

- 1 **Be concise.** Please share your thoughts and answers, but be considerate so that others will have time to share their answers also. Be charitable and kind. Be willing to share with the group, but do not try to dominate the conversation. Use the time after the class to find help with any personal issues or problems you may be confronting in your life.

“Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.”

(James 1:19–20)

- 2 **Be thoughtful with your answer.** Consider your words. Do not simply regurgitate what you have always heard. We have the tendency to speak in “Christianese” — words that only people who grew up on the pews would understand. Think about how your words will be heard by others. Will they understand what you are saying? Is what you are about to say going to be useful for the building up of the faith of others? Or will your words be confusing, cause hurt, or worse, damage someone’s faith? Speak without harshness or anger, but with kindness and humility.

“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.”

(Ephesians 4:29)

- 3 **Rely on the scriptures for truth.** It is easy to rely upon conventional, worldly wisdom as truth. Bible study is about seeking God’s answers for our lives, not dispensing the advice of the world. We must consider that our natural answers may be the wrong answers if they are not founded on God’s word.

“For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.”

(1 Corinthians 1:25)

Have you ever read a chapter in the Bible but then could not remember what you had read? Have you ever fallen asleep while reading? An hour after you read, do you retain what you have read? These problems destroy enjoyment in Bible reading and therefore we must use a method of Bible reading that will solve this problem. To read properly we must be keen observers. We must see words and phrases that stand out while at the same time collecting the whole thought. Remember, the important thing is not how many times you have gone through the Bible, but how many times the Bible has gone through you!

Observe // what do I see?

Every time we study the Bible, the first thing to ask is, "What do I see?" This is the crucial skill of observation, which lays the groundwork for your study. The text is given to you so that you will underline, circle, box, and highlight important words as you read. As you read look for comparisons, contrasts, purposes, results, causes, explanations, conclusions, and conditions. Ask yourself who, what, where, when, why, and how as you read. Keep asking these questions as you read to prevent a lazy brain while reading. Look for themes and main ideas from the passage.

Interpret // what does it mean?

Our observation of a passage should stir interesting yet challenging questions, leading us to the second stage of our Bible study: interpretation. Reread through the passage after your observation notations have been made looking to answer what the passage means. Record your explanations of the text in the workbook.

Apply // how does this affect me?

Our Bible study is not over until we apply what we have learned to our everyday lives. Write down lessons that you have learned for you own life especially things that you see you need to change. Only you know your heart and what is happening in your life to be able to apply God's word directly to you. Bible study is fruitless if we do not take the information we have learned and directly change our lives. Write down how the passage affects you. The transformation section in the workbook will help you in this effort.

Share // how can I share my findings with us?

Now we want to share our findings with others. We want to share our observations, interpretations, and applications with others in the Bible class. This is your opportunity to hear what others have found in their studies and for you to share what you found. By doing this we are able to build one another up and grow up in the unity of the faith (Ephesians 4:12-13). If we do not share what we have found then we will be unable to grow together as the family of Christ.

This is a booklet to aid you in your personal study of this book. Read through the text first, discovering God's precious truths for yourself. Write down the main point of each section of text in the space provided. Use the margins on each side of the text and the backside of the page to make notations of the truths you discover and passages you do not understand. When you believe you have seen all there is in text, read and answer the questions in the booklet pertaining to that section of text. The questions are not an exhaustive list of things to look for in the text. The questions are to help you consider the points that the author was trying to convey to his audience. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

The name of the book can cause a misunderstanding. Do not think of these biblical judges as people in black robes swinging gavels. A judge was a military leader who would rise up by God's power to rescue the people. Not only would the judge bring military deliverance, a judge would also be a spiritual leader, settling disputes and problems between the people of Israel. As you read through the book of Judges, take notice of how far the people have fallen away from the spiritual ideal found in the book of Joshua. Please also look for repetitions in the book regarding the moral condition of the nation. When do they cry out to the Lord? When do they serve the Lord? When do they stop serving the Lord? Also look for the condition of the leadership. What are spiritual differences from Othniel, the first judge, and Samson, one of the last judges? Finally, pay special attention to how God treats Israel through the period of the judges. Is God listening to his people? Does God show compassion for them? Does he stop listening? The book of Judges teaches us about God's character and how he deals with wickedness.

OUTLINING JUDGES:

_____ (Judges 1:1-3:6)

_____ (Judges 3:7-16:31)

_____ (Judges 17:1-21:25)

Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 What is Israel's concern (1:1-18)? What is God's answer? Read Deuteronomy 9:4-6 and note why Israel was to drive out the inhabitants of Canaan.

- 2 What are the failures of Israel in 1:19-36? What is one of the reasons for their failure (1:19)?

- 3 Why did the people fail? Was God not strong enough to drive out the inhabitants? What was the real issue? What do we learn from this?

- 4 What does God do because of Israel's failure (2:1-5)?

- 5 What is the message of 2:6-10? What do we learn?

- 6 Write down all the text says that Israel did against the Lord (2:11-15)? What was God's response?

- 7 What did God do for the people (2:16-23)? What was the response of the people? What is the message? What do we learn?

TRANSFORMATION:

How does this relationship change your relationship with God? What did you learn about him? What will you do differently in your life?

Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 What was God doing through Israel's failure (3:1-6)? Did Israel pass the test? What is the message? What do we learn?

- 2 What did the people do (3:7)? What was God's response (3:8)?

- 3 What did the people do in their oppression (3:9-11)? What did God do? What do we learn about God?

- 4 Who is Othniel?

- 5 Why was Othniel notable (Joshua 15:14-19)?

- 6 Why were the people of Israel oppressed (3:12)? What did the people do (3:13-15)? What was God's response?

- 7 How did God deliver Israel (3:16-30)? What is the message? What do we learn?

- 8 How did God deliver in 3:31?

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Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 What did God do because of Israel's sins (4:1-2) Who did God raise up when the people cried out to the Lord (4:3-5)? What was she doing for Israel?

- 2 What did the Lord command Barak to do (4:6-10)? Had he done it? Why not? What are we learning about the situation in Israel?

- 3 What does the Lord do through Deborah and Barak (4:11-16)?

- 4 What faith do we see in Jael (4:17-24)?

- 5 What is the message of the song from Deborah and Barak (5:1-31)? What is striking about this song?

- 6 What do we learn about faith from Deborah and from Jael?

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Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 What were the Midianites doing against Israel (6:1-6)?

- 2 What does God do this time when the people cry out (6:7-10)? How is this different from the past times the people cried out to God? What is the message?

- 3 What is Gideon doing (6:11-13)? Does he look like a "mighty man of valor?" What is the message? What do we learn?

- 4 What is Gideon's question? What is the Lord's response (6:13-14)? What do we learn?

- 5 How does God build Gideon's faith (6:15-21)?

- 6 What does God tell Gideon to do (6:22-27)? Why is this a frightening act for Gideon?

- 7 What were the people going to do to Gideon (6:28-35)? How is Gideon rescued?

- 8 How does God build Gideon's faith (6:36-40)

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Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 What is the problem (7:1-2) Why does God say there are too many people? What is the message? What do we learn?

- 2 Describe the ways God whittles down the number of people to go to war (7:3-8). How many are left for the battle?

- 3 What is God's direction for victory (7:9-18)? Did this require faith? Explain.

- 4 How does God build Gideon's faith (7:9-18)?

- 5 Why did Gideon and the people win against their enemies (7:19-25)? What do we learn?

- 6 Why does Ephraim complain (8:1-3)? What is Gideon's response? Explain.

- 7 What problem does Gideon encounter (8:4-21)? Why are they unwilling to help Gideon? What does Gideon do?

- 8 Describe Gideon's failure (8:22-35)? What is the message? What do we learn?

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Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 Who is Abimelech (9:1-6)? What does he do?

- 2 What is the meaning of the parable Jothan tells (9:7-21)? What was Israel to understand?

- 3 What did God do (9:22-25)? What happens?

- 4 What does Gaal do (9:26-45)? What was Abimelech's response?

- 5 What does Abimelech then try to do (9:46-57)? How does Abimelech die?

- 6 What had God done (9:56-57)? What is the message?

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Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 Who are God's next two judges (10:1-5)?
- 2 What did God do because of Israel's wickedness (10:6-9)?
- 3 What was God's response to Israel's cry this time (10:10-14)? Are you surprised? What is God's message? What lesson do we learn?
- 4 What did Israel do (10:15-16)? What was God's response? What do we learn about God?
- 5 Was Jephthah's beginning noble (11:1-3)? What happens?
- 6 Does God use Jephthah despite his beginnings? What do we learn?
- 7 What does Jephthah do (11:12-28)?
- 8 Explain Jephthah's vow (11:29-40)? What happened? What do we learn about Jephthah? What was the message?

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Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 What is Ephraim's complaint (12:1-7)? Have we seen this before? What is Jephthah's response?

- 2 Who are the next three judges of Israel (12:8-15)? What do we learn about them?

- 3 Who is oppressing Israel in chapter 13?

- 4 What is special about this birth (13:1-25)? Does this foreshadow any future births recorded in scriptures?

- 5 What requirements were placed on Samson? Explain what these things mean.

- 6 What is the angel's name? What is God teaching?

- 7 What is Manoah's response once he understands he has been in the presence of the angel of the Lord (13:20-25)?

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Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 Write down all the ways Samson either violates and nearly violate the Nazarite vow placed on him in chapter 14.
- 2 What sin is being highlighted in verses 2-4? How is God going to use the sin?
- 3 What are we learning about Samson? What do we learn about Samson's wife?
- 4 What is giving Samson his strength according to chapter 14?
- 5 What does Samson do to the Philistines in chapter 15? Why?
- 6 What is giving Samson his strength in chapter 15?
- 7 What do we learn about Samson in 16:1-3?
- 8 Why does Delilah try to learn the source of Samson's strength (16:4-5)?
- 9 Why does God take Samson's strength away (16:6-22)? What does the text say as to why he lost his strength (6:20)?
- 10 Explain the end of Samson's life.

TRANSFORMATION:

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Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 Who is Micah and what does he do (17:1-6)?

- 2 What is the terrible condition of Israel (17:6)?

- 3 What does Micah then do (17:7-13)? What is this showing about the spiritual condition of Israel?

- 4 What is reminded to the reader again (18:1)? Why is this important to emphasize?

- 5 Explain what happens in chapter 18 with Micah and the Levite. What is the spiritual condition of Israel?

- 6 How far has the spirituality of Israel deteriorated since the days of Joshua? What is the message?

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Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 What evils are happening in chapter 19? Describe the callousness of sin that we see in this chapter.
- 2 What happens when a society lives doing what is right in its own eyes?
- 3 What happens in chapter 20 because of the heinous sins of chapter 19? Notice 20:35. What is God doing?
- 4 Describe what happens in 20:36-48. Does justice go to far? Explain your answer.
- 5 Who do the people blame for Benjamin's devastation (21:2-3)? What do we learn?
- 6 What is Israel's perverse solution (21:9-23)?
- 7 How does the book end? How are these last three chapters a befitting illustration of what happens if people live by what is right in their own eyes? What do we learn?

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JUDGES



RIGHT IN OUR OWN EYES

SELF-STUDY WORKBOOK

by: Brent Kercheville

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