

#My Jubilee Bible

Reflection/Discussion Guide: Judges 16-1 Samuel 14; Psalm 78-84

This guide is broken into three parts:

1. A brief overview of the Scriptures you are reading this week
2. Personal devotion
3. Community group discussion and application

Feel free to answer the questions for personal devotion at your own pace. They are designed to help consider a section of Scripture: How God is revealing himself?, What God is doing?, Who are we in relation to God?, and What are we to do in light of this truth?

Overview of 1 Samuel

For a brief, but great overview of the book of 1 Samuel, please go to <http://www.jubileestl.org/my-jubilee-bible/>

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Personal Devotion

Reading the Scriptures devotionally is such a soul expanding, life enriching way to experience God through His word. There are several challenges that we can face as we read. The biggest one is to approach God and His Word as a critic, or a judge. This approach fills the gaps in our understanding with suspicion rather than trust.

Our goal is not to criticize God and His word, it is to look into the words of life and let them examine us. Our aim is to know God, love Him and respond with obedient faith.

With that in mind we want to approach God and His word with humility, desire and discipline.

Humility

There are four prayers in the Scriptures that can be easily remembered and incredibly helpful when approaching God to hear Him through His word. It's a simple acronym: I.O.U.'S.

"Incline my heart to your testimonies, and not to selfish gain!"—Psalm 119:36 ESB

"Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your law."—
Psalm 119:18 ESB

"Unite my heart to fear your name."—Psalm 86:11 ESB

"Sustain me with a willing spirit."—Psalm 51:12 NASB

Desire and Discipline

"Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.—1 Peter 2:2-3

Desire (longing) needs to lead to diligence (you have tasted) so that we may be satisfied that God really is good. Following are some questions and a format to help us grow in both desire and discipline.

As you read with humble desire and discipline, let these questions help lay some tracks for the train of your thoughts to run on. Start with who God is and what he's doing, then work through who you are and how you can respond.

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Who is God?

- How is he revealing about himself in the text I'm reading?
- What characteristics do I observe?

What is He doing?

- What are God's actions in the text I am reading?
- How do His actions match his revealed character?

Who am I?

- How do I fit into God's story?
- How do I relate to the people in the text I am reading?
- How do I relate to the circumstances they are in?

What do I do?

- How do I respond to God as He reveals Himself in the text I'm reading?
- How do I respond to what God is doing in the text I'm reading?
- How actions or attitudes do I need to change?

The following grid may help you keep track of your observations and applications.

1. Who is God?	3. Who I am?
2. What is God doing?	4. What do I need to do?

It's often helpful to have a way to record your observations and applications as you read. You can get a simple journal or notebook to write your thoughts down, or use the Bible App notes to keep a record of what you sense God is saying to you.

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CG Discussion Guide

Icebreaker: Give a brief description of BLESS and then ask: Who did you BLESS this week?

Read 1 Samuel 3:1-10

- What does this passage tell us about God?
 - How does he act?
 - What is in this passage that helps you love and appreciate God more?
- In verse one it says that visions from God were infrequent. Reflecting back on what we read in Judges, why do you think it might be rare for the people to hear from God?
- How can you relate to that statement?
 - When is the last time you felt you heard from God?
 - What did you sense God saying?
- In verse 4 Samuel thought Eli was speaking to him, suggesting that God speaks to us in ways that are familiar to us.
 - What are some ways that you have experienced God speaking to you?
 - How have you positioned yourself to listen?
- It takes Samuel hearing God three times before he becomes tuned in to God's voice.
 - How does that help us in understanding God?
 - How do you relate to Samuel in this story?
- Who do you have in your life who like Eli has helped you, or still helps you get a sense that God is speaking?
 - Who could you deputize to help you discern God's voice?
 - How can we help one another in discerning what God is saying?

Pray

- Pray for those who feel they have never heard God's voice would begin to hear and respond to what God is saying.
- Pray for us to grow as a listening community helping one another to grow to recognize and respond to God's voice. (John 10:16)

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Notes: