

Lesson Ten
Judges
“Chaos”

1A **Title:** The English title “The Book of Judges” is identical to that of the Vulgate (*Liber Judicum*) and the LXX (*Kritai*), both mean “judges” which are based on the Hebrew, “*Shophetim*”.

The Judge in Israel was one who executed justice, this included decision making as well as activities.

2A **Authorship:** _____; probably Samuel or someone in the school of the prophets under Samuel.

3A **Date:** After 1050 B.C. – Probably during the _____.

4A **Time Period Covered:** From Joshua (1380 B.C.) to Samuel (1075 B.C.)

(BKC [OT] p. 375)

| The Judges of Israel | | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Oppressors | Years of Oppression | Judges | Years of Judging | References |
| Arameans | 8 | 1. Othniel | 40 | Judges 3:7-11 |
| Moabites | 18 | 2. Ehud | 80 | Judges 3:12-30 |
| Philistines | ? | 3. Shamgar | ? | Judges 3:31 |
| Canaanites | 20 | 4. Deborah | 40 | Judges 4-5 |
| Midianites | 7 | 5. Gideon* | 40 | Judges 6-8 |
| ? | ? | 6. Tola | 23 | Judges 10:1-2 |
| ? | ? | 7. Jair | 22 | Judges 10:3-5 |
| Ammonites | 18 | 8. Jephthah | 6 | Judges 10:6 - 12:7 |
| ? | ? | 9. Ibzan | 7 | Judges 12:8 - 10 |
| ? | ? | 10. Elon | 10 | Judges 12:11-12 |
| ? | ? | 11. Abdon | 8 | Judges 12:13 - 15 |
| Philistines | 40 | 12. Samson | 20 | Judges 13 - 16 |

*Abimelech, Gideon's son (Jud. 9), though often considered a judge, is not included here because he usurped authority over Shechem and God did not appoint him as judge.

5A **Purpose:** To demonstrate the failure of the people to obey the Mosaic Law, the consequences, and the need for a King.

1B Judges describes the _____ of the society.

2B Judges portrays the impact of _____ or _____ on a society.

3B Judges traces for us the relationship between moral anarchy and political anarchy. It answers the question of why character matters, and what happens when the spiritual core of a nation rejects bible doctrine.

- 4B This is written to demonstrate the need for authority, a particular type of authority, because man is sinful and without a strong government that can exercise force when the need arises the results will be catastrophic.
- 6A Key Verse: **Judg. 21:25 ¶ In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes. (also Judg 17:6)**

7A Context of the Book:

Judges is the second of the _____ in the *nevi'im*. This tells us the Jews believed this fit the role of the prophet, it was an explanation of Israel's failure to obey the Law.

Deuteronomy—the Constitution of the Theocracy, the Mosaic Law with its instructions on every area of life, and the Suzerain-Vassal Treaty of Deuteronomy which founded the Theocracy, legally.

Joshua—the erection of the Theocracy, the conquest wherein Israel became a literal space-time nation with real estate.

Judges—the failure of man under the Theocracy. From Judges onward through the Old Testament the focus isn't so much on God but rather on how man responds to God, revealing man's true nature and the deterioration under paganism.

8A Structure of the Book

The Basis for the Paganization of Israel, Judges 1:1-3:6

This section summarizes the conditions which give rise to the deterioration of the culture during the period. The lesson that the book of Judges is teaching is stated in this first section and the rest of the book contains the details showing how this lesson actually played itself out throughout the 350 years of the Judges.

The Paganization of the Leaders, Judges 3:7-16:31

An analysis of the performance of the leadership of the people. As the people succumb more and more to the pagan thinking of the Canaanites around them it affected the leaders. The leaders actions deteriorate progressively through the period until the last, Samuel, lives and acts no differently than the pagans.

The Paganization of the People and Priesthood, Judges 17-21

An analysis of the paganization of the people in the nation. This section first describes how the religious apostasy began, then shows how paganism deteriorates into vicious, violent, abusiveness and de-humanizes mankind.

**When a nation rejects the historical evidences for Christianity they always become subjective

**Subjectivity always leads to mysticism

**Subjectivity in a nation always leads to the destruction of that culture

Teaching Point:

All the _____ fail.

The _____ fail to drive out their enemies.

The _____ fail to lead the people spiritually.

The result was _____, by the end of the book of Judges the people are no different than the pagan cultures surrounding them.

The last judge was _____.

This leaves the reader looking for _____.

9A Turn to Judges 2:6-10 for an analysis, post mortem

Exposition of Judges

1A. God's command to annihilate the Canaanites is disobeyed which sets up Israel for future failure, 1:1-3:6

1B. Summary of Israel's compromise, failure and defeat, 1:1-36

1C. Time and Setting: 1:1-2

2C. Success and Failures of Judah, 1:3-20

1D. Alliance with Simeon, 1:3

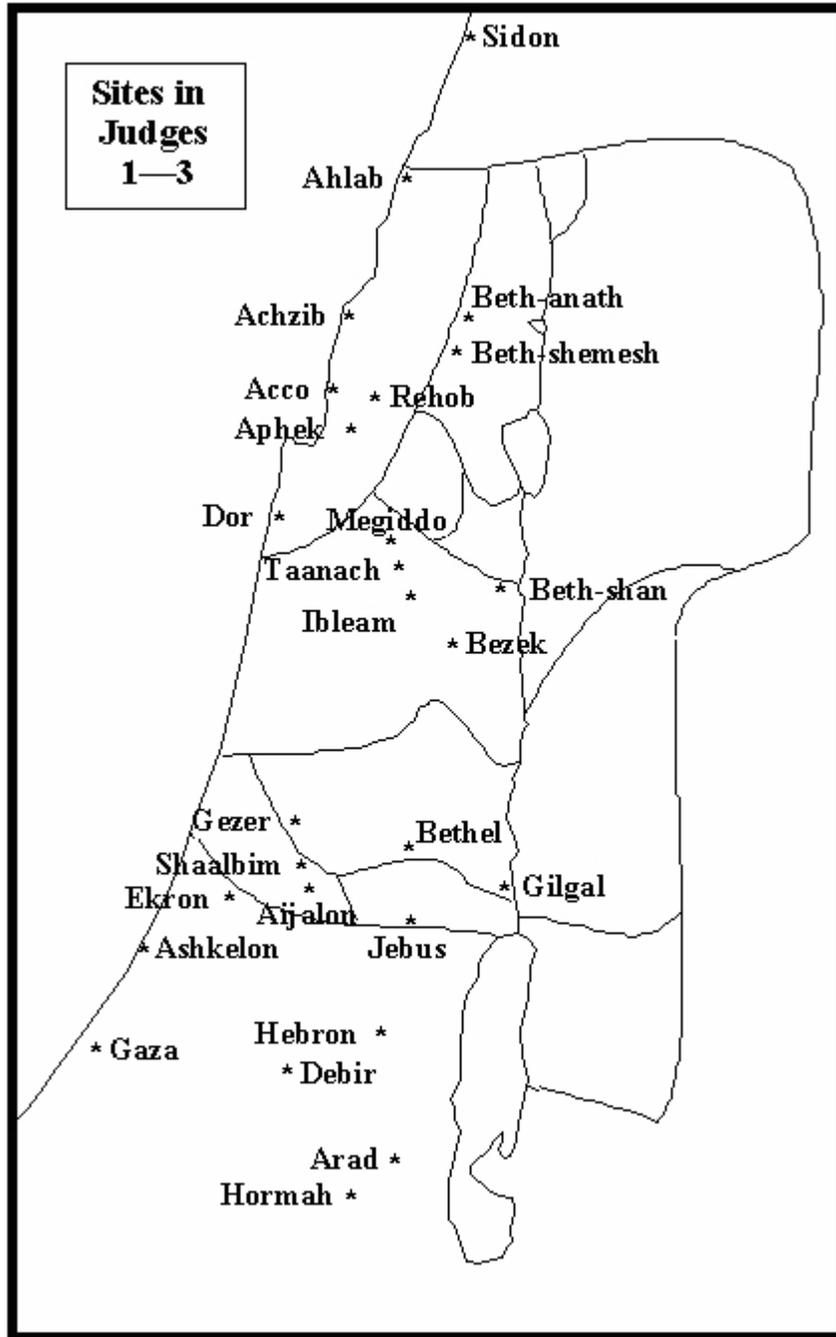
2D. Campaign in the Highlands, 1:4-8

3D. Campaign in the Lowlands, :9-20

1E Introduction, 1:9

- 2E The Conquest of Hebron, 1:10
- 3E The Conquest of Debir: Othniel and Achsah, 1:11-15
- 4E Arad and The Kenite Compromise, 1:16
- 5E Obedience at Zephath/Hormah, 1:17
- 6E Conquest of the Lowlands, 1, 17
- 7E Summary; success limited by inadequate trust, 1:19-20
- 4D. Failures of all the other tribes, The remaining tribes fail to take possession of any of their major cities and 1:21-36
- 1E Failure and compromise of Benjamin, 1:21
- 2E Failure and compromise of Joseph at Bethel, 1:22-26
- 3E Failure and compromise in the north, 1:27-36
- 5D Conclusion
- 1E Joshua had broken the strength of the
_____.
- 2E However, _____ of the tribes
successfully drove out the Canaanites in their own
territories (cf. 1:19, 21, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, and 33).

- 2B. God's Interpretation of these failures, 2:1-23
 - 1C. The Angel of the Lord , 2:1-5
 - 1D Identification of the Angel of the Lord, 2:1a
 - 2D God gracious actions in the past, Israel's response, and God's warning: 2:1b-3
