

JUDGES

IN THOSE DAYS ISRAEL HAD NO KING
EVERYONE DID AS HE SAW FIT

JUDGES 21:25



GOD, WHO IS
RICH IN MERCY

Ephesians 2:4



Seven Bible Studies in the Old Testament Book of Judges
Gympie Presbyterian Church

BIBLE STUDY GROUPS – TERM 3 2017

Our weekly Bible Study groups are **more than just a Bible Study** – we also want to **pray, and share our lives together**. However, it's time spent studying the Bible that ought to shape everything else that we do. In our Bible Study time this term we will be looking at the Old Testament book of Judges.

AN INTRODUCTION TO JUDGES

"In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit"

(Judges 21:25 NIV)

The OT book of Judges tells stories of valour, commitment and victory along with deceit, betrayal and injustice. In all this the discerning reader can see the fickle human heart exposed. In contrast stands the character of the LORD - unchanging, righteous, jealous, patient and merciful. He judges, but shows mercy, time after time, after time.

Reading Judges we learn not only about our own sinfulness, but also about God's mercy. Our God truly is rich in mercy.

"All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest we were objects of wrath. But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved.

(Ephesians 2:3-5, NIV)

WHERE ARE WE HEADED?

We will cover most, but not all, of the book of Judges in these Bible studies. Here is the plan: ¹

Study 1 1:1-3:6 A Slippery Slope

Study 2 3:7-31 God who Remembers the People who Forget (*Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar*)

Study 3 4:1-5:31 Unlimited God (*Deborah and Barak*)

Study 4 6:1-8:35 Fear God, not the gods (*Gideon*)

Study 5 10:6-12:15 A Humbling Salvation (*Jephthah*)

Study 6 13:1-16:31 The Surprising, Saving God (*Samson*)

Study 7 17:1-21:25 Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit

¹ These studies were first prepared for use at Kenmore Presbyterian Church and are used with permission and thanks!

Study 1
A SLIPPERY SLOPE
Judges 1:1-3:6

Prayer

Pray for the things you have discussed since arriving today/tonight. Also pray for:

- new-comers to church in recent weeks
 - Caloundra and Maleny Presbyterian Churches
 - friends and family who are not yet Christians
-

How did we get here?

You know those movies which flick back and forth between the present and the past? The scenes from the past are often included to tell you why things are as they are now. Judges 1:1-3:6 is a bit like that. It gives us a brief overview of the history of the Israelites from the time of their entry into the Promised Land to the time of the Judges. It sets us up for the rest of the book, explaining why God raised up judges in Israel and giving us insight into Israel's response to them. We may look at the rest of the book of Judges and ask the question, 'How did we get here?' Judges 1:1-3:6 tells us how!

The book of Judges begins with the Israelites in their new home: the Promised Land. Let's start our study by looking back at the book of Exodus, to see some of God's instructions for them in this land.

Read Exodus 23:20-33

1. How are the Israelites to treat the inhabitants of the land they will enter?

2. Why must they do this?

Let's look at Judges to see what happened.

Read Judges 1:1-8

3. How do the Israelites go at obeying the commands of Exodus 23?

4. Who was really responsible for their success?

Throughout chapter 1 of Judges we see the conquest of various cities. Take a look at the map on the next page to see the territory they captured.²

²Map courtesy of www.esvstudybible.org



Read Judges 1:21, 27-2:5

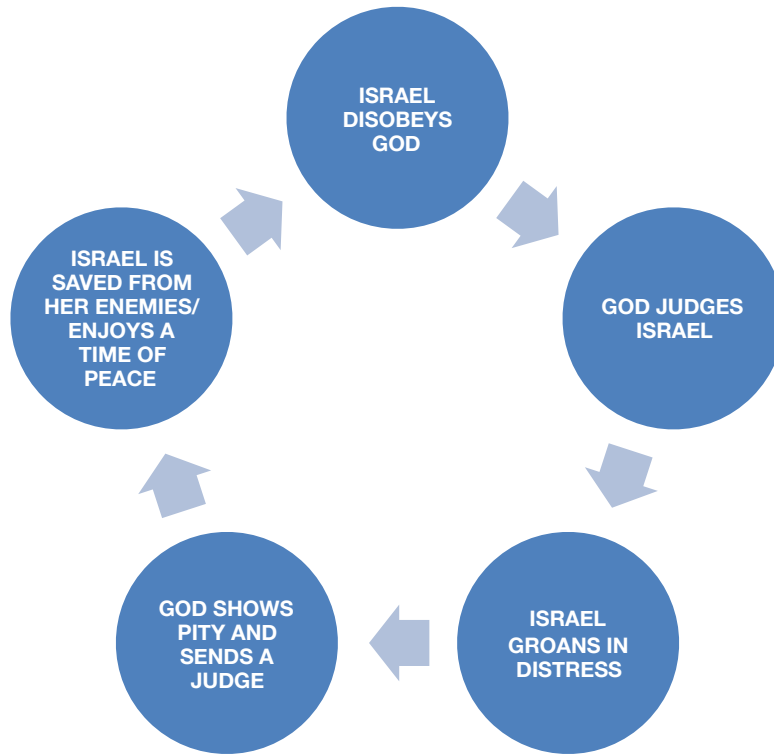
- 5. How are the Israelites going at obeying the commands of Exodus 23 now?

