



# A Review of the Book of Judges

The Fabric of Scripture

# Overview (Dean)

“Judges is a book that is rarely taught in any church. This is a tragedy because it is a book for our times. What is impressive about this book is the theme. The last verse in Judges: “In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did that which was right in his own eyes.” Judges was in many ways the dark ages of Israel's history: they rejected the authority of God, they rejected the authority of Scripture, and in its place they substituted their own authority. In other words, instead of looking to God and His Word for absolutes and structuring all their thought under that umbrella they looked to the community, to one another, to themselves as the source of absolute right and wrong. So there was a culture that was drenched in moral relativism. It shouldn't take too long to figure out what the application is and how it relates to our culture in the twentieth century today.”

[R. Dean, Judges lesson 1]



# Theme of Judges

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

**Judges 21:25 In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.**

# Proverbs 16:25

**Proverbs 16:25 (NASB 1995) There is a way which seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.**

**Proverbs 16:25 (Young's Literal Translation) There is a way right before a man, And its latter end -- ways of death.**



# Why Study the Book of Judges?

- Witness the Depravity of Man
- Witness God's Lovingkindness in Action
- Witness the Struggle Between Faith and Idolatry
- Witness the Similarities to the USA
- Apply Lessons from History to the USA



# Introductory Information

- Date of Writing
- Historical Context
- Issue of Time
- Outline

# Date of Writing

- **Author** was likely Samuel
  - Not Stated but likely Samuel (Robbie Dean)
  - Jewish Tradition including Talmud opinion said Samuel was the author [Constable]
- **Time** of Writing Between 1051 and 1004 B.C.
  - “In those days there was no king” suggests that at the time of the writing there was a king. Judges 17:6; 18:1; 19:1
  - Likely during the reign of Saul before David’s conquest of Jerusalem from the Jebusites (Judges 1:21 “But the sons of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites who lived in Jerusalem; so the Jebusites have lived with the sons of Benjamin in Jerusalem to this day.”) (Dean)



# Possible Motivation for Judges

1 Samuel 8:4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah;

1 Samuel 8:5 and they said to him, “Behold, you have grown old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint a king for us to judge us like all the nations.”

1 Samuel 8:6 But the thing was displeasing in the sight of Samuel when they said, “Give us a king to judge us.” And Samuel prayed to the Lord.

1 Samuel 8:7 The Lord said to Samuel, “Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them.”



# Historical Context

1440 Exodus out of Egypt (Moses)

1400 Entrance into the Land (Joshua)

1370 Death of Joshua / Beginning of Judges

1050 End of Judges

1051 Saul as King

[The exact dates vary among commentators. These dates came from Herman Mattox' Prophets and Kings chart]

# Judges is a History Book

- Judges is the first real history book that was ever written. [Dean, Judges lesson1]

“Judges is really the first book that gives us a philosophy of history, not just a record of events. It portrays man as he is. We see all his sinfulness, his carnality, all of his negative aspects. It is to display in Israel's history the causation, which is their negative volition. It is grounded in the cursing and blessing chapters of Deuteronomy. Judges is the outworking of the cursing aspect of the Deuteronomic law, the Mosaic law, on Israel because of their failure to maintain the covenant and to walk in obedience to God. This displays a view of history that has as its force the concept of progress. As a Christian we can look at history as something that is progressing and is moving toward an ultimate goal which is the culmination of God's plan and purposes in history.”

[Dean, Judges lesson1]



# Historical Israelite Government

“In contrast with the neighboring peoples, who were constituted as monarchies or city-states ruled over by local kings or princes, the nation of Israel was at best little more than a loose confederation of tribes, fond of their freedom, and yet bound together in a manner unique in the ancient world by a common loyalty to the Sinai Covenant.”

