

(Gen. 1:2; cf. Jer. 4:23-34). ... Israel, the firstborn son of God, has been disobedient (Deut. 21:18-21). He has been buried in an exilic graveyard (Ezek. 37:1-14).” -S. Dempster

JOSHUA AND JUDGES

JOSHUA: Land - “Canonical hinge between Torah and Prophets”

Linking to Pentateuch: The author of Joshua concludes this section by stating that God had given Israel “*all the land that he swore to give to their fathers*” (21:43). He states, “*Not one word of all the good promises that Yahweh had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass*” (v. 45).

Book of Joshua: The Story of the Conquest of the Land as God Had Promised (cf. Gen. 12:1-3). Israel, God’s Son is exercising dominion over creation as YHWH’s vice-regent (cf. Gen. 1:26-28).

The Israelites were always to remember when they marched against the enemy what God had told Moses and Joshua before them (Deut. 31:1-6; Joshua 1:1-9):

Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the LORD your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you.”

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”

Date of Events: ca. 1406-1376 (death of Joshua) BC

Outline:

I. Preparation for Entrance to Land (Josh. 1:1-5:12): “Cross” or “Passing Over” is key word

II. Conquest of Land (Josh. 5:13-12:24): “Taking” is key word

III. Distribution of the Land (Josh. 13-21): “Divide” is key word

IV. Covenant Obedience/Disobedience in the Land (Josh. 22-24): “Serve” is key word (serve and worship YHWH in covenantal faithfulness and commitment in the land).

Theme: The Land Promised by God (as an everlasting inheritance in Christ) privileged to participate in by an individual's faith. Joshua's name in Greek is "Jesus" which means "The LORD saves"; this is an appropriate starting place for understanding Joshua. Joshua along with Moses and Samuel and David and Solomon are some of the greatest of the Old Covenant Christ-like-types.

"In order to understand all that the book of Joshua reveals about the nature of the land promise, it is important to remember first that the land belongs to God (Lev. 25:23). Because the land belongs to God, Israel's continued residence in it is linked to God's covenantal relationship with Israel.

...The promise, then, is everlasting, but "participation in it is not guaranteed to every person or generation." – K. Mathison

Thematic Outline:

I. Conquest of the Land: Israel called to Courageous Conquest (Josh. 1:8-9). The Exodus saved/delivered Israel from slavery to sonship, Joshua is the receiving of the inheritance as sons.

II. Rest/Shalom: Israel to enjoy Paradise/Shalom-Peace in the Land. They are to enter their Sabbath rest (cf. Heb. 3:12-4:11).

III. Holy Herem Warfare (Salvation/Judgment): Deut. 7:1-26; 20:1-20; 25:17-29

What is the Herem Warfare? "ban, devote, exterminate" (from Heb.) -- *ban, devote*. This is a word used in Holy War to mean that the enemies of God, including their persons and possessions, must be wholly exterminated, or devoted to destruction, or under God's eschatological wrath-ban (see Joshua 11:20, ESV translated "utterly destroyed").

ESV Joshua 11:20 For it was the LORD's doing to harden their hearts that they should come against Israel in battle, in order that they should be devoted to destruction and should receive no mercy but be destroyed, just as the LORD commanded Moses.

God's Kingdom judgment would come upon his enemies; God's eschatological wrath would intrude upon His enemies through the sword of divine judgment wielded by God's people, the believing Israelites. The enemies of God and his people were placed "under the ban" or sentenced to utter extermination and

devastating destruction as a preview of the wrath of God that has yet to come upon unbelievers (2 Thess. 1:8-10; 2 Peter 3:6-11).

IV. Inheritance Rights of Land (Lev. 25:23; cf. 18:24-30).

Land/Earth in Redemptive-History: Created → Given → Lost → Promised → Inherited/Restored (partially/temporally) → Typified (Inherited by grace in Christ; lost by covenant breaking).

Tabernacle: Typified Eden, Land, and ultimately Jesus Christ: “God with us”.

Land Inherited: 1) Christologically: Christ’s body/temple; 2) Typologically: Rest in union with Christ/forgiveness of sins/heirs of promises of God; 3) Eschatologically: New Jerusalem

Key Chapters/Scriptures to Focus: Joshua 1, 5, 24

God’s Self-Revelation: How is the Triune God revealed?

God fights for Israel as the Divine Warrior (Exodus 15:3; Deut. 31:3). God is a God of both salvation and judgment: God shows judgment through Israel his instruments of judgment (cf. Gen. 15:17), but also much grace and salvation mercy to those who will put their trust in Israel’s Covenant-LORD (Rahab, Josh. 2; Gibeonites, Josh. 9-10).

Joshua 5 reveals the Angel of the LORD who is a preincarnate appearance of the Son of God (both YHWH and in the appearance of man).

Man's Sinful Condition: What is FCF (Fallen Condition Focus)?

