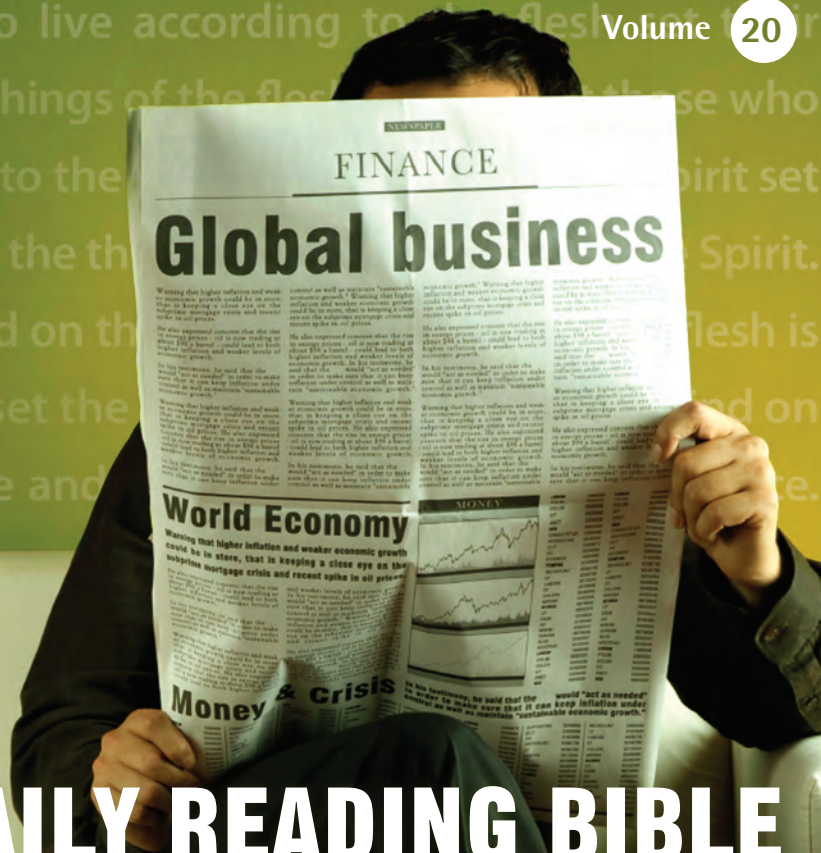


For those who live according to the flesh... Volume 20... minds on the things of the flesh... Spirit. live according to the Spirit. their minds on the things of the Spirit. To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.



NEWSPAPER  
FINANCE  
Global business

Warning that higher inflation and weaker economic growth could be in store, that is keeping a close eye on the mortgage crisis and recent spike in oil prices.

He also expressed concern that the rise in energy prices could be a new trigger for higher inflation and weaker growth in the U.S. economy.

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World Economy

Warning that higher inflation and weaker economic growth could be in store, that is keeping a close eye on the mortgage crisis and recent spike in oil prices.

MONEY

Warning that higher inflation and weaker economic growth could be in store, that is keeping a close eye on the mortgage crisis and recent spike in oil prices.

He also expressed concern that the rise in energy prices could be a new trigger for higher inflation and weaker growth in the U.S. economy.



Money & Crisis

He also expressed concern that the rise in energy prices could be a new trigger for higher inflation and weaker growth in the U.S. economy.

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# THE DAILY READING BIBLE

JUDGES      PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN LIVING      DANIEL

60 daily readings with full Bible text

# THE DAILY READING BIBLE

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# **THE DAILY READING BIBLE**

**Volume 20**

**JUDGES**

**PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN LIVING**

**DANIEL**

*The Daily Reading Bible (Volume 20)*

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# INTRODUCTION

**R**eadng our Bibles regularly is getting harder. That, at least, seems to be the common experience of many Christians. We could waste lots of ink speculating on the reasons for this: is it the frenetic pace of life these days? Is it spiritual laziness? Is it the impact of postmodernism on our culture and the lack of certainty when it comes to interpreting the written word?

But a better option than speculating on the reasons, we thought, was to provide a new resource for Christians to help them get back into a more regular habit of reflecting daily on God's word. So back in June 2001, we decided to start including a section called 'Bible Brief' in our monthly magazine, *The Briefing* (see [www.matthiasmedia.com.au](http://www.matthiasmedia.com.au) for more information about *The Briefing*). The 'Bible Brief' provided 20 short readings each month—acknowledging that there will be days we miss or days when we want to do something a bit different—with questions, thoughts to ponder, and suggestions to get started in prayer.

Now, several years later, we have a good collection of 'Bible Briefs', and it's time to offer them to a wider audience in a format that will, we hope, be even more convenient and useful.