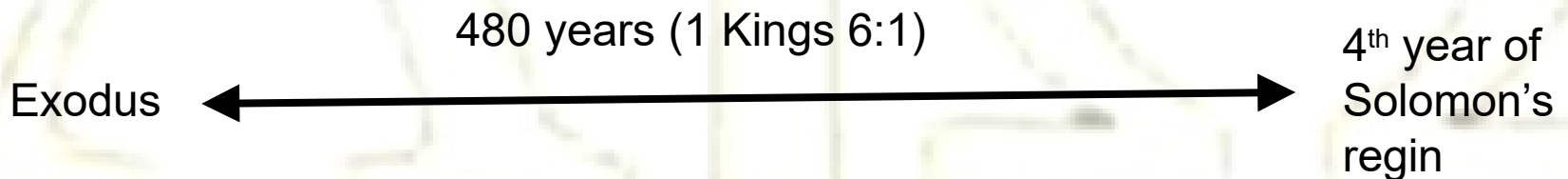
[R. K. Harrison, Introduction to the Old Testament, p691]

# The “410” Years per Chisholm

3:8	Cushan-Rishathaim oppresses Israel	8 years
3:11	Land rests after deliverance	40 years
3:14	Moab oppresses Israel	18 years
3:30	Land rests after deliverance	80 years
4:3	Sisera oppresses Israel	20 years
5:31	Land rests after deliverance	40 years
6:1	Midian oppresses Israel	7 years
8:28	Land rests after deliverance	40 years
9:22	Abimelech rules after Jotham’s curse	3 years
10:2	Tola leads Israel	23 years
10:3	Jair leads Israel	22 years
10:7–8	Philistines and Ammon oppress Israel	18 years
12:7	Jephthah leads Israel	6 years
12:9	Ibzan leads Israel	7 years
12:11	Elon leads Israel	10 years
12:14	Abdon leads Israel	8 years
13:1	Philistines oppress Israel	40 years
15:20	Samson leads Israel	20 years
	Total years	410 years

# Panorama of Judges

- The "judgeships" (rulership tenures) of some of the individual judges apparently overlapped. Some ruled in one area of Israel at the same time that one or more others ruled elsewhere, in some cases. [Constable]



# Periods of Oppression

- There are two periods of oppression. When we read Judges we read that there are eight different judges, eight different cycles of disobedience and discipline and deliverance when God brings a judge, and then the people go back to it again, and again it just continues to deteriorate in these cycles. It seems on a surface reading that they take place one after the other. But if we study this carefully they don't happen that way. One oppression may come in from the east and another one from the west so that they happen at roughly the same time or they were overlapping.
- Dean, Judges lesson 1