 - 3D The nations response, 2:4-5
 - 2C. The Interpretation of the writer of Judges, 2:6-20a
 - 1D The Root causes for Israel's apostasy, 2:6-10
 - 2D The Nature of Israel's apostasy, reversionism, and paganism 2:11-13
 - 3D God's Reaction to Israel's apostasy, 2:14-15
 - 4D Divine Compassion, 2:16-19



- 3C. God's Interpretation, 2:20b-22
- 1D God's accusation, 2:20b
- 2D God's Reaction, 2:21
- 3D God's Motive, 2:22

4C. Conclusion (2:23)

3B .God left the nations to test Israel's obedience in the future. 3:1-6

1C The Nature of Test, 3:1-3

2C The Purpose of the Test, 3:4

3C The Results of the Test 3:5-6

The Jews _____ with the inhabitants of the land and accepted their religious practices.

2A The Paganization of the Leaders, Judges 3:7-16:31

The argument of this section is that the nation progressively takes on the characteristics of the pagan nations surrounding them.

The leaders reflect that paganization and become increasingly like the Canaanites.

No matter how strong the leader, they could not overcome the spiritual decline of the people.

1B Othniel, the first deliverer. Judg. 3:7-11

The evil the Israelites did is defined in context as idolatry.

The Holy Spirit _____ to give him ability to deliver the nation.

**The role of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament is not for their spiritual growth, but for the _____ of the nation.

2B Ehud,, the left handed assassin. Judg. 3:12-30

1C The enemy is an alliance under Eglon, which means
"_____" (cf., 3:17), a play on words, who allies with the Ammonites and Amalekites.

2C This episode is written as a _____, the use of irony or wit to illustrate an aspect of human failure.

3C The Israelites cry out from _____, but no real _____.

4C Ehud uses _____ to assassinate Eglon, a use of pagan methodology.

3B Shamgar and the oxgoad, an unexpected deliverer. Judg. 3:31

1C His name is a problem.

Sh-m-g-r indicates a *four* letter root, Hebrew has *three* letter roots. This could indicate a _____ or foreign origin.

