

Judges 1 Commentary

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Chart from recommended resource [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#) - used by permission
[Chart on Judges](#) - Charles Swindoll

RECYCLING SIN (The High Cost of Compromise)		
Jdg 1:1-3:6	Jdg 3:7-16:31	Jdg 17:1-21:25
Introduction	History of the Judges	Appendix

Causes of the Cycles THE REASON	Curse of the Cycles THE RECORD	Conditions in the Cycles THE RESULTS
Failure to Complete Conquest Jdg 1:1-36 God's Judgment for Failure Jdg 2:1-3:6	Curse of the Cycles	Conditions in the Cycles
Living with Canaanites	War with the Canaanites	Living Like the Canaanites
Religious Laxity	Political Uncertainty	Moral Anarchy

**About 350 Years of Israel's History - Almost 25%!
From Compromise to Confusion!**

A TIMELINE OF ISRAEL'S HISTORY

"in the days when the **JUDGES** governed"

(Note: All dates are approximations & time gaps NOT to scale)

Exodus	40 Years	Israel Enters Canaan	JUDGES	Saul	David	Messiah
Redemption from Slavery	Wilderness Wandering	Canaan Conquered Joshua Dies	LIGHT of book of RUTH Shines forth in Dark Days of Judges	To obey is better than sacrifice	Man after God's Own Heart	The Lamb that was slain
--	40 yrs	~24 yrs	350+ yrs	40 yrs	40 yrs	Forever
MESSIAH'S LINE		To Salmon was born Boaz by Rahab	To Boaz was born Obed by Ruth	To Obed was born Jesse	To Jesse was born David the King	Jesus Christ the Lord
1445BC	1445 -1405	1405 -1381	1381-1051	1051-1011	1011-971	4AD

Another Timeline of Israel's History

Click to Enlarge

from [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#)

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Another Diagram of the Sin Cycle

Other ways to describe Israel's cycles of misery...

- Rest > Rebellion > Retribution > Repentance > Restoration
- Sin > Suffering/Servitude > Supplication > Salvation
- Apathy > Apostasy > Affliction > Answered Prayer
- Disobedience > Desperation > Deliverance
- Disobedience > Bondage > Misery > Liberation and Rest > Compromises

THEME: COMPROMISE BRINGS FAILURE

Causes of Failure (DEFEAT)

- Judges 1:1-2:5 - Incomplete Obedience

- Judges 2:6-3:4 - Idolatry
- Judges 3:5-6 - Intermarriage

Course of Failure (DISOBEDIENCE)

- Judges 3-16 - 13 "Judges"

Curses From Failure (DISGRACE)

- Judges 17-21 - Idolatry > Immorality > Anarchy

The Book of Judges Contrasted with The Book of Ruth	
RUTH	JUDGES
Spiritual light	Spiritual darkness
Purity	Immorality
Deciding for the One true God	Pursuing Idols who are no gods
Devotion	Disloyalty
Love	Lust
Peace	War
Kindness	Cruelty
Obedience brings blessing	Disobedience brings sorrow
Oasis of righteousness	Desert of rebellion
Faithfulness of a Gentile alien	Faithlessness of the "chosen people"

BACKGROUND ON JUDGES

Judges is the second in order of what are called the historical books of the Bible, following chronologically after Joshua. It tells the tragic story in Israel's history which spans the period from Joshua's conquest of the Promised Land of Canaan to the beginnings of the Monarchy. Joshua had led Israel to conquer and occupy most of Canaan and yet many important Canaanite strongholds had been bypassed, leaving their subjugation to individual Israelite tribes as described in the foundational chapter 1 of Judges. The name of this book is derived from the gifted men and woman whom God raised up to deliver and lead Israel during this period of 350 or more years. The English title is somewhat misleading with its judicial or legal connotations, for the judges' role of administering justice was only secondary. Altogether, fourteen of these judges were named in the book, including Deborah and Barak, who served as co-judges. The chronology of Judges is controversial one must be very cautious in ascribing specific dates to the various incidents. Judges provides many examples of the principle that obedience to the law brings peace, whereas disobedience means oppression and death. Despite gross disobedience by the people, we still see the faithfulness of God in repeatedly rescuing His people. When God's grace does appear in Judges, it shines forth in brilliant brightness because of the frequent prevalent spiritual darkness. Interestingly, the historicity of the records in Judges has been confirmed in the New Testament in Acts 13:19-21 and in Hebrews 11:32. As to the author of Judges, we cannot be dogmatic although the Talmud says it was Samuel and that is a reasonable consideration. In any event it is the fully inspired, inerrant Word from God Himself and we should pay close attention to the lessons and principles in this dramatic book.

Ray Stedman writes that Judges "is the first in a series of books that sets before us the warnings and danger signals regarding the perils that lie in the path of a believer. The pattern of defeat described in the book of Judges is presented to us over and over again. The key principle that always spelled defeat in the lives of the people of Israel is given to us in the very last verse of the book: *"In*

those days Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit" (Jdg 21:25). These people were not trying to do wrong. They were not rebellious people, bent on frustrating God's will for their lives. (ED: I MIGHT ARGUE THAT THEY WERE REBELLIOUS! SEE [DEFINITION OF A REBEL](#)) At this stage of Israel's history these people were determined to do right—but they were trying to do what was right in their own eyes (ED: IS THAT NOT THE ESSENCE OF REBELLION AGAINST GOD?). They succumbed to the folly of consecrated blundering. They were well-intentioned blunderers, intending to do right (ED: FRANK SINATRA'S WAY - "I DID IT MY WAY!" NOT GOD'S WAY) but ending up all wrong. I have seen this pattern again and again in my counseling experience. Time after time I have heard people say, "I don't know what went wrong. I tried to do right. I did what I thought was best. But everything seemed to go wrong." (ED: NOTICE THE "KEY WORD" IN THEIR COMPLAINT = "I" - IT IS NO ACCIDENT THAT THE BIG "I" IS THE MIDDLE LETTER OF "sin"! This was the problem with Israel in the book of Judges. As the text says, there was no objective authority in their lives. The Lord Jehovah was supposedly their King, but they did not take Him seriously. And when they did not take Him seriously, they ended up taking themselves too seriously (ED: WHEN WE FAIL TO SUBMIT TO GOD, WE DEFAULT TO THE FALLEN FLESH!). ([Adventuring through the Bible.](#))

Sidlow Baxter commenting on Judges wrote "Would that we might erase from the tablets of Israel's history the many dark doings and sad happenings which make up the bulk of this seventh book of the canon! But alas, the sin of Israel is written "with a pen of iron and with the point of a diamond. "Though Israel wash herself "with nitre" and take "much soap," yet is her iniquity here marked for all time and for all to see. Says Jehovah, long afterwards, through His prophet Jeremiah: "I brought you into a plentiful country, to eat the fruit thereof - but when ye entered ye defiled My land, and made My heritage an abomination" (Jer 2:7). As we cannot obliterate the tragic record, let us be quick to learn from it; for although it is such a pathetic anticlimax to the book of Joshua, it is nevertheless one of the richest books of Scripture in the salutary lessons and examples which it contains. (See [Baxter's Explore the Book - The Book of Judges](#))

Henrietta Mears writes that...Someone has called the book of Judges the account of the Dark Ages of the Israelite people. The people forsook God (Judges 2:13) and God forsook the people (Judges 2:23). Ingersoll (Robert Green Ingersoll, 1833-1899, American orator known as the Great Agnostic) spoke much of "the liberty of man, woman and child." His was a godless liberty. The modern equivalent is "doing our own thing" which permeates the book of Judges. Judges was a new hour in the history of Israel who had come from a long era of bondage in Egypt to a period of forty years when she lived in tents and wandered in the wilderness. Now the march was over. The nomads were to become settlers in a land of their own. The change was not as easy for them as they expected it to be. The book of Judges is in a way another book of beginnings where we see a new nation adjusting her national life. It is filled with struggle and disasters, but also with the moral courage of a select few. ([What the Bible Is All About](#))

In its introduction section, the **Disciple Study Bible** reminds that...Disobedience prevented Israel from receiving the blessings promised by God in the covenant. But the God who made the covenant is a God who is characterized by covenant-keeping love. When Israel recognized disobedience as the cause of their difficulties, they turned to God and confessed their rebellion. Then God acted again with unmerited grace, provided a deliverer, and led Israel to the promised blessings. The covenant people learned they needed a God-directed leader to ensure their loyalty to God. Without such leadership, "everyone did as he saw fit" (Jdg 17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25). God's people set themselves on the road to self-destruction. Yahweh is the Lord of history. What He has promised He will perform. We are to believe in Him, accept the conditions of obedience to His covenant, and become like Him in character and attitude. This is righteousness. Anything else is disobedience, unrighteousness, sin. Sin cuts us off from God's promised blessings and plunges us into confusion and chaos. Confession of sin results in forgiveness by God and His provision of a Deliverer. Old and New Testaments present a God who is able to provide what we truly need in this life, "a righteous God and a Savior" (Isaiah 45:21). Something of how God's Spirit works may also be learned from Judges. The prime mover in God's deliverance is God's Spirit. This role is first presented in the period of the Judges but becomes a major motif throughout the Bible. Gospel narratives of Jesus' life also attribute this role to the Spirit of God. When God's power is acting on our behalf, it is God's Spirit in action. The Spirit empowers individuals with the necessary skills to accomplish God's assigned task. This endowment enhances the personality of its recipient, but it does not displace that personality. ([The Disciple's Study Bible](#))

	Judges 1:1-3:4	Judges 3:5-16:31	Judges 17:1-21:25
PROGRESSION	Explanatory Prologue	Main Body of Book	Illustrative Epilogue
	Apathy	Apostasy	Anarchy
	Deterioration	Deliverance	Depravity
THEMES	Causes of Cycles	Curse of Cycles	Conditions in Cycles
	Failure to Complete Conquest of Canaan	Seven Cycles of Deliverance	Depravity of Israel in times of the Judges

	Living with the Canaanites	Warring with the Canaanites	Living Like the Canaanites
PLACE	"Promised Land" of Canaan		
TIME	350 Years Begins: circa 1050 B.C.		

Judges begins with compromise and ends with confusion. This is what happens in every unsundered life! The people of Israel forgot that God had chosen them for a purpose—to tell the world the truth that there is but one true God. And so we see the story of humans' constant failure and God's constant mercy. It is notable that human pride would love to believe that humanity's trend is upward, but God's Word in general and specifically in Judges shows us that the natural course without supernatural intervention is downward.

Failure through **compromise** permeates every page of the book of Judges. The exploits of the judges teach the lesson that a return to the true faith brings renewed victory; yet the very teaching of this accentuates the main, stark reality, that all the failure is due to compromise. Let the words burn into the mind, and burn out any easy-going toleration of the unholy or questionable thing. We can never enjoy God's promised rest for long if we tolerate only "partially crushed" sins to continue with us. If we make league with questionable things because they seem harmless, we shall soon find ourselves wedded to the desires of the flesh again, and down from the heights to which God had lifted us. Failure through compromise! Oh that Israel had heeded the message of this book! Oh that a compromising Church today never disregard it! God's word to His people of today is still that of 2 Cor 6:17-18

"Therefore (read the incredible promise in 2Cor 6:16 that prompts this "therefore"), **COME OUT** (aorist imperative = Command to do this now. Don't delay! Can even convey a sense of urgency. see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) FROM THEIR MIDST AND **BE SEPARATE** (aorist imperative = Command to mark off from others by setting a boundary, cf Psalm 1:1+) ," says the Lord. "AND **DO NOT TOUCH** ([present imperative with a negative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) WHAT IS UNCLEAN and I will welcome you. And I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me," Says the Lord Almighty.

Gary Inrig writes that...Judges begins by giving us a graphic reminder of the consequences of compromise and partial obedience in a time of spiritual anarchy. It is the fundamental principle that the Holy Spirit communicates about spiritual survival in a society without standards. Partial defense is no defense at all. As D. L. Moody once said, "The place for the ship is in the sea, but God help the ship if the sea gets into it!" When God's people begin to take on the water of the world, they go down fast, and in the opening verses of this great book we see that process vividly portrayed. ([Hearts of Iron, Feet of Clay](#))

As you study Judges notice the repeated emphasis on...

