



WEDNESDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY

SEPTEMBER 16, 2026

LESSON 24

First Baptist Church | Covington, Louisiana

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Theological Insight from Judges

The Book of Judges describes events in the land between the conquest of the Promised Land under Joshua and the rise of the monarchy with Saul and David. This time period was between approximately 1300BC to 1000BC.

Both the date and the authors of the written text are unknown.

The Book can be divided into **three main divisions**:

1. The Prologue vv.1:1-3:6

This describes the last days of Joshua and the land they could not take because of their sin and disobedience.

Israel's failure to possess the land vv.1:1-36

The pattern of sin, judgment, restoration vv.2:1-3:6

2. The Judges vv.3:7-16:31

This section describes the results of Israel's sin. Because the people served the Baal gods and forsook the Lord (apostasy), God gave them over to their enemies (judgment). The People repented and cried out to God (repentance) and God raised up a judge or deliverer to rescue the people (deliverance).

This four-cycle was repeated with all the judges: *Apostasy–Judgment–Repentance–Deliverance*.

This section tells of the twelve judges: These judges served in different parts of the land and probably overlapped in their delivering of peace in the land.

Six minor: Shamgar | Tola | Jair | Ibzan | Elon | Abdon

Six major: Othniel | Ehud | Deborah | Gideon | Jephthah | Samson

Othniel vv.3:7-11 40 years

Ehud vv.3:12-30 80 years

Shamgar v.3:31

Deborah and Barak vv.4:1-5:31 40 years

Gideon and Abimelech vv.6:1-9:57 40 years /

Tola and Jair vv.10:1-5 23 years/22years

Jephthah vv.10:6-12:7

Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon vv.23:8-15

Samson vv.13:1-16:31 23 years

3. The Epilogue vv.17:1-21:25

The religious degeneration of Israel vv.17:1-18:31

The moral degeneration of Israel vv.19:1-21:25

Sad stories of the people turning from the Lord. These stories show the people each turning to their own ways. They did not serve the Lord. Each person did what was right in his own eyes.

OUTLINE:

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2. The Judges vv.3:7-16:31

Othniel vv.3:7-11

Ehud vv.3:12-30

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Deborah and Barak vv.4:1-5:31

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Jephthah vv.10:6-12:7

Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon vv.23:8-15

Samson vv.13:1-16:31

3. The Epilogue vv.17:1-21:25

The religious degeneration of Israel vv.17:1-18:31

The moral degeneration of Israel vv.19:1-21:25

1:1 After the death of Joshua the people of Israel inquired of the LORD, "Who shall go up first for us against the Canaanites, to fight against them?" ² The LORD said, "Judah shall go up; behold, I have given the land into his hand." ³ And Judah said to Simeon his brother, "Come up with me into the territory allotted to me, that we may fight against the Canaanites; and I likewise will go with you into the territory allotted to you." So Simeon went with him. ⁴ Then Judah went up and the LORD gave the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand; ...

¹⁹ And the LORD was with Judah, and he took possession of the hill country, but he could not drive out the inhabitants of the plain, because they had chariots of iron..

²¹ But the people of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites who dwelt in Jerusalem...

²⁷ Manasseh did not drive out the inhabitants ...

²⁹ And Ephraim did not drive out the Canaanites who dwelt in Gezer...

³⁰ Zebulun did not drive out the inhabitants of ...

³¹ Asher did not drive out the inhabitants of ...

³³ Naphtali did not drive out the inhabitants

³⁴ The Amorites pressed the Danites back into the hill country, for they did not allow them to come down to the plain ...

2:1 Now the angel of the LORD went up from Gilgal to Bochim. And he said, "I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you into the land which I swore to give to your fathers. I said, 'I will never break my covenant with you, ² and you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall break down their altars.' But you have not obeyed my command. What is this you have done? ³ So now I say, I will not drive them out before you; but they shall become adversaries^[a] to you, and their gods shall be a snare to you." ...

¹¹ And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals; ...

¹⁶ Then the LORD raised up judges, who saved them out of the power of those who plundered them.

¹⁷ And yet they did not listen to their judges; for they played the harlot after other gods and bowed down to them; they soon turned aside from the way in which their fathers had walked, who had obeyed the commandments of the LORD, and they did not do so. ¹⁸ Whenever the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with the judge, and he saved them from 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 afflicted and oppressed them. ¹⁹ But whenever the judge died, they turned back and behaved worse than their fathers, going after other gods, serving them and bowing down to them; they did not drop any of their practices or their stubborn ways. ²⁰ So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel; and he said, "Because this people have transgressed my covenant which I commanded their fathers, and have not obeyed my voice, ²¹ I will not henceforth drive out before them any of the nations that Joshua left when he died, ²² that by them I may test Israel, whether they will take care to walk in the way of the LORD as their fathers did, or not." ²³ So the LORD left those nations, not driving them out at once, and he did not give them into the power of Joshua.

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