“*Son of Anath*” A worshipper of Anath

Anath was the Canannaitic goddess who was the consort of Baal and the goddess of war. She had also been assimilated into the Egyptian and other ANE pantheon of gods.

An elite Egyptian military unit composed of Hurrian mercenaries was designated “the sons of Anath”

Shamgar is never called a “judge” only a “deliverer.”

2C Block concludes that Shamgar was a foreign deliverer, used by God to deliver his people who are so paganized that they cannot produce their own deliverers. (Daniel I. Block, *Judges and Ruth*, New American Commentary, 149).

3C Shamgar operates at the same time as Deborah and Barak which may indicate a lack of potential male leadership at the time.

4B God raises up Deborah and Barak. (Judg. 4:1-5:31)

Keil and Delitsch: This gift qualified her to judge the nation (the participle expresses the permanence of the act of judging), i.e., first of all to settle such disputes among the people themselves as the lower courts were unable to decide, and which ought therefore, according to Deut. 17:8, to be referred to the supreme judge of the whole nation. The palm where she sat in judgment (cf. Ps. 9:5) was called after her the *Deborah* -palm. The Israelites went up to her there to obtain justice. The expression “*came up*” is applied here, as in Deut. 17:8, to the place of justice, as a spiritual height, independently of the fact that the place referred to here really stood upon an eminence.

Deut. 17:8 ¶ “If any case is too difficult for you to decide, between one kind of homicide or another, between one kind of lawsuit or another, and between

one kind of assault or another, being cases of dispute in your courts, then you shall arise and go up to the place which the LORD your God chooses.

1C Deborah fulfills two rolls: _____ and

This raises a crucial issue: What is the role of women in the sphere of spiritual leadership?

The role of the prophet was to say exactly what God told them to say, they did not interpret God's Word.

Four women or groups of women are prophetesses: Miriam (Ex 15:20), Deborah, Huldah (2 Kings 22:14); Anna (Luke 2:36), the daughters of Philip (Acts 21:7-10).

Observations

1. None of these are shown as teachers, instructing and interpreting the Word of God..
2. None in a position of authority in spiritual arena.

2C The oppressor here is _____
_____. Jabin (cf., Josh 11:1 for another ruler by that name) is probably a title or dynastic name.

3C Jabin's general is _____, who lived in *Harosheth-hagoyim* ("the woodlands of the nations") southwest of Hazor, perhaps in the Jezreel Valley.

4C Hazor was technologically superior to the Hebrews. They had 900 iron chariots which gave them maneuverability in the flat area of the valley.

5C Deborah ("bee") lived in Ephraim, in the center of the land.

Barak ("lightning") lived in the north.

6C Deborah called up Barak to assemble 10,000 soldiers. God promised victory. Barak was too timid, a reflection on the failure of male leadership during this period.

**In paganism there is always a deterioration and reversal of the male-female roles.

7C God reprimands Barak for his timidity and tells him that because of his timidity a woman will get the glory that would have been his.

8C _____ is the deliverer who confuses and destroys the enemy (Judg. 4:14).

9C Jael, the Kenite, gets the glory for killing Sisera.

10C Ch. 5 is a Song of Praise to God.

2 Chron 25:3 describes Jeduthun prophesying by singing praises and thanksgiving to God. Since Miriam and Deborah both write praises to God, perhaps this is what prophecy refers to with them.

5B God raises up Gideon. (Judges 6:1-8:35)

apostacy-Judges 6:1-----ONE verse

chastening-Judges 6:1b-6-----FIVE verses

deliverance-Judges 6:7-8:35--NINETY-FOUR verses

1C Israel once again turns away from God and is oppressed by the Midianites and Amalekites for seven years. (6:1-6)

2C The Hebrews finally turn to God who sends a prophet to explain why they are being oppressed. (7:7-10)

3C _____ commissions Gideon to deliver Israel and Gideon responds with a burnt offering (7:11-24).

