

JUDGES

Book 7

What is the Holy Bible?

The Holy Bible is a collection of writings that includes 66 books in English editions. The Bible consists of two parts, the Old Testament and New Testament. The word testament means covenant. The Old Testament includes 39 books, and the New Testament includes 27 books.

These 66 books were written over approximately 1,400 years by 40 different authors in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. The Old Testament writings were affirmed by Jewish leaders, and moreover, by Jesus Christ.¹ The New Testament writings were confirmed by early church leaders. The 66 books of the Bible are the inspired words of God that are used to make and mature disciples of the One true God through Jesus Christ, his Son ([Matthew 28:18-20](#), [2 Timothy 3:16-17](#)). The Bible was not created by mere human wisdom but was inspired by God ([2 Peter 1:20-21](#)), is interpreted by His Holy Spirit ([John 16:13](#), [Matthew 23:8-10](#)), and will last forever ([Matthew 24:35](#)).²

If you do a phrase search on the Bible you will find the phrase "the word of the Lord" and "Thus says the Lord" more than 700 times.³ In addition, this book has given reasonable evidence to the claim of being God's word by:

- providing answers that conform with the reality we see around us.
- being a reliable collection of historical documents.
- containing eyewitness accounts that were written during the lifetimes of other eyewitnesses.
- recording supernatural events that took place in fulfillment of specific prophecies.⁴

Notes:

¹ See Matthew 4:4-7, 12:3-5, Mark 7:6-7, 12:26-27, and Luke 19:46 for examples.

² ["What are the Books of the Bible", GotQuestions.org](#)

³ [Blue Letter Bible](#)

⁴ Paraphrased from Voddie Baucham

Our Goals in Studying the Bible

To better

- Understand the Only true God; the Author of the Bible. ([2 Timothy 3:16-17](#), [2 Peter 1:20-21](#), [1 John 5:20](#), [Jeremiah 9:23-24](#))
- Learn How He works in the World and in our Lives. ([Job 40:6-14](#), [Isaiah 45:6-7](#), [Isaiah 46:8-10](#), [Philippians 2:12-13](#))
- Understand Ourselves and the Hearts of Mankind. ([Jeremiah 17:9](#), [2 Timothy 3:13](#), [Ephesians 5:7-10](#))
- Come to Know What Pleases and Grieves God. ([1 Thessalonians 4:1](#), [Ephesians 4:26-31](#), [Hebrews 11:6](#), [1 Peter 1:14-19](#))
- To be Transformed into Fruitful Doers of God's Word and not just Hearers. ([Romans 12:2](#), [James 1:27](#), [Matthew 3:8](#))
- Tether Ourselves to God's Word for Our Wisdom, Discernment, and Safety. ([1 Corinthians 6:9-10](#), [Matthew 24:24](#), [Ephesians 4:11-14](#))

[Jeremiah 9:23-24](#) "Thus says the Lord: "Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the Lord."

How to Study the Bible

#1. Observation: What does the text say?

Who?

What?

When?

Where?

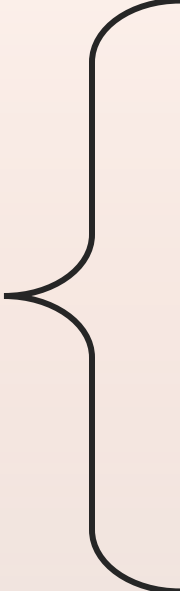
How?

Why?

#2. Interpretation: What does the text mean in context with the passage, book, and whole counsel of God?

#3. Application: How is the Holy Spirit instructing me to apply this understanding at this time in my life?

Study Resources



- Opening Prayer
- Background and Setting
- Book Outline
- Geography Maps
- Key Verses
- Study Questions
- Major Event Timeline
- Book Summary
- Application and Closing Prayer
- Study Leader Support Slides

Opening Prayer: Judges

[Judges 2:13-17](#), "They abandoned the Lord and served the Baals and the Ashtaroth. So the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he gave them over to plunderers, who plundered them. And he sold them into the hand of their surrounding enemies, so that they could no longer withstand their enemies. Whenever they marched out, the hand of the Lord was against them for harm, as the Lord had warned, and as the Lord had sworn to them. And they were in terrible distress.

Then the Lord raised up judges, who saved them out of the hand of those who plundered them. Yet they did not listen to their judges, for they whored after other gods and bowed down to them. They soon turned aside from the way in which their fathers had walked, who had obeyed the commandments of the Lord, and they did not do so."



Review of Joshua

Learning Tip: For those studying the Bible in its table-of-contents order, this slide gives you a brief recap of the book you just completed. Studying in a different sequence? You can simply skip this slide or treat it as a gentle nudge to circle back when the time is right.

Brief Summary: The book of Joshua begins with the death of Moses and the Lord calling upon Joshua to be strong and courageous, to not let the Book of the Law depart from him, and to take command of the people of Israel. The historical timing was ~1400 B.C. at the end of Israel's 40 years of wandering in the wilderness until only a new generation of fighting men were alive along with Joshua and Caleb. God promised to never leave nor forsake Joshua, and when they set out to cross the Jordan River into the Promised Land, God demonstrated he was with Joshua by parting the Jordan as he had done for Moses with the Red Sea ([Joshua 3](#), [Exodus 14:10-22](#)). After Israel crossed the Jordan, the Lord commanded that the new generation of males be circumcised, and Israel celebrated their first Passover in the Promised Land. God miraculously protected Israel from the surrounding enemies while all the men recovered from their circumcision ([Joshua 5:1-12](#)).

Just prior to taking Jericho, Joshua meets the Commander of the Lord's army. We know this is the preincarnate Christ Jesus and not an angel because he receives worship from Joshua ([Joshua 5:13-15](#)). Afterwards God miraculously gives Israel the land of seven nations (see [Joshua 3:10](#)) through various battles beginning with Jericho. Israel conquered the Promised Land via three major campaigns beginning with the central locations, then in battles with the southern kings, and finally defeating the northern kings. The Lord their God fought against their enemies and struck down more soldiers with panic, confusion, hailstones, and hornets than Israel did with the sword (cf. [Joshua 10:11](#), [24:12](#)). God kept the covenant he made with their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and not one of his promises failed as Joshua took the entire land ([Joshua 11:23](#), [21:45](#)). Joshua obeyed the Lord when they came into the land having all the words of the Law read before the leaders and the people ([Joshua 23-24](#)). And with Joshua's challenge to choose whom they would serve; the people renewed their covenant with the Lord God ([Joshua 24:14-18](#)).

The Book of Joshua can be summarized as follows:

Chapters 1-12: Entering and conquering the Promised Land.

Chapters 13-22: Distributing Portions in the Promised Land.

Chapters 23-24: Retaining the Promised Land (Joshua's farewell addresses).

The book closes with a postscript recording the death of our beloved Joshua, the burying of Joseph's bones, and the death of Eleazar. And we are told that Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua and the elders who outlived Joshua who had known all the work of the Lord ([Joshua 24:31](#)).

Foreshadowings: The story of Rahab the harlot and her great faith in the God of the Israelites gives her a place with those honored for their faith in [Hebrews 11:31](#). Hers is a story of God's grace to sinners and salvation by faith alone. Most importantly, by God's grace she was in the Messianic line ([Matthew 1:5](#)) of Jesus Christ.

One of the ceremonial rituals of [Joshua 5](#) finds its perfect fulfillment in the New Testament. Verses 1-9 describe God's commandment that the men who were born in the wilderness were to be circumcised when they came into the Promised Land. By so doing, God "rolled away the reproach of Egypt" from them, meaning that He cleansed them from the sins of their former lives. [Colossians 2:10-12](#) describes believers as having been circumcised in their hearts by Christ Himself, by whom we have put off the sinful nature of our former lives without Christ.

God established cities of refuge so that those who accidentally killed someone could live there without fear of retribution. Christ is our refuge to whom we "have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us" ([Hebrews 6:18](#)). Lastly, the Book of Joshua has an overriding theological theme of rest. The Israelites, after wandering in the wilderness for 40 years, finally entered the rest God had prepared for them in the land of Canaan. The writer of Hebrews uses this incident as a warning to us not to let unbelief keep us from entering into God's rest in Christ ([Hebrews 3:7-12](#)).

Old Testament Table of Contents (39 Books)

THE LAW - 5
GENESIS
EXODUS
LEVITICUS
NUMBERS
DEUTERONOMY

HISTORY – 12
JOSHUA
JUDGES
RUTH
1 SAMUEL
2 SAMUEL
1 KINGS
2 KINGS
1 CHRONICLES
2 CHRONICLES
EZRA
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POETRY - 5
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HOSEA
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NAHUM
HABAKKUK
ZEPHANIAH
HAGGAI
ZECHARIAH
MALACHI

OLD TESTAMENT BOOKS BY DATE WRITTEN

Historical Books

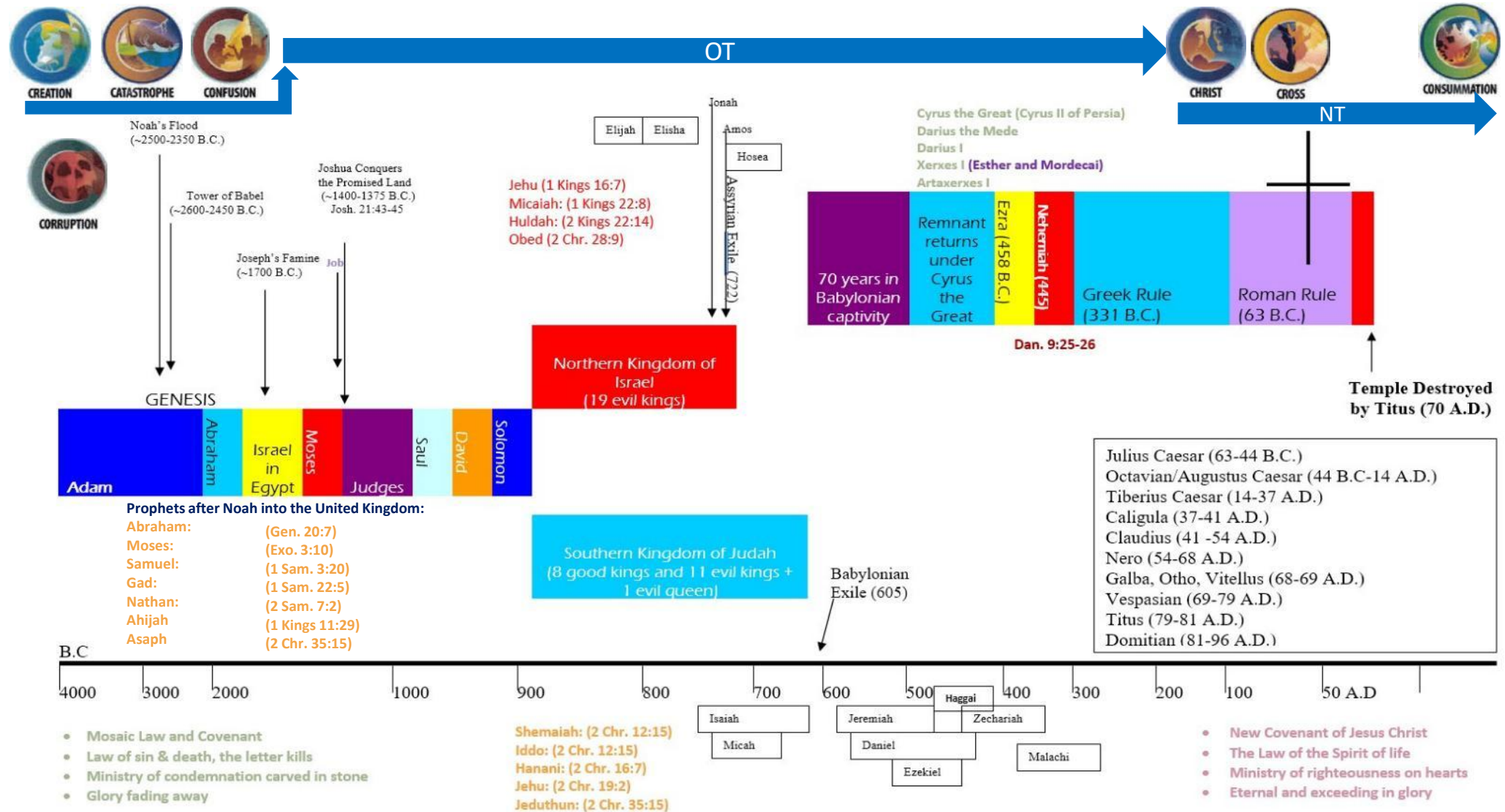
Genesis: c. 1445-1400 B.C.	Exodus: c. 1445-1400 B.C.	Leviticus: c. 1445-1400 B.C.
Numbers: c. 1405 B.C.	Deut: c. 1405 B.C.	Joshua: c. 1405-1385 B.C.
Judges: c. 1043 B.C.	Ruth: c. 1011-971 B.C.	1 & 2 Samuel: c. 960-722 B.C.
1 & 2 Kings: c. 560-540 B.C.	Ezra: c. 460-440 B.C.	Esther: c. 460-350 B.C..
1 & 2 Chron: c. 450-425 B.C.	Nehemiah: c. 445-420 B.C.	

