

# JUDGES



When there was no King in Israel ...

# Introduction to Judges

The book of judges contains some of the most memorable stories in the Bible. Like the classic movie 'The Princess Bride' it is full of larger than life heroes and villains. Set in the period after Israel has taken possession of the promised land, it tells the story of the leaders (judges) God raises up to deliver his people from their enemies. But beyond the memorable characters and great victories, the book of judges has a darker side. The Israelites are stuck in a cycle of disobedience and unfaithfulness that is getting worse. By the end of the book the nation has degenerated into religious and moral anarchy. While God continues to provide judges for the people, it becomes clear they aren't the solution to Israel's continuing rebellion. We are left wondering how God can possibly stay faithful to a people who are so determined to rebel against him.



## Two Tips for studying Judges

1. Judges is great literature. Appreciate it! Don't be afraid of celebrating the great victories, enjoying the dark irony, and being stunned by the terrible tragedies. It might help to read the passage before you get to growthgroup. Perhaps you could also do some dramatic readings, where different people in the group read different parts of the story.



2. Remember, learning from stories is different to learning from other kinds of writing in the Bible. Stories are a powerful way of communicating but, unlike Paul's letters for example, they communicate indirectly. Stories Teach using tools like the plot, the characters, the narrator's comments, word plays and variations of patterns. To find the main point of a story you need to look for how these tools have been used to give a main point. Then you work out how the main point applies to us as Christians. This might sound like a daunting process, but that's what these studies are designed to help you do.