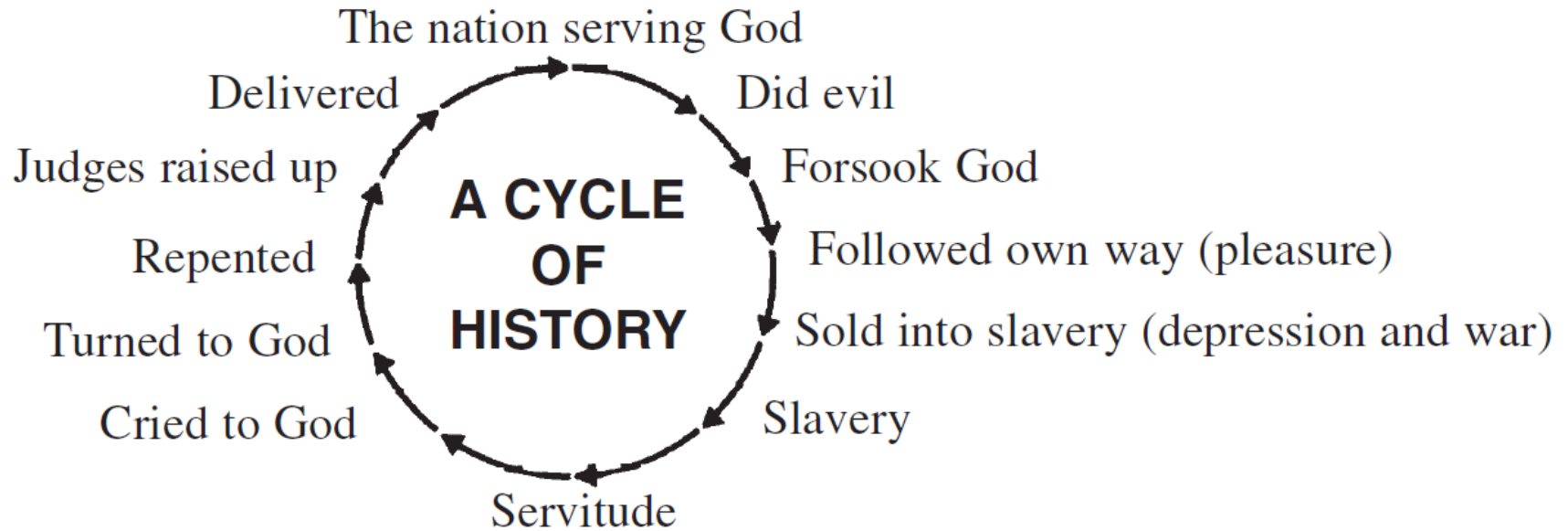
# Outline

- Judges 1:1 – 3:6 The reason for Israel's apostasy
- Judges 3:7 – 16:31 The record of Israel's apostasy
- Judges 17:1 – 21:25 The results of Israel's apostasy

[Constable, Dean follows a similar outline]



# Repeated Cycles



J. Vernon McGee, [https://ttb.org/docs/default-source/notes-outlines/no7\\_joshua-judges-ruth.pdf?sfvrsn=82791c16\\_2](https://ttb.org/docs/default-source/notes-outlines/no7_joshua-judges-ruth.pdf?sfvrsn=82791c16_2)



# Joshua versus Judges

## Book of Joshua

- Victory
- Freedom
- Faith
- Progress
- Spiritual Vision
- Fidelity to the Lord
- Joy
- Strength
- Sense of Unity
- Sin Judged

## Book of Judges

- Defeat
- Servitude
- Unbelief
- Declension
- Earthly emphasis
- Apostasy from the Lord
- Sorrow
- Weakness
- Declension, Anarchy
- Sin Lightly Regarded

Unger's Bible Handbook, p169



# Offenses Against God

Judges 2:11 Then the sons of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord and served the Baals,  
Judges 2:12 and they forsook the Lord, 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 the Lord to anger.

# Major Judges

- Othniel – Victorious in War
- Ehud – Killed king Eglon & Victorious in War
- Deborah/Barak – Victorious in War & killed general and king
- Gideon – Victorious in War & killed enemy leaders
- Jephthah – Victorious in War
- Samson – Only a partial victory

# America: Where Did It Start

- One starting point is at seminaries that abandon the “inerrancy” of the Bible.
- Following quotes come from the book “The New Evangelicalism: The New World Order” by Paul Smith

# Quotes

- Concerning the Bible being inerrant:
- “This word means that the Bible does not make a statement contrary to fact, not only in matters of faith, but also in all other matters. Some of these matters under attack are the historical and scientific accuracy of the Bible.

# Quotes - Humanism

“Humanism produces men who are convinced that they know what’s best for all mankind. This blindness comes from humanism’s limited view which tries to explain the miracle of life and the universe apart from God and His inerrant revelation. The humanistic view of life motivates men who think they are the rightful rulers over the common people. They promote themselves as the knowledgeable elite—with all the right answers for a new world order necessary for the survival of humanity.”

# Quotes

“It was philosopher and poet, George Santayana, who observed that “those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” Certainly that observation comes to life when we read the historical account of the nation of Israel as recorded in the Old Testament book of Judges. Israel’s past revealed that each generation needed to learn to begin with God, the Author of order and design.”



# Paul & Jesus Said

Paul said: 2 Timothy 3:16 All [Each and every verse of] Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;

2 Timothy 3:17 so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

Jesus said: Matthew 4:4 But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.’” [Are you on a hunger strike?]





# Jesus Said

Matthew 5:17 “Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.

Matthew 5:18 For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

Matthew 5:19 Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

# Robert Wilkin Quote

This reminds me of the battle over the concept of inspiration. First it was enough to say that you believed that Scriptures are inspired.

Second, because some said that only the concepts and not the very words of Scripture are inspired, we had to add the word *verbal* before inspiration. Verbal Inspiration.

Third, because some were saying that matters of faith and practice were verbally inspired, but not matters of science and geography or history, then we added the word *plenary* (meaning *all*).

Verbal Plenary Inspiration.

[Inerrancy for Dummies by Robert N. Wilkin]



# Satan Attacks the Word

Satan attacked the Word of God from the very beginning

Genesis 3:1b ...And he [the Serpent who is Satan] said to the woman, “Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from [a]any tree of the garden’?”



# Goal of Our Thinking

1 Corinthians 10:3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh,

1 Corinthians 10:4 for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.

1 Corinthians 10:5 We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,

1 Corinthians 10:6 and we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete.