

## A SURVEY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT:

### Judges

#### *“A Theocracy of Apostasy”*

#### **Background and Setting:**

- Judges is set in various places around the \_\_\_\_\_.
- Judges continues the account of Israel’s history where Joshua left off.
  - Genesis: God calls Abraham’s descendants to be His people.
  - Exodus: God calls His people out of Egypt to go to the Promised Land.
  - Leviticus: God calls His people to be \_\_\_\_\_ for He is holy.
  - Numbers: God punished His people for their unbelieving disobedience.
  - Deuteronomy: God repeats His law for the new generation prior to their entering the Promised Land.
  - Joshua: God enables \_\_\_\_\_, Moses replacement, to organize the initial stages of conquest.
- There is a big transition between Joshua and Judges.
- God did not give the people a leader to \_\_\_\_\_ Joshua.
- Instead, He placed Israel under a new form of government: divine theocracy.
- A theocracy is a system of government in which priests rule in the name of God.
- As a theocracy, Israel had no king.
  - Judges 17:6  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - Judges 21:25  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Mankind failed in the new system just like in the past.
  - The Garden of Eden: Man failed to obey God in a perfect environment even with a face to face relationship with Him.
  - The Flood: Man failed to obey his conscience and descended into total depravity.
  - The Tower of Babel: The divinely instituted \_\_\_\_\_ tried to take God’s place.
  - Judges: The Israelites failed to obey God even with His law in immediate direction.
- There was a cycle of disobedience in the book of Judges.
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_

**Title: Judges.**

- Recalls God's \_\_\_\_\_ servants whom God raised up to restore His people when they repented of their sins.
- Judges in a nutshell: "\_\_\_\_\_."
- Judges summarized:
  - "God chastised Israel for repeatedly neglecting him to follow her own path with pagan deities."

**Author: \_\_\_\_\_**

- Samuel was the first real \_\_\_\_\_ to come after Joshua.
    - 1 Samuel 3:1
- 
- 

- Some textual clues point to Samuel.
  - Repeated statements that there was no king in Israel would only be necessary if there was a king at the time of writing.
  - The Jebusites still controlled Jerusalem (1:21), and David removed them when he became king.

**Date: \_\_\_\_\_**

- Around 1000 BC.
- During the reign of Saul (after the monarchy began and before the reign of David).
- Summary: Judges was most likely written by \_\_\_\_\_ during the reign of Saul.

**Key People**

- Othniel: the first judge soon after Joshua's death; Caleb's immediate relation
- Ehud: Benjaminite who killed the king of Moab.
- Shamgar: fought against the \_\_\_\_\_ in southwest Israel
- Deborah/Barak: a male/female duo that won an impressive victory over iron chariots with God's help
- Gideon: Delivered Israel from the Midianites with 300 men
- Tola/Jair: contemporaries on either side of Jordan
- Jephthah: controversial judge who swore a foolish oath; defeated the \_\_\_\_\_
- Ibzan/Elon/Abdon: served around Israel, maybe at the same time as Jephthah
- Samson: had God-given superhuman strength to defeat the Philistines

**Key Word and Theme: \_\_\_\_\_**

- The keyword is defeat.
- The key theme is, "Defeat after failure."
  - The Israelites had everything they needed for success.
  - But they allow themselves to experience defeat as an entire nation because they followed their own skewed moral compass.

### **Overview:**

- Introduction in the disobedience of Israel (1:1 – 3:6)
- The cycle of defeat, judgment, and restoration (3:7 – 16:31)
  - Othniel vs the Mesopotamians
  - Ehud and Shamgar vs the Moabites
  - Deborah vs the Canaanites
  - Gideon vs the Midianites
  - Tola & Jair
  - Jephthah, Iban, Elon, and Abdon vs Philistines and Ammonites
- The depravity of Israel (17:1 – 21:25)
  - Micah's idolatry
  - The criminal actions in Gibeah

### **Challenges:**

- Did Jephthah really sacrifice his daughter?
  - Jephthah swore that, if God gave the victory, he would sacrifice the first thing that came out of his house to meet him when he returned home.
    - Judges 11:30– 31

---

---
  - His daughter came out, and he was put into an awkward position.
  - The most logical conclusion is that he did sacrifice his daughter.
    - Jephthah expected to offer a human sacrifice – what else would he expect to meet him?
    - If he did not, he would break a solemn vow to God.
    - His \_\_\_\_\_ told him to perform his vow.
    - Two months later, Jephthah performed his vow.
    - It became a yearly custom for the daughters of Israel to lament for the daughter of Jephthah.
    - The most natural reading of the text is that Jephthah \_\_\_\_\_ his daughter to the LORD in fulfillment of the vow.
    - Other options just do not make sense in the context.
      - He did not dedicate her as a \_\_\_\_\_ for the rest of her life.
  - Why did this happen?
    - Jephthah fought against the Ammonites.
    - One of Ammon's patron gods was Chemosh-Melech who supposedly gave victory in battle when he received a human sacrifice.
    - Perhaps Jephthah thought with a twisted understanding of God that he could sacrifice a human to the Lord and thereby prove that God alone had given the victory and not a pagan deity.
  - Did God approve?
    - Asking if God \_\_\_\_\_ the event to happen and if he approved are two diametrically opposite questions.

- It is very plain that Jephthah swore a rash vow without thinking through all the implications.
- God is not required to keep men from getting themselves into serious trouble.
- God did not approve of this action, but it was recorded to show the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Judges.
- There wasn't enough time to have all the judges during the book's timeline.
  - If you add up all the years that the judges rule, it is longer than the possible length of time the book records.
  - This is because many judge in small areas and some of them were contemporaries.

**Key Doctrine**

- God is the king of humanity.
  - Judges recounts the first and only true theocracy the world has yet seen.
  - God ruled Israel through the \_\_\_\_\_ he had set up and His \_\_\_\_\_ who implemented it.
  - This ideal situation failed because people wanted to do what they thought was right without consulting God.

**Christ in Judges:**

Judges foreshadows Christ as the ruler of the \_\_\_\_\_ theocracy in which he will physically rule with a rod of iron.

- Revelation 2:27

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- Revelation 19:15

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Application: Let us continue to follow God so that we are not chastised like the children of Israel.**