1. The wickedness of the human heart (Jdg 2:11-13, 17, 19; 8:33, 34, 35; 10:6; 13:1 - see [notes](#) Jdg 2:11-13, 17, 19; 8:33-35; 10:6; 13:1).
2. God's delight in using the weak things
3. The Holy Spirit in Judges. Over the book of Judges as a guide to its spiritual interpretation might be written Zechariah's great word (Zech. 4:6)—

**Not by might nor by power,
but by my Spirit,' says the Lord Almighty**

Ralph Davis asks "Have you ever noticed how new beginnings are punctuated by the earthly end of God's servants? Exodus begins with the death of Joseph. Joshua begins with the death of Moses. Judges begins with the death of Joshua. 1 Kings begins with the death of David. And yet for all that, God's kingdom does not collapse, not even when Sheol takes God's most useful servants. The kingdom of God continues though the servants of God die. That is the witness of Judges 1. Joshua died, but "Yahweh said, 'I have given the land into Judah's hand'" (Jdg 1:2). Joshua died, but "Yahweh gave the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand" (Jdg 1:4). Joshua died, yet "Yahweh was with Judah so that he possessed the hill country" (Jdg 1:19). The point should not be lost on contemporary Christians. Your help is in the name of the Lord, not in the name of your favorite Christian hero. Even when the Lord himself "went away," it proved a boon for his church (John 16:7). ([Judges: Such a Great Salvation - Focus on the Bible](#))

When did the events in Judges take place? In the range of **1400 - 1050 BC** (350 years) a time period that covers a little less 25% of Israel's history in the OT (assuming an approximate date for Abraham's call of 2100 B.C. and of 400 B. C. for the book of Malachi which would be about 1700 years) And many are only vaguely familiar with this historical book.

When **Joshua** was Israel's leader, all the tribes worked together in obeying the will of God.

In the Book of **Judges**, however, you don't find the nation working together as a unit. Nevertheless it seems here the sons did come before God in this moment of crisis to seek His will.

Dale Ralph Davis writes that the diligent student needs to "remember that Judges 1 deals with a second movement of the conquest of Canaan. The Book of Joshua, especially in chapters 1–12, tells of "taking" the land, breaking the back of Canaanite resistance in something of a blitzkrieg style. Judges 1 emphasizes the process of "possessing" the land in which separate tribes or tribal groups were to follow up the previous conquest and nail down and settle their assigned territories... for many readers Judges I raises once more the so-called moral problem of the conquest. How horrid that Israel butcher innocent Canaanites, wreak havoc and misery, grab their land — and all, allegedly, at Yahweh's command! If only the Canaanites could know how much emotional support they receive from modern western readers. And the conquest was frightful. But people who bemoan the fate of the poor Canaanites don't view the conquest from the Bible's own perspective. They forget one vital fact: the Canaanites were not innocent. Moses was emphatic about that; he humbled the Israelites by insisting that Yahweh was not giving them Canaan because they were such godly folks but because the Canaanites were so grossly wicked (Dt 9:4, 5, 6). If you want all the gory details, see Leviticus 18:6-30 and Deuteronomy 18:9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. These texts show that the conquest was an act of justice, Yahweh's justice. Israel was the instrument of his just judgment upon a corrupt and perverted people. The Bible, of course, does not claim the conquest will be palatable; but it does insist it was just." ([Focus on the Bible: Judges](#))

JOSHUA AND JUDGES CONTRASTED

Joshua	Judges
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Victory 2. Conquest through belief 3. One Man is Prominent 4. Israel as a tutored child 5. Israel served God 6. Freedom 7. Faith 8. Progress 9. Heavenly vision 10. Upward trend, spiritually 11. Fidelity to the Lord 12. Joy 13. Strength 14. Sense of unity 15. Sin judged 16. Objective morality 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Defeat 2. Defeat through disbelief 3. No Single Person Prominent 4. Israel as an adult 5. Israel served self 6. Bondage 7. Unbelief 8. Declension 9. Earthly emphasis 10. Downward trend, spiritually 11. Apostasy from the Lord 12. Sorrow (sobbing) 13. Weakness 14. Declension, anarchy 15. Sin tolerated 16. Subjective morality
Israel knew the person of God and the power of God (Josh 24:16, 17, 18, 31)	Israel knew neither the person of God nor the power of God (Jdg 2:10)
"Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods" (Josh 24:16)	"So the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord. They forgot the Lord their God, and served the Baals and Asherahs" (Jdg 3:7).

Moody Bible Institute's devotional "**Today in the Word**" has an interesting summary cycle of men and of nations ("bird's eye view of the cycle of men and nations"), a pattern that is similar to that seen repeatedly in Judges...

CYCLE OF MEN AND NATIONS

(1) from bondage to spiritual faith.

(2) from spiritual faith to great courage.

- (3) from courage to liberty.
- (4) from liberty to abundance.
- (5) from abundance to selfishness.
- (6) from selfishness to complacency.
- (7) from complacency to apathy.
- (8) from apathy to dependency.
- (9) from dependency back to bondage.

Henrietta Mears offers the following outline for Judges that is easy to remember.

- Seven apostasies,
- Seven servitudes to seven idolatrous and cruel nations,
- Seven deliverances!

Dale Ralph Davis notes that "The principle theme of the Book of Judges is **Failure through Compromise**' which is in contrast to the main theme in the Book of Joshua which is 'Victory through Faith.' ([Judges: Such a Great Salvation - Focus on the Bible](#))

The Book of Judges begins with a series of victories and defeats that took place after the death of Joshua. The boundary lines for the twelve tribes had been determined years before (Joshua 13-22+), but the people had not yet fully claimed their inheritance by defeating and dislodging the entrenched inhabitants of the land. When Joshua was an old man, the Lord said to him, "You are old, advanced in years, and there remains very much land yet to be possessed" (Joshua 13:1+). The people of Israel owned all the land, but they didn't possess all of it; and therefore they couldn't enjoy all of it. Does this sound familiar dear follower of Jesus? Paul writes " Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, **Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.**" (Eph 1:3)

THOUGHT - The previous discussion begs the question -- have you possessed all (or even some) of your possessions in Christ? Or has unbelief and it's bedfellow disobedience "leaked" into your life, preventing your full possession of God's promises? Whatever your answer is, the book of Judges has just what the Great Physician ordered - the truth about apathy which if unchecked eventually leads to anarchy! Do not be deceived, God is not mocked!

Do not be deceived ([present imperative with a negative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#) = stop being deceived!),
 God is not mocked;
 for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.
 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption,
 but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.
 (Gal 6:7-8+)

Paul gives all us a stern warning writing

"**Therefore** (in light of the preceding truths) let him who thinks he stands **take heed** ([blepo](#) in [present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Word and the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) that he does not fall."
 (1 Corinthians 10:12+)

SHAPHAT HEBREW FOR JUDGE

The Hebrew word is **Shaphatim** (see word study on [shaphat](#)), meaning "judges, rulers, deliverers, or saviors." [Shaphat](#) not only carries the idea of maintaining justice and settling disputes, but it is also used to mean "liberating and delivering." [See excellent map depiction of the judges in Judges and their locations](#)

First the judges deliver the people; then they rule and administer justice.

The **Septuagint (LXX)** used the Greek equivalent of this word, [krites](#) ("Judges"). The Latin Vulgate called it **Liber Judicum**, the "Book of Judges."

Judges could also appropriately be titled "**The Book of Failure.**" But why would any Christian today want to read a book that is such a "downer"? Paul gives us a good reason...

Now these things (the events in the OT Paul had just referenced - Israel was "laid low in the wilderness") happened as **examples** (tupos = a "type") for us, that (here's the purpose and the reason we should not forget this history) we should not crave evil things, as they (Israel) also craved (context refers to fact that Israelites preferred the food of Egypt to God's manna! - Nu 11:4+ - Can you apply this to the modern church in American?!)... Now these things (OT) happened to them (Israel) as an **example** (tupos = a "type") , and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. (1Co 10:6,11+) (See [Excursus on Typology](#)).

We must remember that: "Straight ahead lies yesterday!" "Future events cast their shadows before them." "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

THOUGHT - One message in this book is that the result of abandonment of God's law is corruption from within and oppression from without. Compromise will bring failure. Incomplete mastery of evil at the outset always means constant trouble from it afterwards and often defeat by it in the end. So was it with Israel. Israel is a picture of our fallen flesh. Let us beware for ourselves! Let the truth of this book burn into our mind and burn out any toleration of unholy or questionable things. We can never enjoy God's promised rest and blessing for long if we allow partially defeated sins to continue. If we "flirt" with questionable things because they seem harmless, we will soon find ourselves in shackles to the desires of the flesh. Oh that Israel had heeded the message of this book. Oh that the compromising Church today would pay holy heed! God's word to His people today is still that of 2Cor 6:17-18+.

Israel's enslavements were not accidents but were judicial (divine) punishment. God may confer special privileges on certain persons and nations, but He is no respecter of persons in the sense that he winks at their indiscretions!. Those who sin against extra privilege bear heavier responsibility and incur heavier penalty (cp Jas 3:1+, 2Co 5:10+, He 13:17+). God gives privileges, but He never gives the privilege to sin! Let us as saints who enjoy the privilege of the New Covenant of grace beware lest this sense of privilege should beguile our own hearts into the sin of presumption! We must ever beware of the temptation to "turn the grace of our God into licentiousness" (Jude 1:4+, 1Co 8:9+, Ga 5:13+, 1Pe 2:16+)

THOUGHT - Let us read Judges and be alarmed (and warned) that such low living could go with such high calling. We must watch and pray lest we ourselves enter into temptation (Mt 26:41+, 1Co 10:12+).

The cycle that dominates the book of Judges is...Sin > Suffering > Supplication > Salvation

The major apostasies described in detail are all initiated by a variation of the phrase "**the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord**" (Jdg 3:8, 12, Jdg 4:1, Jdg 6:1, Jdg 10:6, Jdg 13:1). Note also that all of these servitudes of Israel are declared to be brought on by Jehovah Himself!

There were three types of judges in the OT - (1) the warrior-judges such as Gideon and Samson, (2) the Priest-judges such as Eli, and (3) the Prophet-judges such as Deborah and Samuel.

After reading Judges you may think that the whole of these three hundred years was spent in rebellion and sin. But if you read it carefully, you will see that only about one hundred out of these possibly 300-350 years were spent in disloyalty to God. In any event, one lesson we learn in the book of Judges is that a **people who spend much of their time in disobedience to God make little progress during their lifetime.**

Sensational headlines like murder, rape, kidnap, etc are everyday fare on the front page of America's newspapers every day now, but similar headlines could describe some of the events that actually occurred in the Book of Judges. What a contrast between the last section of Joshua, where we see Israel resting from war and enjoying the riches God had given them in the Promised Land. Joshua repeatedly pictures victory over enemies. But as we move into the historical period of the Judges we see Israel suffering from defeat, invasion, slavery, poverty, and civil war.

What happened to God's "chosen people" who had it all as the saying goes? Israel begin to decay as the new generation took over, for this generation knew neither Joshua nor Joshua's God. Israel moved from love of God to apathy for God; from obedience to Jehovah to apostasy from Jehovah, from a law abiding nation to a lawless nation filled with anarchy. For Israel, the dark days of Judges were indeed the worst of times.

How could this happen within one to two generations? One reason might be that the older generation had failed to instruct their children and grandchildren in the ways of the Lord. Or it may be that they had faithfully instructed their offspring but this new generation refused to submit to God's Law and God's ways, instead doing things "my way". Although it is a proverb (which is generally true) in this case the proverb proved completely true, Solomon recording that "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people" (Pr 14:34). Judges is the record of God's reproach, not just to "any people" but "His own people"!

Cundall writes in his introduction: The period of the judges did not terminate until Saul's accession to the throne. (cp 1Sa 12). A complete discussion of the period of the judges must take 1Sa 1-12 into account and also the book of Ruth (see notes beginning at Ruth 1:1).

There are close parallels between Joshua and Judges

Jdg 1:10-15,20	Josh 15:13-19
Jdg 1:21	Josh 15:63
Jdg 1:27-28	Josh 17:11-13
Jdg 1:29	Josh 16:10

What appears to be a major difference is that in Judges attention is given to the individual participating tribes, particularly Judah, whereas in Joshua the Conquest is viewed as the work of the united tribes under one leader. The difficulty cannot be sidestepped by the supposition that Judges 1 is a history of the later stages of the Conquest after the death of Joshua, as would appear from Jdg 1:1. Such a view would increase rather than decrease the problem, since the parallels with events in Joshua are too close.