Salvation/Deliverance/Discipline/Judgment. Man does not enter paradise-land-rest completely because of disobedience/faintheartedness/divided hearts.

Pastoral/Practical-Experiential Wisdom: How then should I live?

We see Christ has gone before His people as the Greater YESHUA-JOSHUA who gives His people full Sabbath Rest (Heb. 4:1-11). We keep our eyes on our Pioneer, running the race not being weighed down or hindered by unbelief/sins that so easily beset us (Heb. 3:19, 12:1-3). Only in Christ can we enjoy Paradise-Sabbath-Rest, entered and enjoyed and preserved in Christ for us.

Jesus is God's Warrior who will come in Final Judgment on the Last Day (Acts 17:31; Revelation 19:11-16). The inheritance of God's people is ultimately a renewed Heavens and Earth, and Heavenly Zion (Rev. 21:1-2).

So march *unified* Church of God- -seek the LORD through His Word, and believe and obey what it says: His directives to us are clear as a bell:

Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the LORD your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you."

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

God's mission of conquest was ultimately fulfilled by the Great Judge-Warrior-Savior-Deliverer Jesus Christ, and all we have to do is overcome *in him* by faith- -for we are more than conqueror-overcomers in Him who loved us.

Book of Joshua- Biblical-Theological Summary

Chap. 1: Moses is dead; Joshua begins his leadership of the Israelites as told in chapter 34 of the Book of Deuteronomy. The LORD promises to Joshua to be with him as he was with Moses and therefore to not fear because God will be strong on his behalf. The LORD reminds Joshua to do all according to the Book of Torah. Joshua takes leadership and prepares the people through the officers of the people to get ready to enter the land of rest promised to Abraham. The LORD reminds Joshua again to be strong and of good courage as the Israelites cross over the Jordan to possess the land. There are recurring phrases such as: "Be strong and of good courage"; "to pass over the Jordan"; "to take possession of the land...in order to possess it"; Joshua on behalf of the people said, "All that you have commanded us, we will do..."

Chap. 2-12: Chap. 2 is another story of spies who go to investigate the land of Jericho; Rahab the prostitute is delivered from God's wrath upon the Canaanites because of her faith in the God of Israel. Rahab tells the Israelites that when all of the peoples heard of God's great works in the Exodus, their "hearts melted" and there was no courage in any man. In chap. 3-4, the priests lead the way across the Jordan with the ark of the covenant. As in the Exodus with Moses, so now in the crossing of the Jordan with Joshua the Israelites cross on dry land. Joshua tells the leaders of the people to take up 12 stones for each tribe, as a memory of God's faithfulness. Chap. 5 begins by saying again that as the kings and peoples of neighboring lands heard of what God did in the Jordan, their "hearts melted," and they greatly feared the Israelites. Joshua circumcises the second generation of Israelites and they celebrate the Passover together in the land of promise at Gilgal (roll). The significance of the Passover is found in the Exodus, the crossing of the Jordan and primarily in God's faithful revelation to his people as Joshua experiences at the end of chap. 5:13-15. This reminds the reader of Moses in Exodus chap. 3. Chap. 6 continues with Israel taking the city of Jericho as the LORD promised to them. Chap. 7 reveals how quickly it is for God's people to turn to idolatry in the midst of God's presence and victory in the sin of Achan, the son of Carmi. Joshua mediates for the Israelites as Moses had done before. Chap. 8 recounts the victory against Ai and Joshua is reminded by the LORD again not to fear or be dismayed because the LORD will give the city as he has promised the land, into "your hand." Joshua obeyed the Book of Torah in the battle and defeat of the king of Ai, then he built an altar at Mt. Ebal and wrote on stones a

copy of the Torah of Moses, then he read to them all the words of Torah. Chapters 9-12 account for all the victories the Israelites had over the Canaanites. In chap. 9, the Hivites try to deceive Joshua so that he will make a treaty and keep them from destruction; chap. 10, King Adonizedek feared greatly because he had heard how the Israelites were taking the land so he tried to set up a united front against the Israelites. Joshua routed all the kings however, putting them to death and hanging them on trees. The recurring phrases in these chapters are the people's great fear of the Israelites and God's constant reminder to Joshua as mediator and warrior of the people: "Do not fear; be of good courage because I will give this people into your hand."

