

SUNGAI WAY-SUBANG METHODIST CHURCH

Being with Jesus

VOL 1, JANUARY–MARCH 2023

NAME:

Love God Love People

Mark 12:29-31

Make Disciples

Matthew 28:19-20

Reading Schedule **JANUARY – MARCH 2023**

BEING WITH *Jesus* 2023

	JANUARY		FEBRUARY		MARCH	
Sun	1					
Mon	2	Joshua 1:1–9				
Tue	3	Joshua 1:10–18				
Wed	4	Joshua 2:1–24	1	Joshua 19:40–48	1	Judges 6:17–24
Thu	5	Joshua 3:1–17	2	Joshua 19:49–51	2	Judges 6:25–26
Fri	6	Joshua 4:1–24	3	Joshua 20:1–9	3	Judges 6:27–32
Sat	7	Joshua 5:1–12	4	Joshua 21:1–45	4	Judges 6:33–35
Sun	8		5		5	
Mon	9	Joshua 5:13–15	6	Joshua 22:1–34	6	Judges 6:36–40
Tue	10	Joshua 6:1–20	7	Joshua 23:1–16	7	Judges 7:1–8a
Wed	11	Joshua 6:21–27	8	Joshua 24:1–28	8	Judges 7:8b–22
Thu	12	Joshua 7:1–26	9	Joshua 24:29–33	9	Judges 7:23–8:3
Fri	13	Joshua 8:1–29	10	Judges 1:1–18	10	Judges 8:4–23
Sat	14	Joshua 8:30–35	11	Judges 1:19–36	11	Judges 8:24–28
Sun	15		12		12	
Mon	16	Joshua 9:1–27	13	Judges 2:1–5	13	Judges 8:29–35
Tue	17	Joshua 10:1–15	14	Judges 2:6–9	14	Judges 9:1–21
Wed	18	Joshua 10:16–43	15	Judges 2:10–13	15	Judges 9:22–57
Thu	19	Joshua 11:1–15	16	Judges 2:14–15	16	Judges 10:1–16
Fri	20	Joshua 11:16–23	17	Judges 2:16–18	17	Judges 10:17–11:3
Sat	21	Joshua 12:1–12:24	18	Judges 2:19–3:6	18	Judges 11:4–11
Sun	22		19		19	
Mon	23	Joshua 13:1–13	20	Judges 3:7–31	20	Judges 11:12–28
Tue	24	Joshua 13:14–14:5	21	Judges 4:1–9	21	Judges 11:29–40
Wed	25	Joshua 14:6–15	22	Judges 4:10–24	22	Judges 12:1–4
Thu	26	Joshua 15:1–15:63	23	Judges 5:1–13	23	Judges 12:5–15
Fri	27	Joshua 16:1–17:18	24	Judges 5:14–18	24	Judges 13:1–25
Sat	28	Joshua 18:1–10	25	Judges 5:19–31	25	Judges 14:1–4
Sun	29		26		26	
Mon	30	Joshua 18:11–19:9	27	Judges 6:1–10	27	Judges 14:5–20
Tue	31	Joshua 19:10–39	28	Judges 6:11–16	28	Judges 15:1–17
Wed					29	Judges 15:18–20
Thu					30	Judges 16:1–14
Fri					31	Judges 16:15–22

PASTORAL MESSAGE

Dear SSMC Family,

Greetings in Jesus' name!

Here we are again, at the start of another new year – 2023. For some, we will start with a clean slate, driven by new hope and aspirations. For others, there is disquiet and a sense of the fear of potentially challenging head winds over the horizon. Scripture exhorts us to have the right posture and attitude.

“Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus” (1 Thes 5:16-18).

“Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for He who promised is faithful” (Heb 10:23).

“...Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us” (Eph 3:20).

Pardon me for sounding like a broken record, but I believe reminders are important. The great Apostle Paul writes, ***“It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you” (Phil 3:1b).*** We are easily distracted and we lose focus. Hence, reminders serve as a safeguard to help us to recenter, to focus, and to stay the course. Some of the phrases we hear regularly and repeatedly are important principles and truths:

1. LOVE GOD, LOVE PEOPLE, MAKE DISCIPLES – defines who we are and what we do.
2. JESUS CHRIST is LORD – all domain and life are to be unified under and around Him.
3. The WORD is INFORMATIONAL and TRANSFORMATIONAL - the HEAD-HEART-HAND nexus.
4. OBEDIENCE is the highest worship that unleashes His blessings and power.

PASTORAL MESSAGE

I continue to encourage everyone to participate in reading BWJ 2023 Q1 as we journey through the pages of the books of Joshua and Judges. The conquest of the Promise Land by Joshua, and Israel's subsequent rejection of Yahweh as their LORD and KING resulted in the progressive downward spiral of society and nation. Israel had become unhinged.

As you read, continue to pay attention to the above principles. Apply these truths in our daily context. Share your stories to inspire and challenge others.

Love God, Love People, Make Disciples.

Humbly,

Pastor Robin and the Leadership Team

Introduction to Joshua & Judges

This new year, we will be reading through selected books of the Bible. We will start the year off by reading through the books of Joshua and Judges. Together we will see God's faithfulness and Israel's varied responses to that faithfulness.