Some thoughts that might help resolve the issue:

(1) The attention given to the southern tribes, particularly Judah, in Jdg 1:1-36, probably indicates that this is an extract from a southern version of the Conquest, placing particular stress upon the part played by its own members.

(2). It is inaccurate to suppose that the book of Joshua depicts a COMPLETE conquest and occupation of the whole land in a relatively short space of time. In the speeches of Joshua reference is made frequently to the incompleteness of the occupation (e.g., Jos 13:1-13, 16:10; 17:12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 18:2, 3, 4) and earlier on in Joshua there are hints that the campaign was a protracted one (Jos 11:18). Victories are indeed claimed over the armies of many of the cities listed in Judges, but the defeat of an army and the death of its king, even the destruction of a city, does not involve the occupation of the city.

There may well be a certain idealization in the record (Jos 11:23, 21:43, 44, 45, 23:1) and reference to those passages alone could be used to support the view of a complete conquest and occupation. But certain sections do not support this view and the tension of evidence suggest a great victory but an incomplete one. Joshua does not give a misleading picture. The fact is openly noted that 'there remains yet very much land to be possessed' (Jos 13:1).

FOLLOWING NOTES ARE COMPLETELY REVISED SPRING, 2022

Judges 1:1 Now it came about after the death of Joshua that the sons of Israel inquired of the LORD, saying, "Who shall go up first for us against the Canaanites, to fight against them?" (NASB: Lockman)

- **Now it came about** - Joshua 24:29, 30
- [See excellent map depiction of the judges in Judges and their locations](#)
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Joshua 24:29-30+ It came about after these things that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being one hundred and ten years old. 30 And they buried him in the territory of his inheritance in Timnath-serah, which is in the hill country of Ephraim, on the north of Mount Gaash.

Judges 2:6-9+ (**THIS PASSAGE PROVIDES THE KEY TO THE RAPID SPIRITUAL DECLINE OF ISRAEL IN JUDGES**) When Joshua had dismissed the people, the sons of Israel went each to his inheritance to possess the land. 7 The people served the LORD **all the days of Joshua**, and **all the days of the elders who survived Joshua**, who had seen all the great work of the LORD which He had done for Israel. 8 Then Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of one hundred and ten. 9 And they buried him in the territory of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash. 10 All that generation also were gathered to their fathers; and there arose another generation after them who (1) did not **know the LORD, (THE PERSON)** (2) nor yet **the work which He had done** for Israel. (**THE POWER**).

Numbers 27:21+ "Moreover, he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, **who shall inquire for him by the judgment of the Urim** before the LORD. At his command they shall go out and at his command they shall come in, both he and the sons of Israel with him, even all the congregation."

WHEN A GODLY LEADER PASSES ON

Someone has entitled Judges "**Avoid Generation Degeneration**." I like that title as it incorporates the essence of Israel's problem in Judges with an admonition to believers to learn from Israel's degeneration lest we also experience spiritual "degeneration," and loss of spiritual power and joy and fruitfulness! Are you listening? (I'm preaching to myself beloved!) Judges may be just the book the Divine Doctor ordered for the spiritual cancer that is just beginning to grow in your heart but which can be eradicated by radical spiritual surgery which can bring about a complete cure! Of course, for the rest of your life, you will need "periodic wellness checkups" to assure that there is no recurrence! Amen? Amen!

Now it came about after the death of Joshua - Note how Joshua and Judges both begin with death of a great leader. In other words "Here's what happened after the death of Joshua". As an aside, do you think the Canaanites had heard of the death of Joshua and if so what effect that might have had on their moral to attempt to recover some of the lost territory? Compare Joshua 1:1+

Now it came about after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, that **the LORD spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' servant**, saying...

COMMENT - The striking difference between Joshua and Judges is that in the latter there is no "Joshua figure" raised up to take the place of Joshua. God is sovereign and all wise, so He knows why this leadership void was allowed. Clearly, the void in leadership contributed to the decline in the spiritual condition of the nation. Oh how we need godly, God appointed leaders in our churches today!

George Bush on after the death of Joshua - How long after we have no means of determining; probably not long, for Othniel, the first judge after Joshua's decease, had been his contemporary, and was in fact his son-in-law.

The first few words of the book of Judges may at first glance seem to be only a helpful historical notation. "After the death of Joshua," however, is a statement of drastic change in the spiritual health and direction of the nation of Israel as summarized below: ([see also preceding table](#))

1. Whereas Joshua is a book of conquest, Judges is a three century story of defeat.
2. Joshua is a book of faith, while Judges is a chronicle of national unbelief leading to disobedience.
3. Joshua depicts a people united in following God's man, but Judges is a book of division and anarchy, because every man "did what was right in his own eyes." (Jdg 21:25).
4. In Joshua, God's Word is central and men submit to His authority, while in Judges, God Word is neglected and even rejected.
5. In Joshua, the vow of Israel was **'we will not forget the Lord'**. In Judges the fact is that **'the people forgot the LORD.'** (Jdg 3:7+) Judges sets before us the warnings and danger signals regarding the perils that lie in the path of a believer.
6. Judges sets before us the warnings and danger signals regarding the perils that lie in the path of a believer. The pattern of defeat described in the book of Judges is presented to us over and over again.

Use of the phrase "**now it came about...**"

Gen. 6:1; Gen. 8:13; Gen. 21:22; Gen. 22:1; Gen. 22:20; Gen. 26:32; Gen. 27:1; Gen. 27:30; Gen. 30:25; Gen. 34:25; Gen. 42:35; Gen. 48:1; Exod. 2:11; Exod. 2:23; Exod. 4:24; Exod. 6:28; Exod. 12:29; Lev. 9:1; Jos. 1:1; Jos. 5:1; Jos. 5:13; Jos. 9:1; Jos. 10:1; Jos. 23:1; Jdg. 1:1; Jdg. 6:7; Jdg. 9:42; Jdg. 19:1; Ruth 1:1; 1 Sam. 1:12; 1 Sam. 18:1; 1 Sam. 18:10; 1 Sam. 20:35; 1 Sam. 23:6; 1 Sam. 28:1; 2 Sam. 1:1; 2 Sam. 7:1; 2

Sam. 13:23; 2 Sam. 15:1; 2 Sam. 15:7; 2 Sam. 16:16; 2 Sam. 21:18; 1 Ki. 6:1; 1 Ki. 9:1; 1 Ki. 13:20; 1 Ki. 17:17; 1 Ki. 21:1; 2 Ki. 6:24; 2 Ki. 14:5; 2 Ki. 18:1; 2 Ki. 25:27; 1 Chr. 19:1; 1 Chr. 20:4; 2 Chr. 8:1; 2 Chr. 20:1; 2 Chr. 21:19; 2 Chr. 24:4; 2 Chr. 25:3; Neh. 4:1; Est. 5:1; Isa. 7:1; Jer. 52:4; Jer. 52:31; Ezek. 1:1; Ezek. 11:13

THAT THE SONS OF ISRAEL INQUIRED OF THE LORD SAYING, "WHO SHALL GO UP FIRST FOR US AGAINST THE CANAANITES, TO FIGHT AGAINST THEM:

- Jdg 20:18,28; Exodus 28:30; Numbers 27:21; 1Sa 22:9,10; 23:9,10)
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Judges 20:18 Now the sons of Israel arose, went up to Bethel, and **inquired of God** and said, "Who shall go up first for us to battle against the sons of Benjamin?" Then the LORD said, "Judah shall go up first."

Judges 20:23 The sons of Israel went up and wept before the LORD until evening, and **inquired of the LORD**, saying, "Shall we again draw near for battle against the sons of my brother Benjamin?" And the LORD said, "Go up against him."

Judges 20:27-28 The sons of Israel **inquired of the LORD** (for the ark of the covenant of God was there in those days, and Phinehas the son of Eleazar, Aaron's son, stood before it to minister in those days), saying, "Shall I yet again go out to battle against the sons of my brother Benjamin, or shall I cease?" And the LORD said, "Go up, for tomorrow I will deliver them into your hand."

ALWAYS A GOOD START: TO BE SEEKING GOD

The sons of Israel inquired of the LORD - Inquired (sa'al) means to ask and in context means to seek a direct message or oracle from Jehovah. How the oracle was received in this verse is not clear. In the OT inquiries were made

1. by [Urim and Thummim](#) (Nu 27:21)
2. by the word of the Lord through a prophet serving as God's mouthpiece (1Sa 9:9)
3. simply by prayer, (Ge 25:22), and improperly of false gods (2Ki 1:2, 16), of teraphim, and semi-idolatrourous priests (Jdg 18:5, 14).
4. [dreams](#) (1Sa 28:6)

George Bush on inquired of the Lord - The original phrase is the usual one for consulting the oracle, or inquiring by the ministry of the high-priest, and through the medium of the Urim and Thummim, the will of Jehovah as to the great matters of duty and policy. As we read of no particular person, who succeeded Joshua as commander-in-chief of the Israelites, it is probable that every tribe was governed by one or more of its elders for a number of years, and that in their wars with the Canaanites they also were their military leaders. As the people were now becoming more numerous and capable of occupying a larger extent of territory, they deemed it expedient to renew the war, but having no single head to take the lead in the enterprise, they very properly sought direction from above as to the manner in which the war should be conducted. It will be observed that they do not inquire what individual should be chosen as successor to Joshua and commander of the forces, but which of the tribes shall take the precedence in the expedition. Whether each tribe was ambitious of the honor or fearful of the danger of being first, it is not possible to determine, but by common consent it was resolved to refer the matter to God, the proper arbiter in every doubtful case. Happy is it for us that we have the same infallible source of guidance to which to apply in all our perplexities. **Who shall go up for us?** The common term for a military expedition. See Isa 7:1; Jer. 50:3. The phrase '**for us**' puts the 'going up' in relation to the whole body of the people. The success of whatever tribe took the lead would be an earnest and assurance of the success of the rest in obtaining complete possession of their respective allotments.

Joshua had been faithful to his task to "Be strong and courageous... (and) give this people possession of the land which (Jehovah) swore to their fathers to give them" (Jos 1:6+) and yet much of the Promised Land remained to be conquered. The first act of the children of Israel was to seek God's will about how they should carry out the final conquest.

THOUGHT- We always begin well when we consult the omnipotent, omniscient, sovereign Living God of the Universe. Israel asked Jehovah which tribe was to engage the enemy first.

Seeking God's wisdom and will is always the best place to begin any venture.

It is interesting to notice that from this time forward **inquiring of the Lord** is mentioned only at the end of Judges but then occurs with greater frequency in 1 Samuel, the time that followed the days of the Judges. Note that Moses and Joshua had received direct revelations from God, but at this time presumably the Pentateuch (Torah) had been recorded by Moses for consultation.

Inquired of the LORD (Jehovah) - phrase found 11 times in NAS - Jdg 1:1, Jdg 20:23, Jdg 20:27 1Sa 22:10, 23:2, 23:4, 28:6, 30:8 2Sa 2:1, 5:19, 5:23 (**THOUGHT** - How often is this phrase found in my life?)

Inquire(d) of God (Elohim) - Ex 18:15 Jdg 18:5; 20:18; 1Sa 9:9, 14:37;22:13; 15, 1Chr 14:10, 21:30

Spurgeon writes that "The power of the Canaanites in his day had been broken, but now that he was dead the old races began to look up again, even as we oft times find our sins which we thought were all dead suddenly finding fresh courage, and attempting to set up their empire once more. Then Israel went to God and enquired, " Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to light against them? And the Lord said) Judah shall go up: behold, I have delivered the land into his hand,"

To reiterate a point made earlier, if you ever want to know what your old flesh nature inherited from Adam is like, study Israel!

Judges 1.1 G Campbell Morgan

The Book of Joshua began with the words: "**After the death of Moses,**" and recorded the story of the people of God under the leadership of his successor. Now the story is continued as to what followed his death. These beginnings keep us reminded of the persistence of the Divine purpose, in spite of the frailty of the human instruments. After the death of any servant of God, the service of God goes forward, and the work of God is carried on. Yet the other side of that truth is not to be lost sight of. God carries on His purpose and His work through human instruments. Moses made possible the work of Joshua. Joshua had made possible the work of all who were to follow. (**ED:** Who has God placed in your life who will carry on the work after you have gone? Have you been a faithful Paul or Paulette to them?) The period covered in this Book is that from the death of Joshua to the judgeship of Samuel, and the movement toward monarchy. On the human side, it is a story of **disobedience** and **disaster**; and on the Divine side, of continued **direction** and **deliverance**. Therefore in its light the servant of God may always find encouragement. When the appointed task is done, he will ever be conscious of the incompleteness of it, of the things desired but not done, of the perils threatening the ultimate realization which he must leave unattained; but he will know by all this history that God never abandons His purpose, cannot be finally defeated, will always find those to take up and continue the service which is unfinished.