- 6. What consequences do they face (2:3)?

Let's see what happened as a result. **Read Judges 2:10-3:6**

- 7. How does God respond to his disobedient people?

In Judges 2:10-3:6 the Israelites seem to follow a pattern of disobedience and remorse, followed by disobedience. Meanwhile God punishes and shows mercy. It might look something like this.



The Israelites are in a cycle of disobedience. If we look at the end of the book of Judges, we see that this cycle takes on a downward ‘spiral’. Judges 21:25 says, “In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit.” Remember how they seemed to start so well in chapter 1? The writer shows the Israelites’ decline from obedience, to disobedience, to apostasy (turning away from God) and anarchy! Over coming weeks we will have a closer look at all this.

Think it through

8. What does Judges 1:1-3:6 teach us about the character of God?

9. In what ways do we see that God is king in these chapters?

10. How do these chapters point us to Jesus, or show us our need for Jesus?

11. In Judges 1:1-3:6 we see a progression, from obedience, to laxity, to outright disobedience and apostasy. In what ways might we be in danger of following a similar progression?

Judges 1:1-3:6 gives us the background to, and an overview of what happened in Israel in the time of the Judges. Over the next seven weeks as we study the remainder of the book we’ll see this period in history in more detail.

Prayer

Thank God for His grace and sovereignty, as we see them portrayed in the book of Judges.

Study 2

GOD WHO REMEMBERS THE PEOPLE WHO FORGET

Judges 3:7-31

Prayer

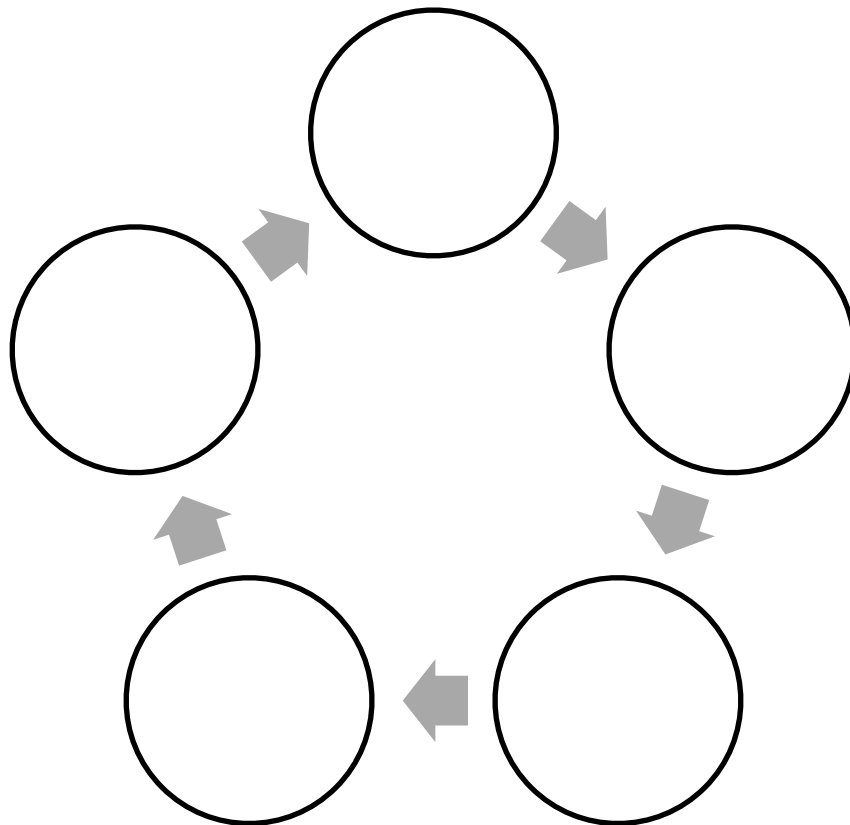
Pray for the things you have discussed since arriving today/tonight. Also pray for:

