



Judges for You

Timothy J. Keller

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"Judges has only one hero God. As we read this as an account of how He works in history, it comes alive. The Book of Judges is not an easy read. But living in the times we do, it is an essential one." Join Dr Timothy Keller as he opens up the book of

Judges, helping you to get to grips with its meaning and showing how it transforms our hearts and lives today.

Written for people of every age and stage, from enquirers to new believers to pastors and teachers, this exible resource is the 2nd installment in the curriculum series, "God's Word For You."

Judges For You is for you to:

Read: As a guide to this historical narrative, pointing you forward to God's greatest rescue of all.

Feed: As a daily devotional to help you grow in Christ as you read and meditate on this portion of God's word.

Lead: As notes to aid you in explaining, illustrating and applying Judges as you preach or lead a Bible study.

Whoever you are, and however you use it, this is JUDGES FOR YOU.

Judges for You Details

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From Reader Review Judges for You for online ebook

Jackie Eason says

I've never studied Judges extensively, so this was helpful in the breakdown of verses and explanation of the narrative. Keller's emphasis on modern day idolatry is a bit of a stretch for me (since the Israelites had literally given themselves over to idolatry). I understand the basic analogy, but I would have enjoyed an emphasis on generational responsibility and being led by God instead of your own desires better. Also, he makes Gideon and Samson look much better than the Bible makes them look. I appreciate that this book made me look at the passages with a critical eye, though. The last two chapters were especially helpful for understanding the ending.

Rob Martin says

One of the best books I have read to date. Keller does a great job of revealing the gospel in the book of judges and leading you to a place of repentance and worship. This book is essential for the modern church.

Alex Houston says

Read my review here:

<http://reformed-at-last.blogspot.com/...>

Jeanie says

Judges is one of those books in the bible that can be difficult to read. And even more difficult to apply to your life. However, as the title indicates, Judges is for the believer. Just as Israel fell away from the Lord by worshipping God half way, we as Christians can make God into an idol that is far removed from what the word of God says. Because of that, the Lord will "force" his hand on his people just as He did with Israel. Keller, walks you thru this study that is in context and also shows the heart of God's people. God knows that whatever controls our heart, is what we idolize and worship. The main focus in Judges is the people did what was right in their own eyes and God's judgement throughout history is to give people over to the consequences of the life they have chosen. Because of this, the Lord, appointed Judges over Israel. Keller also points to the cross and the work of Christ. Judges is for you because it points you to the cross.

We also see the tension that we face today. God's grace and God's judgement. The only way God can love us both conditionally and unconditionally is at the cross. Without the Gospel of Christ crucified, we will always either complacently give in to sin or live under a burden of guilt and fear. The cross is where we find the tension resolved. The cross is where we find the freedom to accept ourselves without being proud and to challenge ourselves without being crushed. (kindle locat 304).

The judge that impacted me the most is was Gideon. He started out in obedience, however, he had some

hangups. Do you ever find yourself wanting or desiring to be needed? It can be deadly and just as Gideon soon found out. The book of Judges shows us that we are problem, back then and today. We cannot be our own solution. Just as Israel did, we need to search for the King and have him deal with our hearts. The study has the old with the promise of the new. With all the struggles we face with our heart and good intentions, we can have hope that Christ work is done and all we have to do is surrender our rebel hearts. Not as easy as it sounds, however, one of my favorite verses helps me in this every day...Be still and know that I am God.

complimentary review copy was provided to me by Cross Focused Reviews (A Service of Cross Focused Media, LLC). I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own

Kevin Thompson says

Simply put, I will never read the book of Judges the same way again and neither will you. This seems like a bold statement, but I believe the content of this book is worthy of such a claim.

