

## The Structure of the Book of Judges\*

### A – Prologue Part 1 (1:1-2:5)

1. The sons of Israel inquired of the LORD, saying, “Who shall go up first for us ...?” And the LORD said, “Judah shall go up” (1:1-2).
2. How Othniel gets his wife (1:11-15)
3. The Benjamites fail to drive out the Jebusites from Jerusalem (1:21).
4. At Bochim, Israel weeps before the angel of the LORD (2:1-5).

B – Prologue Part 2 (2:6-3:6) describes Israel’s spiritual degeneration from obeying their covenant with the LORD to worshiping Baal.

C – Othniel (3:7-11; cf. 1:11-15): His Israelite wife inspired him to drive out the Canaanites and acquired an inheritance from her father, resulting in a blessing.

D – Ehud (3:12-31) has a message for the king. With the Ephraimites, he takes the fords of the Jordan and kills the enemy.

E – Deborah (4:1-5-31): A woman ends the war by piercing the enemy commander’s skull with a tent peg.

F – Gideon (6:33-7:25): At first, Gideon takes a stand against idolatry and fights against the enemy. In the end, he fights against his own people and lapses into idolatry.

E’ – Abimelech (8:33-10:5): A woman ends the war by crushing Abimelech’s (the Israelite commander’s) skull with an upper millstone.

D’ – Jephthah (10:6-12:15) sends a message to the king, takes the fords of the Jordan, and kills his fellow Israelites.

C’ – Samson (13:1-16:31): His Gentile wives influenced him to live among the Philistines and persuaded him to reveal his secrets, leading to his undoing.

B’ – Epilogue Part 1 (17:1-18:31) describes an Israelite’s idolatrous cult and how Moses’ grandson became idolatrous priests for the tribe of Dan.

### A’ – Epilogue Part 2 (19:1-25)

1. The sons of Israel ... inquired of God and said, “Who shall go up first for us ...?” Then the LORD said, “Judah shall go up first” (20:18).
2. How the survivors of Benjamin got their wives (21:1-25)
3. A Levite, avoiding Jebusites in Jerusalem, suffers a terrible outrage at the hands of the Benjamites (19:1-30).
4. At Bethel, Israel weeps before the LORD (20:26-28).

\* Adapted from D. W. Gooding, “The Composition of the Book of Judges,” in *Eretz-Israel*, 16, Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1982, pp. 70-79. Used with permission from the Lockman Foundation.

## Prayers for Our Church

Pray that the Body of Northpoint Church will love Jesus Christ with all our heart and soul and mind, and our neighbors as ourselves.

## Monthly Missions Focus

Ask God to use Corona Life Services to save lives and redeem souls.

## Need to pray with someone?

It is our privilege to minister to you personally. Prayer requests can be emailed to [prayer@northpointcorona.org](mailto:prayer@northpointcorona.org) or submitted by phone or Response Card. Prayer Team members are available following every worship service and at many all-church events. Additionally, you can page the on-call pastor 24 hours a day in a personal or family emergency—simply call the main number (951.734.1335), press option 9, and follow the instructions.



# prayer *life!*

## Bible Reading Plan and Prayer Guide

(Year TWO) February 2015

God works all things together for good. –Romans 8:28

## Where Hope Lies

The Bible was written to be heard. It is organized so that a person listening to the text can follow the progression of events and ideas. Judges is a case in point. You’ll find a structural outline of the book on the back page. I hope it helps you follow the stories to the book’s main point.

The story of Gideon provides the structural centerpiece to Judges. By faith, he led Israel in a stunning triumph over their Midianite oppressors (6:25-8:12), but in the end he caused God’s people to fall back into idolatry (8:24-27). The stories that precede the Gideon account contain obvious similarities with those that follow it. These similarities create a concentric organization in the book that leads the reader—or listener—to compare the first half with the second.

Comparing the stories in the first half of the book with the corresponding stories in the second half highlights Israel’s drastic moral decline. Just as Gideon’s ultimate failure as a judge contrasts sharply with his initial success, Israel’s spiritual and political state in the second half of Judges are far worse than in the first half. In the end, Israel is as thoroughly idolatrous as their Canaanite neighbors.

Reading through the Bible, you’ve probably noticed that you spend two thirds of your time in the Old Testament. The historical narratives of the Old Testament demonstrate the great spiritual realities outlined in the New. As God unveils his redemptive plan through His chosen people, the wickedness of their heart reveals itself. But as the darkness of human nature unfolds, the awesome power of God’s grace shines all the brighter.

Israel’s sins lead to oppression. God sends judges to deliver them. Israel rejects God as their King. He provides David, a king after His own heart. David’s house falls into idolatry and captivity. Miraculously, God restores them after 70 years. Then, 400 years later, God sends His Son to offer His people the kingdom. “He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him” (John 1:11).

The Old Testament demonstrates how humanity perverts everything God gives us and uses it against Him. But God uses our ultimate rejection at the cross to achieve His ultimate deliverance.

Awesome, isn’t He!

# Reading and Prayer Schedule (Year TWO)

February 2015

<b>Sunday:</b> Church & Ministry	<b>Monday:</b> Home & Family	<b>Tuesday:</b> School or Job	<b>Wednesday:</b> Neighbors & Community	<b>Thursday:</b> Nation	<b>Friday:</b> World & Kingdom	<b>Saturday:</b> Praise for God's Blessings
<b>1) Read:</b> Judges 9 <b>Pray for ...</b> God's guidance for a Pastor of Worship to lead us to honor and rejoice in Him through worship that leads us to give ourselves to God in faith, joy, & love.	<b>2) Read:</b> Judges 10 <b>Pray for ...</b> Your spouse and children or your closest friends. May God keep them walking in His will.	<b>3) Read:</b> Judges 11 <b>Pray for ...</b> Those you serve where you work. Ask God to bless them with every spiritual blessing in Christ. Pray for their specific needs.	<b>4) Read:</b> Judges 12 <b>Pray for ...</b> The families of your children's friends. May they come to know Christ as Lord and Savior. Ask God to use you.	<b>5) Read:</b> Judges 13 <b>Pray for ...</b> Godly influences in the businesses of America. Pray that Godly principle will guide their practices, not just the dictates of the marketplace.	<b>6) Read:</b> Judges 14 <b>Pray for ...</b> The liberation of North Korea and the conversion of its people to Christ. Pray that God's light will shine brightly in that dark land.	<b>7) Read:</b> Judges 15 <b>Praise the Lord for...</b> The blessing of being in a healthy church. Rejoice in the "church family" God has given you.
<b>8) Read:</b> Judges 16 <b>Pray for ...</b> Tim East & Steve Flood. Ask God to make the truth of His Word clear to them and to strengthen their faith as they walk with Him each day.	<b>9) Read:</b> Judges 17 <b>Pray for ...</b> Commitment your household to Christ. "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15).	<b>10) Read:</b> Judges 18 <b>Pray for ...</b> Opportunities to express God's love for those you serve through your job.	<b>11) Read:</b> Judges 19 <b>Pray for ...</b> Your relationships and Christian influence in your neighborhood. Acknowledge God's right to command you to, "Go and make disciples."	<b>12) Read:</b> Judges 20 <b>Pray for ...</b> God's forgiveness of our sin as a nation that has rejected God's rule over us (Luke 19:14).	<b>13) Read:</b> Judges 21 <b>Pray for ...</b> The triumph of the Gospel throughout Latin America. May the Gospel be the "power of God to salvation for all who believe."	<b>14) Read:</b> Ruth 1 <b>Praise ...</b> Your Creator for His glorious creation and for giving you life. "Of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace."
<b>15) Read:</b> Ruth 2 <b>Pray for ...</b> Mark Kiker & Jeff Smith (lay elders). Ask God for divine discernment in leading Northpoint according to His will in all things.	<b>16) Read:</b> Ruth 3 <b>Pray for ...</b> Your grandparents and brothers and sisters. Thank God for them and ask Him to keep them in His care.	<b>17) Read:</b> Ruth 4 <b>Pray for ...</b> The quality and effectiveness of your work: May it exalt Christ.	<b>18) Read:</b> Luke 1 <b>Pray for ...</b> The city where you live. Ask God burden your hearts to reach the lost of your neighborhood and community.	<b>19) Read:</b> Luke 2 <b>Pray for ...</b> Our nation's judges, that they will humbly seek Christ in their judgments.	<b>20) Read:</b> Luke 3 <b>Pray for ...</b> Seek The spread of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in China and Japan. Ask God to turn those ancient cultures to Himself.	<b>21) Read:</b> Luke 4 <b>Give God Thanks ...</b> That the Gospel has spread across the world and into your life. Great is the power of the cross!
<b>22) Read:</b> Luke 5 <b>Pray for ...</b> Marti Wiegman (Women's Ministry Director). May God transform the women of our church into the image of Christ through her ministry.	<b>23) Read:</b> Luke 6 <b>Pray for ...</b> Your church family (friends and prospective friends at Northpoint). Confess our tendency to minister in our own strength. Commit our work to the Lord.	<b>24) Read:</b> Luke 7 <b>Pray for ...</b> Your spiritual example and testimony. Pray that others will see Christ in you.	<b>25) Read:</b> Luke 8 <b>Pray for ...</b> Confess our sin as a community. We delight in the blessings God has given us yet neglect to love God and others.	<b>26) Read:</b> Luke 9 <b>Pray for ...</b> The love of God to spread throughout His Church in America, so that we are "filled with all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:18).	<b>27) Read:</b> Luke 10 <b>Pray for ...</b> God to bring peace, stability, and the spread of the gospel to the Muslim nations.	<b>28) Read:</b> Luke 11 <b>Thank God ...</b> For providing godly leadership to Northpoint Church. Praise Him for His past, present, and future faithfulness.

*"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* —1 John 1:9