Chap. 13-21: This next section opens with these words: "Now Joshua was old and advanced in years..." This may be a marker as to the beginning of the end of Joshua's leadership. The reader might read this and ask: "Who will be Israel's leader now?" "They have not possessed all the land, who will lead them to possess the remainder?" The land that remains is told and the Israelite tribes are given their portion in the land. These blessings and portions of inheritance by the Israelites takes the reader back to Moses' final blessing in Deut. 33. The point of these chapters seems to be that the LORD was faithful in giving all the land to all of Israel just as he had promised to them and to their fathers before them. One interesting remark is in 17:17 when Joshua says to the tribe of Joseph that they will drive out the Canaanites even though "they have chariots of iron and though they are strong." This would be forgotten in the Book of Judges, chapters 1-3. The turning point is in chap. 18 when all the whole congregation, the church assembles at Shiloh for the first official "worship service" in the land that they had subdued by the power of the LORD. This section ends with verses 43 through 45 with great and precious promises: "Thus the LORD gave to Israel all the land which he swore to give their fathers; and having taken possession of it, they settled there...they had rest on every side...Not one of all the good promises which the LORD had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass." This is a summary of the section of chapters 13-21: God is faithful to his promises.

Chap. 22: Chapter 22 could be summarized in verse 4-6, as Joshua sends the tribes who will possess the land on the other side of the Jordan: "...the LORD your God has given rest to your brethren...Take care to observe the commandment and the torah which Moses commanded you, to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave to him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul" (cf. Dt. 6:4-6). They then turn away from the LORD immediately and build an altar which is contrary to the teaching of Moses in Deut. 12f.

Chap. 23-24: In chap. 23, it is again repeated that Joshua was getting older and dying. He tells the judges and officers of the people that they have seen God's faithfulness, therefore to be faithful to the LORD their God after he dies. He tells them again to be very steadfast "to keep and do all that is written in the book of Torah...but cleave to the LORD your God as you have done to this day." Joshua warns them against idolatry and tells them that the beginning of wisdom and of obedience is found in love to God and his Torah. He tells them in conclusion that when they disregard the covenant and forget the commandments of the LORD, the LORD's anger will be kindled against them in curses as Moses had warned them. In chap. 24, Joshua is about to die as Moses did in Deuteronomy. He therefore renews the covenant at Shechem and the people agree to live by the commands that Moses has given them written in the Book of Torah. The imperatives of obedience are again preceded by the indicative of who God is as revealed and what he has done for them in the past, the promises to the fathers, and the fulfillment of the promises in giving them the land at impossible human odds. "That day" they choose to serve and obey the LORD their God. Joshua calls a stone from the altar as a witness against the

people that day. Joshua dies and the bones of Joseph are brought up from Egypt and buried at Shechem. The book of Joshua ends at 24:33, not verse 34 because there is an implicit absence of a successor to Joshua in order to prepare the reader for the Book of Judges and the fact that everyone will do what is “right in his own eyes.”

Outline

I. Joshua to be Strong and of Good Courage as He Leads the Israelites into the Land (Chap.1)

- A. Joshua succeeds Moses as leader of the Israelites (1:1-9)
- B. Joshua commands the officers of the people to prepare the people to possess the land (1:10-15)
- C. The people renew the covenant prior to entering the land (1:16-18)

II. The Conquest of the Land (Chap.2-12)

- A. Spies to view the land and Rahab the prostitute who believes in the LORD (2:1-24)
- B. Joshua leads the people across the Jordan as Moses led the Israelites across the Red Sea (3:1-4:24)
- C. All the Kings of the nations fear the Israelites because of the mighty deeds of the LORD (5:1)
- D. Joshua circumcises the second generation of Israelites (5:2-9)
- E. Joshua leads the Israelites in the celebration of the Passover meal (5:10-12)
- F. The Commander of the LORD’s Army reveals himself to Joshua as the LORD did to Moses at the burning bush (5:13-15; cf. Ex. 3)
- G. The siege of the city of Jericho (6:1-21)
- H. God’s faithfulness to Rahab and her family (6:22-27)
- I. Unbelief in the camp: Achan’s sin of idolatry in spite of God’s faithfulness (7:1-26)
- J. Joshua takes the city of Ai (8:1-29)
- K. Joshua builds an altar to the LORD at Mt. Ebal and reads the Torah of Moses to the people (8:30-35)
- L. Joshua routes the five kings who wage a united front against Israel (9:1-10:43)
- M. The LORD delivers all the kings of the nations into the hands of the Israelites (11:1-12:24)

III. The Inheritances of the Twelve Tribes of Israel (Chap. 13-21)

- A. Joshua is aging and coming close to death (13:1)

- B. The land that remained to be conquered (13:2-7)
- C. Apportionment of the land as Moses said in Deut. 33 (13:8-19:51)
- D. Cities of Refuge as Moses said in Deut. 4 (20:1-9)
- E. Remainder of the tribes and their inheritance (21:1-42)
- F. The LORD's word had come to pass as he promised (21:43-45)

IV. The Inheritance of Reuben, Gad, Manasseh, and their Idolatry (Chap. 22)

- A. Their possession because of their faithful obedience to the LORD (22:1-9)
- B. Reuben, Gad and Manasseh offer strange fire to the LORD (22:10-34; cf. Numbers 32:20-22)

