

Timeline of Truth: Judges Mid-Book Review (Judges 1:1 – 12:7)

1. Judges Intro – Introduction

Timing (Dr. Tom Constable):

“Consequently the Book of Judges records about 300 years of Israel’s history (cf. 11:26). This is about 30 percent of the total history of Israel in the Old Testament (from about 1446 B.C. to 430 B.C.)”

5 Aspects of Israel’s Faithlessness & Failure:

- Their Descending Spiral of a Repeated Cycle
- Their Self-Defined Lifestyle
- The Canaanization of Israel
- A Reversal of Joshua’s Conquest
- A Rejection of the Revealed Will of God

High-Level Outline:

- The Two-Part Prologue (1:1-3:6)
- The Cycles of the Judges (3:7-16:31)
- The Two-Part Epilogue (17-21)

2. Judges 1:1-2:5 – Military Failure: Partial Obedience

a. Israel Asks the Lord for Direction

b. Caleb Arranges to Defeat His Enemies

c. The Tribes Fail to Complete the Defeat

- Dwelt among the people
- Did not drive them out
- Were driven out by the Canaanites

3 Key Ideas:

- God gives us commands for our benefit
- Incomplete obedience is disobedience
- God may withhold help if we refuse to obey

3. Judges 2:6-3:6 – Spiritual Failure: God Responds

a. Israel’s Rapid Departure

⁶ And when Joshua had dismissed the people, the children of Israel went each to his own inheritance to possess the land. ⁷ So 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 works of the LORD which He had done for Israel.

b. Israel’s Cycle of Departure

THE SIN – Rejection of God

⁶ And when Joshua had dismissed the people, the children of Israel went each to his own inheritance to possess the land. ⁷ So 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 works of the LORD which He had done for Israel. ⁸ Now Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died when he was one hundred and ten years old. ⁹ And they buried him within the border of his inheritance at Timnath Heres, in the mountains of Ephraim, on the north side of Mount Gaash. ¹⁰ When all that generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation arose after them who did not know the LORD nor the work which He had done for Israel. ¹¹ Then the children of Israel **did evil** in the sight of the LORD, and **served** the Baals; ¹² and they **forsook** the LORD God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt; and they **followed** other gods from among the gods of the people who were all around them, and they **bowed** down to them; and they **provoked** the LORD to anger. ¹³ They **forsook** the LORD and **served** Baal and the Ashtoreths.

SLAVERY – Response by God

¹⁴ And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel. So **He delivered them** into the hands of plunderers who despoiled them; and **He sold them** into the hands of their enemies all around, so that they could no longer stand before their enemies. ¹⁵ Wherever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for calamity, as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had sworn to them. And they were greatly distressed.

SAVIOR – Rescuer from God

¹⁶ Nevertheless, the LORD raised up judges who delivered them out of the hand of those who plundered them. ¹⁷ Yet they would not listen to their judges, but they played the harlot with other gods, and bowed down to them. They turned quickly from the way in which their fathers walked, in obeying the commandments of the LORD; they did not do so. ¹⁸ And when the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with the judge and delivered them out of 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 oppressed them and harassed them. (**SPIRAL DOWNWARD**) ¹⁹ And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that they reverted and behaved more corruptly than their fathers, by following other gods, to serve them and bow down to them. They did not cease from their own doings nor from their stubborn way.

4. Judges 3:7-11 – Othniel, Faithful Foreigner

5. Judges 3:12-30, 31 – Ehud, Elite Assassin

6. Judges 4:1-5:31 – Barak, Reluctant Leader

- Judges 4:1-24 – Barak
- Judges 5:1-31 – Celebratory Song

7. Judges 6:1-9:57 – Gideon, Faulty Judge

- Judges 6:1-40 – Gideon Called
- Judges 7:1-8:12 – Gideon's Victory
- Judges 8:13-30 – Gideon's Fall
- Judges 8:31-9:57 – Gideon's Fallout

8. Judges 10:6-12:7 – Jephthah, Negotiating Judge

- Judges 10:6-11:29 – Jephthah Rises
- Judges 11:30-12:1-7 – Jephthah Wars

9. Coming Up:

a. Judges 3:31; 10:1-5; 12:8-15 – Minor Judges

- 3:31 – Shamgar
- 12:8-10 – Ibzan
- 10:1-2 – Tola
- 12:11-12 – Elon
- 10:3-5 – Jair
- 12:13-15 – Abdon

b. Judges 13:1-16:31 – Samson

- Judges 13:1-25 – The Birth of Samson
- Judges 14:1-20 – The Weakness of Samson
- Judges 15:1-30 – The Victory of Samson
- Judges 16:1-31 – The Downfall of Samson

c. Judges 17:1-18:31 – Abuse of the Priesthood

- Judges 17:1-13 – Micah & Jonathan
- Judges 18:1-31 – Danites & Jonathan

d. Judges 19:1-20:48 – Abuse of Women

- Judges 19:1-30 – Levite & Concubine
- Judges 20:1-48 – War Against Benjamin's Tribe
- Judges 21:1-25 – Seeking to Fix Benjamin's Tribe

e. Judges Summary

Timeline of Truth: Judges Mid-Book Review (Judges 1:1 – 12:7) – Application Points

