

# The Essential 100

## A Bible overview plan for 2011-2012

The Essential 100 (E100) is a systematic approach that guides readers through the big picture of the Bible. It is a carefully selected list of short Bible passages—50 from the Old Testament and 50 from the New Testament. Each testament is broken up into ten, five-week series. We will move from Old to New Testaments every five weeks. My goal is to teach three of the five lessons in every series.

The E100 in Sunday school: We will REAP (read, explain, apply, and personalize) one passage each week and finish a series every five weeks. Each lesson will include a key verse for memorization. At the end of two years, we will have covered the essential 100 passages in the Bible.

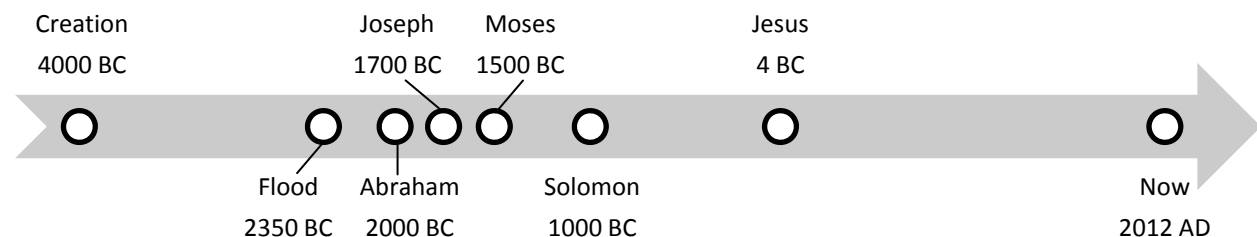
Additional information: To learn more about The E100 program and to obtain additional resources, visit [e100challenge.com](http://e100challenge.com). Our Sunday school website is [stuartheights.org/sundayschool](http://stuartheights.org/sundayschool).

## The Schedule: The Judges

This is our sixth five-week series in the Old Testament. So far, we have looked at In the Beginning, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, The Story of Joseph, Moses and the Exodus, and the Law and the Land. Now we shift to the Judges.

Date	Lesson	Key Verse(s)	Passage	Speaker
January 18	Israel's Disobedience	Judges 2:11-12	Judges 2:6-3:6	Jim Fleming
January 8	Deborah Leads Israel	Judges 4:4-5	Judges 4-5	Jim Fleming
January 15	Gideon Defeats the Midianites	Judges 7:7	Judges 6-7	Jim Fleming
January 22	Samson Defeats the Philistines	Judges 16:29-30	Judges 13-16	Barry Cole
January 29	The Story of Ruth	Ruth 4:13-17	Ruth 1-4	Lori Drake

Assuming a literal interpretation of Bible dates, the following timeline is close:



For the first 2,500 years of the world's history, the patriarchs received revelation from God passed it on orally. In 1450 BC, the Law is given. After Moses and Joshua pass off the scene, judges administer leadership for Israel. The judges bridge the leadership gap between Moses and Joshua and the kings.

# The Judges: Israel's Disobedience

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## Preview: Endangered Species

When Joshua and the elders who outlived him died (**Judges 2:7**), a depressing cycle in Israel's history began (**Judges 2:10-19**). The Israelites turned away from God, worshiped idols, and experienced disaster. Then, in desperation, they cried to God and he raised up leaders (judges here, kings and prophets later) to save them. However, the cycle of obedience and disobedience happened repeatedly.

Key thought: **Every** generation matters (and has an impact for good or for evil)

## Read & Explain (What does it mean?): Judges 2:6-3:6 (Author = Samuel?)

### Judges 2

**6** And when Joshua had dismissed the people, the children of Israel went each to his own inheritance to possess the land.