Happy is the man who in his little hour works with God. He may be at rest about the issues.(Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

Judges 1:2 And the LORD said, "Judah shall go up; behold, I have given the land into his hand."

- Ge 49:8-10; Nu 2:3; 7:12; Ps 78:68-70; Heb 7:14; Re 5:5; Rev 19:11-16) (See [Judah, Tribe of](#))
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Genesis 49:8-12 "Judah, your brothers shall praise you; Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; Your father's sons shall bow down to you. 9 "Judah is a lion's whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He couches, he lies down as a lion, And as a lion, who dares rouse him up? 10 "The [scepter will not depart from Judah \(note\)](#). Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, Until [Shiloh comes](#). And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.

THE "GO" OF FAITH AND OBEDIENCE

When Joshua was an old man, the Lord said to him, "You are old, advanced in years, and there remains very much land yet to be possessed" (Jos 13:1+). The people of Israel owned all the land, but they didn't possess all of it; and therefore they couldn't enjoy all of it. In Judges 1 Israel's work of conquest began in earnest but it ended in weakness and compromise. The Israelites (for the most part) did not obey God and so Judges 1 is a chapter of failure because they did not drive out the enemy as God had commanded.

And the LORD said, "Judah shall go up In Jdg 1:1 the sons asked a specific question and now receive a specific answer. Note

the juxtaposition of **man's responsibility** ("Judah shall go") and **God's sovereignty** ("I have given"). Israel could only retain the land and complete its conquest by the same faith that conquered the land. Jehovah did not speak to Judah and Simeon although Simeon actually had its inheritance within the tribe of Judah (Jos 19:1+). Note that God **did not say** "I have given you all the land except for the section fortified by iron chariots" (Jdg 1:19). God said "**the land**" without qualification. Judah failed to believe God's promise. And promises must be laid hold of by faith (and faith is an "action" verb which translates into obedience).

Judah's leadership position among the tribes is well documented. For example, Jacob depicted Judah as a mighty warrior and the leader of his brothers in (Genesis 49:8-12). The tribe of Judah also assumed a favored position in the encampment arrangement in the wilderness (see Numbers 2) and was the first tribe to whom Joshua allotted land west of the Jordan (Joshua 14-15)

George Bush - Judah shall go up. That is the tribe of Judah, not a person of this name. So in v. 3, Simeon stands for the tribe of Simeon, and so also generally in the sequel (ED: BUT NOT EVERYONE AGREES SIMEON'S GOING WAS IN GOD'S WILL) The precedency was given to Judah, because it was the most numerous powerful, and valiant of all the tribes, and that which the Lord designed should possess the pre-eminence in all respects, as being the one from which the Messiah was to spring, and for that reason crowned with the 'excellency of dignity' above all its fellows. Judah therefore must lead in this perilous enterprise; for God not only appoints service according to the strength and ability He has given, but 'would also have the burden of honor and the burden of labor go together.' Those who have the precedency in rank, reputation, or influence, should always be disposed to go before others in every good work, undismayed by danger, difficulty, or obloquy, that they may encourage others by their example.

Behold (hinneh) I have given the land into his hand: This is a Hebrew idiom which means "to deliver over to the power of" or "to enable to conquer." The [perfect tense](#) of "have given", in this context, describes a **future action** as if it were a "**accomplished**"! (See note below on [perfect tense in Judges](#)) Throughout Judges we see a picture of God's adequacy giving Israel and/or Judah divine direction (Judges 1:2), divine assurance (Jdg 1:2), the experience of God's power (Jdg 1:4) and finally and best of all the experience of God's presence (Jdg 1:19)

George Bush adds **the land** does not refer to "the whole land, but the land or district destined for (Judah's) inheritance. This God has so firmly purposed to deliver into his hand that **it might be considered as already done**, and such assurance of victory would naturally give courage for the contest."

Behold (02009) hinneh is an interjection meaning behold, look, now; if. "It is used often and expresses strong feelings, surprise, hope, expectation, certainty, thus giving vividness depending on its surrounding context." (Baker) Hinneh generally directs our mind to the text, imploring the reader to give it special attention. In short, the Spirit is trying to arrest our attention! And so **hinneh** is used as an exclamation of vivid immediacy (e.g., read Ge 6:13)! **Hinneh** is a marker used to enliven a narrative, to express a change a scene, to emphasize an idea, to call attention to a detail or an important fact or action that follows (Isa 65:17, Ge 17:20, 41:17). The first use of **hinneh** in Ge 1:29+ and second in Ge 1:31+ - "And God saw all that He had made, and **behold**, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day." **Spurgeon** reminds us that "**Behold** is a word of wonder; it is intended to excite admiration. Wherever you see it hung out in Scripture, it is like an ancient sign-board, signifying that there are rich wares within, or like the hands which solid readers have observed in the margin of the older Puritanic books, drawing attention to something particularly worthy of observation." I would add, **behold** is like a divine highlighter, a divine underlining of an especially striking or important text. It says in effect "Listen up, all ye who would be wise in the ways of Jehovah!"

Gary Inrig summarizes the differences of Joshua and Judges and helps set the stage for the next 21 chapters -

The opening words of Judges may at first glance seem to be only a helpful historical notation. Sadly, as we shall see, they represent the spiritual high-water mark of the entire book. The first phrase, "after the death of Joshua," not only gives us the historical setting and indicates that this is a time of major transition for the nation; it also marks the beginning of a drastic decline in the spiritual well-being of the nation. This decline was totally unnecessary, since Israel's well-being was not dependent on the greatness of its leaders but on the goodness of her God. Although the books of Joshua and Judges stand side by side on the pages of Scripture, they are poles apart in what they record of Israel's obedience to God. The book of Joshua is the record of the exploits of the Israelites as they trusted their Lord and obeyed God. God brought His people into Canaan and gave them victory after victory over their foes. Joshua is a book of conquest, but Judges is a long, sad story of defeat. Joshua is a book of faith; Judges of unbelief and disobedience. Joshua depicts a people united in following God's man; Judges tells the story of a people increasingly divided, sliding into anarchy as every person "did what was right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25+). In Joshua, God's Word is central and people submit to His authority, while in Judges, Scripture is neglected and rejected. Two verses clearly indicate the vast difference between the time of Joshua and the period of the judges. As Joshua was about to die, he issued one last, stirring challenge to his nation:

"Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, . . . But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."

The people's response was instantaneous: With one voice the people answered,

"Far be it from us to forsake the Lord to serve other gods!" (Joshua 24:15, 16).

But early in the period of the judges, we have this verdict pronounced on the people:

"The Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord; they forgot the Lord their God, and served the Baals and the Asherahs" (Judges 3:7).

So in a few short years, Joshua's **'we will not forget the Lord'** has become Judges' **"the people forgot the Lord"** Why did that happen? How did a people who knew continuous victory by faith sink to be a nation experiencing constant failure due to compromise? (**THOUGHT**) And how can we guard against the same thing in our lives? After all, we can identify with the hymn writer who probed his heart and declared, "Prone to wander, Lord I feel it, prone to leave the God I love." The purpose of asking these questions is to help us begin to answer them, both for the ancient Israelites and for ourselves.

The death of Joshua marked a national crisis. The great leader had gone, and God had not raised up another leader to take his place. But the people, no doubt reflecting the godly influence of Joshua's life, responded with faith and trust. They gathered together as a united people to seek God's direction and to carry out His mission.

First, they accepted the Lord's authority. They didn't just set out to do what seemed best; they sought His direction, probably by inquiring of the Lord through the high priest's use of the Urim and Thummim.

Second, they accepted His mission for them. God had called them to "go up and fight against the Canaanites." The mission to take the land and exterminate the Canaanites came from the Lord Himself (cf. Ex 23:31–33; Deut 7:1–5), and Israel was to be the instrument of His holy justice.

Third, they waited for the Lord's orders. He was the Commander-in-Chief Who Alone could determine who would lead them into battle. The Lord's choice of the tribe of Judah to take the lead is consistent with His plan to choose a king from Judah, a preview of the great day when His Messiah would be born as a descendant of David. But what should be noted here is the Lord's promise of victory:

"I have given the land into their hands."

This is the way it should be for God's people, but, sadly, as we shall see, we will never reach such heights again in this book. ([Hearts of Iron, Feet of Clay](#))

EXCURSUS ON USE OF THE PERFECT TENSE IN JUDGES

The perfect tense is used in rallying cries

- **Judges 3:28** "And he said to them, "Pursue them, for the LORD **has given** (PERFECT) your enemies the Moabites into your hands."
- **Judges 4:14** And Deborah said to Barak, "Arise! For this is the day in which the LORD **has given** (PERFECT) Sisera into your hands;
- **Judges 7:15** And it came about when Gideon heard the account of the dream and its interpretation, that he bowed in worship. He returned to the camp of Israel and said, "Arise, for the LORD **has given** (PERFECT) the camp of Midian into your hands."

This perfect tense describes divine oracles of deliverance

- **Judges 7:9** Now the same night it came about that the LORD said to him, "Arise, go down against the camp, for **I have given** (PERFECT) it into your hands.
- **Judges 18:10** "When you enter, you shall come to a secure people with a spacious land; for God **has given** (PERFECT) it into your hand, a place where there is no lack of anything that is on the earth."

The perfect tense is used once in a dream interpretation to emphasize the disaster symbolized in the dream...

- **Judges 7:14** And his friend answered and said, "This is nothing less than the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel; God **has given** (PERFECT) Midian and all the camp into his hand."

QUESTION - [What can we learn from the tribe of Judah?](#)

ANSWER - Each of the twelve sons of Israel / Jacob received a blessing from his father just before Jacob's death. The twelve sons were the progenitors of the twelve tribes of Israel, and the blessing contained prophetic information about the future of each tribe. In the case of the tribe of [Judah](#), Jacob prophesied, "Judah, your brothers will praise you; your hand will be on the neck of your enemies; your father's sons will bow down to you. You are a lion's cub, O Judah; you return from the prey, my son. Like a lion he crouches and lies down, like a lioness—who dares to rouse him? The [scepter will not depart from Judah](#), nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his. He will tether his donkey to a vine, his colt to the choicest branch; he will wash his garments in wine, his robes in the blood of grapes. His eyes will be darker than wine, his teeth whiter than milk" (Genesis 49:8–12).

Each part of Jacob's prophecy for the tribe of Judah reveals something about the people of that tribe, their history, and the spiritual application we can draw from it. In verse 8, Jacob prophesies that Judah's brothers would praise him. Judah's name signifies praise and was given him by his mother, her heart being filled with praises to God for him (Genesis 29:35). The strength and power of the tribe is also foretold in verse 8. Verse 9 uses the imagery of both a [lion](#) and the lion's cub to portray the tribe of Judah. Judah was comparable to a young lion for his strength, courage, and vitality and to a mature lion in that the line of Judah contained those of national prominence and kingship, including David and Solomon.

The scepter not departing from Judah until "he comes to whom it belongs" is a Messianic prophecy. The name "Shiloh" appears in this verse in several translations, a word that refers to the Messiah. Commentators differ on the exact meaning of this somewhat obscure passage, but all agree that He who comes to obtain the obedience of the nations can be none other than Christ. The rest of the passage, verses 11–12, refers to the great abundance of riches that would belong to the tribe of Judah. So wealthy and blessed would they be that they would be able to tie a donkey to the choicest grapevine and allow him to eat his fill, an indication of the abundance that would belong to Judah.

The second application of verses 11–12, and the one that pertains to Christians today, is the abundance of spiritual riches available to us in Christ, the great quantity of spiritual blessings flowing from the love of God, which come to us through Christ, which are comparable to wine and milk. The riches include His word and His statutes and Christ Himself, the Bread of Life. These may also be applied to Christ and to His human nature, which was like a garment dipped in blood through His sufferings and death. Isaiah 63:1–3 contains this same imagery. It can also refer to His church and His people whose garments are washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb (Revelation 7:13–14). [GotQuestions.org](#)

Related Resources:

- [Who was Judah in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Who/what is the Lion of the tribe of Judah? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What does it mean that the scepter will not depart from Judah \(Genesis 49:10\)? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What can we learn from the tribe of Judah? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Who were the kings of Israel and Judah? | GotQuestions.org](#)

Judges 1:3 Then Judah said to Simeon his brother, "Come up with me into the territory allotted me, that we may fight against the Canaanites; and I in turn will go with you into the territory allotted you." So Simeon went with him.

- **Simeon** - Genesis 29:33; Joshua 19:1
- **I in turn will go with you** Jdg 1:17; 2Sa 10:11
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



Note Simeon Within Judah

Related Passages:

Genesis 29:33 Then she ([Leah](#)) conceived again and bore a son and said, "Because the LORD has heard that I am unloved, He has therefore given me this son also." So she named him Simeon.

Genesis 35:23 the sons of [Leah](#): Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, then Simeon and Levi and Judah and Issachar and Zebulun;

Joshua 19:1+ Then the second lot fell to Simeon, to the tribe of the sons of Simeon according to their families, and their inheritance was in the midst of the inheritance of the sons of Judah.

Judges 1:17 Then Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they struck the Canaanites living in Zephath, and utterly destroyed it. So the name of the city was called Hormah.

Then - Remember that "then" is worth observing as it usually marks progression in a narrative.

Judah said to Simeon his brother: Since Leah ([Who was Leah?](#)) had given birth to Judah and Simeon, these tribes were blood brothers (Ge 35:23). Incidentally, Simeon actually had its inheritance within the tribe of Judah (Jos 19:1+).

Come up with me into the territory allotted me, that we may fight against the Canaanites Some would say this was in God's will for Judah but others suggest that this is not the specific direction that God gave Judah (if one relies solely on what the previous passage commands) and that it suggests a subtle erosion in their faith and trust in the total adequacy of God to fulfill what He had called Judah to do -- go up and fight the Canaanites.

McGee - At first this looks like a fine sign of cooperation between Judah and Simeon, and it was, but it was also a sign of weakness. The tribe of Judah had no business asking for help to drive the Canaanites out of their particular portion of land. With God's help they should have been able to do it. As a result, the Canaanites were never completely driven out of the land.

And I in turn will go with you into the territory allotted you. So Simeon went with him Simeon was given land in the southern section of Judah's territory (see [map above](#)) in fulfillment of Jacob's prophecy (Ge 49:5). Simeon eventually migrated north when its territory was incorporated into Judah's. See 1Ki 11:13.

Matthew Henry - Observe here, 1. That the strongest should not despise but desire the assistance even of those that are weaker. Judah was the most considerable of all the tribes, and **Simeon** the least considerable, and yet Judah begs Simeon's friendship, and prays an aid from him; the head cannot say to the foot, I have no need of thee, for we are members one of another. 2. Those that crave assistance must be ready to give assistance: Come with me into my lot, and then I will go with thee into thine. It becomes Israelites to help one another against Canaanites; and all Christians, even those of different tribes, should strengthen one another's hands against the common interests of Satan's kingdom. Those who thus help one another in love have reason to hope that God will graciously help them both.

After Joshua's death the tribe of Judah demonstrated continuing faith in God. They boldly attacked the Canaanites still within their territory. The victories they won should have encouraged all Israel. One of the most significant things we can do to strengthen our faith is read **Christian biographies**. (AMEN!) While these are not published frequently today, the life stories of men and women of faith can challenge and encourage us. Relatively recent publications like *Through Gates of Splendor* and *Born Again*, as well as older classics about **Hudson Taylor** ([Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret](#); see [John Piper's thoughts also](#)) and [George Muller](#). (See [Piper's thoughts](#)) can deepen our awareness of what God is able to do through individuals. If only the rest of the tribes of Israel had

QUESTION - [What can we learn from the tribe of Simeon?](#)

ANSWER - Each of the twelve sons of Israel / Jacob received a blessing from his father just before Jacob's death. The twelve sons were the progenitors of the twelve tribes of Israel, and the blessing contained prophetic information about the future of each tribe. In the case of the tribe of [Simeon](#), which was paired in the prophecy with the tribe of Levi, Jacob prophesied,

“Simeon and Levi are brothers—their swords are weapons of violence. Let me not enter their council, let me not join their assembly, for they have killed men in their anger and hamstringed oxen as they pleased. Cursed be their anger, so fierce, and their fury, so cruel! I will scatter them in Jacob and disperse them in Israel” (Genesis 49:5–7).

Jacob pronounces a curse upon the anger of Simeon and Levi, no doubt remembering when they treacherously and barbarously destroyed the [Shechemites](#), an act Jacob deeply resented for the barbarous way in which it was done and the reproach it brought upon his entire family (Ge 34:24–30). Simeon's anger was evil, not because indignation against sin is unwarranted, but because his wrath was marked by deeds of fierceness and cruelty. Righteous anger and indignation, the kind Jesus exhibited in cleansing the temple, for example, is never characterized by cruelty. The swords of Simeon, which should have been only weapons of defense, were weapons of violence to do wrong to others, not to save themselves from wrong.

Jacob's pronouncement **“I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel”** came true. The tribe of Simeon was the smallest and weakest of all the tribes at the close of their sojourn in the wilderness, as noted in the second census of Moses (Nu 26:14+), and the tribe of Simeon was omitted from the blessing of Moses (Deuteronomy 33:8+). Further, because of its size, the tribe of Simeon was forced to share territory with Judah, a larger and more powerful tribe (Joshua 19:1–9+). Jacob did not cut the descendants of Simeon off from any part in the promised inheritance, but he did divide and scatter them.

As Christians, we learn from the tribe of Simeon that **anger is the cause of a great deal of sin** when it is allowed to boil over without restraint, resulting in a scenario in which hurts are multiplied (Proverbs 29:11). Anger leaves devastation in its wake, often with irreparable consequences. Furthermore, while anger against sin is not unwarranted, we ought always to be very careful to distinguish between the sinner and the sin, so as not to love or bless the sin for the sake of the person, nor to hate or curse the person for the sake of the sin.

Jacob's statement **“Let me not enter their council; let me not join their assembly”** is a lesson for us as well. We are not to take the counsel of the angry man because he is unstable and exhibits an inability to control his passions. When anger is a defining trait in another's life, it is an indication of the lack of self-control, which is a hallmark of believers (Galatians 5:22-23+). An angry person makes a poor counselor, and, in fact, his company should be avoided, especially when the sin of anger is unconfessed and there is no attempt to deal with it in a godly manner.

Finally, Simeon and Levi appeared to be inseparable brothers who are often mentioned together in Scripture (Ge 34:25, 34:30, 35:23, 49:5, Ex 1:2 Dt 27:12, 1 Chr 2:1, Rev 7:7), an indication that, like many brothers and sisters, they may have “brought out the worst in each other.” Christian parents who see this type of relationship developing in siblings whose influence upon one another is unhealthy, would do well to consider separating them from one another in circumstances where their unfortunate tendency to spur one another to wrong may exert itself. [GotQuestions.org](#)

Related Resource:

- [Who was Simeon in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Simeon, The tribe of](#)

Judges 1:4 And Judah went up, and the LORD gave the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hands; and they defeated ten thousand men at Bezek.

- **Lord:** Ex 23:28,29 De 7:2 9:3 Jos 10:8-10 11:6-8 1Sa 14:6,10 1Sa 17:46,47 1Ki 22:6,15
- **Bezek:** Eusebius and Jerome mention two villages of this name, near each other, about seventeen miles from Shechem, towards Scythopolis. 1Sa 11:8
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Exodus 23:28; 29 "I will send hornets ahead of you so that they will drive out the Hivites, the Canaanites, and the Hittites before you. (23:29) "I will not drive them out before you in a single year, that the land may not become desolate and the beasts of the field become too numerous for you.

Deuteronomy 7:2 and when the LORD your God delivers them before you (GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY) and you defeat them, then you shall utterly destroy them (MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY), so that you may drive them out and destroy them quickly . You shall make no covenant with them and show no favor to them.

Deuteronomy 9:3 "Know therefore today that it is the LORD your God who is crossing over before you as a consuming fire. He will destroy them and He will subdue them before you (GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY), so that you may drive them out and destroy them quickly (MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY), just as the LORD has spoken to you.

Joshua 10:8-10 The LORD said to Joshua, "Do not fear them, for I have given them into your hands (GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY); not one of them shall stand before you." 9 So Joshua came upon them suddenly by marching all night from Gilgal. 10 And the LORD confounded them before Israel, and He slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, and pursued them by the way of the ascent of Beth-horon and struck them as far as Azekah and Makkedah.

Joshua 11:6-8 Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid because of them, for tomorrow at this time I will deliver all of them slain before Israel; you shall hamstring their horses and burn their chariots with fire." 7 So Joshua and all the people of war with him came upon them suddenly by the waters of Merom, and attacked them. 8 The LORD delivered them into the hand of Israel (GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY), so that they defeated them (MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY), and pursued them as far as Great Sidon and Misrephoth-maim and the valley of Mizpeh to the east; and they struck them until no survivor was left to them.

1 Samuel 14:6; 10 Then Jonathan said to the young man who was carrying his armor, "Come and let us cross over to the garrison of these uncircumcised; perhaps the LORD will work for us, for the LORD is not restrained to save by many or by few." (14:10) "But if they say, 'Come up to us,' then we will go up (MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY), for the LORD has given them into our hands (GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY); and this shall be the sign to us."

1 Samuel 17:46-47 (**DAVID TO GOLIATH**) "This day the LORD will deliver you up into my hands, and I will strike you down and remove your head from you. And I will give the dead bodies of the army of the Philistines this day to the birds of the sky and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, 47 and that all this assembly may know that the LORD does not deliver by sword or by spear; for the battle is the LORD'S and He will give you into our hands."

GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY **MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY**

The LORD "GAVE" but Judah had to carry out their part and fight.

And Judah went up, and the LORD gave the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hands God's sovereignty. Note that Judah had a first hand experience of the power and sufficiency of the Almighty in warfare. How their faith must have (or should have) been fanned by these divine encounters. Why was Judah successful? Because they believed God. They had talked with God. God had spoken clear instructions and they believed Him (although see caveat discussed at note on v3). But go to [Jdg 1:19].

Canaanites applies to all the peoples found in the land of Palestine, but at times it is restricted to the inhabitants of the valleys and coastal plains (Nu 13:29). Here the Canaanites are linked with the Perizzites, an ethnic group often included in lists of the people of Canaan.

and they defeated ten thousand men at Bezek: ([Bezek](#)) (1Sa 11:8) Men's responsibility. Bezek was located 12 miles NE of Shechem and 13 mi from Jabesh-Gilead, 6 mi N of Tirzah, though the Judges' site may be a distinctive city. 10,000 men would be no small army. This was clearly evidence of God's promise of victory.

THOUGHT - Experiencing spiritual victories clearly from the hand of the Lord should serve to encourage our faith that He can perform future victories. One trap we can fall into is failure to acknowledge God as the Source (failure to express our gratitude) or alternatively and every worse to actually think we were successful because of our power and military prowess! Another danger is simply to forget the previous powerful acts of the Lord. Is this not what transpired in the generation of Israel that followed Joshua and the elders who served with

Joshua? Jdg 2:10 records "All that generation also were gathered to their fathers; and there arose another generation after them **who did not know the LORD**, nor **yet the work which He had done for Israel.**" Lord give us good memories of Your past acts of power and provision in our lives. Amen

J Vernon McGee - You would think that after this first step of victory the people in Judah would be confident that God would deliver their inheritance into their hands.

Related Resources:

- [Who were the Canaanites? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Why did the Israelites take the Canaanites as slaves instead of destroying them as they were instructed? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Why did God command the extermination / genocide of the Canaanites, women and children included? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Why did God condone such terrible violence in the Old Testament? | GotQuestions.org](#)

Judges 1:5 And they found Adoni-bezek in Bezek and fought against him and they defeated the Canaanites and the Perizzites. [Bezek](#)

- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

And they found Adoni-bezek in Bezek and fought against him and they defeated the Canaanites and the Perizzites Why did they defeat them? Because they **trusted and obeyed** God's promise...

And the LORD said, "Judah shall go up; behold, I have given the land into his hand."

Question - [Who was Adoni-Bezek?](#)

Answer: Adoni-Bezek is a name meaning "**lord of Bezek**" and is mentioned in Judges 1:5–7:

"It was there that [the men of Judah] found Adoni-Bezek and fought against him, putting to rout the Canaanites and Perizzites. Adoni-Bezek fled, but they chased him and caught him, and cut off his thumbs and big toes. Then Adoni-Bezek said, 'Seventy kings with their thumbs and big toes cut off have picked up scraps under my table. Now God has paid me back for what I did to them.' They brought him to Jerusalem, and he died there."

This violent ruler was defeated by the tribe of Judah, with Simeon's help. Adoni-Bezek's captors cut off his thumbs and big toes. Then he was taken as a prisoner to Jerusalem where he later died. God did not specifically command the maiming of the lord of Bezek, yet the king himself confessed that the act was just, based on his treatment of other rulers.

The town of Bezek is today called Khirbet Ibziq, a village north of Tubass in the West Bank (see 1 Samuel 11:8). The facts that Adoni-Bezek oversaw 10,000 soldiers and that he had tortured 70 kings indicates that he was very powerful. Bezek, meaning "lightning," may have had a connection with the worship of the Canaanite storm god, Baal, whose images typically depicted him holding a lightning bolt.

Some point out the torture of Adoni-Bezek as either an evil act or an act of retributive justice, but it is clear that the Israelites' treatment of this king was an act of disobedience. Deuteronomy 7:24 says, "He will give their kings into your hand, and you will wipe out their names from under heaven. No one will be able to stand up against you; you will destroy them." Rather than torturing the kings they defeated, the Israelites were commanded to completely destroy them.

This lack of obedience in completely defeating their enemies is a repeated theme in Judges. Judges 1:19 and 21 say, "The men of Judah . . . took possession of the hill country, but they were unable to drive the people from the plains, because they had chariots fitted with iron. . . . The Benjamites . . . did not drive out the Jebusites, who were living in Jerusalem; to this day the Jebusites live there with the Benjamites." The final verses of chapter 1 also emphasize the incomplete nature of the conquest of the Promised Land. This introduction sets the reader up for what follows—an ongoing cycle of sin that leads to oppression from enemies, followed by a calling out to God, and then the raising up of a judge to rescue the people.

Adoni-Bezek was an evil Canaanite ruler. He was one among many whom the people of Israel defeated, yet he was allowed to live in direct disregard of God's command. The Book of Judges provides many other examples of the Israelites' disobedience and how it led to difficult times for Israel until they returned to Him in repentance and obedience. (Source: [GotQuestions.org](#))

Judges 1:6 But Adoni-bezek fled; and they pursued him and caught him and cut off his thumbs and big toes.

- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

But Adoni-bezek fled; and they pursued him and caught him and cut off his thumbs and big toes - This form of punishment humiliated the victim, eliminated any possibility of his taking up arms in the future, and symbolized the cessation of his rule as a warrior-king. This might seem to be cruel and unusual punishment, but this king, by his own admission (v7), received what he deserved, for he had mutilated 70 other kings in this same way.

Judah seems to use the "standard" from the world, not from God. Mutilation was what everyone else did to their captured enemy leaders because this would render them incapable of functioning as leaders and warriors. So it seemed like the rational, logical, sensible thing for Judah to do. But oh the deception of disobedience (partial obedience). God had said they were to utterly obliterate their enemies, not compromise with them by mutilating them. Thus Judah's obedience was but partial (and so it was disobedience). One has to wonder if this beginning could have anything to do with Judah's failure to defeat the iron chariots in Jdg 1:19.

One commentary says "Though barbarous by modern standards, this act was pragmatic since the loss of the thumbs made it difficult to hold a weapon, and the loss of the big toes hindered one's footing in combat." While that may be pragmatic, God had not not commanded "pragmatism" but utter destruction of the enemy! It seems this commentary even lost sight of this important principle!

Gary Inrig agrees commenting "that mutilation was a pagan practice. They were drawing their standards from people around them. And besides, God wanted these men put to death, not mutilated. The obedience of Judah was only partial." ([Hearts of Iron, Feet of Clay](#))

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KITTO - Friday. Thumbs and Great Toes—Judges 1:1–7

One is shocked to learn that when the Israelites had taken captive AdoniBezek the king of Jerusalem, they cut off his thumbs and his great toes. The man who has studied the war usages of ancient times cannot, indeed, feel much surprise at anything of barbarity or savageness of which he can read, although the distress of his feelings may be not less than that of the person of less knowledge to whom such things are new. For the reasons already stated, we have no just grounds for expecting that the Hebrews should carry on their warfare more mildly than their neighbors; yet it must be admitted that this treatment of a captive king is, at the first view, regarded with pain and with something like abhorrence. But wait a little. Let us read a few lines more of the record. How did this king himself regard this treatment? How did it affect his mind? Did he fill the air with outcries at this cruel indignity, and call down upon them all the curses of all his gods? Did he fold his arms in calm dignity upon his breast, and submit his outraged majesty to the insults of a barbarous people? Nothing of the kind! He was humble, he was contrite. He regarded himself as an offender brought to justice, and confessed that he richly deserved the doom inflicted upon him. Hear his words: "Three score and ten kings, having their thumbs and great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table. As I have done, so God hath requited me." Do the Hebrews, after this, need any excuse? Why, the man they thus roughly handled is himself their apologist and vindicator. So far from taking pleasure in such barbarities, it was precisely to express their abhorrence of them, as exercised by him, that they had subjected him to the very same treatment, that he might learn there is a God that judgeth in the earth. And he did learn it. Nothing can be more shocking than the scene this wicked king depicts. Seventy kings, not only thus mutilated, but reduced to a condition worse than slavery—their misery paraded at the conqueror's court—and instead of sitting at his table, constrained to gather their food, like dogs, below it. This helps us to some insight of the state of the country under the native princes, whom the Israelites were commissioned to expel. Conceive what must have been the state of the people among whom such a scene could exist,—what wars had been waged, what cruel ravages committed, before these seventy kings—however small their territories—became reduced to this condition, and behold in this a specimen of the fashion in which war was conducted, and of the treatment to which the conquered were exposed. Those are certainly very much in the wrong who picture to themselves the Canaanites as "a happy family," disturbed in their peaceful homes by the Hebrew barbarians from the wilderness. Behold how happy, behold how peaceful, they were!

It may not be clear to many of our readers what may have been the special object of this form of mutilation. We have read often enough, of various kinds of mutilations inflicted upon prisoners of war, but this kind is new to us. It is still, however, not less significant than blinding and other modes of privation adopted in such cases. The object was, in the first place, to disable the kings from taking part in war, without so impairing any of their faculties or functions as to lessen or deaden the sense of suffering and humiliation. This incapacitation was a great matter, when kings were expected to lead their armies in person, and to take an active part in the conflict. It is clear that no man deprived of his thumbs could handle any weapon, and that one destitute of the great toes could not have that firmness of tread in walking, racing, and climbing, which were essential to a military chief, particularly among a people who went barefoot, or who at least wore only such feet-coverings as permitted the full natural action of the toes, among which the great toes are of the highest importance. We almost think that this privation must have operated as a disqualification for any future restoration to the throne, and was intended so to operate. There can be no doubt that when the Israelites proceeded with their miserable captive to his city of Jerusalem, they restored to their liberty the seventy kings whom they had thus avenged, and with whom they had, in this uncouth manner, expressed their sympathy. Nor can there be any doubt that when the seventy discrowned princes beheld their old oppressor thus brought low, they rose from the dust to greet him, crying, "Art thou also become like unto us—thou that didst weaken the nations—thou that madest the land to tremble!" A mutilation which the threescore and ten survived, was not likely to be in itself mortal, and it was therefore more probably from humbled pride than of his wounds that Adoni-Bezek died at Jerusalem.

It is observable that in the Hebrew the great toe is called the thumb of the foot, and hence the phrase here is, "the thumbs of the hand and feet." This is the case in other Oriental and in some European languages. In the Hindu the thumb is called "sevia viril," the great finger of the hand, and the large toe is named the great finger of the foot. Mr. Roberts, in his curious "Oriental Illustrations," states that this punishment was in ancient times very common in India, and was inflicted principally upon those who had committed come flagrant offence with the hands or with the feet. Thus, those convicted of forgery or of numerous thefts, had their thumbs cut off. The practice is now extinct, but the memory of it still exists, as it is now one of the bugbears of the nursery and of domestic life: "If you steal any more I will cut off your thumbs;" "Let me find out the thief, and I will soon have his thumbs," and the like.

Judges 1:7 And Adoni-bezek said, "Seventy kings with their thumbs and their big toes cut off used to gather up scraps under my table; as I have done, so God has repaid me." So they brought him to Jerusalem and he died there.

- **As I have done** - Ex 21:23, 24, 25; Lev 24:19, 20, 21; 1Sa 15:33; Is 33:1; Mt 7:1,2; Lk 6:37,38; Ro 2:15; Jas 2:13; Re 13:10; 16:6

- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

And Adoni-bezek said, "Seventy kings with their thumbs and their big toes cut off used to gather up scraps under my table

After a custom not uncommon in antiquity, the many chieftains whom he had subdued were kept, like dogs, "for lengthened sport," under the banqueting table of the proud conqueror in a mutilated condition, their thumbs and great toes cut off, in token that they could never again handle sword and bow, nor march to war. It need scarcely be said, that the Mosaic law never contemplated such horrors. Nevertheless the allied tribes now inflicted mutilation upon Adoni-bezek.

Gather up - Elsewhere this verb usually carries the sense of "to gather; to pick up; to glean," but "lick up" seems best here in light of the peculiar circumstances described by Adoni-Bezek. ([Net Bible Notes](#))

As I have done, so God has repaid me - This pagan king had a sense of righteous retribution! Interesting! Well, sort of! He did not know that God's "retribution" for him was actually to be utter destruction!

Repaid (Lxx = antapodidomi (word study) - used in Jdg 1:7; 1Sa 25:21; 2Sa 22:21; 1Kgs 2:44; 2Chr 32:25; Ps 103:10; 116:12) - Hebrew verb **salam** carries the primary meaning of "making intact, bringing to completion and can refer to paying off a debt, making restitution, restoring something that has been lost or stolen, and paying religious vows. Occasionally it is used of rewarding someone for an act of kindness, but more often, as in the present context, it refers to repaying evil deeds. Therefore some interpret this verse as an illustration of **lex talionis**, the law of retaliation demanding an "eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot" (Ex 21:24, 23, 25; cf. Mt 5:38-note).

While the pagan king admitted the justification of the act in his case, this is man's idea of vengeance, not necessarily God's (see Ro 12:17, 18, 19+) Since when does God tell His people to use the means of pagan people to accomplish His means? Pagans cut the toes off, but that's not what God said to do. This is the way flesh does it. God says "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY" In the relevant NT passage (Ro 12:17+, Ro 12:18, 19+) "vengeance" is translated with [ekdikesis](#) (see noun -ekdikos) which means retribution out of righteousness. God is ultimately the only One Who can pay back this way (our of His perfect righteousness). He knows what crime or misdeed has been committed and He alone knows how to repay.

So they brought him to Jerusalem and he died there - This is another evidence of their disobedience, because they were supposed to utterly destroy him. Furthermore Jerusalem was not completely in the hands of Israel. One commentator suggests that Adoni-bezek's own people took him to the Canaanite city-state of Jerusalem to live out his days.

Mattoon - A common practice in the Middle East was to mutilate prisoners of war and afflict them.

- **Sesostris**, King of Egypt, harnessed conquered kings to his chariot and compelled them to pull it.
- **King Sapor**, King of Persia, compelled the Roman Emperor Valerian to stoop down, using his back as a block to mount his horse.
- **Assyrian Kings** would drag royal captives by a cord attached to a fish hook that was attached to the lower lip of the prisoner or the cartilage in their nose. Thumbs and toes were cut off to eliminate a warrior from further military service. A mutilated king could never return to the throne. A mutilated man could not serve as a priest (Leviticus 21).

This episode with Adoni-bezek reminds one of the "partial obedience" of King Saul when he defeated Amalekites and spared their king Agag (as well as the best of the sheep, etc) (1Sa 15:8-9). Saul was so deceived by his own flesh that he said to Samuel "I did obey the voice of the LORD, and went on the mission on which the LORD sent me, and have brought back Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites (**YES, ALL EXCEPT ONE!**)." (1Sa 15:20) Samuel's response was classic...

"Has the LORD as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of divination, And insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He has also rejected you from being king." (1Sa 15:22-23)

And Samuel finished what Saul should have finished when he "hewed Agag to pieces before the LORD at Gilgal." (1Sa 15:32-33)

Related Resources:

- [Why is obedience better than sacrifice? | GotQuestions.org](#)
 - [What does the Bible say about rebellion? | GotQuestions.org](#)
 - [Who was King Saul in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)
-

Now—Or Later

Read: Judges 1:1-7 |

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. —Galatians 6:7

The principle that we reap what we sow is taught and illustrated throughout the Bible. The effects of our choices may be in the here and now, or they may be experienced in the hereafter, when we stand before God.

From the perspective of eternity, it is far better to reap the consequences of sin now in this lifetime. That's because there is still time for repentance and restoration.

In Judges 1, we learn that the Canaanite king Adoni-Bezek was among the more fortunate in this respect. In keeping with the cruelty of his day, he had cut off the thumbs and big toes of 70 captured kings. But then the tables were turned. The Israelites captured Adoni-Bezek and cut off his big toes and thumbs. The wicked scoundrel, though, had enough sense to admit that God was causing him to reap what he had sown (v.7). We are not told whether he truly repented, but we can consider him fortunate to have had the opportunity to do so.

If you see yourself reaping the consequences of your sins, stop the self-destructive cycle. Make the most of the rest of your life by running back to the open arms of the Lord. He longs to forgive you and lead you to a way of life that reaps His blessing and reward.

THINKING IT OVER

What is society reaping today?

What am I personally reaping?

What do I need to stop sowing? Start sowing?

Present choices determine future rewards.

By Herbert Vander Lugt

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Judges 1:1,2,27-36 Theodore Epp Back to the Bible

Incomplete Victory - We have seen before that we cannot possess what we do not first dispossess. We cannot possess what someone else has control of.

Israel could not possess that portion of Canaan where they coexisted with the Canaanites, even though the Canaanites were their slaves. Instead of destroying the Canaanites or driving them out as God had commanded, the Israelites in many areas allowed them to live in their midst.

It was not a complete victory for God's people. Time after time we are told how they failed to go all the way to accomplish God's purpose. Passage after passage tells us the same story.

This is the story of the seven tribes of Israel that did not completely dispossess the inhabitants and thus possess the land for themselves. God said to drive out these Canaanites, for their cup of sin was full. Israel was to get rid of them and then to dwell where they had dwelt.

There are things that God has told us to get rid of in our lives. And there is no need for us to protest that we cannot, because Christ died and rose again to make it possible for us to do so.

Furthermore, we have the Holy Spirit indwelling us so that Christ now indwells us through the Holy Spirit to live out His life in us. Thus day by day we can, by faith, overcome in the spiritual warfare and be victors through Christ.

"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace" (Ro 6:14-note). (Copyright Back to the Bible. Used by permission. All rights reserved)

Judges 1:1-20

Then Joshua sent the people away, each to his own inheritance. - Joshua 24:28

TODAY IN THE WORD Flannery O'Connor, one of the greatest American short-story writers, was sometimes criticized for her outlandish characters. She explained that they were intentionally grotesque, because "for the hard of hearing you shout, and for the blind you draw large and startling figures." She could have been describing the characters we'll encounter this month in our study of

the books of Judges and Ruth. God has included these stories from the history of Israel in His Word in order to shout some truths to us about His own character.

God has something to teach us in both the structure and the stories in the book of Judges. It sometimes appears to be a string of stories, like a pearl necklace, held together by the common thread of Israel's sin and deliverance. This image is incomplete, however. Judges is one of the most richly textured, crafted, and organized books in Scripture. Rather than a strand of pearls, we'll see the book is designed more like an intricate gold filigree.

We'll see a number of themes emerge: the role of Judah, God's concern for the unity of His people, the relationship between men and women, and the ongoing disintegration of country, family, and individuals as a result of disobedience.

The first phrase of the book, "After the death of Joshua," gives us the historical context for these events (Jdg 1:1). And right away, we see several of our key themes. God designates Judah as the tribe to begin fulfilling His command to be an instrument of justice against the wicked Canaanites. God blesses Judah's obedience with victory.

The story of Acsah is not randomly placed in this passage. We see that she must have been quite a woman, worthy of great and heroic deeds for the right to marry her. We also see her wisdom and initiative in asking her father Caleb for water in addition to her parcel of land, located in the desert. Her story, inserted precisely in the middle of the account of Judah's initiative, illustrates personal initiative that receives a blessing.

TODAY ALONG THE WAY Judah took the initiative to obey what God had commanded; Acsah's prudence and wisdom led her to take action to ensure that her family's land would be fertile. Has God called you to obey Him in some area that you've been resisting? Is there some aspect of life where you know that action would be the wise and prudent decision . . . but you still hesitate? Trust in His character to bless and reward initiative!

Judges 1:8 Then the sons of Judah fought against Jerusalem and captured it and struck it with the edge of the sword and set the city on fire.

- Jdg 1:21 Jos 15:63
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Judges 1:21 But the sons of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites who lived in Jerusalem; so the Jebusites have lived with the sons of Benjamin in Jerusalem to this day.

2 Samuel 5:5-8 (At Hebron he (DAVID) reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years over all Israel and Judah. 6 Now the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the [Jebusites](#), the inhabitants of the land, and they said to David, "You shall not come in here, but the blind and lame will turn you away"; thinking, "David cannot enter here." 7 Nevertheless, David captured the stronghold of Zion, that is the city of David. 8 David said on that day, "Whoever would strike the [Jebusites](#), let him reach the lame and the blind, who are hated by David's soul, through the water tunnel." Therefore they say, "The blind or the lame shall not come into the house.")

TEMPORARY TAKEOVER OF JERUSALEM

Then the sons of Judah fought against Jerusalem and captured it and struck it with the edge of the sword and set the city on fire - Note that the text does "they utterly destroyed the city and its inhabitants." The inhabitants of Jerusalem were the [Jebusites](#) and they proved difficult to uproot, for in Josh 15:63 we read "the sons of Judah could not drive them out; so the Jebusites live with the sons of Judah at Jerusalem until this day." Joshua had slain the king of Jerusalem and his four allies after the battle at Gibeon (Jos 10:3,18-26), but had not conquered Jerusalem. This was not done till after Joshua's death, when it was taken by Judah (presumably with Simeon but not so stated in this verse) (Jdg 1:8). But even after this capture, and burning the town, Jerusalem did not come into the sole and permanent possession of the Israelites. That would be left for King David to accomplish (2Sa 5:5-8) some 350-400 years later! Apparently (and this is not entirely clear) after Judah had captured Jerusalem, the conquerors had advanced farther to make war upon the Canaanites in the mountains, in the Negev, and in the Shephelah (lowlands) (Jdg 1:9ff.). Apparently at this time the [Jebusites](#) took Jerusalem again and rebuilt it, so that in the following age it was regarded by the Israelites as a foreign city (Jdg 19:11,12+). And in this same chapter the [Benjaminites](#), to whom Jerusalem had fallen by lot, were

not able to drive out the Jebusites. Consequently they continued to live by the side of the Benjaminites (Judges 1:21) and the Judaeans (Jos 15:63), who settled, as time rolled on, in this the border city of their possessions; and in the upper town especially, upon the top of Mount Zion, they established themselves so firmly, that they could not be dislodged until David succeeded in wresting this fortress from them, and make the city of Zion the capital of his kingdom (2Sa 5:6, 7, 8f.).

In short, [Jerusalem](#) was only temporarily and partially captured. Joshua had defeated "the king of Jerusalem" (Jos 12:7,10), but did not destroy the Jebusites. The [Jebusites](#) later returned to reoccupy their city. The men of Judah did capture the lower city (Jdg 1:8, 21), but only later did King David capture the upper city and eliminate the Jebusites permanently (2Sa 5:6-7).

[Jerusalem](#) is one of the oldest cities in the world having been occupied almost continually for 5000 yrs. Its capture and destruction recorded here is complicated by the reference in (Judges 1:21) did not drive out the Jebusites from Jerusalem and by (Jos15:63) which notes that Judah did not expel the Jebusites from Jerusalem.

James Orr in ISBE on Jebusites - "Jebus" is an old name for Jerusalem (Jdg 19:10,11; 1 Chr 4:5 parallel 2Sa 5:6-9, "the same is Jerus"). "Jebusi" (literally, "Jebusite") is also used as a name for the city in the King James Version (Josh 18:16,28; cp Josh 15:8); the Revised Version (British and American) correctly renders "Jebusite." "Jebusites," for the people (Ge 15:21; Ex 3:8,17, etc.), does not occur in Hebrew in the plural; hence, in the Revised Version (British and American) is always rendered in the singular, "Jebusite." The "Jebusite" is said in Gen 10:16; 1Chr 1:14 to be the 3rd son of Canaan, i.e. of the country of Canaan. Elsewhere he represents a tribe separate from the Canaanites. He stands between Heth and the Amorite (compare Nu 13:29; Josh 11:3; Ezek 16:3,15). In the lists of the peoples inhabiting Palestine the "Jebusite" is always placed last, a fact indicative, probably, of their smaller number. To what race the Jebusites belonged is doubtful. Their name does not seem Semitic, and they do not make their appearance till after the patriarchal period.

The original name of Jerusalem was Babylonian, Uru-Salim, "the city of Salim," shortened into Salem in Ge 14:18 and in the inscriptions of the Egyptian kings Ramses II and Ramses III. In the Tell el-Amarna Letters (1400 BC) Jerusalem is still known as Uru-Salim, and its king bears a Hittite name, implying that it was at the time in the possession of the Hittites. His enemies, however, were closing around him, and one of the tablets shows that the city was eventually captured and its king slain. These enemies would seem to have been the Jebusites, since it is after this period that the name "Jebus" makes its appearance for the first time in the Old Testament (Jdg 19:10,11).

The Jebusite king at the time of the conquest was Adoni-zedek, who met his death at Beth-boron (Josh 10:1 ff; in 10:5 the word "Amorite" is used in its Babylonian sense to denote the inhabitants of Canaan generally). The Jebusites were a mountain tribe (Nu 13:29; Josh 11:3). Their capital "Jebus" was taken by the men of Judah and burned with fire (Jdg 18), but they regained possession of, and held, the fortress till the time of David (2 Sam 5:6 ff).

When Jerusalem was taken by David, the lives and property of its Jebusite inhabitants were spared, and they continued to inhabit the temple-hill, David and his followers settling in the new City of David on Mt. Zion (Josh 15:8,63; Jdg 1:21; 19:11). And as Araunah is called "king" (2 Sam 24:23), we may conclude that their last ruler also had been allowed to live. His name is non-Sem, and the various spellings of it (compare 1 Ch 21:15, "Ornan") indicate that the Hebrew writers had some difficulty in pronouncing it. The Jebusites seem ultimately to have blended with the Israelite population.

QUESTION - [What is the significance of the city of Jerusalem?](#)

ANSWER - For millennia, Jerusalem has been an important city, often commanding the attention of much of the world, and the city figures prominently in both biblical history and biblical prophecy. Jerusalem is central to many important events in the Bible.

The city of Jerusalem is situated on the edge of one of the highest tablelands in Israel, south of the center of the country, about thirty-seven miles east of the Mediterranean Sea and about twenty-four miles west of the Jordan River. Its situation, lined on two sides by deep ravines, provides a natural defense for the city. Jerusalem is called by various names in Scripture: "Salem," "Ariel," "Jebus," the "city of God," the "holy city," the "city of David," and "Zion." *Jerusalem* itself means "possession of peace."

Jerusalem in history. The first biblical reference to Jerusalem is found in the story of Abraham's encounter with [Melchizedek](#), King of Salem (Genesis 14:18–24). The actual name *Jerusalem* first occurs in Joshua 10:5. Later, David marched on Jerusalem (2 Samuel 5:6–10, c. 1000 BC), and he "captured the fortress of Zion—which is the City of David" from the Jebusites (verse 7). At that time, Jerusalem became the capital of Israel. It was in Jerusalem that Solomon built the temple and his palace (1 Kings 6–7). In 586 BC the Babylonians destroyed the temple and the city and deported the Jews to Babylon (2 Kings 24–25). After the Jews were allowed to return to Jerusalem, they rebuilt the temple, completed in 516 BC under Zerubbabel (Ezra 6). Under Nehemiah's leadership the walls were rebuilt in 444 BC (Nehemiah 6).