Wisdom Book and Prophetic Books

Job: c. 1440 – 950 B.C.	Psalms: c. 1410-500 B.C.	Proverbs and Song of Solomon: c. 965 B.C.
Ecclesiastes: c. 930 B.C.	Obadiah: c. 848-840 B.C.	Joel: c. 835 – 796 B.C.
Jonah: c. 790 – 739 B.C.	Hosea and Amos: c. 760 -725 B.C.	Isaiah and Micah: c. 739 – 681 B.C.
Nahum: c. 663–612 B.C.	Habakkuk and Zephaniah: c. 635-605 B.C.	Jeremiah and Lamentations: c. 630-575 B.C.
Ezekiel and Daniel: c. 593 – 530 B.C.	Haggai and Zechariah: c. 520-470 B.C.	Malachi: c. 440 – 400 B.C.

[Amos 3:7](#) : “For the Lord GOD does nothing without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets.”

BIBLICAL CHRONOLOGICAL BACKGROUND



Aug-2004; jfh
Rev Jun-2026; jfw

Judges

Date: c. 1043 B.C.

Author: Possibly the Prophet Samuel

JUDGES: ABOUT THE Author and Book

DATE: c. 1043 B.C

The book bears the fitting name “Judges,” which refers to unique leaders God gave to his people for preservation against their enemies ([Judges 2:16-19](#)). The Hebrew title means “deliverers” or “saviors,” as well as judges (cf. [Deuteronomy 16:18; 19:16-17](#)). Twelve such judges arose before Samuel; then Eli and Samuel raised the count to 14.¹ God himself is the highest Judge ([Judges 11:27](#)). The book of Judges spans about 350 years from Joshua’s conquest (c. 1398 B.C.) until Eli and Samuel judged prior to the establishment of the monarchy (c. 1043 B.C.).

No author is named in the book, but the Jewish Talmud identifies Samuel, a key prophet who lived at the time these events took place and could have personally summed up the era (cf. [1 Samuel 10:25](#)). The time was earlier than David’s capture of Jerusalem c. 1004 B.C. ([2 Samuel 5:6-7](#)) since Jebusites still controlled the site ([Judges 1:21](#)). Also, the writer deals with a time before a king ruled in Israel ([Judges 17:6; 18:1; 21:25](#)). Since Saul began his reign c. 1043 B.C., a time shortly after his rule began is probably when Judges was written.

Notes:

¹Some count Barak who served with Deborah against the remaining Canaanites. This generates a judge count of 15.

Judges Background and Setting

Judges is a tragic sequel to Joshua. In Joshua, the people were obedient to God in conquering the land. In Judges, they were disobedient, idolatrous, and often defeated. [Judges 1:1–3:6](#) focuses on the closing days of the book of Joshua. [Judges 2:6-9](#) gives a review of Joshua's death (cf. [Joshua 24:28-31](#)). The account describes seven distinct cycles of Israel's drifting away from the Lord starting even before Joshua's death, with a full departure into apostasy afterward. Five basic reasons are evident for these cycles of Israel's moral, spiritual, national, and military decline:

- 1) disobedience in failing to drive the Canaanites out of the land ([Judges 1:19](#), [1:21](#), [1:35](#));
- 2) idolatry ([Judges 2:12](#));
- 3) intermarriage with wicked Canaanites ([Judges 3:5-6](#));
- 4) not heeding judges ([Judges 2:17](#)); and
- 5) turning away from God after the death of the judges ([Judges 2:19](#)).