V. Rest in the Land and the Death of Joshua (Chap. 23-24)

- A. Joshua summons the elders of Israel to read the Torah of Moses to them in the promised land (23:1-15)
- B. Joshua summons the elders of Israel to renew the covenant in the promised land at Shechem (24:1-28)
- C. Joshua tells the people that they "cannot serve the LORD for he is a holy God and a jealous God" (24:19-21)
- D. Joshua calls the people to affirm the covenant of the LORD at Shechem (24:22-28)
- E. Joshua, the servant of the LORD dies (24:29-30)
- F. There is no mediator, no leader for Israel now that Moses, Aaron, Joshua and Eleazar have died (24:31-33)
- G. The bones of Joseph are buried at Shechem (24:32)
- H. The conclusion has no successor of Joshua (24:33)

JUDGES – The Canaanization of Israel

Book of Judges: A Story of Spiritual Degeneration/ Canaanization of Israel: Israel in a downward spiral spiritually, blindly doing what is right in her own eyes. After JOSHUA, there is no one like Moses and Joshua to preserve the people in righteousness. Thus, begins a turning away, and eventually another expulsion from Paradise-Rest-Land.

Israel needs a Shepherd-King to deliver and lead them in righteousness before YHWH—a more might and permanent deliverer-warrior-savior.

^{ESV} Judges 17:6 In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

^{ESV} Judges 18:1 In those days there was no king in Israel.

^{ESV} Judges 19:1 In those days, when there was no king in Israel, a certain Levite was sojourning in the remote parts of the hill country of Ephraim, who took to himself a concubine from Bethlehem in Judah.

^{ESV} Judges 21:25 In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

Perhaps the title “Judges” is deceiving for we English readers (“Judges” comes from the Latin Vulgate of Jerome *Liber Judicum*) and perhaps a better title of the book would be “***Book of Warlords***” or “***Book of Saviors***” or “***Book of Warrior Deliverers***” or “***The Book of Tribal Rulers***” (see Block, pgs. 23-25).

Link back to Joshua and Pentateuch/Torah/Moses:

^{ESV} Judges 2:6-10: When Joshua dismissed the people, the people of Israel went each to his inheritance to take possession of the land. ⁷ And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great work that the LORD had done for Israel. ⁸ And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of 110 years. ⁹ And they buried him within the boundaries of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the hill country of Ephraim, north of the mountain of Gaash. ¹⁰ And all that generation also were gathered to their fathers. And there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD or the work that he had done for Israel.

v. 10 sounds like ^{ESV} **Exodus 1:8** *Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph.*

What are “Judges”? The Hebrew verb *shaphat* [jp;v' vb. **judge, govern**] means “to judge” or “to lead” or “to govern” (Judges 3:10; 4:4; 12:7; 15:20; 16:31; *shopetim* is the plural as in “judges” in the book’s title) We actually have a good definition of Judges found in chapter 2, verses 16-19:

^{ESV} Judges 2:16-19: Then the LORD raised up judges, who saved them out of the hand of those who plundered them. ¹⁷ Yet they did not listen to their judges, for they whored

after other gods and bowed down to them. They soon turned aside from the way in which their fathers had walked, who had obeyed the commandments of the LORD, and they did not do so.¹⁸ Whenever the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with the judge, and he saved them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge. For the LORD was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who afflicted and oppressed them.¹⁹ 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.

Date of Events: Period between death of Joshua and rise of monarchy in Israel- ca. 1400-1050 BC- Approx. 350 years from death of Joshua to Samuel.

Important! Redemptive-Historical Time Period of Judges:

From death of Joshua (Conquest) to Samuel (1 Samuel 1-8)- Overlap. Books of Samuel take place at the end of the period of the judges (Judges 2:18-19; cf. 1 Samuel 2:10, 4:18; 7:15-17; 8:5-6, 20).

Samuel is the last of the judges of Israel, the first of the prophets of Israel

[Samuel is “Prophetic Hinge” in Redemptive History from Torah/Former Prophets to Latter Prophets and then the New Covenant]

^{ESV} 1 Samuel 7:15-17: Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life.¹⁶ And he went on a circuit year by year to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah. And he judged Israel in all these places.¹⁷ Then he would return to Ramah, for his home was there, and there also he judged Israel. And he built there an altar to the LORD.

^{ESV} Acts 13:18-20: And for about forty years he put up with them in the wilderness.¹⁹ And after destroying seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave them their land as an inheritance.²⁰ All this took about 450 years. And after that he gave them judges until Samuel the prophet.

Outline:

I. What Causes the Degeneration? (Judges 1:1-3:6)- Who will lead Israel after the death of Joshua (Judges 1:1-36)?

II. Canaanization of Israel (Judges 3:7-16:31)

III. Deep Depravity and Moral Chaos (Judges 17:1-21)- Israel has become like Sodom!

Theme: The Evil Canaanization of Israel: Doing what is right in one's own eyes (2:11; 3:7, 12; 4:1; 6:1; 10:6; 13:1). Israel is unfaithful and idolatrous before YHWH, becoming like the nations rather than being a light to the nations. God disciplines His people, but though they are unfaithful, God remains faithful to deliver them when they cry out in repentance to Him for help.

