

JUDGES

DOING WHAT'S RIGHT IN YOUR OWN EYES

Ralph Porter
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AUTHOR

Jewish tradition attributes it to Samuel.
Whoever wrote it did so after the death of Samson since he mentions that event.
He shows no evidence of knowledge of David's conquest of Jerusalem.
This would indicate that the author is at least a contemporary of Samuel.

DATE

These events date the writing of the book between about 1390 and 1050 B.C.

BACKGROUND

Joshua left the nation on a spiritual mountain top, having just confirmed their loyalty to Yahweh and their submission to His rule over them.
Following the conquest of Canaan and the division of the land, Joshua died.
Joshua left each tribe to govern its own affairs and to eliminate the remaining Canaanites from their territory.
Political and geographical factors isolated the tribes from one another.
Local tribes feuded with one another.

There was no strong national leadership to inspire or direct the people, so every individual began to do as he pleased.

However, two major failures produced rapid spiritual degeneration:

- 1) They failed to obey God's orders to eliminate totally the Canaanites.
- 2) They failed to teach their children about Yahweh.

Another generation arose that didn't know Yahweh.

The same cycle was repeated throughout the period of the judges: rebellion, oppression, repentance, salvation.

PURPOSE AND THEME

HISTORICAL: Judges reveals the development of Israel from the death of Joshua, to the reformation and unification movement under Samuel.

THEOLOGICAL: Judges illustrates how God deals with His covenant people.

Basic principle: obedience produces blessing; disobedience brings cursing.

In God's sight, partial obedience is equal to no obedience.

God demands total trust, submission and obedience.

God is faithful to fulfill His promises.

He is in control of history, even directing events in pagan countries.

He loves His people, even when they forget Him or rebel against Him.

He forgives their sin and draws them back into fellowship with Himself.

Rather than seek God's will and receive His blessing, Israel goes their own way and repeatedly requires correction.

As a result, they ride the roller coaster of spiritual ups and downs, as God seeks to restore them to consistent fellowship with Him.

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EVERYONE DID WHAT WAS RIGHT IN HIS OWN EYES

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FAILURE PRODUCED BY PARTIAL OBEDIENCE	1-3:6	FAILURE PRODUCED OPPRESSION	3:7-16:31	FAILURE PRODUCED PERVERSION	17-21
Partial+I conquest of God's land	1-2:5	Othniel's liberation from Mesopotamia	3:7-11	INFIDELITY: Micah, the priest, and the Danites	17-18
Judah and Simeon's conquests	1:1-20	Ehud's liberation from Moab	3:12-30	Micah and the priest	17
Partial failure by tribes	1:21-36	Shamgar's liberation from Philistines	3:31	The priest and the Danites	18
Resulting thorns and snares	2:1-5	Deborah's liberation from Canaan	4-5		
		Gideon's liberation from Midian	6-8		
Occasional obedience of God's law	2:6-3:6	Abimelech's tyranny over Israel	9	IMMORALITY: A girl, the Levite, and the Benjaminites	19-21
Initial faithfulness	2:6-9	Tola and Jair's liberating leadership	10:1-5		
Ignorant generation	2:10	Jephthah's liberation from Ammonites	10:6-12:7	Atrocity committed	19
Idolatrous disobedience	2:11-13	Ibzan, Elon and Abdon's leadership	12:8-15		
Corrective punishment	2:14-15	Samson's liberation from Philistines	13-16	Offenders attacked	20
Liberating leadership	2:16-18	His birth and promise	13		
Repetitious rebellion	2:19	His carnality	14-16:20a		
		His defeat	16:20b-22	Wives provided	21
Oppressing nations	2:20-3:6	His victory	16:23-31		