A four-part sequence repeatedly occurred in this phase of Israel's history:

- 1) Israel's departure from God;
- 2) God's chastisement in permitting military defeat and subjugation;
- 3) Israel's prayer pleading for deliverance; and
- 4) God raising up "judges," either civil or sometimes local military champions who led in shaking off the oppressors.

Fourteen¹ judges arose, six of them military judges (Othniel, Ehud, Deborah, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson). Two men were of special significance for contrast in spiritual leadership: 1) Eli, judge and high priest (not a good example); and 2) Samuel, judge, priest, and prophet (a good example).

Notes:

¹Some count Barak who served with Deborah against the remaining Canaanites. This generates a judge count of 15.

Judges Outline

The Disobedience of Israel – Introduction and Summary

Judges 1:1–3:6

- Incomplete Conquest over the Canaanites (Judges 1:1-2:5).
- Recap of Joshua's last address and death (Judges 2:6-2:10).
- The Decline and Judgment of Israel (Judges 2:11-3:6).

The Deliverance of Israel - Selected History of the Judges

Judges 3:7–16:31

- **First Period:** Othniel vs. Mesopotamians (Judges 3:7–11).
- **Second Period:** Ehud and Shamgar vs. Moabites (Judges 3:12–31).
- **Third Period:** Deborah and Barak vs. Canaanites (Judges 4:1–5:31).
- **Fourth Period:** Gideon vs. Midianites (Judges 6:1–8:32).
- **Fifth Period:** Tola and Jair vs. Abimelech's (Gideon's son's) in Civil War (Judges 8:33–10:5).
- **Sixth Period:** Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon vs. Philistines and Ammonites (Judges 10:6–12:15).
- **Seventh Period:** Samson vs. Philistines (Judges 13:1–16:31).

The Dereliction of Israel – Epilogue

Judges 17:1–21:25

- The Idolatry of Micah and the Danites (Judges 17:1–18:31).
- The Crime at Gibeah and Civil War Against Benjamin (Judges 19:1–21:25).

Geography for Judges



Israel During Joshua's Life



Map of Judges in Israel



Maps of Israel
and Judges

The Judges of Israel: A Look At Those Whom God Raised Up



Judge	Reference	Tribe	Oppressor	Period of Oppression	Period of Rest	Total Length of Time*
Othniel	3:7–11	Judah	Mesopotamians	8 years (3:8)	40 years (3:11)	48 years
Ehud	3:12–30	Benjamin	Moabites	18 years (3:14)	80 years (3:30)	98 years
Shamgar	3:31		Philistines			
Deborah	chs. 4–5	Ephraim	Canaanites	20 years (4:3)	40 years (5:31)	60 years
Gideon	chs. 6–8	Manasseh	Midianites	7 years (6:1)	40 years (8:28)	47 years
Tola	10:1–2	Issachar			23 years (10:2)	23 years
Jair	10:3–5	Gilead-Manasseh			22 years (10:3)	22 years
Jephthah	10:6–12:7	Gilead-Manasseh	Ammonites		24 years (10:8; 12:7)	24 years
Ibzan	12:8–10	Judah or Zebulun?			7 years (12:9)	7 years
Elon	12:11–12	Zebulun			10 years (12:11)	10 years
Abdon	12:13–15	Ephraim			8 years (12:14)	8 years
Samson	chs. 13–16	Dan	Philistines	40 years (13:1)	20 years (15:20; 16:31)	60 years

* Added together, the dates in this column total about 410 years. However, many of the episodes in Judges overlap each other, unfolding in different parts of the land.



Judges: Key Verses

[Judges 2:6-8](#): "When Joshua dismissed the people, the people of Israel went each to his inheritance to take possession of the land. And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great work that the Lord had done for Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died at the age of 110 years."

[Judges 2:10-15](#): "And all that generation also were gathered to their fathers. And there arose another generation after them who did not know the Lord or the work that he had done for Israel. And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and served the Baals. And they abandoned the Lord, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt. They went after other gods, from among the gods of the peoples who were around them, and bowed down to them. And they provoked the Lord to anger. They abandoned the Lord and served the Baals and the Ashtaroth. So the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he gave them over to plunderers, who plundered them. And he sold them into the hand of their surrounding enemies, so that they could no longer withstand their enemies. Whenever they marched out, the hand of the Lord was against them for harm, as the Lord had warned, and as the Lord had sworn to them. And they were in terrible distress."

[Judges 2:16-19](#): "Then the Lord raised up judges, who saved them out of the hand of those who plundered them. Yet they did not listen to their judges, for they whored after other gods and bowed down to them. They soon turned aside from the way in which their fathers had walked, who had obeyed the commandments of the Lord, and they did not do so. Whenever the Lord raised up judges for them, the Lord was with the judge, and he saved them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge. For the Lord was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who afflicted and oppressed them. But whenever the judge died, they turned back and were more corrupt than their fathers, going after other gods, serving them and bowing down to them. They did not drop any of their practices or their stubborn ways."

[Judges 3:7-11](#): "And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. They forgot the Lord their God and served the Baals and the Asheroth. Therefore the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia. And the people of Israel served Cushan-rishathaim eight years. But when the people of Israel cried out to the Lord, the Lord raised up a deliverer for the people of Israel, who saved them, Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. The Spirit of the Lord was upon him, and he judged Israel. He went out to war, and the Lord gave Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand. And his hand prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim. So the land had rest for forty years. Then Othniel the son of Kenaz died."