PATTERN of JUDGES/Cycles:

IDOLATRY → SLAVERY/OPPRESSION → PRAYER FOR HELP → YHWH RAISES UP DELIVER/JUDGE/WARLORD → ISRAEL ENJOYS TEMPORAL PEACE, THEN GROWS COMPLACENT → IDOLATRY

Summary: Sin → Oppression → Deliverance

Summary: Rebellion → Retribution → Repentance → Restoration

Thematic Outline: The Judges (Major and Minor)

Major Judges	Minor Judges	Scripture
Othniel		3:7-11
Ehud		3:12-30
	Shamgar	3:31
Deborah and Barak		4:1-5:31
Gideon		6:1-8:35
Abimelech		9:1-57
	Tola	10:1-2
	Jair	10:3-5
Jephthah		10:6-12:7
	Ibzan	12:8-10
	Elon	12:11-12
	Abdon	12:13-15
Samson		13:1-16:31

Key Chapters/Scriptures to Focus: Judges 2:11-23 (cf. Exo. 23:23-33; Numbers 33:55-56; Deut. 7:1-5; Josh. 23:11-13, 15)

God's Self-Revelation: How is the Triune God revealed?

God disciplines and chastens His disobedient people, but at their worst, YHWH stays at His Covenant best: faithful and does not abandon His own Beloved. "What Judges gives the reader is

not a systematic theology, but rather the history of a relationship. Judges leaves us with a paradox: God's relationship with Israel is at once both conditional and unconditional. He will not remove His favor, but Israel must live in obedience and faith to inherit the promise" (Dillard and Longman).

Because the people of God so quickly forgot the covenantal promises that God had made to them which included victory over their enemies, by God's grace the Angel of YHWH came to them to remind the people of Israel that there were to be consequences for their sins and covenantal unfaithfulness (2:1ff). This was the Angel of the LORD, the Second Person of the Trinity, the Pre-Incarnate Christ who was the Commander of the LORD's Army who was the One who God said would be with them after the exodus and forever (this is also known as a *Theophany*, but you knew that!):

*^{ESV} Judges 2:1-3: Now the angel of the LORD went up from Gilgal to Bochim. And he said, 'I brought you up from Egypt and brought you into the land that I swore to give to your fathers. I said, 'I will never break my covenant with you,'² and you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall break down their altars.' **But you have not obeyed my voice. What is this you have done?**³ So now I say, I will not drive them out before you, but they shall become thorns in your sides,¹ and their gods shall be a snare to you.'*

As Michael Wilcock suggests in his excellent commentary, perhaps *the Book of Judges* should have the title that the spiritual biography of John Bunyan had: *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* (preface). *Judges* is a book revealing that where sin abounds, grace abounds all the more!

Man's Sinful Condition: What is FCF (Fallen Condition Focus)?

Israel's propensity toward idolatry is still a reality in the human heart. As one author put it: "Old Testament Israel is universal human nature writ large." Only the Holy Spirit can give us affections and desires that want to wholeheartedly love and serve God and our neighbors as ourselves.

We are idolaters; or another way of stating this is that we are by nature covenant-breakers or those who do not listen to the Word of God and do what it says. What is first in our hearts, what we care about, or love the most is what we worship as "GOD".

As Professor Daniel Block writes in his excellent commentary: "...*the Book of Judges* declares that if God's people ever forget the grace that he has lavished upon them in redemption, covenant relationship, and the revelation of his will, the slide into apostasy is inevitable.... [On the other hand] *the Book of Judges* teaches its readers in every age that the darker the human heart the more brilliant the light of God's grace" (*Judges*, NAC, preface).

Apostasy a dangerous threat at all times in the covenant community.

Pastoral/Practical-Experiential Wisdom: How then should I live?

God desires to teach His people spiritual warfare through tribulation and trials:

^{ESV} **Judges 3:1-2:** *Now these are the nations that the LORD left, to test Israel by them, that is, all in Israel who had not experienced all the wars in Canaan. ² It was only in order that the generations of the people of Israel might know war, to teach war to those who had not known it before.*

Behold God's good providence. Even when sinners do wickedness, He is faithful to use it for good (cf. Rom. 8:28-29; Gen. 50:20; Job 42:1-6).

Let us see Christ as our Blessed and Glorious Final and Faithful Divine Judge/Deliverer/Warlord who possesses us by His Spirit so that we will wholeheartedly devote our hearts and live to Him in gratitude and obedience, fearing the LORD in holiness of life. *Westminster Shorter Catechism, Q&A 26* teaches us: "Christ executes the office of king, in subduing us to Himself, in ruling and defending us, and in restraining and conquering all His and our enemies."

