

OT7: Judges (Judg: 21 Chapters) Former Prophets**Theme: Jehovah Proves Israel in the days of the Judges**

Judges is so called because it tells of the judges, or rulers, of Israel from the possession of Canaan until the time of the prophet-judge Samuel. It includes the adventures of Deborah, Gideon, and Samson.

Brief Outline:

- Judg 1-2: I. Israel forsakes Jehovah
- Judg 3-16: II. Outward Result: Oppression. The following is the often repeated cycle in the book of Judges:
 - A. Relapse
 - B. Retribution
 - C. Repentance
 - D. Rescue (by means of a “Judge”)
- Judg 17-21: III. Inward Result: Corruption
 - Judg 17-18 A. Idolatry
 - Judg 19-21 B. Immorality

Prayers in Judges

- Gideon-for proof of his call Judg 6:36-40
- Manoah-for guidance Judg 13:8-15
- Samson-for water Judg 15:18, 19
- Samson-for strength Judg 16:29,30

Expanded Outline:

- I. Judg 1-2 Israel forsakes Jehovah: Incomplete Conquest & Idolatry
 - Judg 1 Failure to Complete the Conquest of Canaan. Recap of Caleb.
 - Judg 2 (The Setting) The generation of Israel after Joshua’s death is unfaithful. The Lord turns against them but raises up judges to save them.
 - Judg 2:16 “Then the Lord raised up judges, who saved them out of the hand of those who plundered them.”
 - Judg 2:19-22 “But whenever the judge died, they turned back and were more corrupt than their fathers, going after other gods, serving them and bowing down to them. They did not drop any of their practices or their stubborn ways. So the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he said, “Because this people have transgressed my covenant that I commanded their fathers and have not obeyed my voice, I will no longer drive out before them any of the nations that Joshua left when he died, in order to test Israel by them....””
- II. Judg 3-16 Outward Result: Oppression. Relapse, Retribution, Repentance, and Rescue (by means of a “Judge”) is the often repeated cycle in the book of Judges
 - Judg 3 Othniel, Ehud, and Shamgar
 - Judg 3:1-6 Nations left by the Lord in the Promised Land
 - Judg 3:7-11 Othniel (Caleb’s nephew) delivers from Mesopotamians
 - Israel serves Baal & Asheroth
 - Cushan-rishathaim, King of Mesopotamia oppresses 8 years
 - Othniel delivers and the land has rest for 40 years
 - Othniel dies.
 - Judg 3:12-30 Ehud delivers from Moabites Eglon with double edged dagger

- Israel does evil in the sight of the Lord
- Eglon, King of Moab oppresses 18 years
- Ehud, the left handed Benjamite delivers and the land has rest for 80 years
- Judg 3:31 Shamgar delivers Israel, killing 600 Philistines with an oxgoad.
- Judg 4-5 Debrah with Barak deliver from Canaanites. (Jael slew Sisera with a nail)
 - Judg 4 Deliverance
 - Israel does evil in the sight of the Lord
 - Jabin king of Canaan oppresses for 20 years. Sisera is the commander of his army.
 - Deborah the prophetess and Barak deliver from Sisera's army and his 900 chariots – but the glory of sleighing Sisera will go to a woman, because Barak said to Deborah “If you will go with me, I will go (Judg 4:8).
 - Jael drives a tent peg through Sisera's temple while sheltering him in her tent.
 - Jabin king of Canaan is destroyed. The land has rest for 40 years (Judg 5:31)
 - Judg 5 The Song of Deborah and Barak
 - Judg 5:8 “When new gods were chosen, then war was in the gates.”
 - Judg 5:24-27 Blessing on Jael and her action.
- Judg 6-8 Gideon delivers from Midianites
 - Judg 6 The Call of Gideon
 - Israel does evil in the sight of the Lord
 - Midian Oppresses for 7 years
 - Judg 6:11-24 The Angel of the Lord calls Gideon
 - Judg 6:22-23 “...And Gideon said, “Alas, O Lord God! For now I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face.” But the Lord said to him, “Peace be to you. Do not fear; you shall not die.”
 - Judg 6:25-35 At the command of the Lord, Gideon destroys the Baal alter and Asherah, and builds an altar to the Lord, and sacrifices on it. Out of fear, he does this at night.
 - In response to those who want to kill Gideon for this action, Gideon's father Joash says to let Baal contend for himself. Gideon is then named “Jerubbaal” meaning “Let Baal contend against him”
 - Judg 6:36-40 Gideon tests God: The Sign of the Fleece
 - 1st try: Fleece wet with dew, ground dry
 - 2nd try: Fleece dry, ground wet with dew
 - Judg 7 Gideon Defeats Midian with 300 men.
 - Judg 7:1-18 The Lord reduces the army from 32K to 300.
 - Judg 7:2 “The Lord said to Gideon, “The people with you are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand, lest Israel boast over me, saying, ‘my own hand has saved me’.””
 - 22K Fearful and trembling men go home
 - Only the 300 men who lapped like dogs are selected.
 - War Materials: Empty Jars, trumpets, and torches
 - War Cry: “For the Lord and for Gideon”