[Judges 4:1-4](#), [4:23-24](#): "And the people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the Lord after Ehud died. And the Lord sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor. The commander of his army was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth-hagoyim. Then the people of Israel cried out to the Lord for help, for he had 900 chariots of iron and he oppressed the people of Israel cruelly for twenty years. Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel at that time." ... "So on that day God subdued Jabin the king of Canaan before the people of Israel. And the hand of the people of Israel pressed harder and harder against Jabin the king of Canaan, until they destroyed Jabin king of Canaan."

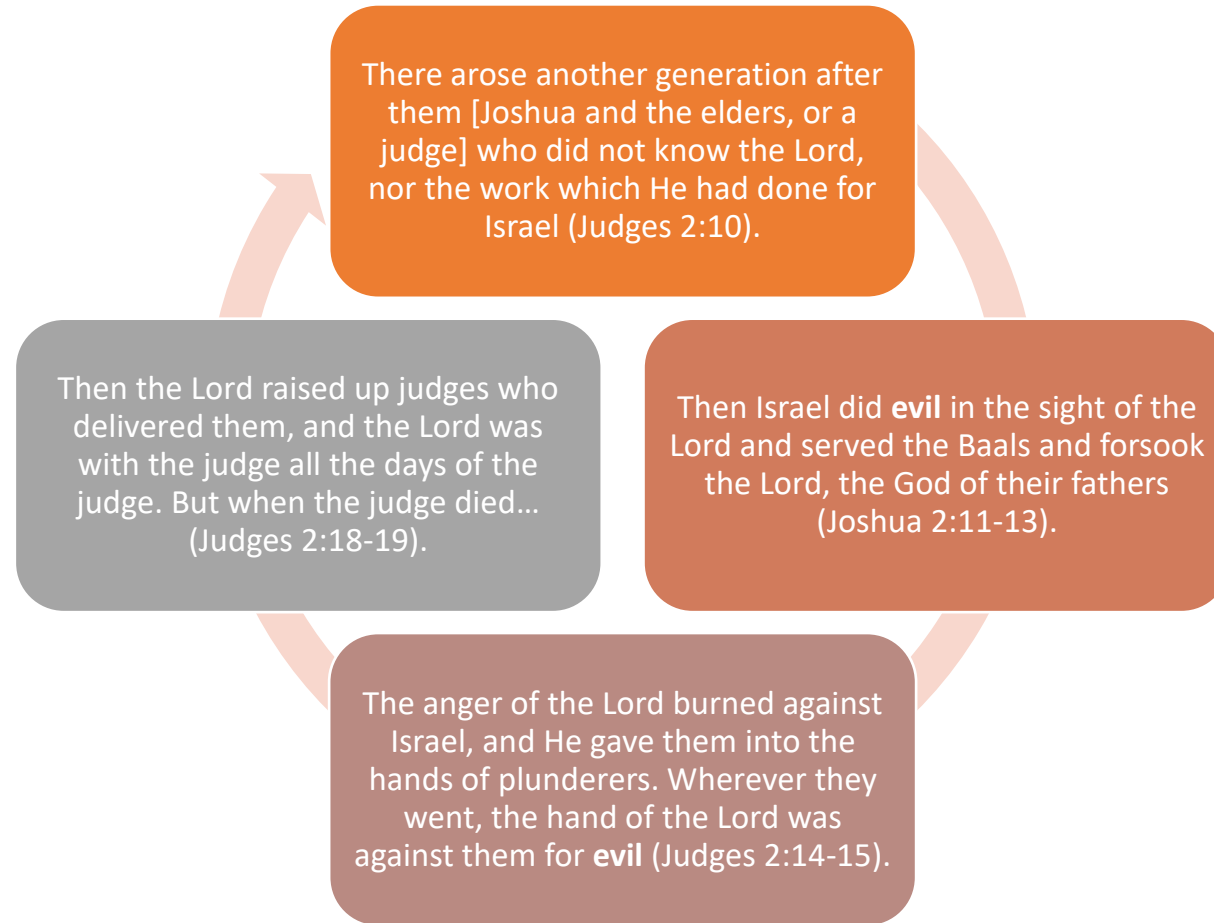
[Judges 6:1](#), [6:11-12](#): "The people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord gave them into the hand of Midian seven years. Now the angel of the Lord came and sat under the terebinth at Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, while his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the winepress to hide it from the Midianites." ... "Now the angel of the Lord came and sat under the terebinth at Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, while his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the winepress to hide it from the Midianites. And the angel of the Lord appeared to him and said to him, 'The Lord is with you, O mighty man of valor.'"

[Judges 10:15](#): "And the people of Israel said to the Lord, 'We have sinned; do to us whatever seems good to you. Only please deliver us this day.'"

[Judges 13:1](#), [13:21-26](#): "And the people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, so the Lord gave them into the hand of the Philistines for forty years." ... "The angel of the Lord appeared no more to Manoah and to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he was the angel of the Lord. And Manoah said to his wife, 'We shall surely die, for we have seen God.' But his wife said to him, 'If the Lord had meant to kill us, he would not have accepted a burnt offering and a grain offering at our hands, or shown us all these things, or now announced to us such things as these.' And the woman bore a son and called his name Samson. And the young man grew, and the Lord blessed him. And the Spirit of the Lord began to stir him in Mahaneh-dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol."

[Judges 21:25](#): "In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes."

The Repetitive Cycle in Judges



Definition Moment: Evil

E'VIL, *noun evil* is natural or moral.