- other Bible study groups
 - Maroochydoore and Nambour-Eumundi Presbyterian Churches
 - friends and family who are not yet Christians
-

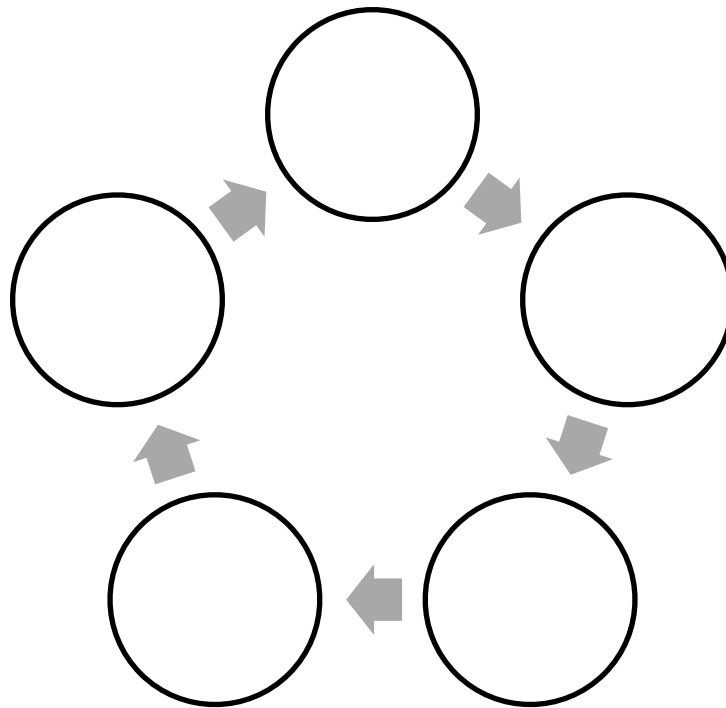
Discuss: How do you respond when someone keeps making the same mistake again and again?

Read Judges 3:7-11

Last week we discovered that Israel follows a cyclical pattern of disobedience. In this week's passage we see this cycle played out in more detail. Have a go at adding the details of Judges 3:7-11 to the following cycle diagram.



Now read **Judges 3:12-30**, and see if you can fill in the details of the cycle again.



Things aren't looking good in Israel! God promised to give them the land of Canaan when they left Egypt but because of their disobedience they had to wait through 40 years of wandering in the desert before they could enter. Now they're in you'd think they'd be grateful, but they keep forgetting Him and find themselves trapped in an endless cycle of sin.

1. Each cycle ends with God rescuing Israel. Does this mean that He ignores their sin?
2. In what ways do we see God's kingly rule at work over both Israelites and non-Israelites?

Think it through

3. Why do you think God keeps persevering with the Israelites, rescuing them when they keep disobeying Him?
4. In what ways might we follow the pattern of the Israelites?
5. Read Romans 5:6-11. What elements of God's character, displayed to the Israelites, do you see in the gospel of Jesus?

Prayer

Thank God for His grace and mercy to the disobedient, including us.

Study 3
UNLIMITED GOD
Judges 3:31-5:31

Prayer

Pray for the things you have discussed since arriving today/tonight. Also pray for:

- Religious Instruction in our region's schools
 - Noosa and Maryborough Presbyterian Churches
 - friends and family who are not yet Christians
-

Discuss: How does God view half-heartedness?

Read 4:1-3

1. Look back over the diagrams from study 1 and your notes from study 2. How does the passage we've just read compare with the cycles of previous weeks? What's the same? What's different?

Read 4:4-10

2. Is Barak obedient to God (v6, 8)?

3. Who will secure victory for Israel?

Read 4:11-24

Verse 11 begins by telling us that Heber the Kenite has 'moved tent', and now lives in a different place from the rest of his people. Whatever Heber's reasons for the move, God used his placement in Zananim in a mighty way!

4. Who secures victory for Israel? By what means?

5. How does Barak's attitude (v8) affect the outcome of these events?

You go, girl!?

