

JUDGES

BASIC INFO

-  **Author:** Samuel
-  **Date written:** 1050–1000 BC
-  **Settings :** Canaan (promised land)

MAIN CHARACTERS



GIDEON



DEBORAH



DELILAH



SAMSON



EHUD

KEY THEMES

Israel's Sin & Idolatry – Without a king, Israel turns to idolatry, abandoning God's covenant.

God's Mercy & Deliverance – Despite Israel's sin, God raises up judges to rescue them.

Cycle of Rebellion – Israel repeatedly falls into sin, faces oppression, repents, and is delivered.

Need for a Righteous King – The book ends with moral chaos, highlighting Israel's need for godly leadership.

Leadership and Covenant — Without godly leaders, the nation drifts from God's law

SUMMARY

After Joshua dies, Israel settles among Canaanite peoples and soon chases their gods. A sad cycle fills the book: the people quit the Lord, enemies crush them, they cry out, God sends a judge and the Spirit of the LORD came upon each judge, empowering the deliverance, peace returns, then they fall again when the judge dies. These judges are not courtroom officials; they are rescuers and local leaders from many walks of life—warriors, prophets, farmers—raised for a season. Othniel frees them from Aram. Ehud, the left-handed Benjamite, hides a dagger and kills huge King Eglon of Moab. Shamgar drives off Philistines with an ox goad. Deborah, a prophet, orders soldier Barak into battle; rain floods the enemy chariots, and Jael ends fleeing commander Sisera with a tent peg. Gideon tears down an idol, twice asks God for a fleece sign, and defeats Midian with only three hundred torch-bearing men. Abimelech crowns himself but dies when a woman drops a millstone on his head. Jephthah beats Ammon yet keeps a rash vow and sacrifices his only daughter. Samson, mighty but careless, harries Philistines, is betrayed by Delilah, and in death pushes their temple down, killing many foes. The last stories turn grim: a stolen idol, a horrid attack on a Levite's wife, and civil war that nearly wipes out Benjamin. Judges ends, "Everyone did what was right in his own eyes," warning that Israel needs a faithful king.

KEY VERSES

 **Judges 2:16** – "Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them." – God's mercy in delivering Israel despite their rebellion.

 **Judges 6:12** – "And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and said unto him, The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour!" – God calls Gideon to lead, despite his fear and self-doubt.

 **Judges 16:30** – "Let me die with the Philistines!" – Samson's final act of sacrifice defeats Israel's enemies.

 **Judges 17:6** – "In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes." – A repeated theme highlighting Israel's moral decline.

 **Judges 10:15** – "And the children of Israel said unto the Lord, We have sinned: do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; deliver us only, we pray thee, this day." – Israel acknowledges their sin

JESUS IN THIS BOOK

Judges reveals Jesus as the flawless Deliverer King. Every human judge offers only temporary rescue, exposing Israel's and our need for lasting salvation. God's direct intervention with Gideon and Samson shows that redemption will require the Lord Himself to step into history. Samson's arms-outstretched self-sacrifice foreshadows Christ's voluntary death on the Cross, conquering enemies far greater than the Philistines. The relentless cycle of sin and mercy throughout the book underscores humanity's need for the sinless and eternal Judge, our Lord Jesus Christ, whose reign alone ends the spiral and brings abiding

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Judges warns that unfaithful cycles begin when people forget God. In daily life, guard against drifting by setting regular prayer, Scripture, and honest friends. When leadership is scarce, step up in humility like Deborah or Gideon, using gifts to serve, not to boast. Refuse to blend with destructive habits around you; small compromises grow into deep pain. In family, model faith for the next generation so they do not repeat the spiral. Cry out quickly when you fall, trusting that God still raises deliverers and restores broken communities.

**1** | THE FIRST JUDGES

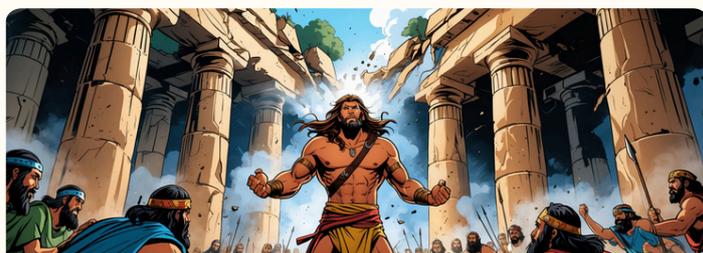
JUDGES 1-3

**2** | JUDGES CALL

JUDGES 4-6

**3** | GIDEON'S VICTORY

JUDGES 7-11

**4** | SAMSON

JUDGES 12-16

**5** | MORAL COLLAPSE

JUDGES 17-19

**6** | NEED FOR A KING

JUDGES 20-21

1 | The First Judges (Judges 1-3)

Israel fails to drive out the Canaanites, leading to cycles of rebellion and oppression. Israel's repentance renews the Sinai covenant, showing grace plus human return. In response, God raises up the first judges: Othniel, Ehud, and Shamgar to deliver Israel from its enemies and restore order. The Spirit of the LORD rushes upon each judge, granting power for deliverance.

2 | Judges Call (Judges 4-6)

Deborah and Barak defeat Sisera, a Canaanite commander, as Jael kills him with a tent peg. Later, God calls Gideon to deliver Israel, but he struggles with fear and repeatedly seeks reassurance from God.

3 | Gideon's Victory (Judges 7-11)

With only 300 men, Gideon wins the war with Midian, proving victory comes from God, not numbers. Minor judges Tola and Jair then provide brief stability. After Gideon dies, Abimelech's brutal coup plunges Israel into civil strife. Jephthah later defeats the Ammonites but fulfills a tragic rash vow which led to his daughter's death. After Jephthah, minor judges Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon offer short time of peace between crises.

4 | Samson (Judges 12-16)

An angel announces Samson's birth and sets him apart under a lifelong Nazirite vow. Samson, blessed with great strength, battles the Philistines but falls into sin and is deceived by Delilah and fails his nazirite vow. Captured and blinded by the Philistines and was sent to jail, his final act of sacrifice collapses a temple killing the Philistines and himself, bringing victory through his death.

5 | Moral Collapse (Judges 17-19)

Israel descends into deep moral corruption, seen in Micah's idolatry and the Levite's concubine's tragic fate. The Danites steal Micah's idol and migrate north, spreading idolatry (Judg 18). The people do what is right in their own eyes, completely forsaking God's law.

6 | Need for a King (Judges 20-21)

A brutal civil war erupts against Benjamin, nearly wiping out the tribe. The book ends in chaos, highlighting Israel's desperate need for a righteous king to restore order and faithfulness.