- Judg 7:19-25 Gideon and Co. defeats Midian
 - War Plan Executed: Blow trumpets, smash jars and cry “A sword for the Lord and for Gideon”
 - Judg 7:22 “When they blew the 300 trumpets, the Lord set every man’s sword against his comrade and against all the army.”
 - Oreb and Zeeb, the princes of Midian are caught and executed.
- Judg 8 Zebah, Zalmunna (Kings of Midian), Gideon’s Ephod, and Gideon’s Death.
 - Judg 8:1-21 Zebah and Zalmunah are pursued, caught and executed. Gideon punishes Succoth and Penuel for their lack of support in the pursuit of Zebah and Zalmunah.
 - Judg 8:22-27 Gideon makes a golden Ephod out of the gold earrings from the spoil. It becomes an idol and a snare that Gideon and Israel whore after.
 - Judg 8:28 The land has rest under Gideon, for 40 years.
- Judg 9 Abimilech Conspires with the leaders of Shechem. He kills the 70 sons of Gideon (except for Jotham – who hides and escapes), and take control. He reigns for 3 years. Then he begins to work at smothering rebellions within Shechem. After burning 1000 men and women alive in the Tower of Shechem, Abimilech proceeds to the tower in Thebez. While there, a woman drops a millstone from the tower, and it crushes his skull. Abimilech has his servant kill him with a sword, so he does not die from the hand of a woman. The Lord used Abimilech to punish Shechem for their earlier support of Abimilech, then used Shechem to destroy Abimilech.
- Judg 10 Tola, Jair, and the Ammonite & Philistine Oppression
 - Judg 10:1-2 Tola of Issachar judges Israel for 23 years
 - Judg 10:3-5 Jair, the Gileadite, who had 30 sons who rode on 30 donkeys and had 30 cities called “Havvoth-jair” in Gilead judged Israel 22 years.
 - Judg 10:6-18 Israel does what is evil in the eyes of the Lord. The Lord brings in the Ammonites and the Philistines to oppress Israel. Israel cries out for deliverance.
- Judg 11
 - Judg 11:1-28 Jephthah the Gileadite, the son of a Harlot called as leader against the Ammonites.
 - Judg 11:29-40 Jephthah’s Tragic Vow, his victory, and fulfillment of his vow.
- Judg 12 Jephthah’s conflict with Ephraim. After Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, & Abdon.
 - Judg 12:1-6 Ephraim feuds with Jephthah and Gilead.
 - Ephraimites could not pronounce “Shibboleth” correctly, and this became a test used by the Gileadites in discerning who to kill.
 - Judg 12:7 Jephthah judged Israel 6 years, and then he died.
 - Judg 12:8-15 Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon
 - Ibzan from Bethlehem judged Israel 7 years
 - Elon the Zebulonite judged Israel 10 years.
 - Abdon the Pirathonite (who had 40 sons and 30 grandsons who rode on 70 donkeys) judged Israel 8 years.
- Judg 13-16 Samson Delivers from the Philistines. Samson’s birth is predicted by the Angel of the Lord, and Samson is to be a Nazarite.
 - Judg 13 The Birth of Samson
 - Israel does evil in the sight of the Lord