4C God tests Gideon by commanding him to destroy the _____ in his own father's home and to replace it with an altar to _____ (6:25-32)

*****Before the believer can start functioning in the role of Christian service there needs to be application in the believer's life.**

NB The role of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament was to empower the leaders to _____, it was not for the purpose of spiritual growth or _____.

- 5C Gideon gathers an army from his own clan (Abiezrites), and the tribes of Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali). 6:33-35
- 6C Gideon tests God to avoid the responsibility. God had already clearly revealed the task to Gideon. 6:36-40
- 7C God reduces the size of Gideon's army in order to teach Gideon that His grace is sufficient to win the battle 7:1-
- Gideon's army is reduced from 32,000 to 300.
- The Midianite coalition is 132,000. They are outnumbered 440 to 1.
- 1D God sent confusion among the Midianites and Amelekites and they panicked and ran, killing each other.
- 2D Gideon then calls the Ephraimites to block the ford of the Jordan, they capture Oreb and Zeeb, the two leaders of Midian.
- 3D Gideon calms the offended Ephraimites, 8:1-3
- 8C Gideon harshly punishes Succoth for their lack of cooperation.

- 9C Gideon then discovered that Zebah and Zalmunna the kings of Midian had killed his brothers and executes them.
- 10C Gideon shows his tragic flaw: he refuses to be named king, but names his son Abimelech (“my father is king”) a title for royalty.
At the same time he builds an ephod from the spoils of the battle which leads the nation back into idolatry.
- 11C During Gideon’s life there is peace, but at his death the people return to worship the Baals.
- 6B The Abimelech interlude 9:1-57
- 1C Abimelech conspires with his mother’s relatives in Shechem to stage a coup d’etat against his father’s family, his own half-brothers in Oprah. 9:1-6
Result: The men of Shechem and Beth-Millo make Abimelech King over Israel.
- 1D. This is the longest section in the book of deliverers 2:6-16:31
- 2D. There is an excessive attention to detail in the machinations and violence of Abimelech and the Shechemites.
- 3D. The chapter focuses on the internal division and fragment of Israel and not on an external enemy.
- 4D. Abimelech is established as a pagan king in opposition to Yhwh.
- 5D. God let’s Israel self-destruct.
- 2C Jotham’s parable focuses on the key problem: no integrity. 9:7-21

**when a culture or society has no basis for integrity, then the culture will demonstrate little integrity.

*A society with little integrity produces leaders with little integrity.

*When leaders lack integrity, there are no internal controls for power lust.

- 3C The Roots of Abimelech's Demise (9:22–25).
- 4C God judges Abimelech, the men of Schechem and fulfills the curse of Jotham (9:34-57)
- 7B God raises up two minor judges, Tola and Jair to judge Israel. 10:1-5
- 8B God raises up Jephthah, an outcast and outlaw, to deliver Israel.
- 1C The nation again succumbs to idolatry and paganism and serves the false god of Aram, Moab, Ammon, and the Philistines. God oppresses them with the Philistines and Ammonites for 18 years. 10:6-9
- Israel is invaded by Ammon.
- 2C The nation cries for deliverance, God reminds them of numerous past failures and tests their resolve, the people then confess. 10:10-18
- 3C Jephthah, is a social outcast: son of a prostitute, an outlaw with a reputation as a warrior. 11:1-3 A Gileadite was by nature a social reject.
- 4C Jephthah operates on a mix of paganism and truth. He attempts to manipulate God with a bargain.

Gideon's vow is to offer an *olah*, "burnt offering" to God.