In Judges 4-5 the characters most worthy of commendation are the women. Deborah and Jael are the ones who 'come through with the goods', being used by God to fulfill pivotal roles in Israel's success over her enemies. This is all the more noteworthy when we consider the 'expected' role of women in Israelite society.

However this passage reads more like an indictment against weak-willed men, than a paradigm of female leadership. It was a shameful thing for a man to be killed by a woman, so much so that in Judges 9:53-54 we find a servant spear his master with a sword so that it won't look like a woman was responsible for his death.

Deborah and Jael act as they do to fill a void left by weak-willed men. Woe to men who don't step up to the plate!

Read 5:1-31

6. Judges 5 is a recap of, or commentary on, Judges 4. Think about the various characters who we've read about today. Which characters does this chapter commend? Why?

7. Who does this chapter condemn? Why?

8. How does Judges 5 show God's involvement in events?



Think it through

9. The story of Deborah and Barak is graphic and messy. We might be tempted to skip over this passage of Scripture! What should we do with 'messy' passages like this?

10. In what ways might we be tempted to be like Barak and say, "Yes, I'll obey, but only if...?"

11. Is half-hearted obedience acceptable to God?

12. In what ways do these events demonstrate God's grace? How does this point us to the fullest demonstration of God's grace in Jesus?

In Judges 4-5 we see God at work through willing and unwilling/half-hearted people. Of course our whole-hearted obedience is what He requires but this passage shows us that God is not limited by limited obedience. Men might be, but God isn't!

Prayer

Thank God for His abundant grace and for His power that is not limited by our limited obedience. Ask for His help to obey wholeheartedly.

Study 4

FEAR GOD, NOT THE GODS

Judges 6:1-8:35

Prayer

Pray for the things you have discussed since arriving today/tonight. Also pray for:

- Cooloola Christian College
 - Hervey-Bay and Gayndah Presbyterian Churches
 - friends and family who are not yet Christians
-

Discuss: What does it mean to fear God?

Read Judges 6:1-10

We may well read this passage and think, '*here we go again.*'

1. Why is Israel suffering as they are (v1, v10)?
2. Are they crying out in repentance or just seeking relief from suffering (vv6-7)?

Read 6:11-24

3. Why does Gideon think God is not with the Israelites? Does this complaint sound familiar (in Israel/in our day)?
4. Do you think Gideon is making excuses for disobedience (v14ff) or is he genuinely struggling to trust that the LORD will be with him?
5. Can you remember other times God has given promised to be with His people?(v16)³

In 6:25-32 we see Gideon following the LORD's instruction (albeit fearfully). He destroys his father's altar of Baal and builds an altar to the LORD. This is a vivid portrait of what should be happening in Israel: the LORD alone should be worshipped as God, not the pagan gods (6:10).

The altar to Baal belonged to Joash, Gideon's father. We get the hint that maybe Joash is beginning to see who is really in control. He says, "If Baal really is a god, he can defend himself when someone breaks down his altar." (6:31). Thus, Gideon is called "Jerub-baal", which means "Let Baal contend with him" (6:32). The one true God, who is to be feared, is the one who is with Gideon and helps him. Other gods pale in comparison. Is there any need to fearful of them?

Think it through

6. Is there any way we might be fearful of false 'gods' in our day?

³ If you have time, take a look at Exodus 3:12 and Joshua 1:5.

7. How can you make sure you're fearing God (in the sense of 'reverent fear'), not the gods?

Read 7:1-23

8. Why does God whittle down Gideon's army so much?
9. Undoubtedly a great military conquest ensues. Who is responsible? What do the Israelites contribute?
10. Look ahead to 8:22-23. How does Israel ultimately react? How does Gideon respond?

Think it through

1. When might we be in danger of boasting that *our own strength* has saved us (7:2)?
2. Think of a time when you have felt that your resources were low and then felt that they have then been made lower still. What encouragement can you take from the way God worked through Gideon?
3. Read 2 Corinthians 12:9. How can we show reverent fear of God in times of weakness?

2 Corinthians 12:9

But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.

Memory verse challenge

Here's a challenge? Why not set yourselves the goal of memorising 2 Corinthians 12:9? (or part of it?) See who can remember it next week!

Things are looking up in Israel but if we read ahead we realise that it doesn't last for long and we're back to that point of thinking, "here we go again, ... again." Having acknowledged God's rule in Israel, Gideon makes an ephod (a tunic worn by a priest) out of the spoils of battle. Israel treats it as an idol. Then, after Gideon dies, Israel forgets God and follows the Baals. *Here we go again.* The Israelites run after the very thing God instructed them not to (6:10). But their repeated disobedience comes at a cost. God gives Israel periods of rest (8:28) but this is the last time. As we will see in the coming weeks, Israel does not rest from disobedience and so Israel will not rest from conflict.

