

Bible Snapshots



Judges – Decline and Apostasy

Author – Most likely Samuel, early in his ministry

Connection with Joshua

- Judges, named for the 13 judges (12 given of God and one usurper), is a continuation of the life of Israel after the death of Joshua and the elders that served with him.

Facts

- The word judge means “ruler,” from the verb “to put right and then rule;” judges are also called “saviors” and deliverers (see 2:17-19). Historical in nature. It has 21 chapters and 618 verses. Over 350 years of history.

Themes

- Israel’s apostasy occurred seven times in this book as they go through what we call the “cycle of sin.” It gives an account of the lives of all the judges, except 2, Eli and Samuel, which are given in 1 Samuel. The book begins with apostasy and ends with borderline anarchy and confusion.
- Purpose for us – reveal causes of failure to be blessed and how to seek restoration.

Key chapters/verse

- 2 – The beginning of apostasy / 21:25 (cf. 17:6)

Key phrase / word / thought

- Delivered – occurs 28 times / Neither did – incomplete victory (1:27, 29, 30, 31)

Christ In numbers

- Our Deliverer (3:9) and Angel of the Lord (6:12)

Types of Christ

- Christ our judge (3:9; with 1 John 1:7, 9; 2:1)

Miracles in Joshua

Fire out of the rock (6:17-23); Gideon’s fleece (6:36); Water from a jawbone (15:19); Samson’s strength (14-16); Gideon’s victory with pitchers and torches (7:1-21).

Proving Deuteronomy - Iron in Palestine – (1:19; 4:3) Excavations have revealed many iron relics of ancient Philistia. Iron had its place in international commerce about the time of Moses. By Saul’s days the Philistines were skilled blacksmiths and controlled the industry in Palestine (1 Sam. 13:19-23).

Secret passages into the city – (1:21-25) A fort believed to be built by king Uzziah, who reigned during the days of Elijah, was recently discovered. A secret passage in the wall revealed one of the building tricks involved when Old Testament characters bypassed the gates of fortified cities to go in and out secretly. The fort had casement walls or two walls with several feet between them. Often these walls had certain slabs would slide in and out, revealing steps that would allow secret entrance into the city.

See also 2 Kings 25:4. Apparently this was very common. **Samson’s death** – (16:23-31) The plan of the Philistine temple with its two pillars destroyed by Samson has been illustrated by a recent discovery of a Philistine temple with similar features, found just outside of Tel Aviv. **Random destruction** (17:6; 21:25) The period of Israel’s history was chaotic. Throughout the land, archeological evidence of random destruction correlates with this record of God’s Word (19-21).

Israel’s Oppressors – Mesopotamia for 8 years (3:8); Moab under king Eglon (Ammonites and Amalekites) for 18 years (3:14); Canaanites under Jabin for 20 years (4:3); Midian for 7 years (6:1); Apostasy under Abimelech (8:33-9:57); Ammonites for 18 years (10:8); Philistines for 40 years (13:1).

Judges – Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah and Barak, Gideon and Abimelech, Tola, Jair, Jephthah, Ibzan, Abdon and Samson.

Sins of Israel in the Cycle of sin – Failure to drive out idolaters, dwelt among them, intermarried with them, served their gods, forgot their God.