May God once again hear the prayers of His visible Church and may he enable us by His Powerful Spirit to go forth as the church militant, the very "church on the march" as we live holy lives separated from the City of Man because in Christ we are already citizens of Heaven, the City of God where God dwells in all of His glory.

Let us be watchful of our propensity to idolatry. Let us remember that when we fail, we can always call upon God the Father in Christ and find the forgiveness of our sins as He has faithfully promised to us!

Let us live by faith like Gideon, Barak, Jephthah and Samson (Heb. 11:32-33). J. Alan Groves wrote helpfully, "*But once Christ had come, the struggling faith of the judges was understood as looking forward to Christ. In the end, in Christ, they were seen not as bringing the solution, but as acting in faith that God would bring the solution. Which he did, in Christ.*"

^{ESV} **Hebrews 11:32-33:** *And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets- ³³ who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions...*

Book of Judges- Biblical-Theological Summary

Chap.1: The first thing to notice is v. 1 and its connection to the Book of Joshua and its sequel to the death of Joshua ("After the death of Joshua..."). Immediately, the author points us to the fact that Joshua is dead and Israel has no leader (mediator?), so they inquire of the LORD immediately. It is interesting to notice the preeminence of the Tribe of Judah and their victories from the very beginning of the Book in chapter 1. It is interesting that in v.19 the author says "the LORD was with Judah...but he was unable to defeat the inhabitants of the plain because of their iron chariots." Although the author seems to be sympathetic to Judah's victories, even Judah could not defeat those with iron chariots and had forgotten the hope of the LORD in "Fear not for I have given you the land as an inheritance." Judah had "good reason" for not defeating all the inhabitants, but in contrast, the Benjamenites did not drive out the Jebusites even though they are not reported as having any kind of iron chariots (v.21). This would affirm the author writing during the time prior to David's kingdom. It seems to be a contrast

between Saul, the Benjaminite to David from the Tribe of Judah. The LORD was also with Joseph (v.22); Manasseh did not drive out the inhabitants of the land. The reoccurring motif is that “Israel did not utterly drive them out” (v.21; cf. 28-36). Only Judah came close to achieving the victory in the land which God had promised; the other tribes utterly failed to drive the inhabitants out of the land.

Chap. 2-16: Chap. 2 opens with the Angel of the LORD telling the Israelites of their unfaithfulness followed by an account of Joshua’s death and the fact that this was a generation who did not know the LORD or the work which he had done for Israel (2:10). In v.11 we see the first motif of “And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals...” In v. 14, we see the first of the motifs saying, “So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel...” Then in v. 16, “Then the LORD raised up judges, who saved them out of the power of those who plundered them.” From 2:11-23, the stage is set for the cycles of Judges to be presented in chapter 3 and following. Throughout the successive judges there is the repeated pattern of Israel’s disobedience upon the death of the judge. In chap. 4 and 5 it seems obvious that a satirical or ironical judge has been raised up in the woman Deborah. Chap. 4 ends with Jael, another woman defeating the enemies of Israel. In 5:27 this irony in Deborah’s song seems to be evident: “[Jael] sank, he fell, he lay still at *her* feet,” rather than the other way around in a patriarchal society. The most obvious reflection in Judges 2-16 is that all of the judges are not heroes, but anti-heroes. They all are microcosms of Israel’s disobedience to the covenant and to her unbelief. All of them are not ones to be admired, but it is as if God is teaching in Judges that albeit imperfect, these were the only men to deliver Israel- - ultimately this points to a better, a perfect deliverer to come! One like Moses and Joshua, but a perfect deliverer who will be faithful to the covenant and deliver Israel permanently and bring her into God’s rest.

Chap. 17-21: Here are two small tales, stories, or parables of Israel’s disobedience to God. Although God has delivered Israel every time she has called upon him, they have consistently been idolaters (Micah, his mother and the Levite are idolaters). God is displeased with Israel and the author continuously repeats the phrase: “Now Israel was without a king and everyone did what was right in their own eyes.” The Benjaminites (incidentally the tribe from which Saul comes) behave treacherously as Canaanites against the concubine rather than acting as covenant people of God.

Outline

I. Prologue: Joshua’s Death and the Israelites with no Mediator/Leader before God (Chap.1)

- A. Judges as sequel to the Book of Joshua (1:1)
- B. Judah and Simeon’s partial conquest of Canaan (1:1-20)
- C. Benjamin’s failure in battle against the Jebusites (1:21)
- D. Joseph’s partial conquest of Bethel (1:22-26)
- E. The failure in conquest of the other tribes (1:27-36)

II. The Cycles of Israelite Disobedience and the Deliverance by Judges (Chap. 2-16)

- A. The angel of the LORD reminds Israel of the covenant at Bochim (2:1-5)
- B. Reflections on Joshua's leadership and death after covenant renewal (2:6-10)
- C. Israel's beginning pattern of disobedience after Joshua's death (2:11-23)
 - 1. Israel does evil in the sight of the LORD (2:11-13)
 - 2. The LORD is angry with Israel and gives them over to their enemies (2:14-15)
 - 3. The LORD raises up judges to deliver Israel (2:16-18)
 - 4. After deliverance, Israel returns to a life of covenantal disobedience (2:19-22)
 - 5. The LORD allows the nations to remain in Canaan (2:23)
- D. (1st) First Cycle: The Nations the LORD allows to remain in Canaan (3:1-6)
 - 1. Israel does evil in the sight of the LORD (3:7)
 - 2. The LORD's anger was kindled against Israel (3:8)
 - 3. The people cry out to the LORD for deliverance (3:9)
 - 4. The LORD raises up a judge to deliver Israel (3:9)
 - 5. (1) First Judge: Othniel (3:9-11)
 - a. Othniel has God's Spirit upon him (3:10)
 - b. Othniel is victorious and brings forty years of rest to the land (3:10-11)
- E. (2nd) Second Cycle: King Eglon fights against Israel (3:12-30)
 - 1. (2nd) Second Judge: Ehud (3:15-30)
 - a. Ehud the Benjaminite a left-handed man (3:15)
 - b. Ehud kills Eglon in a dishonorable way (3:16-30)
 - 2. (3rd) Third Judge: Shamgar, son of Anath (3:31)
- F. (3rd) Third Cycle: Jabin king of Canaan who reigns in Hazor fights against Israel (4:1-24)
 - 1. (4th) Fourth Judge: Deborah a prophetess (4:1-5:31)
 - a. Deborah is a woman (4:4)
 - b. Deborah is accompanied by Barak who is fearful unless accompanied by her and under her command (4:8f; cf. 4:14)
 - c. The enemy Sisera is killed by Jael, a woman (4:17-22)
 - d. God subdues Israel's enemies by women (4:23-24)
 - 2. Interlude: the Song of Deborah (cf. Song of Moses/ Song of Mary in the NT)
 - a. The land has rest for forty years (5:31b)
- G. (4th) Fourth Cycle: Midian conquers Israel for seven years (6:1-8:35)

1. Interlude: the LORD sends a prophet to remind Israel of the past and the threat of the future (6:7-10)
2. (5th) Fifth Judge: Gideon sent by the angel of the LORD (6:11-8:35)
 - a. Gideon is described as a “mighty man of valor” (6:12)
 - b. The angel of the LORD reminds Gideon of the LORD’s faithfulness to his promises (6:13-16)
 - c. Gideon’s lack of faith; his need for a “sign” other than the one God had already given him in the Exodus and at Sinai (6:17-24)
 - d. Gideon apprehensively obeys the LORD and tears down the altar to Baal (6:28-32)
 - e. The Spirit of the LORD comes upon Gideon to defeat the Midianites (6:33-35)
 - f. Gideon has another spell of disbelief and desire for a “sign” (6:36-40)
 - g. The LORD teaches Gideon faith by decreasing the number of his troops (7:1-8:3)
 - h. Gideon crosses the Jordan like Moses and Joshua before him and begins the conquest of the land God had promised to the Israelites (8:4-21)
 - i. Gideon offered a kingship like Moses before him and he rejects the offer (8:22-26)
 - j. Gideon defeats the Midianites, but Israel plays the harlot and Midian subdues Israel (8:27-28)
 - k. Gideon allowed the land to rest for forty years (8:28b)
 - l. Gideon dies and his leadership is taken by his son Abimelech and the Israelites play the harlot again (8:29-35)
3. **Interlude:** Abimelech takes the rule of Gideon and the Israelites make him king in Shechem where they had affirmed God’s rule over them (9:1-6)
 - a. Jotham’s parable of a king over Israel (9:7-15)
 - b. Jotham’s judgment on Israel making Abimelech king (9:16-21)
 - c. Abimelech rules over Israel three years (9:22)
 - d. God sends an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem (9:22-25)
 - e. The men of Shechem follow Gaal, son of Ebed and there is inter-tribal warfare in Israel (9:26-52)
 - f. Abimelech is killed by a woman (9:53-55)
 - g. God avenges the death of Abimelech’s seventy brothers; the men of Shechem receive Jotham’s curse (9:56-57)
4. (6th) Sixth Judge: Tola, son of Puah who judged Israel twenty-three years (10:1-2)
5. (7th) Seventh Judge: Jair the Gileadite who judged Israel twenty-two years (10:3-5)