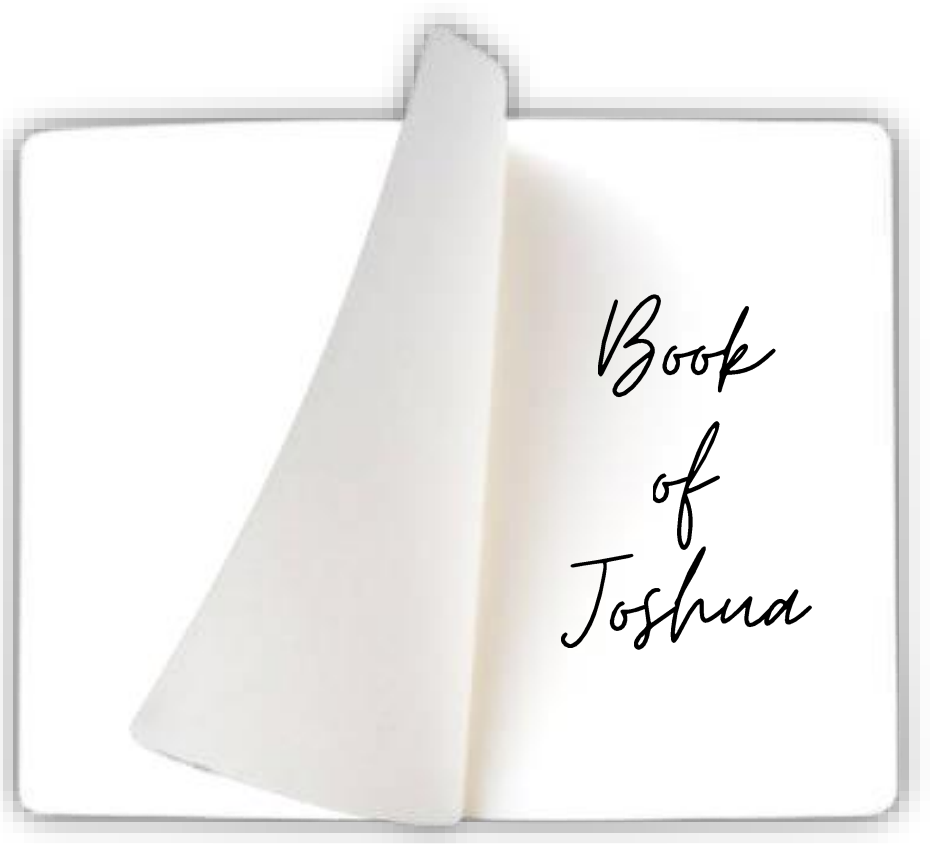
As we continue in the spiritual discipline of reading Scripture, let us strive to build ourselves and others up. Let us spend time in His Word, and let us also live His Word in our faith communities. For couples and families, try to read and share together throughout this year. For the entire church family, I pray that each of us will be rooted in a small group of faithful disciples, that we may all grow together. The lessons of Scripture in general, and of Joshua and Judges in particular, are not purely individualistic, and we and our house would do well to serve the Lord communally (Joshua 24:15). This is particularly true as we work through stark examples of the fallen nature of man before a Holy and Righteous God.

For 2023 we will continue to provide questions for the reader(s) to ponder. The pronouns 'I', 'me', and 'my' are used to indicate the personal nature of the proposed reflections. This however should not be seen as being individual-focused, couples and families should consider self-inserting 'we' and 'our' instead where appropriate. For those who prefer to focus on Scripture alone, feel free to do so, as Scripture stands above all the thoughts of men. However, for those who prefer more guidance and background, the readings for this year are loosely based on the JourneyThrough series published by Our Daily Bread Ministries. These readings can be found online at <https://journeythrough.org/all-courses/> devotional booklets available at local Christian bookstores as well.

May the Holy Spirit guide our reading of His Word. As our heads and hearts are engaged, may our hands also be moved by the Spirit according to His direction.

Yours truly,
Ng Oon-Ee (Christian Education)

This edition of Being With Jesus has seen significant contributions from various disciples in the body. Special thanks to Poh Gaik, Eddy, and Rosalind for their efforts and time.



JAN 1, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

JAN 2, MONDAY

Joshua 1:1–9

Commands and Promises

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Are God's promises here conditional on Joshua's obedience? 2) Do I focus more on God's commands, or on His promises? How can I meditate on both, without neglecting either one? 3) What is one specific command from God that I need to keep today? What is one specific promise that will encourage and strengthen me?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JAN 3, TUESDAY

Joshua 1:10–18

Conveying the Lord's Commands

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What opportunities do I have (or create) to hear others reiterate what God is saying to me? 2) Reflecting on my obedience to God's Word, in what ways am I similar or dissimilar to Joshua? 3) Is there someone to whom I could remind of God's Word, reaffirm His promises, or reiterate His commands?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JAN 4, WEDNESDAY

Joshua 2:1–24

I Know That the Lord Has Given You This Land

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Why does Rahab provide aid to the foreign spies? 2) What does this familiar story tell me about trusting God and about interacting with 'pagans' and 'unbelievers'? 3) How can I pray for faith to arise in those who are not yet in God's kingdom?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

JAN 5, THURSDAY

Joshua 3:1–17

The Lord Will Do Amazing Things Among You

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JAN 6, FRIDAY

Joshua 4:1–24

The Stones Are There to This Day

Context

Questions
to ponder

- 1) For whom was the altar of 12 stones established?
- 2) What are some things the Lord has done for me?
How can I commemorate them for others to remember God's glory?
- 3) What does our church choose to remember and commemorate? Is there a memorial altar of some form that we should establish?

Head

What can I understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

JAN 7, SATURDAY

Joshua 5:1–12

End of the Exodus

Context	<p>1) The Exodus began with the Passover (Exodus 12), and now ends with a celebration of the Passover. An entire new generation of Israelites had not been circumcised on the way. Why?</p> <p>2) What is the significance of circumcision to us as Christians?</p> <p>3) When the Lord had fulfilled His promise to bring Israel into a land flowing with milk and honey, the manna from heaven stopped. How has God's provision in my life changed over time?</p>
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

JAN 8, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

JAN 9, MONDAY

Joshua 5:13–15

What Message Does My Lord Have?

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) How does the commander of the Lord's army respond to Joshua's challenge? What warning can we take in the (social/political) wars we wage today? 2) What does Joshua's response in Joshua 5:14 tell us about his heart posture before God? 3) How have I been listening to and responding to God?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JAN 10, TUESDAY

Joshua 6:1–20

Jericho Delivered to Israel

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What purpose did the 7 days of marching serve? Couldn't the Lord have brought Jericho's walls down on the first day? 2) Compare God's instructions (as stated by Joshua) with the actions of the entire Israelite army. How have I seen the fruit of obedience in my walk with God? 3) Only one house is to be spared in the city. Who occupies this house, and why are all in the house spared?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JAN 11, WEDNESDAY

Joshua 6:21–27

Rahab and Family Brought Out

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Why are the two young spies specifically tasked with protecting Rahab and those with her? 2) Joshua refers to Rahab as 'the prostitute', a phrase which was no less 'polite' then than now. Yet Rahab would be the direct ancestor of David and, ultimately, Jesus. Do I consider this story of redemption to be inspiring? Why or why not? 3) There is hope for every person, no matter their background. Who in my life can I pray for right now to receive the Lord's protection and salvation?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JAN 12, THURSDAY

Joshua 7:1–26

The Sin of Achan

Context

Questions
to ponder

- 1) How many people died as a result of Achan's sin? What does this tell us about the consequences of sinning against a righteous God?
- 2) What do the warnings of verses 12 and 13 tell me about the danger of not dealing with sin?
- 3) Give glory to the Lord! What unresolved area of my life can I bring before God today?

Head

What can I understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

JAN 13, FRIDAY

Joshua 8:1–29

Ai Destroyed

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Keeping in mind the sin of Achan (yesterday's reading), what interesting difference do I see between God's commands in Joshua 6:18-19 and Joshua 8:2? 2) As with Jericho (except for Rahab and those who were hers), all the inhabitants of Ai were killed. Genesis 15:16, Deuteronomy 9:4, and other similar verses explain why God gives this command. What do I think of this, and how am I to respond?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Take a moment to meditate on sin, judgement, death, and grace. What does God want me to know about how these interact?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JAN 14, SATURDAY

Joshua 8:30–35

Renewing the Covenant

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Joshua and the Israelites are obeying God's command (see Deu 27). What does the Law mean to us as disciples of Christ? 2) Have I ever returned to the place where I made my first commitment to the Lord? In what ways does it hold special meaning to me? 3) Take a moment to renew your commitment to the Lord. Do so in prayer to the Lord.
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JAN 15, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

JAN 16, MONDAY

Joshua 9:1–27

Without Inquiring of the Lord

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Joshua and Israel were deceived into a treaty that contradicted God's command. What did they decide to do? 2) Have I ever faced a dilemma of conflicting laws or commands? What were they, and how did I resolve the dilemma? 3) When did I last ask the Lord for wisdom? How did the Lord answer me?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JAN 17, TUESDAY

Joshua 10:1–15

Surely the Lord Was Fighting for Israel

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JAN 18, WEDNESDAY

Joshua 10:16–43

Just as the Lord Had Commanded

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The execution of the five kings brings to mind Psalm 110:1, which is repeatedly referenced in the New Testament. What does this act symbolize to Joshua and Israel? 2) The second half of today's passage has a repetitive structure, and ends with the conclusion in vs 40. What is my main takeaway for these battle accounts? 3) "Joshua, and all Israel with him.." did as God commanded. How can we, the church, do likewise?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JAN 19, THURSDAY

Joshua 11:1–15

Weapons of Warfare

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Joshua and Israel now face the northern kings. What specific military advantage do these kings have according to Scripture? 2) What would be the best way to use the weapons of defeated enemies? What was God's instruction? 3) How have I placed my trust in the Lord rather than in earthly tools? How can I continue to do so?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JAN 20, FRIDAY

Joshua 11:16–23

For a Long Time

Context

Questions
to ponder

- 1) The conquest described in these chapters took years (estimated 7 years). Joshua would be roughly 80 years old during these accounts. Who do I know who continues to show godly faith at an older age?
- 2) What can I learn from those who have followed the Lord's commands for many years?
- 3) How can I help to cultivate a patient and lasting faith in a brother or sister today?

Head

What can I understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

JAN 21, SATURDAY

Joshua 12:1–12:24

Defeated Kings

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The victories God has won for Joshua and Israel so far are listed in today's passage. What are the victories God has won for me? 2) Have I seen kings and powers brought low by God's miraculous power? How can I pass these experiences on to others within the church? 3) The land now has rest (Joshua 11:23) from war, and has been claimed as an inheritance by Israel. Hebrews 4:1 describes our own Sabbath rest as disciples of Christ. Am I prepared to enter that rest?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JAN 22, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

JAN 23, MONDAY

Joshua 13:1–13

Inheritance Promised or Inheritance Received?

