

# OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

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*Judges*

# INTRODUCTION

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*Title:* “Judges” in Hebrew and LXX

*Author:* ? Jewish Talmud says Samuel wrote it.

- After the events took place: “to this day” (1:21; 6:24; 10:4; 15:19)
- Before David’s capture of Jerusalem (1004 B.C.) since Jebusites still controlled the site (Jdg 1:21).

*Theme:* Disobedience and Defeat (without a king.)

*Purpose:* The failure of Israel during the period of the Judges demonstrated Israel’s need for a righteous human King.

# OUTLINE

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- I. Disobedience in Judges (1 - 3)
  - A. Incomplete obedience (1-2:5)
  - B. Idolatry (2:6-3:4)
  - C. Intermarriage with the heathen (3:5-6)

# OUTLINE

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- II. History of the Judges (3-16)
  - A. First oppression (3:7-11) — Delivered by Othniel
  - B. Second oppression (3:12-31) — Delivered by Ehud
  - C. Third oppression (4:1-5:31) — Delivered by Deborah & Barak
  - D. Fourth oppression (6:1-8:32) — Delivered by Gideon
  - E. Fifth oppression (8:33-10:5) — Delivered by Tola & Jair
  - F. Sixth oppression (10:6-12:15) — Delivered by Jephthah
  - G. Seventh oppression (13-16) — Delivered by Samson

# OUTLINE

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## III. Apostasy in Judges (17-21)

A. Idolatry (17-18)

B. Immorality (19)

C. Anarchy (20-21)

# KEY DATES

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- From the Death of Joshua (c. 1390 BC) to the Death of Samson (c. 1055 BC)

# KEY CHAPTERS

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5 Song of Deborah

6-8 Gideon's judgeship

13-16 Samson's judgeship

# KEY PASSAGES

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11:34-40 Jephthah's vow is fulfilled regarding his daughter.

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



# KEY PEOPLE

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**Barak** - Collaborated with Deborah

**Deborah** - Fourth judge of Israel, a prophetess, administrator of justice, "a mother in Israel."

**Gideon** - Unique victor over Midianites

**Jephthah** - Eighth judge of Israel, of illegitimate birth, appointed leader over Gilead. He defeated Ammonites decisively as well as the Ephramites. His vow caused him to sacrifice his daughter.

# KEY PEOPLE

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**Samson** - Twelfth judge of Israel, fought the Philistines, very strong, with strong weaknesses.

# HELPFUL RESOURCES

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- Daniel Block, *Judges-Ruth* (New American Commentary).
- Dale Ralph Davis, *Judges: Such a Great Salvation*.

# SELECTED INTERPRETIVE PROBLEMS

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## 1. The Purpose of Judges

- A. To Demonstrate the Need for the Monarchy in Israel (17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25)
- B. To Show Yahweh's Gracious Sustaining of the Israelites Despite the Canaanization of Israelite Society after the Conquest and Settlement of the Land

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# SELECTED INTERPRETIVE ISSUES

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## 2. The Chronology of the Judges

A. Consecutive (1 King 6:1)

B. Overlapping (3:26-4:1; 10:6-9 and 13:1)

## THE CHRONOLOGY OF JUDGES

The Data:

### JUDGES

JUDGE	TRIBE	OPPRES- SOR	YEARS OF OPPRES- SION	YEARS OF REST	TOTAL YEARS
Othniel	<i>Judah</i>	Meso- potamians	8	40	48
Ehud	<i>Benjamin</i>	Moabites	18	80	98
Shamgar	?	Philistines			
Deborah/ Barak	<i>Ephraim/ Naphtali</i>	Canaanites	20	40	60
Gideon	<i>Manassah</i>	Midianites	7	40	47
[Abimelech]					3
Tola	<i>Issachar</i>			23	23
Jair	<i>Gad</i>			22	22
Jephthah	<i>Gad</i>	Ammonites	18	6	24
<u>Ibzan</u>	<i>Judah(?)</i>			7	7
Elon	<i>Zebulun</i>			10	10
Abdon	<i>Ephraim</i>			8	8
Samson	<i>Dan</i>	Philistines	40	20	60
					410

### SAMUEL

Eli	<i>Levi</i>	(Philistines)		40	40
Samuel	<i>Levi</i>	Philistines	20(?)	?	?
					60+

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# SELECTED INTERPRETIVE ISSUES

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## 3. Jephthah's Vow (11:29-40)

A. The Perpetual Virginity and Tabernacle Service  
[Life] of Jephthah's Daughter

B. The Offering [Death] of Jephthah's Daughter

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