: Jael.
9. God is (vs. 15).
10. The Israelites went down from the mountain to fight on flatland where Sisera and his army were and which is where they had a disadvantage against the chariots, yet because they had faith in God's word they still went.
11. Verse 9. But also a partial fulfillment of Genesis 3:15.
12. (Jael's action fulfills the prophecy, but she is technically not even an Israelite (not to mention she is a woman). It is shameful for a warrior to be killed by a woman (for both parties). She is celebrated for her actions in chapter 5, but she should not have done it. This shows us that what God does is sometimes surprising and not what we expect.
13. God destroys his enemies. We often think of God as peaceful and nice. But we forget that sin has consequences and that God is full of wrath and justice.
14. Allow your group to discuss.
15. Jesus disarmed Satan and crushed him just like Jael crushed Sisera with the temple peg.
16. The crushing of the serpents head is an event that is also seen as being fulfilled by the church (God's covenant people) as they live in obedience to Christ, which is still happening today.
17. Refer back to question 13. God will destroy evil and this affirms His perfect justice. God must be the God of peace and of justice so that Christ can be punished for our sins and peace can be brought forth.
18. Allow your group to discuss. Jesus ultimately and finally crushes the serpent's head by defeating sin on a cross. He defeats all of God's enemies not just as Judge, but as King, and not only King, but King over the entire cosmos.
- 19-20. Allow group to discuss.

# JUDGES

## NEXT STEPS

### What's Next?

#### DISCUSS WITH YOUR GROUP:

Should we continue discussion on this passage or move on through the text next week?

Do you guys feel confident in your understanding of what was discussed tonight?

Any questions? (Allow anyone to come to you in private if needed)

### Announcements

#### WHAT'S GOING ON?

Where is Cru at this week?

What upcoming events do we have?

Any other announcements? Should be in the slack.

### Prayer

#### BREAK OFF AND PRAY

Take this time as an opportunity to model prayer to those who are younger in their faith.

Provide opportunities for those who wish to pray.

Model different types of prayer like the ACTS model.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Who were the Judges?](#)
- [Key Info and Resources](#)
- [Knowing the Judges-TGC](#)