- Natural *evil* is any thing which produces pain, distress, loss or calamity, or which in any way disturbs the peace, impairs the happiness, or destroys the perfection of natural beings.
- Moral *evil* is any deviation of a moral agent from the rules of conduct prescribed to him by God, or by legitimate human authority; or it is any violation of the plain principles of justice and truth.
- There are also evils called civil, which affect injuriously the peace or prosperity of a city or state; and political evils, which injure a nation, in its public capacity.

Judges: Study Questions

1. We know from [Joshua 21:43-45](#) that God gave Israel all the Promised Land through Joshua and that Israel settled into their inheritance and had rest. And we are also told in [Joshua 13:1-7](#) that God identified additional surrounding lands to be deemed Canaanite, and that though Israel had conquered the entire land and had rest, there were still some inhabitants they had not driven out of the land (cf. [Judges 1:18-19](#)). Read [Judges 2:19-22](#) and [Judges 3:1-3](#) and answer the questions below.
 - a) What does [Judges 2:19-22](#) tell us about why God did not drive out the remaining inhabitants and nations he identified to Joshua?
 - b) Now read [Judges 3:1-3](#) and explain any additional reasons given for why God did not give Israel the additional nations identified to Joshua?
2. In [Judges 6:11-40](#) we read the story of how God called Gideon (aka Jerubbaal) to become a judge to rescue Israel from the Midianites. Gideon asked for multiple signs from the Lord first to be sure that it was the Lord who was actually speaking to him ([Judges 6:17-23](#)) and then to be sure that God would make him successful in battle ([Judges 6:36-40](#)). Let's dig deeper into this.
 - a) Who initiated the conversation and the request of Gideon ([Judges 6:11-21](#))?
 - b) Who was another individual who was given signs after being called to a great task by God (see [Exodus 4:1-9](#))?
 - c) When speaking to the unbelieving scribes and Pharisees who wanted more signs from Jesus, Christ told them that an evil generation seeks signs ([Matthew 12:38-40](#)). What was different about how Gideon and Moses approached their requests?
 - d) Read [Romans 12:1-2](#), [Philippians 4:6-7](#), and [James 1:5-8](#) and explain how God wants us to discern his will for our lives.
3. In [Judges 14:3-4](#) we learn that God used Samson's desire for a Philistine bride as an opportunity for Samson to come against the Philistines. The marriage did not take place, and Samson did indeed overthrow the Philistines and rule Israel for 20 years ([Judges 15:14-20](#)). What was Samon's downfall (cf. [Judges 16:4-17](#)) and how did he end up in the Hebrews "Hall of Faith" ([Hebrews 11:32-34](#))?

JUDGES



[Judges 2:6-8](#): "When Joshua dismissed the people, the people of Israel went each to his inheritance to take possession of the land. And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great work that the Lord had done for Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died at the age of 110 years."

Major Events on God's Timeline
God's creation of the Heavens and the Earth, every living creature, and Mankind (Genesis 1-2; ~4000 B.C.)
The Fall of Mankind, the Promise of a Savior (Gen 3:15), the Global Flood, the Tower of Babel, the birth of the Nations Genesis 3-11; ~4000 - 2640 B.C.
Abraham and God's covenant with him to bless him and through him to bless all the nations of the earth Genesis 12-50; ~2000 B.C.
Israel freed from Slavery, entering the Promised Land, the United Kingdom, and God's covenant with David that His Descendant would reign forever, Solomon's reign Exodus-2 Samuel; ~1800 B.C. - 931 B.C.
The Divided Kingdoms of Israel and the Assyrian Conquest and Exile of Northern Israel (1 Kings - 2 Kings) Prophetic fulfillment: 722 B.C.
The Babylonian Conquest, Exile of Southern Israel, and Destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple (2 Kings 17-2 Chron) Prophetic fulfillment: 605 B.C., 597 B.C., and 586 B.C.
Israel's return to Jerusalem under Cyrus' decree to Rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem (Ezra - Nehemiah; Prophetic fulfillments: ~ 538 B.C.) And the Rebuilding of Jerusalem ~446 B.C.
God's silence for ~400 years
John the Baptist, the 1st Coming of Christ Jesus' Ministry, Death, Burial, Resurrection, and Ascension Matt - John (Prophetic fulfillment: ~4 B.C. - 32 A.D.)
The Church Age Begins (Acts - Revelation) Prophetic fulfillment: ~ 32 A.D. - Present
Jerusalem and the Temple are Again Destroyed Prophetic fulfillment: 70 A.D.
The Great Tribulation, Jesus' 2nd Coming, the Rapture, and Final War (Matt 24, Mark 13, Luke 21, 2 Thess, Revelation)
Jesus is Crowned King of Kings for the Millennial Kingdom (Dan 7, Rev 20, 1 Tim 6:13-16, Heb 12:26-29) All Israel Saved (Romans 11:25-27) Trial of the Sheep & Goats (Matt 25) Satan is bound for 1,000 years (Rev 20:1-3)
Every knee will bow at the name of Jesus Christ to the Glory of God the Father (Isa 45:23, Phil 2:10-11)
Satan is released and gathers Gog and Magog for war against the saints and the Holy City (Rev 20:7-11)
Fire from heaven destroys the armies of Gog and Magog Satan is thrown into the Lake of Fire Christ on the white throne of Judgment/2nd Resurrection (Rev 20:9-15, Col 3:23-24)
New Heaven and New Earth (Rev 21, 1 Cor 15:22-28, Heb 12:26-29)

God's Prophetic Timetable Events



[Judges 21:25](#): "In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit."

