

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
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- 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.