

Old Testament Segment 2: The Historical Books

This section of the Bible chronicles the history of Israel after their Exodus from slavery, their wandering in the wilderness, and their eventual occupation of the Promised Land of Canaan.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Explore one of these readings before moving on to the next video segment.

→ **Jericho.** Read Joshua 6:1–25. Joshua, the successor to Moses, leads the Israelites toward the establishment of their own land and nation. The battle of Jericho is legendary.

- How many days did this battle go on? Do you see any connection between the length of the battle and the story of Creation, or even the sacramental life of the Church?
- Notice who leads the march. What do you think is the significance of this?

In verses 22–25 we find an unlikely hero—Rahab the prostitute. Rewind to chapter 2 to get her story, then page forward to the New Testament (Matthew 1:5) and see who later turns out to have her as an ancestor.

→ **David and Goliath.** Read chapter 17 of 1 Samuel. Study the subtle and symbolic messages in this famous event.

- Notice what David declines to use in battle ... and what he chooses to rely on.
- If Goliath is a symbol of the fear that prevents us from living as God intends, what would you say is your “Goliath”?
- As David picked five stones for his slingshot, what tools might you choose to rely on in overcoming your fears? (Pick five if you like!)

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

→ **Discerning a Calling.** Together, read 1 Samuel 3. As a boy, Samuel heard God's call to become a prophet, but he wasn't sure of it at first.

- How can a person in modern times discern the call of God?
- What has been your experience and understanding of a vocation or calling?
- What can get in the way of discerning a calling?

WHEN YOU HAVE MORE TIME ...

→ **Deborah.** Read Judges 4 and 5 and meet the only woman to serve as a judge in Israel. Deborah was a sage, warrior, wife, poet, and maternal figure. Who does she remind you of in your own life?

→ **Samson.** You can read all about this strongman and his trials and triumphs in Judges 13:24—16:31. What virtues and messages do you see here?

→ **Ruth and Naomi.** The book of Ruth is named for a loyal foreigner who makes an oath to her mother-in-law Naomi and becomes the great-grandmother of David and ancestor of Jesus. Addressing human and divine relationships, the book is considered a classic among short stories. What do you take away from it?

→ **David the Sinner.** Read 2 Samuel 11:1—12:25 for the account of David's most sinful act. He was a successful king, mighty warrior, skilled musician, and friend of God—but here he messed up big time.

- What was the prophet Nathan's role in this story? Who has played a similar role in your life?
- What do you make of David's actions and attitudes after his conversation with Nathan?