

INTRO REMARKS:

X. Judges

A. Introduction

- Above all, the theme verse in Judges

“In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes.” (Judges 17:6, 21:25)

1. Title: “Judges” in Hebrew and LXX
2. Date of Events: From the Death of Joshua (c. 1390 B. C.) to the Death of Samson (c. 1055 B. C.) –

¹ Notes prepared with help of The Master’s Seminary BI 501 Bible Survey syllabus.

B. Major Themes

1. The Judges (n. 2:16-19 [6x]; v. 3:10; 4:3; 10:2, 3; *11:27; 12:7, 8-9, 11, 13-14; 15:20; 16:31) [KHI, 181-2; CBCOT, 39]

- Judges introduced in chpt 2:11

¹¹ Then the sons of Israel did what was evil in the eyes of Yahweh and served the Baals, ¹² and they forsook Yahweh, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods from *among* the gods of the peoples who were around them and bowed themselves down to them; thus they provoked Yahweh to anger. ¹³ So they forsook Yahweh and served Baal and the Ashtaroth. ¹⁴ And the anger of Yahweh burned against Israel, and He gave them into the hands of plunderers who plundered them; and He sold them into the hands of their enemies around *them*, so that they could no longer stand before their enemies. ¹⁵ Wherever they went, the hand of Yahweh was against them for evil, as Yahweh had spoken and as Yahweh had sworn to them, so that they were severely distressed. ¹⁶ Then Yahweh raised up judges who saved them from the hands of those who plundered them. ¹⁷ Yet they did not listen to their judges either, for they played the harlot after other gods and bowed themselves down to them. They turned aside quickly from the way in which their fathers had walked in obeying the commandments of Yahweh; they did not do as *their fathers*. ¹⁸ Now when Yahweh raised up judges for them, Yahweh was with the judge and saved them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; for Yahweh was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who oppressed and suppressed them. ¹⁹ But it happened when the judge died, that they would turn back and act more corruptly than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them and bow down to them; they did not abandon their practices or their stubborn ways. ²⁰ So the anger of Yahweh burned against Israel, and He said, "Because this nation has trespassed against My covenant which I commanded their fathers and has not listened to My voice, ²¹ I also will no longer dispossess before them any of the nations which Joshua left when he died, ²² in order to test Israel by them, whether they will keep the way of Yahweh to walk in it as their fathers did, or not." ²³ So Yahweh allowed those nations to rest, not dispossessing them quickly; and He did not give them into the hand of Joshua.

- a. The Background of the Judges (Ex. 18:13-27; Num. 11:10-17, 24-30; Deut. 1:9-17; 16:18-20; 17:8-13; Josh. 8:33; 23:2; 24:1)
- b. The List of the Judges
 - 1) The Major/Primary Judges:

➤ Othniel (Judg 3:9-11)

Judg 3:9 then the sons of Israel cried to Yahweh, and Yahweh raised up a savior for the sons of Israel to save them, Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother (so, Othniel was Caleb's nephew)

- Defeated king of Mesopotamia; gave rest to Israel for 40 years

➤ Ehud (Judg 3:15-23)

- Assassinated Eglon, king of Moab; leading Israel from enslavement to Moab (killing 10,000 Moabites; 80 years of peace)

➤ Deborah (Judg 5-6)

- Used to deliver Israel from a 20-year Canaanite oppression; after Barak's failure to courageously lead, God chose a woman to defeat Sisera (commander of the Canaanite army) by Jael, who drove a tent peg through his temple

➤ Gideon (Judg 6-8)

- Midian crushed Israel by destroying their crops & forced them to live in "caves" (6:2); despite his weakness & natural lack of courage, Yahweh uses him to crush the enormous Midianite army by yelling & smashing pitchers

➤ Jephthah (Judg 11)

- Son of a harlot (11:1); used to crush a huge Ammonite army; makes a foolish vow to offer his daughter

➤ Samson (Judg 13-16)

- Despite a flawed life & flawed faith, Yahweh used him to deliver Israel from the Philistines with extraordinary, supernatural displays of physical strength

****God can use very imperfect men & women to accomplish his perfect purposes**

2) The Minor/Secondary Judges:

Shamgar (Judg 3:31), struck down 600 Philistines w/ an ox goad

Tola (Judg 10:1-2), saved Israel, judged 23 years)

Jair (Judg 10:3-5), judged for 22 years

Ibzan (Judg 12:8-10), judged for 7 years, buried in Bethlehem

Elon (Judg 12:11-12), judged for 10 years

Abdon (Judg 12:13-15), judged 8 years

2. The Incomplete Obedience of Israel (1, 2)

3. The Cycle: 6 times: (2, 3, 4-5, 6-8, 10-12, 13-16)

Deut. 12:8 "You shall not do at all what we are doing here today, every man doing whatever is right in his own eyes."

Judges 17:6, 21:25 "In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes."

- a. Israel's Sin (2:11-13, 17; 3:7, 12; 4:1; 6:1; 8:33; 10:6; 13:1)
- b. Israel's Servitude (2:14-15, 20-23; 3:8, 12-14; 4:2; 6:1-6; 10:7-9; 13:1)
- c. Israel's Supplication (2:18; 3:9, 15; 4:3; 6:7; 10:10)

3:15 "But when the sons of Israel cried to Yahweh, Yahweh raised up a deliverer for them..."

- d. Israel's Salvation (2:16; 3:9-10, 15; 4:6-7; 6:14, 10:18; 13:5)
- e. Israel's Security (2:18; 3:11, 30; 5:31; 8:28; 12:7; 16:31)

4. The Provocation and Protection of Yahweh (2, 3, 4, 6-8, 10; cf. Ps. 106:43-45; Neh. 9:27-28)

The point of Judges is not _____

Rather, the point is _____

*The importance of God's sovereign grace, expressed in the Abrahamic Covenant.

5. The Spirit of Yahweh (3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6, 19; 15:14) [Empowering Samson, for example, in spite of Samson]
6. The Angel of Yahweh (2:1, 4; 5:23; 6:11, 12, 20, 21, 22; 13:3, 6, 9, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21)
7. The Brutality in the Society (3, 4, 5, 9, 12, 14-16, 19-21)
8. The Kingship (8:22-23; 17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25)

- C. Purpose: The failure of Israel during the period of the Judges demonstrated Israel's need for a righteous King and regeneration of the heart.

Or: Despite Israel's constant sin and incredible rebellion, Yahweh was faithful to not throw away his chosen nation. He remained true to the promise to Abraham.

D. Bibliography

1. Exegetical: Wood, *Distressing Days of the Judges*.
2. English Interpretation: Block, *Judges-Ruth* (NAC)
3. Expositional: Dale Ralph Davis, *Judges: Such a Great Salvation*.