

INTRODUCTION TO JUDGES

Judges 1:1 NOW after the death of Joshua it came to pass, that the children of Israel asked the LORD, saying, Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them?

Judges 2:16 Nevertheless the LORD raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them.

Ruth 1:1 NOW it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Beth-lehem-judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons.

1 Samuel 4:18 And it came to pass, when he made mention of the ark of God, that he fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck brake, and he died: for he was an old man, and heavy. And he had judged Israel forty years.

1 Samuel 7:15 And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. **1 Samuel 7:16** And he went from year to year in circuit to Beth-el, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places. **1 Samuel 7:17** And his return was to Ramah; for there was his house; and there he judged Israel; and there he built an altar unto the LORD.

1 Samuel 8:1 And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel. **1 Samuel 8:2** Now the name of his firstborn was Joel; and the name of his second, Abiah: they were judges in Beer-sheba. **1 Samuel 8:3** And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment. **1 Samuel 8:4** Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah, **1 Samuel 8:5** And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.

1 Samuel 8:20 That we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles.

Eisodus: into

Genesis 15:13 And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;

Exodus 12:40 Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. **Exodus 12:41** And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt.

Exodus 2:23 And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage. **Exodus 2:24** And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. **Exodus 2:25** And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them.

Slavery: after the expulsion of the Hyskos

Exodus 1:6 And Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation.

Exodus 1:8 Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph. **Exodus 1:9** And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we: **Exodus 1:10** Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land.

Exodus: under Moses

The 40years in the wilderness, death of Moses, Aaron, and all but...

Numbers 14:6 And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes: **Numbers 14:7** And they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. **Numbers 14:8** If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. **Numbers 14:9** Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the LORD is with us: fear them not. **Numbers 14:10** But all the congregation bade stone them with stones. And the glory of the LORD appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel.

Numbers 14:20 And the LORD said, I have pardoned according to thy word: **Numbers 14:21** But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD. **Numbers 14:22** Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice; **Numbers 14:23** Surely they shall not see the land which I swore unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it: **Numbers 14:24** But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it.

Numbers 14:38 But Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of the men that went to search the land, lived still.

Deuteronomy 1:39 Moreover your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, and your children, which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil, **they shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it.** **Deuteronomy 1:40** But as for you, turn you, and take your journey into the wilderness by the way of the Red sea.

Conquest: under Joshua & the Book of Joshua

To understand Judges one must understand Joshua

The immediate success and the work

Joshua 11:18 Joshua made war a long time with all those kings. **Joshua 11:19** There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, save the Hivites the inhabitants of Gibeon: all other they took in battle. **Joshua 11:20** For it was of the LORD to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no favour, but that he might destroy them, as the LORD commanded Moses.

Joshua 11:23 So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD said unto Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. **And the land rested from war.**

THOUGHTS ABOUT THE ERA AND THE BOOK OF THE JUDGES:

1. Judges transpired after the death of Joshua

Joshua 23:14 **And, behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth:** and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof.

Joshua 24:29 **And it came to pass after these things, that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being an hundred and ten years old.** **Joshua 24:30** And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-serah, which is in mount Ephraim, on the north side of the hill of Gaash. **Joshua 24:31** And Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the LORD, that he had done for Israel.

Judges 1:1 **NOW after the death of Joshua** it came to pass, that the children of Israel asked the LORD, saying, Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them?

Judges 2:8 **And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died,** being an hundred and ten years old.

2. Judges is **both a book and an era**

The era is from the death of Joshua until the reign of Saul

Judges → Ruth → Samuel

2 Kings 23:22 Surely there was not holden such a passover **from the days of the judges that judged Israel**, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah;

3. Judges was written out of order → intentionally!

1-2: an introduction that actually introduces

3-16: The cycle of Judges (more or less chronological)

17-18:

Judges 18:30 And the children of Dan set up the graven image: and Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan until the day of the captivity of the land. **Judges 18:31** And they set them up Micah's graven image, which he made, all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh.