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) "There are still very large areas of land to be taken over." Had Joshua failed or run out of time? 2) Would I prefer to have received an inheritance or to be promised an inheritance in the future? 3) What does today's passage tell me about the relationship between God's actions on my behalf and my own efforts?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JAN 24, TUESDAY

Joshua 13:14–14:5

No Inheritance for Levi

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Why is the tribe of Levi not granted territory as an inheritance? The accounts of Genesis 34:24-30 and Genesis 49:5-7 explain the history behind this. 2) Who are those in our own community who have 'not received an inheritance' from the Lord in the same manner as the rest of the community? 3) What does the tribe of Levi receive instead? What hope does this give to me and my faith community?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JAN 25, WEDNESDAY

Joshua 14:6–15

I Am Still as Strong Today

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Caleb and the men of his tribe claim the hill country where he had walked decades earlier. How long am I willing to wait to see God's promise fulfilled in my life? 2) What does Caleb's testimony teach me about age and enthusiasm? How does this apply to my own walk of faith? 3) While Joshua 14:11 is often quoted, the ending of verse 12 arguably tells us more about Caleb's faith. Let us pray that our families and faith community will have this vigorous and active faith throughout the generations!
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JAN 26, THURSDAY

Joshua 15:1–63

Claiming Their Inheritance

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) After the faith-filled statements of yesterday's reading, Caleb and Judah now set about claiming the inheritance allotted to them. How have I recently acted in accordance with God's promises to me? 2) Amid this territorial description is a short description of the challenges Caleb and Judah faced in claiming their inheritance. Who were these Anakites (also mentioned in Joshua 14:12)? 3) In today's reading we are introduced to Othniel, a younger member of the tribe of Judah. What does the interaction between Caleb, Aksah, and Othniel teach us about inter-generational service to God?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JAN 27, FRIDAY

Joshua 16:1–17:18

But They Did Not Drive Them Out Completely

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The inheritance of the tribes was to be passed down to sons, but the daughters of Zelophehad also claimed an inheritance. Why does Joshua entertain this request (see Numbers 27 and 36 for context)? 2) The tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh also have a request, which Joshua does not entertain. What instruction does Joshua give to them? 3) Numerous times this phrase is repeated (both here and throughout the rest of Joshua) – "they did not drive them out". Were the Israelites unable or unwilling? Am I unable or unwilling?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JAN 28, SATURDAY

Joshua 18:1–10

How Long Will You Wait?

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The whole assembly of Israel is at Shiloh (instead of Gilgal), roughly in the center of the Promised Land. What is the significance of the setting up of the tabernacle here? 2) Joshua's exasperation with the tribes of Israel is evident in Joshua 18:3. Why does Israel wait? Am I dragging my feet to obey God's commands and promises? 3) How do we recognise spiritual complacency and lazy contentment in our own spiritual communities?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JAN 29, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

JAN 30, MONDAY

Joshua 18:11–19:9

Allocation of the South

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Benjamin and Simeon in the south border Judah's territory, and these tribes are closely linked (even till the time of the divided kingdom). Who are those closest to me in Christ's body? 2) Closeness can breed cooperation but also competition. Famously Saul of Benjamin would spend years hunting David of Judah. Am I currently participating in a 'family conflict' within the body of Christ?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) How can we in our faith community support each other rather than competing with each other?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JAN 31, TUESDAY

Joshua 19:10–39

Allocation of the North

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The northern territories are allotted to Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, and Naphtali. Along with the other northern tribes in the time of the divided kingdom, their kings would forsake the Lord and they would be eventually carried into exile by Assyria. What is the effect of faithless leadership on faith communities? 2) Nevertheless, the humbled lands of Zebulun and Naphtali (Isaiah 9:1-2) are to see a great light (Matthew 4:15-17). What is the hope of those of us who stray from God's promises?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) One of those in the temple to greet Jesus was Anna of Asher (Luke 2:36). Am I to be one of those who remains faithful despite of my community?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

Alternative Inheritance

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The tribe of Dan are men of action (as seen in Joshua 19:47). How does this contrast with the rest of the tribes of Israel? 2) Perhaps the most famous descendant of the tribe of Dan is the judge Samson, on whom the Spirit of God fell. Was he a man of action? Am I similar to Samson? (We will study Samson's life more in next month's readings) 3) Another descendant of the tribe of Dan is Oholiab who, filled with the Spirit of God, assisted Bezalel in making the tabernacle and its articles of worship. Was he a man of action? How can I use my God-given gifts and being in-filled by the Holy Spirit to honour God?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

FEB 2, THURSDAY

Joshua 19:49–51

Allocation for Joshua

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Joshua himself receives an allocation within his tribe's territory, honouring his lifetime of serving God and Israel. Take a moment to recall Joshua's journey from assisting Moses through to the allocation of the Promised Land. 2) Joshua's actions showed him faithful, brave, and obedient. Can I too demonstrate these qualities in my walk of discipleship? 3) A close reading of the book of Joshua indicates that Joshua's courage was probably not in-born, as God's Word to Joshua repeatedly exhorts him to "be strong and courageous". What comfort can I take from this demonstration of God's sovereignty over my inadequacy?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

FEB 3, FRIDAY

Joshua 20:1-9

Cities of Refuge

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Half the cities of refuge (see Deuteronomy 19:1-13) had already been set apart east of the Jordan; now Israel designates the remaining 3 cities west of the Jordan. What is the purpose of these cities? 2) What would the effect of these cities of refuge be on the victim's families and in particular on the 'avenger of blood'? 3) The fugitive who takes refuge in one of these cities is confined there till the trial before the assembly and the death of the high priest. What parallel is there to this for the Christian before their great high priest?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

FEB 4, SATURDAY

Joshua 21:1–45

Every Good Promise of the Lord Was Fulfilled

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Cities for the Levites were given (by the tribes) as the Lord had commanded; some in every tribe's territory, fulfilling the prophecy of Jacob (Genesis 49:7). How is this dispersed tribe to sustain itself? 2) This account ends the allocation of the entire promised land. Joshua 20:43-45 concludes that every good promise of the Lord was fulfilled. What specific promises were these? 3) Which of the Lord's promises have I seen fulfilled in my own life? Who can I share them with today?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