- 5C God gives Jephthah victory over the Ammonites because that is God's plan. But God personally disciplines Jephthah by causing his daughter to be the first out of the house to greet him. 11:29-40
- 6C The tribe of Ephraim takes offense at being left out of the process and instigates a civil war. 12:1-7
- 7C Jephthah judges Israel for 6 years.
- 9B Ibsan of Bethlehem, Elon the Zebulunite, and Abdon the Pirathonite judge Israel. 12:8-15
- 10B God raises up Samson who is set apart from birth by his Nazirite vow, he is the most pagan of the judges and never delivers nation. His blind death is a picture of Israel's spiritual blindness. 13:1-16:31
- 1C Israel is again disobedient and disciplined by the Philistines. (13:1)
- 2C The deliverer is promised and is to be a Nazirite: no wine or grape juice, cannot touch a dead body, cannot cut his hair. 13:2-25

3C Samson demonstrates that his values are those of the pagan culture around him. He is a womanizer, a bully, arrogant, and he dishonors the Nazirite vow on numerous occasions. 14:1-20

**Samson's attitude toward women is typical of paganism. Women is dishonored and treated as sex objects and objects of political manipulation.

4C Samson's motivations against the Philistines are based on personal vendetta and lust rather than a desire to serve the Lord and Israel. 15:1-20

The Jews demonstrate that they do not want freedom.

The jawbone of the ass is from a dead creature, a violation of the vow.

5C Samson's womanizing is his weakness which leads to his downfall at the conniving hands of Delilah. 16:1-22

4A The Paganization of the people and the Priesthood. 17:1-21-25

1B The idolatrous actions of Micah shows the paganization of the priesthood.

1C Micah rejected the divinely revealed worship at Shiloh and invents his own religion.

Warning: Whenever you meet someone wrapped in religion and ritual and Not the revealed Word of God, beware, they are another Micah and the enemy of our nation.

1D Thus use of proper religious terminology is not a sign of spirituality or orthodoxy. This is one of Satan's great ploys

for deceiving believers. Notice in this passage we have “blessed be my son by the Lord”, v. 2; I wholly dedicated the silver from my hand to the Lord, v. 3,4; Now I know the Lord will prosper me seeing I have a Levite as my priest, vs. 13.

- 2D Religion does not restrain morality. Micah, the young Levite, even the priests of Baal and Dagon are all religious. But their religion is false and destroys the nation.
 - 3D. Spirituality is a relationship with God based on the finished work of Christ on the cross, walking by the Spirit, confession of sin, and application of doctrine. It is not emotion, feelings, ritual, religious activity or religious devotion.
 - 4D. Micah rejected the divinely ordained place of worship in Shiloh and the divinely mandated system of worship through the Levitical priesthood at Shiloh. This is analogous today of rejecting the worship of God through the teaching of the Bible in favor of praise and modern forms of worship and church that minimize the teaching of the Bible for other religious activity such as subjective emotional forms of worship, contemplative spirituality and other forms of church activity that put the emphasis on individual experience rather than the objective work of God. .
 - 5D Religion doesn't always deny the teaching of Scripture it offers something additional. The Charismatics offer a postsalvation experience falsely called the Baptism of the Holy Spirit; others offer dedication, contemplation, discipleship, psychology. But they all deny the sufficiency of Scripture and the sufficiency of the cross. The most successful religious deceptions add to Scripture rather than taking away.
 - 6D False religion treats God like a superstitious magic charm, this is seen in the worship of relics, repetition of meaningless prayers like the prayer of Jabez, and manipulation of God as seen in the health and wealth movement. (Judge 7:13)
- 2b The pagan actions of one man leads to a major civil war and almost destroys the tribe of Benjamin.

Judges 18 reports the apostasy of the Tribe of Dan. These mechanics relay to us an example of how the entire nation fell into apostasy.

1. The tribe of Dan was provided an allotment of land under the provisions of the Conquest. This was to be their possession.

Dan failed to trust God so they failed to realize what was theirs positionally.

Then they start looking around. Like many Christian organizations, seminaries and churches who start raising money as a goal rather than trusting God. God's work done God's way never lacks for God's resources.

1. The Background to the Violence at Gibeah (19:1–10a)
2. The Nature of the Violence at Gibeah (19:10b–30) THE SOCIAL OUTRAGE (19:10–21). THE MORAL OUTRAGE (19:22–28)
3. The Israelite Response to the Violence at Gibeah (20:1–48)
4. The National Crisis Precipitated by the Violence at Gibeah (21:1–25)