#### Death of Joshua

**7** So the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua [meaning Joshua passed the baton on to them], who had seen all the great works of the LORD which He had done for Israel. **8** Now Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died when he was one hundred and ten years old. **9** And they buried him within the border of his inheritance at Timnath Heres, in the mountains of Ephraim, on the north side of Mount Gaash. **10** When all that generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation arose after them who did not know the LORD nor the work which He had done for Israel. [Why did they not know the Lord? Perhaps because they did not see the miracles, perhaps because their parents did not tell them about Him, perhaps because they consciously rejected Him—the text does not tell us]

#### Israel's Unfaithfulness

**11** Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served the Baals [BAH-als; crivoice.org: Worship of Ba'al involved imitative magic, the performance of rituals, including sacred prostitution, which were understood to bring vitality to Ba'al in his struggle with Mot [another god]. It takes little imagination to see the connection between the human sexual act and rain watering the earth to produce fruit. . . . Contrary to how some statements in the biblical traditions are often understood, the problem that faced Israel through most of its history was not that the people totally abandoned Yahweh for the worship of Ba'al. Rather the problem was syncretism, the blending of Yahweh worship with Ba'al worship. Baal worship would continue in Israel for another **800+** years.]; **12** and they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt; and they followed other gods from among the gods of the people who were all around them, and they bowed down to them; and they provoked the LORD to anger. **13** They forsook the LORD and served Baal and the Ashtoreths [Baal was the male, Ashtoreth was the **female**—the plural shows up because there was a belief that there was a Baal for each area and an Ashtoreth for each area]. **14** And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel. So He delivered them into the hands of plunderers who despoiled

them; and He sold them into the hands of their enemies all around, so that they could no longer stand before their enemies. **15** Wherever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for calamity, as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had sworn to them. And they were greatly distressed. [David Guzik: God's response to Israel's forsaking of Him is no surprise; He specifically promised that He would do this in the covenant He made with Israel, which was characterized by blessings for obedience and cursing for disobedience (Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28)]

This paragraph is a **summary** of the book of the **Judges**. **16** Nevertheless, the LORD raised up judges [judges, governors, vindicators, punishers, **heroic** leader] **who delivered** [saved, delivered, gave victory to] **them out of the hand of those who plundered them.** **17** Yet they would not listen to their judges, but they played the harlot [explicit unfaithfulness] **with other gods, and bowed down to them.** They turned quickly from the way in which their fathers walked, in obeying the commandments of the LORD; they did not do so. **18** And when the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with the judge and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; for the LORD was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who oppressed them and harassed them. **19** And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that they reverted and behaved more corruptly than their fathers, by following other gods, to serve them and bow down to them. They did not cease from their own doings nor from their stubborn way.

**20** Then the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel; and He said, "Because this nation has transgressed My covenant which I commanded their fathers, and has not heeded My voice, **21** I also will no longer drive out before them any of the nations which Joshua left when he died, **22** so that through them I may test Israel, whether they will keep the ways of the LORD, to walk in them as their fathers kept *them*, or not." **23** Therefore the LORD left those nations, without driving them out immediately; nor did He deliver them into the hand of Joshua.

## Judges 3

### The Nations Remaining in the Land

**1** Now these *are* the nations which the LORD left, that He might test Israel by them, *that is*, all who had not known any of the wars in Canaan **2** (*this was* only so that the generations of the children of Israel might be taught to know war, at least those who had not formerly known it), **3** *namely*, five lords of the Philistines, all the Canaanites, the Sidonians, and the Hivites who dwelt in Mount Lebanon, from Mount Baal Hermon to the entrance of Hamath. **4** And they were *left*, that He might test Israel by them, to know whether they would obey the commandments of the LORD, which He had commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses. [Disobedience led to several hundred years of **testing**]

**5** Thus the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. **6** And they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons; and they served their gods.

Generations:

Moses (mostly God) → Joshua (served God) → Elders (served God) → Children (**mixed** worship)

**David Guzik: The continual cycle makes us less and less confident of man; but more and more impressed with the mercy and grace of God.**

### **Apply (What is the point?)**

1. Passing the baton is **two**-fold (receiving and passing)
2. Passing the baton must continue **forever** (skipping a generation can have epically bad implications)

### **Personalize (What do I do with that?)**

1. Clearly identify a person who is passing you a baton and clearly identify a person to whom you are passing a baton
2. My faith will help to **define** my children's faith (for good or for bad)