FEB 5, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

FEB 6, MONDAY

Joshua 22:1–34

Be Very Careful to Keep The Commandment and the Law

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Which of Joshua's five challenges (Joshua 22:5) resonates with me the most? Why? 2) Almost immediately, Israel faces a seeming disobedience to God by the returning eastern tribes. What do the responses of Phinehas and the leaders of all the tribes tell us about their devotion to God? 3) Even when the eastern tribes and the rest of Israel were motivated by Godly motivations, conflict and destruction were narrowly averted. What does this tell us about sharp disputes even within the body of Christ?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

FEB 7, TUESDAY

Joshua 23:1–16

Hold Fast to the Lord Your God

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Here Joshua speaks to the leaders of Israel and exhorts them to remain true to the Lord. 2) What faithfulness is demanded of Israel by Joshua? 3) How can I build habits of faithfulness in line with the great faithfulness God has demonstrated to me and mine?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

FEB 8, WEDNESDAY

Joshua 24:1–28

We Will Serve the Lord!

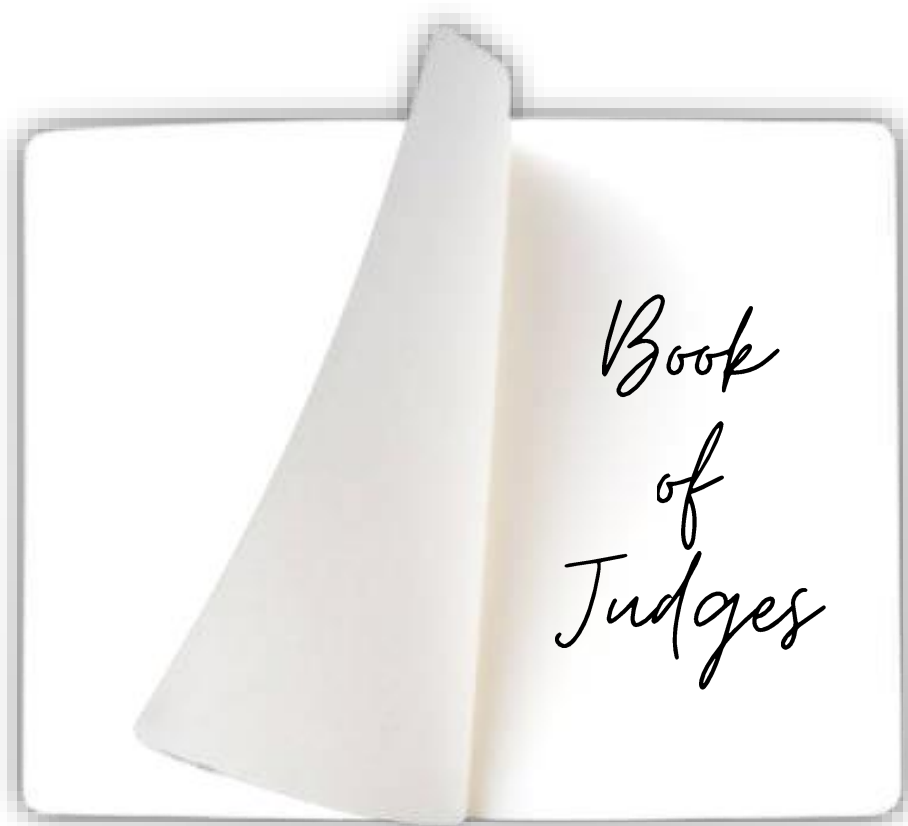
Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Joshua now speaks to all Israel and recounts the history of the children of Israel. What is my own spiritual history? 2) How can I and my household serve the Lord? How can we ensure we will continue to do so faithfully? 3) Joshua's entreaties to Israel are both positive (serve the Lord) and negative (throw away the foreign gods). How does all Israel reply? Do I have some false gods that I need to throw away?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

FEB 9, THURSDAY

Joshua 24:29–33

Dead and Buried

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Joshua, Joseph, and Eleazar's burials are described here. Spend some time to recall the stories of God's work in their lives. 2) What characteristic of Joshua's life can I encourage a brother or sister to emulate for the glory of God? 3) Pray in your own words, "Lord, You know the number of my days. May I bring You glory and honour and praise."
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	



FEB 10, FRIDAY

Judges 1:1–18

The Claiming of the Promised Land Continues

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Israel inquires of the Lord, obeys, and claims more territory. Does the account in today's passage differ in any way from the accounts we have just read in the book of Joshua? 2) The book of Judges will describe Israel's downward spirals after the death of Joshua. Do I feel a personal downward spiral, and if so, why? 3) How can I keep the promise I have made that "we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24)?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

FEB 11, SATURDAY

Judges 1:19–36

They Were Unable to Drive Them Out?

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Have Joshua's words in Joshua 17:18 been disproven? 2) Am I only partially obedient to the Lord's commands? 3) What are the consequences of partial obedience?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

FEB 12, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

FEB 13, MONDAY

Judges 2:1–5

Not All Promises Are Good

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What is the promise that the Lord now makes to Israel? 2) What is it that has led to this consequence? Have I experienced the thorns and snares of persistently refusing to completely obey God's commands? 3) Let us take a moment to seek the Lord's forgiveness and mercy in complete repentance.
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

FEB 14, TUESDAY

Judges 2:6-9

Throughout the Lifetime of Joshua

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The people served the Lord while led by men who had seen all the great works of the Lord. Is this true in our faith community? 2) What must we do to retain "first generation" fervour for God in our faith community? 3) Joshua was responsive to God's Word and applied his faith in prompt and decisive action. What is one thing I need to do today to emulate him?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