Prayer

Have a read of Psalm 81 together, and pray that we would indeed "Sing for joy to God our strength" and walk faithfully with Him.

Study 5
A HUMBLING SALVATION
 Judges 10:6-12:15

Prayer

Pray for the things you have discussed since arriving today/tonight. Also pray for:

- the mission team coming from Queensland Theological College
- recent PCQ church plants: Emerald and Bargara
- our Sunday School, the teachers, helpers, and children.

Memory Verse challenge

How did you go at memorising 2 Corinthians 12:9?

Things are looking pretty bad in Israel. Last week we saw how God used Gideon to achieve a great victory for Israel. But after Gideon’s death, things go downhill rapidly. Gideon’s own son, Abimelech,⁴ is appointed king in Israel, but only after murdering his 70 brothers! After Abimelech come two more judges, Tola and Jair, but the commentary on their periods of rule is brief (Judges 10:1-5). We know they lead Israel but that’s about all. In the passage we’re looking at today, we’re going to see God’s ongoing work to save Israel. However, along with this salvation comes a costly lesson.

Read Judges 10:6-16

1. Have a go at filling in this table:-

Countries God has saved Israel from in the past (v11-12)	Countries whose gods Israel has since followed (v6)	Countries who are oppressing Israel (v7-9)

2. What parallels do you see?

Israel wants salvation (v10) but it’s from affliction they’ve brought upon themselves (vv13-14)! And the source of the salvation that they need is the Saviour they have rejected (v10, v15).

3. We see here two responses from God: refusal to save (v13), and compassion (v16). What do these two responses tell us about His character?

Read 10:17-11:11

4. What parallels do you see between the treatment of Jephthah by his brothers and Israel’s treatment of God (10:6-16)?

⁴ Abimelech was a common name of Philistine kings – which makes it an interesting name for Gideon to give his son. It is not a Hebrew name, but it sounds like the Hebrew for “my father is King”. You would have to think that this is not an accident!

5. What change is required of Israel/the Gileadites (a sub-group of Israelites)?

It's a theme that runs through the Gospel—**salvation by a rejected Saviour!**? At the cross, salvation was bought by a rejected Saviour. But like the Israelites we too must change. We must stop rejecting the Saviour and humbly ask for His help (Romans 10:9).

Salvation costs us our pride. We can't hold onto it thinking we can save ourselves by our own efforts. The Gileadites needed to come to this same realisation before they asked Jephthah to lead them. Tragically this is a lesson Jephthah himself fails to learn.

Read Judges 11:29-40

6. Who saved Israel (v29)?
7. Do you think Jephthah is right to make this vow? Is he right to keep it?

Jephthah's vow is a feeble and unwarranted attempt to manipulate the LORD. Rather than twisting God's arm with a vow, he should have humbly asked The LORD for help and trusted Him. Jephthah treats the LORD the same way the pagan nations treat their gods – paying them to perform by offering sacrifices. Jephthah's attitude towards the LORD is arrogant, or ignorant, or both.

While Jephthah (more so his daughter) appear pious by following-through with the vow, they are in fact sadly misguided and ultimately disobedient.⁵ Their piety is in fact gut-wrenching folly. The irony is that Jephthah becomes like the Ammonites—offering a human sacrifice—something which the LORD has specifically condemned.⁶

Think about it

8. Though Jephthah's is an extreme example, aren't we all susceptible to misguided piety? What do you think?

The victory over the Ammonites is further marred, let's read on.

Read Judges 12:1-7

9. How is the war portrayed here different from other battles in Judges?

⁵ Leviticus 5:4-6 explains what Jephthah could have done.

⁶ Leviticus 18:21 specifically forbids child sacrifices to Molech, the Ammonite god (1 Kings 11:33).

The book of Judges here takes a tragic turn. The Israelites have wavered between obedience and disobedience, between following God and rejecting Him, but they have remained united as a nation. Now we see infighting. Salvation is marred by civil war brought about by the offence taken by Ephraim who were left out of the attack on the Ammonites. The nation is wounded by the wounded pride of Ephraim.

In this study we've observed that salvation requires humility. Surely there is no place for pride in salvation.

