



Era 5: Judges

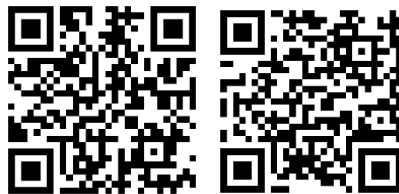
After Joshua died, the Israelites had conquered most of the land but not all the land. This was a problem because the Canaanites, who worshiped other gods, often led the Israelites astray.

Through Joshua, God told the Israelites that all these groups → Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites, Jebusites (what a mouthful!!) → must be wiped out. These groups were bad news. God wanted to protect His people from what those groups were doing so He instructed them to drive them out because He knew their influence would be bad for His people. The Israelites didn't do a great job at obeying God's instructions... uh-oh. The Israelites started to worship the Canaanite gods, and they even started marrying them. All the Israelites had to do was obey what God told them to do. They just had to go in and take the land, but they decided they didn't like God's plan and they were much happier living with the Canaanites. As you can imagine God was not happy about this. So, what do you think God did because of their disobedience?

This is where **ERA 5: JUDGES** comes in to play. God raised up judges to keep the people in check. First God raised up a judge. Then the people acted right for a while, but when the judge died, they went back to being disobedient. Their disobedience brought punishment. Finally, the people would cry out for mercy and the Lord gave them another judge to deliver them. A couple judges you may have heard of are Gideon and Samson.

This Sunday in church your children learned about the story of Gideon! **Scripture verses we covered:** Judges 6:2-3, 12, 14, 16, 34-35 & 7:2, 7, 20-21.

Watch Gideon's story with your child again!





Day 2: Ruth

How does Ruth fit in with the Judges era?

The book of Ruth opens with Ruth 1:1, “In the days when the Judges ruled there was a famine in the land, and a man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife, and his two sons.”

God took care of Naomi and Ruth by leading Ruth to Boaz after her husband, Naomi’s son, died during the famine. Ruth stayed faithful to Naomi and went with Naomi when she returned to Bethlehem. You can watch Ruth’s story here:



Ruth’s story happens during the dark period of the judges. It shows us that when we are faithful, God takes care of us. Her story is one of hope and faithfulness during a dark period where there seemed to be only hopelessness and faithlessness. Another awesome fact about Ruth is that she and Boaz (who happens to be the son of RAHAB → remember her from last week?) had a son, Obed. Obed is the father of Jesse. Jesse is the father of King David! And who comes from the family lineage of King David? **JESUS!!!**

Scripture verses you can read from the book of Ruth: Ruth 1:3-5, 8,16 & 2:2-3, 19-20

Family activity: Family necklace

- What you’ll need
 - Yarn or string
 - Different color beads
- What to do
 - Make a necklace with a different color bead for each member of your family.
 - When your child is finished making their necklace, ask them who each color stands for.



Day 3: Samson

In the years before Samson was born Israel had had many judges. Israel would forget about God and start worshiping the idols of the surrounding nations. God would punish them by allowing their enemies to conquer Israel. Eventually God's people would cry out to Him and He would send a judge (or leader) to help the people defeat their enemies. Finally, Israel would enjoy a time of peace until they began to forget God again and the cycle would start all over.

This time God allowed the Philistines to take over Israel for 40 years! But God had a plan to rescue His people from their enemies. One day the angel of the Lord appeared to a man named Manoah and his wife. The angel promised that they would have a son named Samson, and he would rescue the Israelites from the Philistines. Samson was to be set apart for God so the angel told Manoah and his wife that they were never to cut his hair. God blessed Samson and made him really strong! God was going to use Samson to save His people!

Watch the video below to learn more about Samson.



Here is a fun music video to go along with Samson's story. God made Samson SUPER strong. No one can ever be as strong and mighty as God, but God is so strong that He can help His people do anything He tells us to do!





Day 4: Samuel

The period of the judges ends with Samuel. Have you ever wondered where the verse, “Speak Lord, your servant is listening” came from? Here is your answer! God told Samuel that bad things would happen because of how bad Eli’s sons were, and Eli didn’t seem to be doing anything to make them stop being so wicked. Samuel became a prophet and the bridge between the period of Judges and the period of rule by kings (that is where we will pick up next week). Here are some videos about who Samuel was and why he was important!



Next week, we will learn about the era of the kings! See you there!