FEB 15, WEDNESDAY

Judges 2:10–13

Another Generation Who Knew Not the Lord

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What are the markers of a generation who forsook the Lord? 2) In what way can Christ's disciples today be complacent and compromised in our faith? 3) "Inherited faith" is not impossible (see Paul's description of Timothy), but the book of Judges shows the depths that Israel falls to after Joshua's generation. How can I and my family maintain a vibrant faith?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

FEB 16, THURSDAY

Judges 2:14–15

Consequences of Sin

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What is the primary sin of Israel that will be described throughout Judges? 2) What are the repeated consequences of sin that will be described throughout Judges? 3) Even in judgement, God's mercy and grace are still available to those who cry out to him. What can I do to remain in an attitude of thankfulness for God's mercy and grace?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

FEB 17, FRIDAY

Judges 2:16–18

Salvation From the Hands of Their Enemies

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The book of Judges features men (called judges) raised up by the Lord for the salvation of the people of Israel. How has God done the same in my life? 2) Most of the judges served a military or leadership purpose and were directly appointed by God. What parallels can we see with the leadership of our present-day churches and nations? 3) Though the book of Judges has a beginning and an end, God's love and mercy reaching out to us has no end. Let us give thanks to Him today.
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

FEB 18, SATURDAY

Judges 2:19–3:6

Enemies Allowed to Remain

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Israel's transgressions are the root cause of some nations remaining in the Promised Land. What additional purpose does God give for this happening? 2) We sometimes hear of mighty acts of deliverance where God totally removes an ailment or problem from a disciple's life. Can we also share about the adversities which God allows to remain? 3) What purpose is God working out in the adversities of my faith walk?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

FEB 19, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

FEB 20, MONDAY

Judges 3:7–31

God Uses All Kinds of People

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Ehud was left-handed, Shamgar probably a peasant, yet along with the respectable Othniel, all are used by God. What limitations can prevent men from fulfilling God's purposes? 2) Do I believe that my limitations are not limitations to God's work? 3) How can I step out in faith and let God use me for His glory?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

FEB 21, TUESDAY

Judges 4:1–9

The Honour Will Not Be Yours

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) How does Deborah's leadership contrast with Barak's? 2) Why does Deborah (as Israel's judge) call upon Barak to lead the army? 3) What do gender roles (and related social norms and expectations) mean when it comes to service and leadership in our faith community? Does Galatians 3:28 apply here?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

FEB 22, WEDNESDAY

Judges 4:10–24

Victory from Unexpected Sources

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Israel is severely out-numbered and lacking weapons of war (Judges 5:8), especially for battle on the plains (Judges 4:14). How does God rout the superior Canaanite army (see Judges 5:21)? 2) The Bible does not say why Jael (a non-Jewish woman allied with Jabin) would kill Sisera. What prophecy of Deborah does this fulfill? 3) How can I learn to "Go!" in obedience when faced with 'certain' defeat and disaster?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

FEB 23, THURSDAY

Judges 5:1–13

Willingly Offering Themselves

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Deborah's song tells of desperate times and God's intervention. What does God do according to this song? 2) How did the people of Israel respond when called out to war? 3) Is my response to God's call to action like that of Israel's? How can I cultivate such a heart that responds freely, voluntarily, and eagerly?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

FEB 24, FRIDAY

Judges 5:14–18

Responses of the Tribes

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Many tribes, especially Issachar, Zebulun, and Naphtali, responded enthusiastically and bravely to Barak's call. Do I respond in this way to God's call? 2) The tribe of Reuben engaged in "much searching of heart", but no action was to come from them. Do I respond in this way to God's call? 3) Gilead, Dan, and Asher stayed apart and conducted their own regular business. Do I respond in this way to God's call?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

FEB 25, SATURDAY

Judges 5:19–31

Cursed and Blessed by Their Actions

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Compare the town Meroz and the woman Jael. Which of them did according to the Lord's commands? 2) Does God need Meroz or any other group of people to fulfill His plans and purposes? What does this tell me about freely serving without obligation? 3) How can I encourage a brother or sister who is discouraged with their service of God?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

FEB 26, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

FEB 27, MONDAY

Judges 6:1–10

But You Have Not Listened to Me

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) This time, Israel's cries for help were not answered with a judge, but with a prophet. What is this prophet's message? 2) Some (not all!) of our challenging situations can be the consequence of our own actions and disobedience. Do I need a (divine) reminder today? 3) Read Judges 7:8-10 again; what is God's focus in this Word? What does God have to tell me today?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

FEB 28, TUESDAY

Judges 6:11–16

Go in the Strength That You Have

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What does today's passage (Gideon's words and actions) tell us about how Gideon saw himself? 2) What does today's passage (God's Words) tell us about how God saw Gideon? 3) Am I inadequate to serve God? Does God see me that way? What then should I do today?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAR 1, WEDNESDAY

Judges 6:17–24

Gideon Seeks a Sign

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Gideon seeks a sign and prepares a huge quantity of food (in a time of famine!). What can I understand about his intentions here? 2) When Gideon receives his sign, his immediate reaction is woe and guilt. What is my own reaction to God's awesomeness? 3) How can I allow Jehovah Shalom (the Lord is Peace) to transform my heart?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAR 2, THURSDAY

Judges 6:25–26

No Other Gods

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Before the land is to be cleansed of the Midianites, Gideon is to cleanse his household of pagan objects of worship. What does this teach us about worship of the one true God? 2) What "false altars" might be taking the place of God in my life? 3) God's instructions are not just to cleanse, but also to build. How can I build 'a proper kind of altar' in my life, in my family, and in my faith community?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAR 3, FRIDAY

