

Old Testament Israel: Law, **Judges**, Kingdoms

Introduction: The Book of Shophetim (Hebrew = “Judges”, but also Liberators/Rulers)

Scripture **Joshua 24:1 thru Judges 3:4**

Overview

Rabbinic tradition ascribes the Book to Samuel, who isn’t born until immediately after the period covered by book, so editorial authorship is understood.

The book covers the period of 355 years (1380-1045 BC), from the conquest of Joshua to right before the first king of Israel, Saul (beginning of I Samuel).

The Cycles of Failure, Curse, Repentance, Redemption

The history in Judges is one of perpetual failure, but also of repentances and glorious redemptions. There are 12 judges and 7 of these cycles in the Book of Judges. The parallels to individual Christian life experience is undeniable, embarrassing, but at the same time encouraging. The Book teaches us that even when we rebel or fail, God will still pick us up again when we turn to him.

Joshua 24 Final address and death of Joshua (age 110).

Judges 1:1-18 All good

Judges 1:19-36 Failures

Judges 2:1-5 Declaration of God, by the “Angel of the Lord”

Judges 2:6-3:4 Summary of whole Book to follow, remember Judges was written after the events, as a recent history.

vs 11-13 Idolatry

vs 14-23 Anger and purpose of God

3:1-4 Remaining people

Discussion:

Discuss the editorial authorship of Judges and compare to the Books of Genesis, Job, I & II Chronicles, Mark, and Luke.

Discuss the Christian experience of failure, repentance, restoration, repeat, in comparison to the Book of Judges, but in light of Philippians 1:6 and Romans 8:28-30.

Open Question:

Based on Exodus, Numbers, and Joshua – what SHOULD the time of the Judges been like, how should it have worked?