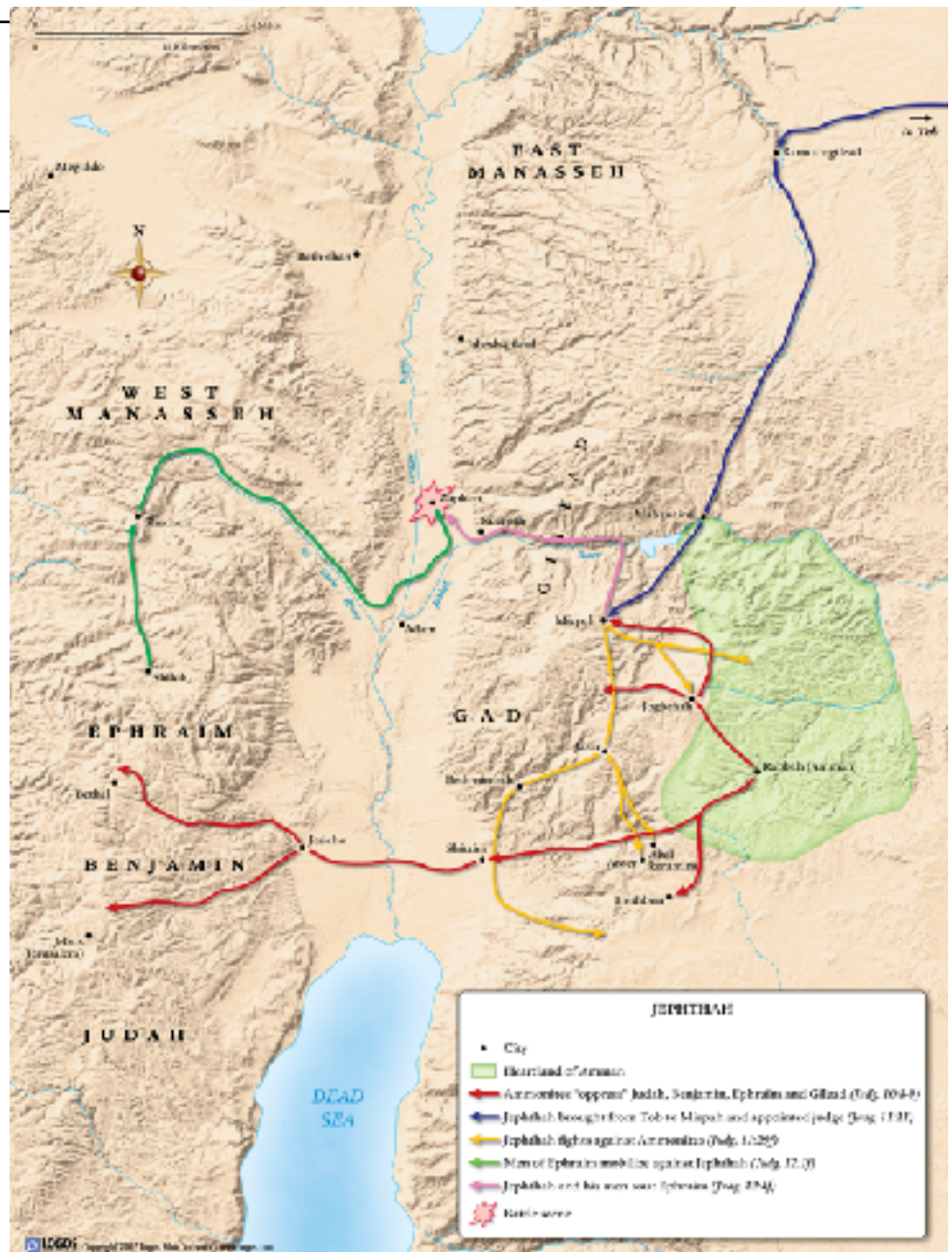
Read Philippians 2:5-11

10. How costly was our salvation?

11. How does this passage tell us to respond?

Prayer

Ask God to help you to have the mind of Christ, our humble Saviour.



Study 6

THE SURPRISING, SAVING GOD

Judges 13:1-16:31

Prayer

Pray for the things you have discussed since arriving today/tonight. Also pray for:

- new-comers to church
 - Bundaberg Presbyterian Church
 - friends and family who are not yet Christians
-

Throughout our studies of Judges we've seen God use a range of characters to achieve His purposes. We've seen Him use men who are reluctant (Barak, Gideon) or rejected (Jephthah). God doesn't necessarily follow our ideas of what an ideal leader might look like. In this study we will see God again use an unlikely source to rescue Israel. We will see the work of our surprising, saving God.