Judges 6:27–32

Let Baal Contend with Him

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAR 4, SATURDAY

Judges 6:33–35

The Spirit of the Lord Came on Gideon

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Some translations say the Spirit of the Lord 'clothed' Gideon, as a suit or armour would. What is the result of this 'cloth-ing' of a fearful but obedient servant? 2) Based on the readings in the past few days, why was Gideon chosen to be 'clothed' with the Spirit of the Lord? 3) How can I allow the Holy Spirit to 'clothe' me in my life both within and without my faith community?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAR 5, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

MAR 6, MONDAY

Judges 6:36–40

Gideon Seeks More Signs

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Gideon already knew what God's will and instructions were (Judges 7:14, 16). Why does he then insist on setting out his wool fleece? 2) Do Gideon's actions grant him any (more) certainty than he had prior to asking for more signs? Have I 'set my fleece out' despite knowing God's instructions? 3) What was God's response to Gideon's doubt? How can I respond similarly to a brother or sister who doubts?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAR 7, TUESDAY

Judges 7:1–8a

Too Strong To Be Used

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Twice God tells Gideon "You have too many men". Twice Gideon obeys and sends men home. Why does God do this? 2) In yesterday's reading, Gideon sought arbitrary signs from God. Does God now seek arbitrary obedience from Gideon? 3) How can I radically depend on God's strength and not my own?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAR 8, WEDNESDAY

Judges 7:8b–22

God's Word from Midianite Mouths

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Gideon continues to be obedient, but what is his heart attitude according to today's passage? 2) What is Gideon's reaction to hearing the prophetic dream and interpretation? 3) Is God calling me to do something that I do not understand? How can I hold on to His commands and promises?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAR 9, THURSDAY

Judges 7:23–8:3

Tribal Disputes

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What is the Ephraimites' contention with Gideon? Have I seen similar contentions arise amongst the churches of Christ? 2) Was Gideon's answer to the Ephraimites wise? Was it cowardly? Was it from God? 3) What can I do to keep my focus on God even in times of victory?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAR 10, FRIDAY

Judges 8:4–23

God-centred or Gideon-Centred?

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) In today's passage, does God speak to and through Gideon? What is the source behind each of Gideon's recorded actions? 2) Is there a marked difference between the attitude of Gideon recorded in today's reading compared to the Gideon described in the past few days? 3) How can I avoid shifting my focus to a self-centred agenda while obeying God's commands and instructions?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAR 11, SATURDAY

Judges 8:24–28

Building His Own Snare

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) In yesterday's reading, Gideon affirmed God's sovereign rule over Israel. Why then does he make an idol in today's reading? 2) How have I seen myself or others take great God-victories and then engage in compromised idolatry? 3) The ephod proves to be a snare to Israel. Do I see similar snares in my life or the lives of my brothers and sisters?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAR 12, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

MAR 13, MONDAY

Judges 8:29–35

I Will Not Rule Over You

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) In Judges 8:23, Gideon refused the kingship of Israel. His son is named Abimelech, which translates to "my father is king". What else in today's reading indicates the lifestyle of a ruler? 2) God had already given a specific instructions for kings in Deuteronomy 17:17. How does Gideon's life after defeating Midian reflect his calling from God? 3) How has my dedication to God altered my own life? Am I backsliding from complete obedience to God?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAR 14, TUESDAY

Judges 9:1–21

Which Is Better for You?

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Judges 9:2 has Abimelech presenting a false dichotomy between the rule of Gideon's other sons and himself as ruler. What is the righteous answer which is missing here (and throughout this reading)? 2) Israel lacked Godly leadership, what actions resulted from this? 3) Is there a power vacuum in our faith community, in our family, or in our own lives? Who should be our King?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAR 15, WEDNESDAY

Judges 9:22–57

The Leader That They Deserve

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Scripture tells us that "God stirred up animosity between Abimelech and the citizens of Shechem". What grievances would the people of Shechem have expressed? 2) In times of turmoil, we always look for a strong leader. Who gained the confidence of the citizens of Shechem, and what was the result of their trust in him? 3) How can we avoid the folly of the citizens of Shechem? What does it mean to enthrone the Rightful King in our lives and communities?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAR 16, THURSDAY

Judges 10:1–16

Regret or Repentance?

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Israelites cry out to the Lord twice (Judges 10:10 and Judges 10:15). What is the difference between these two cries? 2) God says "I will no longer save you" (Judges 10:13). What is my heart's reaction to this? 3) How can I recognise whether I am expressing regret or repentance before my Holy Father?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAR 17, FRIDAY

Judges 10:17–11:3

Trained by Circumstances

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What place does Jephthah have among the people of God? What kind of prejudices would I hold against someone of his background, today? 2) Where does Jephthah go when he is cast out from God's people? What does he do? 3) God's people now seek a commander of men. Which portion of Jephthah's life has trained him for this role? What does this tell me about my own (and others') experiences outside God's salvation and family?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAR 18, SATURDAY

Judges 11:4–11

The Lord Is Our Witness

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Carefully consider every participant in today's reading. Do any of them inquire of the Lord or seek to obey Him? 2) Jephthah is invited to be the commander but negotiates to be made head. Do these negotiations feel familiar to me, from my professional or educational experience? Is God involved? 3) Do I go about my business (and God's business) without ever seeking Him? Do my prayers simply ask for God to be my witness?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAR 19, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

MAR 20, MONDAY

Judges 11:12–28

Attempted Negotiation

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) As Jephthah negotiated with the elders of Gilead, so too he now negotiates with the Ammonite king. Why not immediately attack? 2) Jephthah disputes the Ammonite king's claims with the history of Israel before God. Though an outcast from God's people, he evidently knows their history. How well do I know the history of my faith and faith community? 3) In Judges 11:24, Jephthah appears to equate Chemosh with the Lord. What may this be telling us about Israel's descent into idolatry throughout the times of the judges?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAR 21, TUESDAY