19-21:

Judges 20:27 And the children of Israel inquired of the LORD, (for the ark of the covenant of God was there in those days, **Judges 20:28** And Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, stood before it in those days,)

saying, Shall I yet again go out to battle against the children of Benjamin my brother, or shall I cease? And the LORD said, Go up; for to morrow I will deliver them into thine hand.

Ruth:

Ruth 1:1 NOW it came to pass **in the days when the judges ruled**, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Beth-lehem-judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons.

Ruth 4:18 Now these are the generations of Pharez: Pharez begat Hezron, **Ruth 4:19** And Hezron begat Ram, and Ram begat Amminadab, **Ruth 4:20** And Amminadab begat Nahshon, and Nahshon begat Salmon, **Ruth 4:21** And Salmon begat **Boaz**, and Boaz begat Obed, **Ruth 4:22** And Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David.

4. Judges transpired without obvious leadership

Judges 17:6 **In those days there was no king in Israel**, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

Judges 18:1 **In those days there was no king in Israel**: and in those days the tribe of the Danites sought them an inheritance to dwell in; for unto that day all their inheritance had not fallen unto them among the tribes of Israel.

Judges 19:1 And it came to pass in those days, **when there was no king in Israel**, that there was a certain Levite sojourning on the side of mount Ephraim, who took to him a concubine out of Beth-lehem-judah.

Judges 21:25 **In those days there was no king in Israel**: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

Ruth 1:1 NOW it came to pass **in the days when the judges ruled**, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Beth-lehem-judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons.

The book of Judges is a constant search for leadership

5. Judges transpired in / amidst fragmentation, chaos, and tribal conflict!

There were no unified leadership of all 12 tribes

Usually only a small area

What do we find?

Many examples of inter-tribal conflict and even war

Israel is used over 150x → but it is always a fragmented, conflicted Israel.

One man said: The untitled book should be called “The Book of Tribal Rulers.”

6. The Era of the Judges and the Judges were & are to be evaluated by the book of Deuteronomy

How far back do we need to read?

The entire OT **assumes** you have read and know well the Law (events and specific laws).

If the OT doesn't specifically &/ directly comment on a character or event or action → the author **assumes** you know the Law

Deuteronomy 17:14 When thou art come unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me; **Deuteronomy 17:15** Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother. **Deuteronomy 17:16** But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the LORD hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way. **Deuteronomy 17:17** Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold. **Deuteronomy 17:18** And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites: **Deuteronomy 17:19** And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them: **Deuteronomy 17:20** That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from

the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel.

Anytime Scripture mentions a King, no direct comment is really necessary!

A King & the Kingdom is:

- Chosen by god
- Chosen from Israel → so no foreign kings
- No foreign entanglements
- Not a military-centered kingdom
- No multiple wives
- Not greed-centered
- Bible-centered
- Bible formed
- One of his brethren that remains / stays like one of his brethren

Deuteronomy 5:6 I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

Deuteronomy 5:7 **Thou shalt have none other gods before me.**

Deuteronomy 5:8 **Thou shalt not make thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters beneath the earth: Deuteronomy 5:9 Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them:** for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God....

Deuteronomy 5:11 **Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain...**

Deuteronomy 5:12 **Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it,** as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee. **Deuteronomy 5:13** Six days thou shalt labour, and do all thy work: **Deuteronomy 5:14** But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou.

Deuteronomy 5:15 And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the LORD thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day.]

Deuteronomy 5:16 **Honour thy father and thy mother,** as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

Deuteronomy 5:17 **Thou shalt not kill.**

Deuteronomy 5:18 **Neither shalt thou commit adultery.**

Deuteronomy 5:19 **Neither shalt thou steal.**

Deuteronomy 5:20 **Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbour.**

Deuteronomy 5:21 **Neither shalt thou desire** thy neighbour's wife, **neither shalt thou covet** thy neighbour's house, his field, or his manservant, or his maidservant, his ox, or his ass, or any thing that is thy neighbour's.