

## The Scriptures Summarized / Book 6 — Judges

The book of Judges is the aftermath to the time of Conquest. However, unlike Moses, Joshua could not leave behind a divinely appointed successor. The tribes were no longer encamped with each other. They were now separated into their land inheritances. There was no centralized government or capital city. Additionally, although the military campaigns were over, and the land was divided, the battles against remnants of enemy opposition persisted. Judges were the regional leaders and military heroes of that era.

**Judges 17:6** (& **21:25**) In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit.

The absence of a King is a key to understanding the era; so also is the anticipation of one; and finally the anarchy of that setup.

The book covers a span of nearly 400 years. It records the downward spiral of a culture choosing to be less spiritual and more secular. Scriptural warnings from Moses and Joshua are forgotten and remain unheeded, leading to decline and defeat. Divine deliverance is required often.

**Prov. 14:34** Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin condemns any people.

The book contains its own summary in **2:6-23** where a recurring pattern is recorded. Israel would be at peace until they imitated the pagan ways of the nations they were commanded to drive out. God would use those very nations to punish and persecute His people during this period of error. Eventually, the godly would petition God for deliverance. God would thus raise up a person to judge Israel for its sin and also the enemy for its cruelty to God's people.

**Hebrews 11:32** And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson and Jephthah, about David and Samuel and the prophets, 33 who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised;

The majority of the book of Judges reads like a story book. Thus it is often used as Sunday School curriculum for children. Compromise and Relativism are lessons for today.

- I. The Spiritual Rationale for the Judges; chaps. 1-3:6
  - A. How they Reneged the Covenant
  - B. How they Repeated a Cycle
  - C. How they were Rebuked by Christ
  
- II. The Scriptural Record of the Judges; chaps. 3:7-16
  - A. Othniel — (Mesopotamia) This was Caleb's relative
  - B. Ehud — (Moab) Lefty vs. Hefty
  - C. Shamgar — (Philistines) victory over 600 using an ox prod
  - D. Deborah & Barak — (Canaanites) Victory over mud-stuck chariots
  - E. Gideon — (Midianites) Victory with only 300
  - F. Tola — served 23 years on west side of Jordan
  - G. Jair — served 22 years on the east side of Jordan
  - H. Jephthah — (Ammonites) Known for making a rash vow
  - I. Ibzan — From Bethlehem with 60 children; married outsiders
  - J. Elon — served 10 years from Zebulun
  - K. Abdon — (Amalekites?) led for 8 years; large wealthy family
  - L. Sampson — (Philistines) Physical strength but moral weakness
  
- III. The Societal Ruin During the Judges; chaps. 17-21
  - A. Religious Apostasy
  - B. Political Anarchy
  - C. Potential Tribal Annihilation