Judges 11:29–40

A Deadly Vow

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Jephthah continues to negotiate, but this time with God, attempting to buy God's favour and assistance in the coming battle. What does this tell us about Jephthah's view of God? 2) Jephthah says "I am devastated", but insists on following through with the vow he has made, demonstrating commitment to his word. Is it right to hold to our word when it is given in contradiction to God's commands (in this case, against human sacrifice)?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Do I view God as an uncaring master or cold judge, intent on making me earn His favour? How can I learn to recognise my Heavenly Father who gives good things (Matthew 7:11) to those who ask of Him?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAR 22, WEDNESDAY

Judges 12:1-4

The Arrogance of Ephraim

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Ephraimites were numerous and strong (Joshua 17:17), but as in Judges 8:1 with Gideon, they both refused to fight God's battle and instead threatened and bullied their own brother Israelites. Is Jephthah right in responding differently from how Gideon did in Judges 8:2-3? 2) Have I engaged in 'external consultancy' criticism within my faith community, confronting those who are directly engaged with God's work and mission? Have I encouraged or allowed such behaviour from others?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) How can I avoid behaving like the Ephraimites? How can I disciple a brother or sister to avoid behaving like the Ephraimites?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAR 23, THURSDAY

Judges 12:5–15

Who Is Your Enemy?

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Ephraim's arrogance was wrong. What do I think about Jephthah's retribution? 2) What does this final story of Jephthah's actions reinforce to us about his view of God? Is there any grace shown in Jephthah's life story and actions? 3) Jephthah probably caused more Israelite deaths than the Ammonites had. Are there parallels between this sordid account and the history and present situation of our faith community?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAR 24, FRIDAY

Judges 13:1–25

A Nazirite – Separate and Set Apart

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) "Nazir" in Hebrew means "to set apart" or "to separate". Samson is to be a Nazirite. What instructions does the angel of the Lord give to his parents for this to be so? 2) In the coming days we will read more about the Philistines' oppression of Israel. Unlike previous oppressors they were not raiders or conquerors; instead, they dwelt among the people of God. What is the significance of Samson's Nazirite calling in this context?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) God is still calling for a set apart people, holy unto Him, but not isolated from 'the world'. How can I, as Samson's parents did, contribute to the holiness of a child of God?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAR 25, SATURDAY

Judges 14:1-4

Samson Came, Saw, and Coveted

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Samson the Nazirite refuses to set himself apart, and instead desires a Philistine young woman. Why does he do this? 2) Samson's parents had received the prophecy of the angel of the Lord and obeyed the instructions given in raising Samson. What do they do when Samson directly intends to disobey God? 3) Judges 14:4 provides a surprising context to Samson's covetousness and indiscipline. Does this justify Samson's actions? What does this tell me about God's sovereignty and designs?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAR 26, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

MAR 27, MONDAY

Judges 14:5–20

A Wedding Riddle

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) As Samson prepares to be married, he first wanders into a vineyard and then holds a seven-day wedding feast. How does this compare to his Nazirite vows (see Numbers 6:3-7)? 2) In the game of the wedding riddle, Samson's weakness for women (his Philistine wife) is obvious (this will not be the last time). How does this compare with God's commands for all Israel in Deuteronomy 7:3-4?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Nonetheless, the Spirit of the Lord 'came powerfully open him'. And he engages in his first act of rebellion and anger against the Philistines. How does this challenge my ideas about who God can use for His purposes?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAR 28, TUESDAY

Judges 15:1–17

A Self-Absorbed Judge, not a Leader

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Samson was to 'take the lead' in delivering Israel, yet all his actions are motivated by personal vengeance. What went wrong? Could God still work through him? 2) 3000 Judeans were so compromised that they do the bidding of the Philistines instead of rallying against them. Gideon or Jephthah issued a call to battle, but no such call happens here. What does this tell us about the spiritual condition of Israel at this time?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Is there a compromise today in my life between God's standards and other concerns? Have I become comfortable with such compromises?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAR 29, WEDNESDAY

Judges 15:18–20

He Cried Out to the Lord

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) This is the first time we read of Samson speaking to God. What can I understand from Samson's words of prayer? 2) God answered Samson's prayer, and Samson names the spring En Hakkore, "the caller's spring". Who does this name memorialise, and what do we therefore continue to see in Samson's heart and motivations? 3) Even in all his faults and sin, Samson is powerfully used by God for the deliverance of His people. What does this tell me about the men and women of our time who are also used by God?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAR 30, THURSDAY

Judges 16:1–14

Going to Gaza, Going to Delilah

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Where did Samson, the Nazirite, Judge of Israel, go? What was his purpose? Do I also intentionally seek out temptation in dangerous places? 2) Once again, a woman he loves asks Samson for a secret. Has he learnt his lesson from the woman from Timnah? 3) What does Scripture tell me to do with temptation and tempting circumstances (see 1 Corinthians 10:13)?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAR 31, FRIDAY

Judges 16:15–22

Desire Gives Birth to Sin, Sin Gives Birth to Death

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Samson's hair was not magic. Though it appears he had broken other Nazirite vows, this was one that he had continued to keep for 20 years. And he was aware of this. What weakness led him to give this secret up? 2) Perhaps the most damning statement in Scripture regarding Samson is the end of Judges 16:20. Am I aware of God's presence and help and blessing? Would I be aware of its removal?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Judges 16:22 tells us this is not the end of the story. God is still working, and grace is still available. Who in my life needs to hear of God's bottomless grace today?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

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