This twentieth volume contains 60 readings, all designed to be done in 15–20 minutes. These daily Bible readings are designed to

help you feed regularly from God's word. They won't cover every issue in each passage, nor even every passage from each Bible book. In other words, *they are no substitute for the in-depth study of the Scriptures* that you may undertake personally, in small groups or through listening to sermons.

With the kind permission of our friends at Crossway Bibles, we've been able to make this a complete package to take with you—we've included the English Standard Version Bible text with each daily study. So you can take this one book with you and have everything you need—on the train, on the bus, or to the park at lunchtime—wherever and whenever you can get 20 minutes to yourself.

## How to use these readings

- *With a penitent heart*, the true prerequisite for all Bible reading. Open with prayer (perhaps using the prayer suggested at the beginning of each set of studies).
- *With 15–20 minutes* of peace and quiet. If you can take longer, and want to read and pray further—great! But we have designed the readings to be done in a fairly short space of time.
- *With an accurate modern translation*. We recommend and have included the new ESV translation. The writers of the studies refer to this translation. Contact us for further details about the ESV or visit [www.matthiasmedia.com.au/ESV](http://www.matthiasmedia.com.au/ESV)

- *With a pen.* Even if you only jot down brief ideas, writing focuses the mind.
- *As a guide and help, not a straitjacket.* Feel free to dig further into the passage, to notice and ponder things that the questions don't point to.
- *As a launch-pad for prayer.* Use the prayer ideas at the end of each reading as a starting point for your daily prayer. Many of the points that will arise from the readings will be things you can pray for yourself, and also for others (family, friends, neighbours, etc.). Why not compile a list of people you want to pray for (you can write them in the blank space below), and use the prayer ideas from each reading to pray for the next person on your list?

This twentieth volume includes:

- studies on Judges (written by Ben Gooley, assistant minister at the University Churches, University of New South Wales,

Sydney, Australia)

- studies on practical Christian living (written by Gordon Cheng, Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students Campus Director at the Cumberland Campus of the University of Sydney, Australia)
- studies on Daniel (written by Steve Blencowe, a member of the ministry team at Kenmore Presbyterian Church, Brisbane, Australia).

### **Matthias Media**

*October 2009*

**Please note:** the main section of Scripture for each study is reproduced before the questions. Other Scripture references are reproduced as footnotes at the bottom of the page, or, where the passages are too long to be included as footnotes, in the appendix.

## **PEOPLE TO PRAY FOR:**

# JUDGES

## INTRODUCTION

The colourful book of Judges describes the early days of Israel's possession of the land—the time between the death of Joshua, and the birth of Samuel and the start of the monarchy. The bulk of it tells the story of Israel through the fate of her leaders—the judges. As we read about judge after judge, a spiralling cycle emerges that tells us a great deal about Israel and the nation's relationship to God.

### A guide to these readings

The passages provided will enable you to read through the whole of Judges over the 20 studies. However, if you find you are pressed for time, concentrate on the verses in brackets. Plot summaries for the longer sections are provided where appropriate.

You might like to use this prayer (or your own variation of it) before each of the next 20 studies:

*Dear Father,  
Thank you for being a God who keeps your word. Help me to learn from your promises and warnings, and from your judgement and compassion as presented in Judges. Strengthen me to trust and obey you. Thank you for sending your eternal king and judge—my Lord Jesus, in whose name I pray.  
Amen.*

NB: Tick the box when you've completed each study ✓

## READING 1

## JOSHUA 24:14-28 AND JUDGES 1:1

### Joshua 24:14-28

**"N**ow therefore fear the LORD and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. <sup>15</sup> And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

<sup>16</sup> Then the people answered, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to

serve other gods, <sup>17</sup> for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our fathers up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight and preserved us in all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed. <sup>18</sup> And the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God."

<sup>19</sup> But Joshua said to the people, "You are not able to serve the LORD, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive



your transgressions or your sins. <sup>20</sup> If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm and consume you, after having done you good." <sup>21</sup> And the people said to Joshua, "No, but we will serve the LORD." <sup>22</sup> Then Joshua said to the people, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the LORD, to serve him." And they said, "We are witnesses." <sup>23</sup> He said, "Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your heart to the LORD, the God of Israel." <sup>24</sup> And the people said to Joshua, "The LORD our God we will serve, and his voice we will obey." <sup>25</sup> So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and put in place statutes and rules for them at Shechem. <sup>26</sup> And Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God. And he took a large stone and set it up there under the terebinth that was by the sanctuary of the LORD. <sup>27</sup> And Joshua said to all the people, "Behold, this stone shall be a witness against us, for it has heard all the words of the LORD that he spoke to us. Therefore it shall be a witness against you, lest you deal falsely with your God." <sup>28</sup> So Joshua sent the people away, every man to his inheritance.