Summary of Judges

Brief Summary: The Book of Judges covers about 350 years of Israel's history (c. 1398 B.C. to c. 1043 B.C.). Though chapter 1 of Judges opens with the phrase "After the death of Joshua...", there is at least one "rewind" in the text that points back to events during the life of Joshua, which can make the chronology of some of the early events difficult to follow.¹ Nonetheless, where the book of Joshua triumphantly ends with the statement "that not one of God's promises failed" ([Joshua 11:23, 21:45](#)), the period of the Judges is sadly a cycle of generations who rise up not knowing the Lord, nor his work, and forsake the Lord their God doing evil in His sight by serving the Baals and other gods ([Judges 2:10-13](#)). The text tells us that God left some surrounding nations to test Israel's obedience and to teach war to the new generations of Israel ([Judges 3:1-2](#)). Tragically, they repeatedly failed the test, for they grieved God and played the harlot with other gods taking for granted God's mercy to them year after year, century after century. Israel's idolatry led to God's anger and as God had warned them, He gave them into the hands of their enemies so that they were severely distressed. When they cried out to the Lord, He raised up judges to rescue them; for the Lord was moved to pity ([Judges 2:18](#)). But their repentance was short lived, and as soon as the judge died, they returned to forsaking the Lord their God ([Judges 2:17-23](#)). Israel was in distressed from the surrounding nations of Mesopotamia, Moab, Midian, and Philistia and disobediently intermarried with Canaanites whom they had not completely driven from the land. In addition to external nations, Israel experienced internal conflicts ([Judges 9](#)) and eventually civil war ([Judges 19-21](#)). Yet God never failed to open His arms in love to His people whenever they repented from their wicked ways and called upon His name ([Judges 2:18](#)). Through twelve judges of Israel, God honored His promise to Abraham to protect and bless his offspring ([Genesis 12:2-7](#)).

During the ~350-year span of the Book of Judges, the most prominent judges raised up by God include: Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah (with Barak), Gideon, Abimelech, Tolah, Jephthah, and Samson. Probably the most notable judge was Samson who led the Israelites after a 40-year captivity under the rule of the ruthless Philistines. Samson led God's people to victory over the Philistines where he lost his own life after 20 years as judge in Israel. The book of Judges ends with debauchery, violence, and civil war, as foolishly everyone did what was right in his own eyes ([Judges 19-21](#)) and not as God commanded them.

Foreshadowings: The announcement to Samson's mother that she would bear a son to lead Israel is a foreshadowing of the announcement to Mary of the birth of the Messiah. God sent His Angel to both women and told them they would "conceive and bear a son" ([Judges 13:6-7](#); [Luke 1:26-31](#)) who would lead God's people.

The cycle of Israel in Judges is a cycle that can be traced through every nation in all of history who has forgotten their Creator and Judge. As God in his mercy raised up judges and leaders to rescue Israel and bring them to repentance, so He has done for other nations in history (cf. [Jonah 3:4-10](#)). Moreover, God in his compassion has sent us the ultimate Rescuer/Judge in Christ Jesus. God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us ([Romans 5:6-11](#)). Jesus, the infinite holy Son of God (cf. [Philippians 2:5-11](#), [Colossians 1:13-18](#)), died to deliver His people—all who would ever believe in Him—from their sinful crimes against an infinitely holy God.

Notes:

¹ Judges 1:2-2:9 with Joshua 12

Judges: Practical application

Disobedience always brings judgment. The Israelites present a perfect example of what we are not to do. Instead of learning from experience that God will always punish rebellion against Him, they continued to disobey and suffer God's displeasure and discipline. If we continue in disobedience, we invite God's discipline, not because He enjoys our suffering, but because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son ([Hebrews 12:6](#)).

The Book of Judges is a testament to God's faithfulness. Even if we are faithless, He will remain faithful ([2 Timothy 2:13](#)). Though we may be unfaithful to Him, as the Israelites were, still He is faithful to save us and preserve us ([1 Thessalonians 5:24](#)) and to forgive us when we seek forgiveness ([1 John 1:9](#)). He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful ([1 Corinthians 1:8-9](#)).

Closing Prayer Verse

[Judges 21:25](#): “In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”

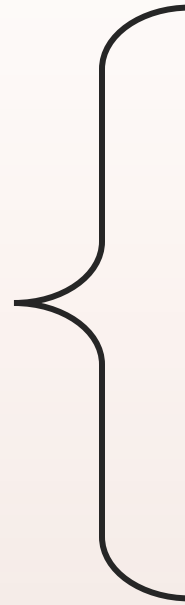




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3. **Inductive Bible Study Method:** Adapted from Precept.org.
4. **Creation – Consummation Icons:** Adapted from AnswersInGenesis.org.
5. **Definitions:** Adapted from Websters 1828 Dictionary.
6. **Bible Reference Software and Quotes:** All Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible using primarily the English Standard Version (ESV) or New American Standard Bible (NASB) translations. Links to Scripture references utilize BibleRef.com, which is a Got Questions Ministries' website.

Study Leader
Assistance



Sample Prayers

Study Question Answer Keys

Sample Opening Prayer: Judges

[Judges 2:13-17](#), "They abandoned the Lord and served the Baals and the Ashtaroth. So the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he gave them over to plunderers, who plundered them. And he sold them into the hand of their surrounding enemies, so that they could no longer withstand their enemies. Whenever they marched out, the hand of the Lord was against them for harm, as the Lord had warned, and as the Lord had sworn to them. And they were in terrible distress.

Then the Lord raised up judges, who saved them out of the hand of those who plundered them. Yet they did not listen to their judges, for they whored after other gods and bowed down to them. They soon turned aside from the way in which their fathers had walked, who had obeyed the commandments of the Lord, and they did not do so."