Read Judges 13:1-7

1. Do the Israelites express repentance or even sorrow at the current state of affairs?

Even so, God intends to save them (v5)! Let that truth sink in for a moment. Is it possible that we are so familiar with the concept of salvation and the grace of God that we're not amazed when He saves those who are in active rebellion against Him (see Romans 5:8)?

Romans 5:8

God demonstrates his own love for us in this: *While we were still sinners*, Christ died for us.

Back to Judges 13:1-7...

2. This is not the first, nor the last, time God promises a child to a woman who seems incapable of bearing one. He uses barren women (Sarai, Rebekah, Rachel, Hannah, Elizabeth) and a virgin (Mary). Why do you think He might do this?

3. Read verses 4-5, 7, and 14. Why do you think these details are repeated?

What is a Nazirite?

A Nazirite was an Israelite man who made a vow of consecration to the LORD. During the period of his consecration he was to abstain from alcohol, stay away from dead bodies, and not cut his hair. (Find out more in *Numbers 6*.)

Even before his birth Samson is dedicated to God. In the rest of chapter 13 we are given insight into how God plans to deliver Israel from the Philistines. Now let's see how He uses the grown-up Samson to achieve His purposes.

Read Judges 14:1-20

4. Does it look like Samson is living as one dedicated to the LORD?⁷
5. Is there any indication Samson was seeking to follow God or acknowledge Him?

And yet God uses him! Samson wants to marry a woman from the very people he's supposed to be defeating. We may rightly feel a sense of shock and surprise (his parents agree, v3)! Even behaviour which seems entirely out of place is used by God to achieve a victory against the Philistines however.

6. What is the source of Samson's remarkable strength (v6, v19)?
7. In this episode we also see a chink in Samson's armour. What is his weak point (v17)?



Read Judges 15:9-13

8. How does Judah treat the Philistines?
9. How should they be treating the Philistines?

What follows are details of Samson's victory over the Philistines—striking down 1000 men with the jawbone of a donkey. This great salvation is marred by hints of sadness. In the previous chapter Samson has married a Philistine. Now, in chapter 15, he's hand-delivered to the Philistines by the men of Judah, people who are supposed to be on his side (vv11-13)! What is the rest of Israel doing, while Samson attacks the Philistines??? They're helping their enemies, the very people who oppress them!

Read 15:18-20

Finally a bright spot! It seems Samson is at least aware of the source of his strength (v18), and we find Israel under the leadership of a judge once more (v20). Sadly, however, this doesn't last for long. Once again Samson is weakened by a woman (Delilah). He sells the secret of his strength for love. Apparently this is more important to him than obedience to God. So Samson suffers at the hand of the Philistines. Sound familiar? **What happens to Samson is a lot like what happens to Israel as a nation.** They obey, then they disobey by cavorting with the people who should be their enemies, so they suffer at the hands of the enemies they've allied themselves with.

⁷ Note: the 'he' in verse 4 refers to the LORD. God was seeking an opportunity against the Philistines.

Read Judges 16:23-31

10. Which elements of this episode do you find surprising or ironic?

Yet again we see the LORD work through weak vessels. This is no great military victory after which the brave commander rides home with fanfare and ceremony. Rather, it is a messy victory, achieved in the death of God's chosen servant who is at this moment weak and humiliated. Ironic, isn't it? **But it points us to Christ.** Just as victory came through Samson's death, *it's through Christ's death that death itself is swallowed up and defeated* (see the lyrics below). **God works a surprising salvation!**

Think it through

11. Do you know what your weak spots are, where you are most vulnerable to temptation?

12. How can you guard against yielding to temptation?

Prayer

Pray together in the light of the things you've discussed and praise God for bringing victory through Christ's humiliating death.

Christ Jesus lay in death's strong bands

For our offences given;
But now at God's right hand he stands
And brings us life from heaven.
Therefore let us joyful be
And sing to God right thankfully
Loud songs of alleluia!
Alleluia!

No son of man could conquer death,
Such ruin sin had wrought us.
No innocence was found on earth,
And therefore death had brought us
Into bondage from of old
And ever grew more strong and bold
And held us as its captive.
Alleluia!

Christ Jesus, God's own Son, came down,
His people to deliver;
Destroying sin, he took the crown
From death's pale brow forever.
Stripped of pow'r, no more it reigns;
An empty form alone remains;
Its sting is lost forever.
Alleluia!

