

Old Testament Eras

Judges

Introduction

Judges chapter 1 and the first part of chapter 2 are basically a summary of Israel's failure to completely take possession of the Promised Land. It's important to note these events also take place after the death of Joshua (1:1). Context of Joshua and Judges aside, in what ways might the loss of ANY God-fearing leader result in struggle? Provide opportunities for blessing?

At your table, read Judges chapter 2 through chapter 3:6. Discuss what went wrong for the Israelites.

Othniel

Jair

Ehud

Jephthah

Shamgar

Ibzan

Deborah

Elon

Gideon

Abdon

Abimelek

Samson

Tola

What insights did you gain from this rapid-fire study of Israel's Judges?

In the closing 5 chapters of Judges (17-21) we see example after example of Israel's depravity. For what reasons are you not surprised to hear the book of Judges ends this way?

Samuel—The Last Judge

Samson was called to be the “beginning of the end” of the Philistines. The Lord now was going to bring in another judge to help in the struggle against the Philistines, Samuel. Samuel and Samson have similar beginnings as they both were dedicated specifically to the Lord before birth, and yet there would be no judge to follow Samuel.

1 Samuel 3

1 Samuel 4

1 Samuel 5

1 Samuel 6

1 Samuel 7

1 Samuel 8

1 Samuel 12

Application

The author of the People's Bible commentary on 1 and 2 Samuel writes, “The secret of Samuel's success as a prophet was not that he excelled in speaking, but in listening.” (Peoples Bible, p22) For what reasons do you and I need a reminder like that on a regular basis?

Your friend Anna is troubled. She has to make an important decision. She has asked God to come to her and tell her what she should do, but He hasn't. She says, "I wish God would just come to me like He did with Samuel and tell me what I need to do." How can you help Anna?

While God could continue to speak to us directly, He's chosen to speak to us in His Word. (2 Peter 1:19, etc.) Come up with three advantages we have as a result of God's decision to speak to us that way.

The name for God used throughout these chapters is "LORD." Anyone remember what that name emphasizes? For what reasons is it important to notice this particular name of our God?

Our next Old Testament Era will be David! (Consider reading the headings for every section from 1 Samuel 16 through 1 Kings 2:12)