- Philistines Oppress for 40 years
- The Angel of the Lord visits Manoah's wife 2x, before interacting with Manoah as well. The angel of the Lord gives criteria to guide Samson's upbringing as a Nazirite to God.
 - Judg 13:22 "And Manoah said to his wife, "We shall surely die, for we have seen God."
- Samson the Danite is born.
- Judg 14 Samson and his Marriage to a Philistine
 - Samson kills a lion with his bare hands.
 - Then eats honey from the lion's carcass.
 - Then tells a riddle to the Philistines.
 - Then is betrayed by his new philistine wife, and kills 30 Philistines from Ashkelon and takes their garments to fulfill the obligations of the riddle.
 - His wife is then given to Samson's best man.
- Judg 15 Upon hearing that his wife was given to his best man:
 - Samson ties 300 foxes together, tail to tail, with a torch in-between each pair of tails – and releases on the Philistine's grain crop.
 - In retaliation, the Philistines burn Samson's wife and father-in-law to death.
 - Then 3000 men of Judah bind Samson with new ropes and deliver him to the Philistines.
 - Then Samson breaks free of the ropes, and kills 1000 Philistines with the jawbone of a donkey
 - After this Samson is deathly thirsty, so God miraculously provides water for Samson.
- Judg 16 Samson, the Philistines, and his other women:
 - Judg 16:1-3 After visiting a prostitute in Gaza, Samson raises the city gates and carries them off, escaping the Philistines once again.
 - Judg 16:4-22 Samson and Delilah
 - Samson lies to Delilah 3 times: 7 fresh bowstrings, new ropes, and a weaving his 7 locks of hair with a web did nothing to subdue Samson.
 - Samson, worn down by Delilah, tells her his whole heart.
 - Delilah has his head shaved while he is sleeping
 - The Philistines capture Samson, gouge out his eyes, and set him to work grinding in the mill, in prison, in Gaza.
 - Judg 16:22 "But the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaved."
 - Judg 16:23-31 The Death of Samson
 - The lords of the Philistines gather to sacrifice to Dagon. 3000 Philistines are in attendance.
 - Judg 16:23 -24 "...they said, "Our god [Dagon] has given Samson our enemy into our hand." And when the people saw him, they praised their god [Dagon].
 - After the Philistines are merry, Samson is brought out to entertain the Philistines.
 - Samson asked to be put next to the supporting pillars of the building.
 - Judg 16:28 "Then Samson called to the Lord and said, "O Lord God, please remember me and please strengthen me only this once, O God..."

- Samson with left hand on 1 pillar, and right hand on the other pillar brings down the whole building, killing more Philistines in his death than he did during his life.
 - Samson had judged Israel 20 years.
- III. Judg 17-21 Inward Result: Corruption
 - A. Judg 17-18: Idolatry of Micah and the Danites
 - Judg 17 Micah of Ephraim
 - With the help of his mother's silver, creates a household of gods,
 - Ordains his son as priest,
 - Then hires a Levite from Bethlehem to be his Priest.
 - **Judg 17:6 "In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes."**
 - Judg 18 The Danites conquer a land for themselves, and take Micah's Idols and Micah's priest – so their tribe can worship.
 - B. Judg 19-21: Immorality at Gibeah: The Levite's concubine – leads to war with Benjamin. Wives are then provided to Benjamin.
 - Judg 19 A Levite and his concubine (see also Gen 19)
 - Judg 19:1-21 A Levite from Ephraim takes to himself a concubine, but she leaves him for 4 months. The Levite retrieves her from her fathers house in Bethlehem of Judah. On their way home, they stay at Gibeah of Benjamin. An old man takes them in so they do not have to stay in the open square.
 - Judg 19:22-30 The Benjaminites of Gibeah call to "know" the visiting Levite man. The old man offers his virgin daughter, and the Levite's man concubine. The Levite man makes his concubine go out to them, and she is abused all night till morning. In the morning she is dead at the door of the house. The Levite takes her and returns to his home. Then cuts the concubine corpse, limb by limb, into 12 pieces, and sends them to the 12 tribes. This acts a summons of Israel to war.
 - Judg 20 Israel (apart from Benjamin) unites 400K men as one man against Gibeah of Benjamin, but Benjamin refuses to give up the men of Gibeah, and instead assembles 26,700 men for battle (26K from Benjamin, 700 from Gibeah). After 3 days of battle and losses, the Lord gives Benjamin into the hands of the rest of Israel. Israel kills 25K of Benjamin's men, slaughter all they come across and set fire to the towns. (A similar ending to Sodom & Gomorrah).
 - Judg 20:28 "...and Phinehas the son of Eleazor, son of Aaron, ministered before it [the ark of the covenant] in those days)
 - Judg 21 Wives are provided to Preserve the Tribe of Benjamin
 - Jabesh-gilead is sacked for its 400 virgins – it was chosen because they did not come to fight against the Benjaminites
 - Shiloh is stalked by Benjamin to kidnap its women for wives.
 - **Judg 21:25 "In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes." The last words of the book of Judges.**