*It was a strange and dreadful strife
When life and death contended;
The victory remained with life,
The reign of death was ended.
Holy Scripture plainly says
That death is swallowed up by death,
Its sting is lost forever.
Alleluia!*

Martin Luther

Study 7

ISRAEL HAD NO KING; EVERYONE DID AS HE SAW FIT

Judges 17:1-21:25

Prayer

Pray for the things you have discussed since arriving today/tonight. Also pray for:

- churches in Gympie
 - Jared, our mission partner
 - friends and family who are not yet Christians
-

The book of Judges has three big parts:

Judges 1:1-3:6 - Introductions: We are reminded of Israel's failure to fully possess the land of Canaan, and we are told the LORD leaves the nations to test Israel. We are introduced to a cyclic pattern of rebellion, judgement, salvation and rest.

Judges 3:7-16:31 - Body: These chapters give an account of the judges whom the LORD used to save His people and to lead them. However it would appear that each judge is less effective than the one before – certainly they each have significant flaws, and Samson is barely recognisable as a judge at all.

Judges 17:1-21:25 - Conclusion: A summary of the state of the nation of Israel.

On our way through the last 13 chapters we have witnessed the downward spiral of the nation of Israel. Now in the final five chapters of the book we see the result. In Judges 17:6 we are introduced to a refrain that echoes through this section as the narrator passes his judgement on Israel, '*in those days Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit.*' The final verse of the book leaves this message ringing in our ears.

What is truly amazing is, as we read on through the Old Testament, the LORD in his boundless mercy provides a king for this rebellious nation. Then another king, and another king, and another... and ultimately His own son, Jesus. But, back to Judges.

These last five chapters fall into two parts:

Judges 17-18: A sad portrayal of the total religious decline of the nation. We watch the Israelites make their own gods.

Judges 19-21: A sordid account of the utter moral failure of the nation of Israel. We watch them destroy their own people.

We will spend some time considering the shorter of the two parts. Come to Judges chapter 17.

Read Judges 17:1-6

1. What things strike you as odd, foolish, or downright wrong in these verses?

Micah's name literally means 'who is like the LORD?' which simply adds to the irony and farce you have just identified in the passage. The narrator's summary in 17:6 is justified—everyone *is* doing whatever they see fit. (Perhaps we should also call to mind Samson who went after what was good in his eyes—with disastrous consequences).

Read Judges 17:7-13

2. What things strike you as odd, foolish, or wrong in these verses?

Verse 13 could not be a more brutal condemnation of Micah! And in the very next verse (18:1) the narrator reminds us of his refrain (cf. 17:6). Let's read on.

Read Judges 18:1-10

Well, it is a small world isn't it (v3)!

3. How is the city of Laish described? (v7, 10, and take a glimpse ahead at v28)

If the Levite knew Laish, then perhaps he didn't really enquire of the LORD (v5-6), but rather took a calculated risk that the men of Dan could conquer defenceless Laish. Though the sad fact is the Danites have turned their back on their allotted territory and fertile plains because the Amorites have over-powered them (see Judges 1:34). Laish is simply an easy alternative.

Judges 1:34

The Amorites confined the Danites to the hill country, not allowing them to come down into the plain.

Read Judges 18:11-31

4. Consider the Danites in these verses. How are they portrayed?
5. What about the Levite? What drives him?
6. Cast your eyes back over the number of times the narrator mentions Micah's idols (v14, 17, 18, 20, 24, 27, 31). What do you suppose the narrator thinks of Micah's gods?
7. Finally, reflect on Micah by comparing these verses: 17:13, 18:24, 26.... and 17:2! What are we to make of him?

It's a sad story told with controlled sarcasm and irony. We really have only scratched the surface. There are three more chapters of equally damning evidence (ch19-21). The nation of Israel truly is a mess.



Think about it

8. How much do you think we, as sinful human beings, ought to see ourselves in this narrative?

9. Why would God be so patient with the Israelites, giving them second, third, fourth.. chances?

10. How do these messy events show the need for a great king and saviour?

When we consider the way the Israelites are caught up in sin we are reminded again that our God truly is rich in mercy. Perhaps the best way to finish our time in Judges is to read some verses from the New Testament. As we do, reflect on the depths of our sin and the richness of God's grace in the gospel of Jesus

Read Ephesians 2:1-10

Prayer

Thank God for his incredible mercy to us in Jesus.