Sample Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for these warning examples of how easily it is for us to abandon You, our Creator and Savior. We are so grateful that with you there is mercy and forgiveness. In our personal lives we pray that your Holy Spirit will prevent us from ever breaking covenant with you. But when we fail to obey the Spirit, we ask that you quickly convict us and grant us godly sorrow that leads to repentance, forgiveness, and restored fellowship with you. For the world we pray that you will raise up national leaders who will follow you and help to restore our nation under your Commandments. We love you Lord and pray all these things in Jesus' matchless name. Amen.



Judges: Study Questions

1. We know from [Joshua 21:43-45](#) that God gave Israel all the Promised Land through Joshua and that Israel settled into their inheritance and had rest. And we are also told in [Joshua 13:1-7](#) that God identified additional surrounding lands to be deemed Canaanite, and that though Israel had conquered the entire land and had rest, there were still some inhabitants they had not driven out of the land (cf. [Judges 1:18-19](#)). Read [Judges 2:19-22](#) and [Judges 3:1-3](#) and answer the questions below.
 - a) What does [Judges 2:19-22](#) tell us about why God did not drive out the remaining inhabitants and nations he identified to Joshua? **Answer:** Israel continued to display a lack of respect and gratitude after God's merciful rescues. They repeatedly broke covenant with God through their idolatrous behavior and provoked him to anger. Therefore, the Lord would no longer drive out the nations Joshua left. The passage tells us God also did this to test Israel's obedience by these nations. Since God is omniscient (cf. Isaiah 46:8-10), He already knew how Israel would respond. Thus, the tests were to help the Israelites see their own faithlessness toward the God with whom they had made a covenant and who repeatedly rescued them. It is painfully obvious that God's testing in our own lives often also reveals our own faithlessness.
 - b) Now read [Judges 3:1-3](#) and explain any additional reasons given for why God did not give Israel the additional nations identified to Joshua? **Answer:** The text explains that God left these nations so that the generations that had not experienced war could be trained in it. Even in God's anger he was still teaching and training Israel. War and troubles are inevitable in a sinful world (cf. Mark 13:7). May God keep our nation prepared, and may we be trained in righteousness through the Holy Spirit by the troubles God allows in our lives.
2. In [Judges 6:11-40](#) we read the story of how God called Gideon (aka Jerubbaal) to become a judge to rescue Israel from the Midianites. Gideon asked for multiple signs from the Lord first to be sure that it was the Lord who was actually speaking to him ([Judges 6:17-23](#)) and then to be sure that God would make him successful in battle ([Judges 6:36-40](#)). Let's dig deeper into this.
 - a) Who initiated the conversation and the request of Gideon ([Judges 6:11-21](#))? **Answer:** The angel of the Lord came to Gideon while he was hiding wheat, called him a mighty man of valor, and told Gideon to go and save Israel from Midian. This is when Gideon asked for his first sign to be sure it was the Lord speaking with him.
 - b) Who was another individual who was given signs after being called to a great task by God (see [Exodus 4:1-9](#))? **Answer:** God called Moses to go to Pharaoh and bring His people out of Egypt. When Moses told God that he didn't think the Israelites would believe that God had sent him, God gave Moses three signs to use before them.
 - c) When speaking to the unbelieving scribes and Pharisees who wanted more signs from Jesus, Christ told them that an evil generation seeks signs ([Matthew 12:38-40](#)). What was different about how Gideon and Moses approached their requests? **Answer:** First the record of signs performed for Moses and Gideon are descriptions of what took place and not prescriptions of what God calls us to do regularly in our lives. Secondly, both Gideon and Moses were being called by God to large and dangerous leadership positions. These men were not being stubborn in their unbelief but truly asking for the assurance that God was indeed with them. The unbelieving Jewish leaders were insincere in their requests for more.
 - d) Read [Romans 12:1-2](#), [Philippians 4:6-7](#), and [James 1:5-8](#) and explain how God wants us to discern his will for our lives. **Answer:** God calls us to renew our minds in His word and to live righteous lives; offering our bodies as living sacrifices. Secondly, we are to approach him with thanksgiving as we bring our requests before him. Lastly, we are to ask in faith knowing that our Heavenly Father desires to give us good gifts (Luke 11:10-13). Following this prescription from God, we will find the discernment we need to determine his will for the decisions we need to make in our lives. A renewed mind (and heart) receives its desires from God (Psalm 37:4).
3. In [Judges 14:3-4](#) we learn that God used Samson's desire for a Philistine bride as an opportunity for Samson to come against the Philistines. The marriage did not take place, and Samson did indeed overthrow the Philistines and rule Israel for 20 years ([Judges 15:14-20](#)). What was Samon's downfall (cf. [Judges 16:4-17](#)) and how did he end up in the Hebrews "Hall of Faith" ([Hebrews 11:32-34](#))? **Answer:** Samson's misplaced love for Delilah led him to disobey God, reveal the truth of his Nazarite vow, and break his covenant with God. Delilah betrayed him for money, and Samson was blinded, enslaved, and imprisoned. But when God gave him a final opportunity, Samson cried out to the Lord and was granted the strength for a great final victory over the Philistines. Samson's repentance and victory in the Lord obtained him a spot in the Hebrews "Hall of Faith".

Sample Closing Prayer Verse

[Judges 21:25](#): “In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”

Sample Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, how foolish of us to think we can find joy and peace by doing what we believe to be “right” instead of obeying our Creator’s commands and instructions. You have warned us that the human heart is desperately wicked, and we witness this truth everyday in our own private thoughts and in the daily news reports. Help us to renew our minds in your written word and to submit to the Holy Spirit more each day. Enable us to live our lives to bring you honor and good to others. We asked these things in the matchless name of Jesus.