H. (5th) Fifth Cycle: The Philistines and the Ammonites conquer Israel (10:6-12:15)

1. (8th) Eighth Judge: Jephthah the Gileadite a “mighty warrior” who was the son of a harlot (11:1)
 - a. Jephthah’s brothers throw him out of the house and he becomes a thief and common robber (11:2-3)
 - b. Jephthah is called to deliver Israel by the elders of Gilead (11:4-13)
 - c. Jephthah ironically recounts the great acts of God in Israel’s past to the King of the Ammonites (11:14-28)
 - d. The Spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah and he routs the Ammonites (11:29-33)
 - e. Jephthah sacrifices his daughter to the LORD based upon his vow (11:34-40)
 - f. Inter-tribal warfare among the Israelites and Jephthah’s death (12:1-7)
 - g. Jephthah judged Israel for six years.
2. (9th) Ninth Judge: Ibzan of Bethlehem judges Israel for seven years (12:8-10)
3. (10th) Tenth Judge: Elon the Zebulunite judges Israel for ten years (12:11-12)
4. (11th) Eleventh Judge: Abdon, son of Hillel judged Israel for eight years (12:13-15)

I. (6th) Sixth Cycle: The Israelites conquered by the Philistines for Forty Years (13:1-16:31)

1. (12th) Twelve Judge: Samson, son of Manoah (13:2)
 - a. The angel of the LORD gives Samson to his barren mother (13:3)
 - b. Samson shall be set apart as a Nazirite from birth (13:4-20)
 - c. Manoah realizes that the angel of the LORD has visited him (13:17-24)
 - d. The Spirit of the LORD comes upon Samson (13:25)
 - e. Samson tempted by Delilah, a Philistine woman (14:1-14)
 - f. Samson’s riddle interpreted by Delilah; Samson is deceived by his Philistine wife who gives his secrets to Israel’s enemies (14:15-18)
 - g. The Spirit of the LORD comes upon Samson and he kills the men of Ashkelon (14:19-20)
 - h. Samson “out foxes” the Philistines (15:1-8)
 - i. Samson slays the Philistines with the jaw bone of an ass by the power of the Spirit of the LORD (15:9-19)
2. Interlude: Samson judges Israel for twenty years (15:20)
3. Samson as a type of Israel going through cycles of deception and deliverance by being deceived by Delilah a Philistine (16:1-31)
 - a. Samson visits a harlot (Israel is playing the harlot) (16:1-3)

- b. Samson falls in love with a Philistine (Israel is in love with Philistinian things rather than the things the LORD has given to them) (16:4f)
- c. Samson reveals his strength to the enemy of his people (the “devil in the blue dress” scenario) and they overcome him (16:6-12)
- d. Samson’s Philistine woman deceives him again (16:13-22)
- e. The Philistine’s and Dagon make “sport” of Samson (16:23-27)
- f. Samson calls upon the LORD and kills the Philistines, but he dies with them (Israel will be among the enemies of God who receive his wrath if they do not repent) (16:28-31)
- g. Samson judged Israel twenty years (16:31)

III. Epilogue: Two Parables of Israel’s Disobedience (17-21)

- A. A story about Micah of Ephraim (17:1-6)
 - 1. Micah and his mother are idolaters (17:3-5)
- B. Interlude: “In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes” (17:6)
- C. A Levite from Judah visits Micah (17:7f)
- D. Micah installs the Levite as the priest of the “cult of Micah” in his idolatrous temple (17:11-13)
- E. Interlude: “In those days there was not king in Israel” (18:1)
- F. The Tribe of Dan seeks an inheritance and seeks God’s guidance in the “cult of Micah” (18:1b-31)
 - 1. The Danites install the Levite and worship at the “cult of Dan” (18:14-20)
 - 2. The “cult of Dan” vs. the “cult of Micah” (18:21-31)
- G. Interlude: In those days, when there was no king in Israel...” (19:1)
- H. A Levite takes a concubine and makes a journey (19:1b-21)
- I. The Benjaminites desire to have sex with the Levite; instead, they rape the concubine (19:22-26)
- J. The Levite cuts up the concubine and deposits her body throughout the twelve tribes of Israel (19:27-29)
- K. Interlude: “And all who saw it said, ‘Such a thing has never happened or been seen from the day that the people of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt until this day; consider it, take counsel, speak.’”
- L. The people of Israel assemble at Mizpah before the LORD (20:1-3)

1. The Levite is on trial before the chiefs of all the tribes of Israel and before God (20:2-3)
 2. The Levite testifies before the sacred court (20:4-11)
 3. The Israelites judge the tribe of Benjamin and make war against it (20:12-48)
- M. The Israelites Inquire of the LORD as to why the tribes of Israel are fighting against one another (21:1-12)
- N. The Israelites have compassion on the Tribe of Benjamin (21:15)
- O. The Tribe of Benjamin returns to their land (21:16-24)
- P. Postlude: “In those days there was not king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes.”
- Q. Silence; selah: Moses and Joshua are dead; there are no more judges and Israel is disobedient to the LORD.

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