### Judges 1:1

After the death of Joshua, the people of Israel inquired of the LORD, "Who shall go up first for us against the Canaanites, to fight against them?"

*Judges begins "after the death of Joshua" (Judg 1:1). In this study, we'll set the scene for Judges by looking at the last chapter of the book of Joshua.*

1. What is Joshua's ultimatum, and how do the people initially respond?
2. What problem does Joshua have with their response?
3. What does Joshua do to hold Israel accountable to their pledge?

**PONDER** What do these verses suggest about the importance of remembering everything God did to win his people's salvation? What do they suggest about Israel's future?

**PRAYER IDEAS** Thank God for the great work of salvation he has wrought in Christ, and ask him to help you to remember it always, responding to him in trust and obedience.

## READING 2

## JUDGES 1 (1:1-10, 16-26)

After the death of Joshua, the people of Israel inquired of the LORD, "Who shall go up first for us against the Canaanites, to fight against them?" <sup>2</sup> The LORD said, "Judah shall go up; behold, I have given the land into his hand." <sup>3</sup> And Judah said to Simeon his brother, "Come up with me into the territory allotted to me, that we may fight against the Canaanites. And I likewise will go with you

into the territory allotted to you." So Simeon went with him. <sup>4</sup> Then Judah went up and the LORD gave the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand, and they defeated 10,000 of them at Bezek. <sup>5</sup> They found Adoni-bezek at Bezek and fought against him and defeated the Canaanites and the Perizzites. <sup>6</sup> Adoni-bezek fled, but they pursued him and caught him and cut off his thumbs and his big toes.

<sup>7</sup> And Adoni-bezek said, "Seventy kings with their thumbs and their big toes cut off used to pick up scraps under my table. As I have done, so God has repaid me." And they brought him to Jerusalem, and he died there.

<sup>8</sup> And the men of Judah fought against Jerusalem and captured it and struck it with the edge of the sword and set the city on fire. <sup>9</sup> And afterward the men of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites who lived in the hill country, in the Negeb, and in the lowland. <sup>10</sup> And Judah went against the Canaanites who lived in Hebron (now the name of Hebron was formerly Kiriath-arba), and they defeated Sheshai and Ahiman and Talmi.

<sup>11</sup> From there they went against the inhabitants of Debir. The name of Debir was formerly Kiriath-sepher. <sup>12</sup> And Caleb said, "He who attacks Kiriath-sepher and captures it, I will give him Achsah my daughter for a wife." <sup>13</sup> And Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, captured it. And he gave him Achsah his daughter for a wife. <sup>14</sup> When she came to him, she urged him to ask her father for a field. And she dismounted from her donkey, and Caleb said to her, "What do you want?" <sup>15</sup> She said to him, "Give me a blessing. Since you have set me in the land of the Negeb, give me also springs of water." And Caleb gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.

<sup>16</sup> And the descendants of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, went up with the people of Judah from the city of palms into the wilderness of Judah, which lies in the Negeb near Arad, and they went and settled with the people. <sup>17</sup> And Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they defeated the Canaanites who inhabited Zephath and devoted it to destruction. So the name of the city was called Hormah. <sup>18</sup> Judah also captured Gaza with its territory, and Ashkelon with its territory, and Ekron with its territory. <sup>19</sup> And the LORD was with Judah, and he took possession of the hill country, but he could

not drive out the inhabitants of the plain because they had chariots of iron. <sup>20</sup> And Hebron was given to Caleb, as Moses had said. And he drove out from it the three sons of Anak. <sup>21</sup> But the people of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites who lived in Jerusalem, so the Jebusites have lived with the people of Benjamin in Jerusalem to this day.

<sup>22</sup> The house of Joseph also went up against Bethel, and the LORD was with them. <sup>23</sup> And the house of Joseph scouted out Bethel. (Now the name of the city was formerly Luz.) <sup>24</sup> And the spies saw a man coming out of the city, and they said to him, "Please show us the way into the city, and we will deal kindly with you." <sup>25</sup> And he showed them the way into the city. And they struck the city with the edge of the sword, but they let the man and all his family go. <sup>26</sup> And the man went to the land of the Hittites and built a city and called its name Luz. That is its name to this day.

<sup>27</sup> Manasseh did not drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shean and its villages, or Taanach and its villages, or the inhabitants of Dor and its villages, or the inhabitants of Ibleam and its villages, or the inhabitants of Megiddo and its villages, for the Canaanites persisted in dwelling in that land. <sup>28</sup> When Israel grew strong, they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but did not drive them out completely.

<sup>29</sup> And Ephraim did not drive out the Canaanites who lived in Gezer, so the Canaanites lived in Gezer among them.