Judges 1:1-2:5 – Military Failure: Incomplete Obedience Is Disobedience

- God gives us commands for our benefit
- Incomplete obedience is disobedience
- God may withhold help if we refuse to obey

Judges 2:6-3:6 – Spiritual Failure: God Sends Trouble on God-Forsakers

- When we allow ourselves to stay in sin or to put up with sin, we fight against God and His protection.
- Putting up with sin breaks down our relationship with God.
- Sin in us must be rejected and confessed or it will eventually rule us

Judges 3:7-11 – Othniel, Faithful Foreigner

- God Does Not Have to Help Us When We Disobey
- God Will Find Someone to Do His Work

Judges 3:12-4:1 – Ehud, Elite Assassin

- Ehud developed multiple skills.
- Ehud acted rather than sitting on the sidelines.
- Ehud attacked the primary cause.
- Sin brings misery (sometimes for a long time).
- God desires us to walk with Him to avoid misery.
- God supervises history to keep His plan on track.
- God controls the details.
- God had to make ALL the variables work.

Judges 4:1-24 – Barak, Reluctant Leader

- God chose Barak, a man, to rescue Israel by fighting against the mean enemy.
- Barak should have trusted in God and obeyed God right away, but he did not.
- God used Deborah, a woman, to encourage Barak to lead as God wanted him to.
- God still used Barak to rescue Israel, but because he did not obey without Deborah, God did not let Barak get the honor for defeating the enemy. God let a woman (Jael) win the final victory, and God gave the credit to her).

Judges 5:1-31 – Celebration Song

- God's plan involves leaders leading willingly and people following willingly.
- Spiritual obedience often yields visible victory and blessing.
- God's decisive victories should be celebrated.
- Spiritual obedience is evidenced by corporal involvement.
- Spiritual disobedience is evidenced by selfish endeavors that leave out the greater concerns of the whole.

Judges 6:1-40 – The Calling of Gideon

- God graciously calls those for His purposes.
- God patiently calls those for His purposes.
- God sees us for what we can be in Him.
- God works with us in steps (Joseph).

Judges 7:1-8:12 – The Victory of Gideon

- God can do much with little.
- God desires to reveal His power.

Judges 8:13-34 – The Downfall of Gideon

- The fastest way to spiritual failure is to take credit for God's accomplishments, including His work through you.
- Today's spiritual victory does not eliminate the obedience needed for tomorrow's victory. Like any war, the battle is new every day, and often multiple times each day. Continual, humble obedience is essential to walk with God and to avoid walking away from Him. We are never beyond the ability to sin, and to sin greatly.
- Resist pride, the sinful idea that I do not need God, and that my victories are only the result of my own efforts. Walk with God by continually acknowledging my need of Him.
- Infuse yourself with the truth (about God, God's ways, and about yourself). Gideon forgot what was true about God and what was true about himself.

Judges 8:31-9:57 – The Fallout of Gideon

- Live your life in light of the fact that your actions and choices have impact beyond your own lifetime.
- God allows sinful choices and actions, but God will eventually judge all sinful choices and actions.

Judges 10:6-11:29 – The Rise of Jephthah

- God may decide to quit listening. We cannot continue in sin - disobeying God - and then expect God to respond when we get in trouble. God may leave us in the trouble that we deserve.
- God may choose to help. Israel seems to have genuinely repented by their actions. They began worshipping and serving God alone. God did decide to help them after they had done this for some time. It is never wrong to throw ourselves on the mercy of God.
- Regarding Jephthah himself, he was rejected by his family and his community because of his birth. Jephthah had no choice in his birth (like our 10 Unchangeables study on Wednesdays). Even though his family and his town had kicked him out, they ended up going to find him and asking him to be their leader. We should not judge people based upon their birth, skin shade, or how much money they have.

Judges 11:30-12:7 – The Wars of Jephthah

- We need to obey all God says all the time.
- It is better to suffer than to keep doing wrong.