For the past year or so I have been trying to focus on Biblical theology and learning the unfolding of redemptive history throughout the entire Bible, Old and New Testaments. Finding Jesus in the Old Testament is far more than looking for forced types and obscure prophecies, but it is about seeing a creation in desperate need of redemption. It's about seeing imperfect rulers pointing to the one whose shoulders one day all governments will rest. It's about seeing a sacrificial system that screams out the need for the one true sacrifice. I could go on and on but in reality, this commentary on Judges is a perfect example of seeing Christ in the Old Testament, in least likely placed you'd expect to see Him.

Often when we look through the pages of Judges we focus on tales of people we should or should not emulate. Be like this person, but not so much this person. Or, perhaps as children we learned the heroic stories of men like Gideon and Samson but glazed over their sinful indiscretions. In this book, Tim Keller walks us through many of these Biblical accounts, but with an eye to see man's sinfulness, God's faithfulness and the need of redemption only found in Jesus. This book is filled with the gospel. I cannot tell you how much I appreciate this perspective. It is a breath of fresh air.

The other highlight of this book is its devotional value. I would recommend this book as a devotional tool to use with your daily reading. It is incredibly easy to read and intensely practical. Not only does Keller explain the text in a manner that is understandable but he does so in such a way as to touch your daily life. This is far from a theological treatise for ivory tower types. It's theology for the working man.

I cannot recommend this book to you enough. Go out and buy a copy today. Warning, you'll need a highlighter, an open heart, a willingness to be challenged and some time set aside for thoughtful reflection to use the book most effectively.

Disclaimer: This book was provided by the publisher for review. I was under no obligation to offer a favorable review.

Dave Adams says

Me encantó. Creo que me gustó aun más que Gálatas para Ti porque no esperaba ver el evangelio en este libro. Y Keller siempre resalta el evangelio. En el libro de Jueces que parece ser tan violento y deprimente, nos señala a nuestra necesidad del mejor y verdadero Juez, el mejor y verdadero Salvador. ¡Muy recomendado!

Craig Hurst says

“In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit.” (Judges 21:25)

At the end of the book of Joshua Israel is in the land possessing it and driving out the pagan inhabitants under the leadership of Joshua. Israel is in the land God has promised them. If they are an obedient people they will keep possession of the promised land of Canaan. The book of Judges shows us how obedient, or, rather, how disobedient they have become.

Israel was to drive the Cannanites out from the land so they could live in covenant faithfulness to the Lord. They failed, miserably. “Though they had not wholly rejected God as their God, they had not wholly accepted him, either.” (23) This is the tension in the book of Judges which surfaces as we observe how Israel behaves before, during and after each of its judges.

In his reworked devotional on Judges, *Judges: The Flawed and the Flawless*, Tim Keller writes the second book in the new God’ Word For You Series, *Judges For You*, published by The Good Book Company. This series is designed so that one can simply read through the book to learn more about a particular book of the Bible, use the book to feed you for your personal devotions or serve as a guide to lead others in a small group setting.

Interpretational Guides for Judges

Before getting into the pages of Judges, Keller wisely points out six main themes that run through the book of Judges (10-12):

1. God relentlessly offer his grace to his people who do not deserve it, or seek it, or even appreciate it after they have been saved by it. Throughout the repetitive cycle of Israel throughout each judge, God’s grace is front and center in the face of Israel’s constant rebellion against God.
2. God wants lordship over every area of our lives, not just some. God wanted Israel to possess the entirety of Canaan but their disobedience to God in so many ways kept them from keeping possession of the land.
3. There is a tension between grace and law, between conditionality and unconditionality. This is the hardest aspect of the book of Judges to grasp. God blesses Israel despite their sin when they repent and God promises to only bless them if they are obedient. The question of tension is, are God’s promises conditional or unconditional? Keller answers both.
4. There is a need for continual spiritual renewal in our lives here on earth, and a way to make that a reality. The cycle of sin to repentance throughout the book of Judges shows us that because of our continual sin we are in need of continual spiritual renewal.
5. We need a true Savior, to which all human saviors point, through both their flaws and strengths. Through

the strengths and weaknesses of each of the judges we see the need for the true and better judge, Jesus Christ.

6. God is in charge, no matter what it looks like. If we merely look at Israel in Judges we might be prone to think God is not there amidst the rampant idolatry of his people. We would be wrong. God is always in the midst working towards his ends.

A Repeated Cycle to Summarize the Book

There is no question that one of the first things a familiar reader of Judges thinks of when they think of the book is the repeated cycle of Israel through the life of the judges. Though there are some minor variations of this cycle Keller lays the seven step cycle as seen in Judges 2:11-19:

1. The people rebel – vs. 11-12
2. God is angry – vs. 12
3. They are oppressed by their enemies – vs. 14-15
4. They repent and cry out to the Lord – vs. 15
5. God saves them through a chosen leader – vs. 16
6. Israel has peace for a time – vs. 18
7. The judge dies – vs. 19

With the passing of each judge Israel sinks deeper and deeper into the covenant unfaithfulness and idolatry with the gods of the other nations. “The thorn dug deeper and deeper; the snares pulled Israel more and more tightly. We will see as Judges progresses that the rebellion becomes worse, the oppression heavier, the repentance less heartfelt, the judges themselves more flawed, and the salvation and ‘revivals’ they bring weaker.” (34) The people of Israel go through a constant spiral, and a downward one at that.

Seeing Ourselves in Judges

It is very easy to read the book of Judges with 20/20 vision and be tempted to judge Israel for their continual rebellion against God. Surely, the last thing we would conclude is that Israel’s behavior is but a mirror reflection of our relationship with God. Who could or would want to be like that, we might ask ourselves. As Keller so aptly points out throughout the book, Judges is just that – a window and mirror into our own lives. Towards the end of the book, reflecting on the horrific events of chapter 19, Keller explains it nicely:

And they (Israel) show us, to an extent, ourselves. We may have secrets buried deep that bear resemblance in some (perhaps small) way to the conduct of the Gibeonites. Or we may not have committed such things, but (like the Levite) have failed to prevent them, enabling them through inaction. We will have all told ourselves and others a better story about ourselves and our conduct than the whole truth reveal. And, as the book of Judges has repeatedly challenged us about, we will have all allowed ourselves, unconsciously and even consciously, to be shaped and enslaved by our culture rather than by the Lord, whose name we call on, just like Israel. (187)

We may rightly shake our heads in disbelief at the repeated unbelief Israel displayed through their idolatry against God, but we must be willing to see ourselves right there with them.

Who Can Help?

The book of Judges serves as a reminder that no matter what good qualities men may have and no matter how gracious God can be with His rebellious people, his people still fail and we need a better Judge. In short,

the book of Judges leaves us with Israel languishing in a land they barely possess without a leader and desperately in need of a judge who can truly save his people. This savior will come without being called, will choose us without us having chosen him, will accomplish our salvation without us since we cannot do it ourselves nor contribute to it, will be victorious in death since we would remain dead and will remove evil from our hearts because we cannot, and will not, do it ourselves. (196) We need king Jesus!

Judges for You is now the best devotional I have read on the book of Judges. In classic Keller style your mind will be opened to the book in a fresh way and you will be challenged on every page. This is a must have for personal and group study on Judges. Keller puts you in the pages of Judges to show you why we all need Jesus, the perfect judge and savior.

Note: I received this book for free from The Good Book Co. through Cross Focused Reviews in exchange for an honest review. I was under no obligation to provide a favorable review. The words and thoughts expressed in this review are my own.

David Shaw says

Keller too often seeks to apply the smaller details of the stories in my opinion, but his analysis of the big point is usually quite helpful - especially with Gideon and Jephthah. His retelling of the stories brings them to life and helps you understand what is going on. He also seeks to put each passage in context of the book as a whole and considers how the passage contributes to the overall message.

Michael says

There were some really good parts in this lay-level commentary and some other parts that fell short of the mark in my opinion. It often seemed to me that Keller would be explaining why approaching a story in one way was to approach the story with "modern sensibilities" and then he would invariably seem to approach the same story from another direction that also seemed to be rife with "modern sensibilities. I'm glad I read it but I do feel like it went off the mark in several places.

Angie Arms McGill says

This is a compelling read. Keller manages to present a study of the book of Judges in a reader-friendly, conversational style, yet provide sound biblical theology at the same time.

The content is devotional, doctrinal, theological, and conversational, all at the same time. That, in itself, is not easily accomplished by an author.

Keller captures in vivid detail not only the difficulties of the biblical characters' lives he discusses, but God's saving grace at work through them...and by inference, through us as Christians.

His handling of the similarities between Samson's life and death and that of Jesus was enlightening to me and a beautiful portrayal of God's sovereignty.

Mike says

Parts of the Bible can be difficult to understand, but thankfully there are writers and scholars to help us find the answers to our questions. The book of Judges is such a book, and Tim Keller has painstakingly taken the time to get into the meat of the book and explain it. If you have wanted to get more from your reading or study of the book of Judges, this book will help get you through it.

Judges is full of stories of the Israelites sinning and rebelling against God, then begging for forgiveness, followed by that forgiveness. The people want a physical leader, but those leaders (judges) aren't always good, and the people fall into idolatry. Many times this happened because of involvement with the people around them, many times due to a failure of faith in their God. The parallels with today's believers and the world are astounding and relevant. Is the grass greener on the other side? Has God left us when we don't see Him working? Do we need to put someone/something up to worship? God's Word was written for us to learn and grow, and the Book of Judges is no exception. "Judges for You" will give you answers to questions you might have and will help you delve deeper into this interesting book of the Old Testament.

Tim Keller is a wonderful writer who has certainly done his preparation for this book. He carefully explains the thoughts and events with clarity and wisdom, making it possible for average Bible readers to get to the meat of this book. I have really enjoyed it and look forward to reading more of his work. This book would make a wonderful devotional book, book discussion choice, and even a book for Sunday School groups to study. I received my review copy from Cross Focused Reviews in exchange for an honest review.

Mitch Bedzyk says

Tim Keller doing what he does best: exalting Christ.

Keller does an excellent job of showing how Judges is ultimately pointing to our need for Christ, not a book about emulating super heroes. There are no misplaced or forced "Jesus jukes" here. He remains faithful to the text and always connects it to Christ and to the church today, showing how Judges is the most relevant book for our day and age. In short, Keller helps the modern, OT-illiterate church member read the Bible through new eyes; new Christological eyes.

Some of the details Keller draws attention to will make you never read the book the same. He's not devising a novel interpretive approach, adding meaning to the text. Rather, he brings to light little details that have always been there that often get overlooked by the modern reader. He helps the reader see what the Author of Judges is actually saying.

His treatment of Samson's story is simply outstanding. Highly recommended for preaching, Sunday school, and small groups.

This is one of those books I wish I could make everyone in my church read, because it would help them appreciate and read the OT more.

Kevin says

A fantastic tool for studying the book of Judges. The book is devotional in nature, but Keller isn't afraid to get into technical details that shine light on the text.

Again and again, Keller helped me in my study to turn my eyes towards Jesus, the ultimate righteous ruler who came as both savior and sovereign. The book of Judges is not afraid to look into the darkest, most depraved corners of the human heart. We see clearly that a human rescuer just won't cut it. That's why God himself needed to enter history in the man Jesus Christ.

Donna says

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Barbie N says

Excellent companion to the book of judges

Scholarly, analytical, but also devotional. Excellent as a companion to my daily reading as I worked my way through judges. Key thought...Weber man doing what seems right in his own eyes leads to the objectifying of women, rape, vengeance, and lawlessness. A timely lesson for today.