<sup>30</sup> Zebulun did not drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, or the inhabitants of Nahalol, so the Canaanites lived among them, but became subject to forced labor.

<sup>31</sup> Asher did not drive out the inhabitants of Acco, or the inhabitants of Sidon or of Ahlab or of Achzib or of Helbah or of Aphik or of Rehob, <sup>32</sup> so the Asherites lived among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land, for they did not drive them out.

<sup>33</sup> Naphtali did not drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh, or the

inhabitants of Beth-anath, so they lived among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land. Nevertheless, the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and of Beth-anath became subject to forced labor for them.

<sup>34</sup> The Amorites pressed the people of Dan back into the hill country, for they did not allow them to come down to the plain. <sup>35</sup> The Amorites persisted in dwelling in Mount Heres, in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim, but the hand of the house of Joseph rested heavily on them, and they became subject to forced labor. <sup>36</sup> And the border of the Amorites ran from the ascent of Akkrabbim, from Sela and upward.

*Judges 1 tells the story of Israel's faltering attempt to conquer Canaan in overview.*

### READING 3

### JUDGES 2:1-5

**N**ow the angel of the LORD went up from Gilgal to Bochim. And he said, "I brought you up from Egypt and brought you into the land that I swore to give to your fathers. I said, 'I will never break my covenant with you, <sup>2</sup> and you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall break down their altars.' But you have not obeyed my voice. What is this you have done? <sup>3</sup> So now I say, I will not drive them out before you, but they shall become thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare to you." <sup>4</sup> As soon as the angel of the LORD spoke these words to all the people of Israel, the people lifted up their voices and wept. <sup>5</sup> And they called the name of that place Bochim. And they

1. *In this chapter, how successful is Israel in their conquest of the promised land?*

2. *How does their success change as the chapter progresses?*

**PONDER** Just from your reading of this first chapter, why do you think Israel failed to take possession of the land?

**PRAYER IDEAS** Thank God for all that he has generously given you, and ask him to strengthen you as you strive to live in obedience to him.

sacrificed there to the LORD.

*Judges 2 takes a second look at Israel's attempt to conquer Canaan. This chapter presents further information on the conquest from God's perspective, and introduces the 'Judges cycle', which is repeated throughout the book.*

1. *What accusation does God (via the angel) level against Israel?*

2. *Read Deuteronomy 7:1-6.<sup>1</sup> How does God's command in this passage help you to*

1. "When the LORD your God brings you into the land that you are entering to take possession of it, and clears away many nations before you, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations more numerous and mightier than yourselves, <sup>2</sup> and when the LORD your God gives them over to you, and you defeat them, then you must devote them to complete destruction. You shall make no covenant with them and show no mercy to them. <sup>3</sup> You shall not intermarry with them, giving your daughters to their sons or taking their daughters for your

sons, <sup>4</sup> for they would turn away your sons from following me, to serve other gods. Then the anger of the LORD would be kindled against you, and he would destroy you quickly. <sup>5</sup> But thus shall you deal with them: you shall break down their altars and dash in pieces their pillars and chop down their Asherim and burn their carved images with fire.

<sup>6</sup> "For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth."

understand Israel's failure in Judges 1?

3. Why is God's punishment of Israel's crime fitting (v. 3)?

**PONDER** God's judgement drove Israel to mourning. What does Paul say about right repentance in 2 Corinthians 7:8-10?<sup>2</sup>

**PRAYER IDEAS** Take this chance to confess to God the times you have failed to live in a godly way. Think about what your repentance will look like in practice.

## READING 4

## JUDGES 2:6-15

**W**hen Joshua dismissed the people, the people of Israel went each to his inheritance to take possession of the land.<sup>7</sup> 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.<sup>8</sup> And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of 110 years.<sup>9</sup> And they buried him within the boundaries of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the hill country of Ephraim, north of the mountain of Gaash.<sup>10</sup> 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.

<sup>11</sup> And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals.<sup>12</sup> 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.<sup>13</sup> They abandoned the LORD and served the Baals and the Ashtaroath.<sup>14</sup> 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.<sup>15</sup> 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.

*These verses tell the story of Israel's conquest a second time and help us to get another perspective on the events we have just read about. The passage begins by talking about the time before the death of Joshua.*

1. In Judges 2:6-10, what are the key differences between the two generations mentioned?
2. How were the generation you read about in Joshua 24:14-28 (see Reading 1) unfaithful to the promises they made?

2. For even if I made you grieve with my letter, I do not regret it—though I did regret it, for I see that that letter grieved you, though only for a while.<sup>9</sup> As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting. For

you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us.<sup>10</sup> For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.