During the [intertestamental period](#), the Selucid king [Antiochus IV](#) (175–163 BC) desecrated the temple. In 165 Jerusalem was

liberated by [Judas Maccabeus](#), and the Jews cleansed and restored the temple. In 65 BC the Romans besieged the city and destroyed the walls. Herod the Great was made “king of the Jews” by Caesar Augustus in 40 BC. Twenty years later Herod began a massive remodeling of the Jewish temple, a project completed in AD 66. That temple was destroyed by the Romans in AD 70, and the Jews dispersed throughout the world.

In the seventh and eighth centuries, Islam came on the scene, and Muslims began building shrines and mosques in Jerusalem to commemorate certain events important in their religion. The [Dome of the Rock](#) is the most noteworthy shrine, built directly on the temple mount. Under Arab rule, Jerusalem prospered, and tolerance was at first extended to Christians. However, this tolerance began to wane over time. In the early eleventh century, a ruler of the Fatimid Dynasty ordered the destruction of all churches in Jerusalem. This outraged Christians throughout Europe and led to the [First Crusade](#) (1095–1099).

After World War II, on May 14, 1948, Israel once again became an independent state, and President Truman duly recognized Israel’s restored status as a national homeland for the Jewish people. On December 5, 1949, Israel declared Jerusalem to be its “eternal and sacred” capital. Unfortunately, other nations have been slow in facing the reality of Israel’s independence and its right to choose its own capital. In December 2017 the United States officially recognized Jerusalem as Israel’s capital.

Jerusalem in prophecy. The Bible predicted that the Jewish people would return to Israel, and Jerusalem figures prominently in prophecies concerning the end times (Joel 3:1; Jeremiah 23:3; 30:7; Ezekiel 11:17; 37:1–14). Someday, the Jewish temple will be rebuilt in the Holy City (Daniel 9:27; 12:11; Matthew 24:15; 2 Thessalonians 2:3–4).

In the early part of the tribulation, a combined military force, including [Russia](#), will march against Jerusalem: this battle is outlined in Ezekiel 38–39 in the prophecy of [Gog and Magog](#), and it will end in the destruction of those armies arrayed against Israel. During the tribulation, the two witnesses will be martyred in Jerusalem (Revelation 11). At the end of the tribulation, the nations of the world will mount a final assault on the city in the Battle of Armageddon (Joel 3:9–12; Zechariah 14:1–3; Revelation 16). That battle will be ended by the arrival of Jesus Christ Himself (Revelation 19). “The Lord will go out and fight against those nations, as he fights on a day of battle. . . . The Lord my God will come, and all the holy ones with him” (Zechariah 14:3, 5).

Zechariah 12:2–4 refers to the futility of people attacking Jerusalem: “I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that sends all the surrounding peoples reeling. Judah will be besieged as well as Jerusalem. On that day, when all the nations of the earth are gathered against her, I will make Jerusalem an immovable rock for all the nations. All who try to move it will injure themselves. On that day I will strike every horse with panic and its rider with madness.”

During the Millennial Kingdom, the Lord Jesus Christ will reign over the earth from Zion, and the nations will come to Jerusalem for instruction and blessing (Isaiah 2:2–4; 35:10; Psalm 102:20–22; Revelation 20).

Jerusalem in the present. Israel is a sovereign nation, and it has chosen its capital to be Jerusalem. In 1995, the United States Congress passed the Jerusalem Embassy Act, requiring the U.S. embassy to be moved to Jerusalem. However, for over two decades, implementation of that law was delayed by U.S. Presidents. Now the United States has officially recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, a move that accords with thousands of years of history and the wishes of Israel itself.

Jerusalem is held in high regard by all three major world religions: [Judaism](#), [Christianity](#), and [Islam](#). Jews consider the Temple Mount to be the holiest place on earth; it is the third holiest Islamic site. Christians value Jerusalem as the site of much of Jesus’ ministry, the place where He was crucified and rose again, and the church’s birthplace ([Acts 2](#)). Today the Temple Mount is under the control of the Jerusalem Islamic Waqf, a trust established to manage the Islamic structures in Jerusalem. Under their current rules, access to the holy sites is prohibited to all non-Muslims. The closest the Jews can get to their former temple site is the Western Wall.

Currently, Jerusalem is still experiencing what Jesus called “the times of the Gentiles” in Luke 21:24: “Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.” This period began with the Babylonian Exile (or possibly with the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70) and will continue through the tribulation period (Matthew 24; Revelation 11:2). Scripture tells us to “pray for the peace of Jerusalem” (Psalm 122:6).

The rebirth of Israel in 1948 was a vital step in the fulfillment of biblical prophecy. The [dry bones](#) of the prophecy in Ezekiel 37 began coming back together. The recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital is another important step. The stage is being set for other prophecies to be fulfilled. We may not know all the implications that current events have on the prophetic timeline, but we do know that Jerusalem is a special city. It is the only city in the world where God has put His Name (2 Kings 21:7). As for the temple, the Lord said, “I have chosen and consecrated this temple so that my Name may be there forever. My eyes and my heart will always be there” (2 Chronicles 7:16). God has promised an everlasting covenant with Jerusalem (Ezekiel 16:60), and Zion has this promise:

“Though the mountains be shaken
and the hills be removed,
yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken

nor my covenant of peace be removed,
says the Lord, who has compassion on you" (Isaiah 54:10).

At His second coming, Jesus will descend to the Mount of Olives, just outside of Jerusalem (Zechariah 14:4). Jerusalem will be the seat of authority in Jesus' kingdom, and judgment will be meted out from Zion (Micah 4:7; Isaiah 33:5; Psalm 110). With every passing day, we are closer to the Lord's fulfillment of His promises concerning Jerusalem and His reign of true justice and peace (Isaiah 9:7). "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Revelation 22:20, KJV). GotQuestions.org

Judges 1:9 And afterward the sons of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites living in the hill country and in the Negev and in the lowland.

- **And afterward** - Jos 10:36; 11:21; Josh 15:13-20
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

See Negeb and Shephalah at top of page
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And afterward the sons of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites living in the hill country and in the Negev and in the lowland - **And afterward** would be apparently after Judah's victories over the Canaanites and Perizzites (Jdg 1:4) The geographic descriptions are the three major geographical divisions of southern Palestine. The **Hill Country** (see map above for the ridge of mountains stretching north-south just to the east of the Jordan River and Dead Sea) is the central mountainous region between and including Jerusalem (2,500 ft high) and Hebron (3,040 ft high). The **Negev** was the semi-desert area that begins just south of Hebron and was bordered on south by [Kadesh-Barnea](#). **Lowland** is also known as the [Shephelah](#) representing the **foothills** between the Mediterranean coast and the Judean mountains, and the scene of many battles between the Israelites and the Philistines.

It is notable that Joshua 10:40 records "Thus Joshua struck all the land, the **hill country** and the **Negev** and the **lowland** and the slopes and all their kings. **He left no survivor**, but he utterly destroyed all who breathed, just as the LORD, the God of Israel, had commanded. had taken these territories utterly destroying all who breathed." It follows that the Canaanites described in Jdg 1:9 would have re-populated these geographic areas, coming in from surrounding areas, because Joshua had left no survivor.

QUESTION - [What is the significance of the Negev in the Bible?](#)

ANSWER - The Negev is a hot, dry region in the southern part of Israel that receives less than eight inches of rainfall each year. The Negev Desert factors into the events of Abraham's life and through the period of Israel's wilderness wanderings. The area is also significant throughout the time of the united monarchy until the period of the [divided kingdom](#). Three of the Bible's prophets mention the Negev as well.

The name *Negev* means "dry land" in Hebrew, but the Bible sometimes uses the term to refer to the "south country," or "south." An alternate spelling for *Negev* in the Bible is *Negeb*. The King James Version regularly translates *Negev* as "the south," whereas the New International Version (Negev) and English Standard Version (Negeb) normally use the name for the territory.

Although no specific geographical boundaries define the Negev in the Bible, the region extends between [Beersheba](#) and [Kadesh Barnea](#) from north to south, and from near the Mediterranean Sea to the Arabah Valley from west to east, an expanse of about 70 miles wide. In Bible times, the territory resembled an hourglass or figure eight turned on its side. On all but the west side, highlands and mountains border the Negev, but to the west it stretches to within a few miles of the Mediterranean coast.

Today, the Negev is the largest region in the modern state of Israel and includes more territory than it did in ancient times. According to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, the total area of the Negev Desert covers about 4,700 square miles, "occupying almost half of Palestine west of the Jordan River and about 60 percent of Israeli territory under the 1949–67 boundaries." Rather than a figure eight, current Negev is shaped like an inverted triangle.

After God called Abraham, the patriarch set out in obedience, leaving his pagan country to go to the land of promise. In the initial part of his journey, Abraham traveled as far as the Negev (Genesis 12:4–9). When a severe famine entered the land, Abraham left the Negev and went to Egypt (verse 10). Later, after the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham returned to settle in the Negev (Genesis 20:1). Abraham's son Isaac was living in the south country of the Negev when he first met Rebekah (Genesis 24:62).

During much of the 40-year wilderness wanderings, the Hebrew people camped around the oasis of Kadesh Barnea in the southern part of the Negev (Deuteronomy 1:19, 46). The Negev was included in the lands the people of Israel were to possess (verse 7 and 34:1–3). When the Israelites spied out the [Promised Land](#), Moses instructed the scouts to head northward through the hill country, starting in the southlands of the Negev (Numbers 13:17–20). The semi-nomadic [Amalekites](#) also lived in the Negev (verse 29).

Joshua led the people of Israel in military conquest of the lands of the Negev, taking control away from its native inhabitants (Joshua 10:40; 11:16; 12:8). Eventually, the region was allotted to the tribes of Judah and Simeon (Joshua 15; 19:1–9; Judges 1:9).

Ziklag, a city in the Negev, was given to David by Achish, the Philistine king of Gath. David had fled there when King Saul sought to harm him (1 Samuel 27:5–7). Later, this same city in the “Negev of Caleb” was raided by Amalekite warriors (1 Samuel 30:1). In the Bible, territories in this southern region are called the “Negev of Judah,” “Negev of the Kenites,” “Negev of the Jerahmeelites” (1 Samuel 27:10), and the “Negev of the Kerethites” (1 Samuel 30:14).

With limited rainfall, the Negev Desert offered little opportunity for agriculture or economic development in biblical times. However, in northern areas of the Negev, some grain farming was done as well as raising of goats, sheep, and camels (1 Samuel 25:2; 1 Chronicles 4:38–41; 2 Chronicles 26:10). Farmers of the Negev used terrace farming for the best use of the land. During the time of the kings, many small villages and fortifications were established in the Negev to guard the southern borders of Judah.

Isaiah mentions the wild animals of the Negev in an oracle denouncing Judah’s reliance on Egypt, calling the territory “a land of hardship and distress” (Isaiah 30:6). Jeremiah said that, if Israel were to keep the Sabbath, people would come from all around Jerusalem, including the Negev, to observe the holy day (Jeremiah 17:26). And Obadiah prophesied about the inhabitants of the Negev after their time in exile: “People from the Negev will occupy the mountains of Esau, and people from the foothills will possess the land of the Philistines. They will occupy the fields of Ephraim and Samaria, and Benjamin will possess Gilead. This company of Israelite exiles who are in Canaan will possess the land as far as Zarephath; the exiles from Jerusalem who are in Sepharad will possess the towns of the Negev” (Obadiah 1:19–20).

After the fall of Jerusalem, at the time of the exile in 587 BC, the lands of the Negev fell under control of the [Edomites](#). The territory supported few inhabitants until the arrival of the Nabateans in the last two centuries BC. The Nabateans rebuilt many settlements of the Negev and established new villages. Through careful water conservation, they became skilled at farming and pasturing in the dry region. The population of the Negev continued to grow until the Arab conquest in AD 632 but then diminished again until more recent times. [GotQuestions.org](#)

Negev -35v - Gen. 12:9; Gen. 13:1; Gen. 13:3; Gen. 20:1; Gen. 24:62; Num. 13:17; Num. 13:22; Num. 13:29; Num. 21:1; Num. 33:40; Deut. 1:7; Deut. 34:3; Jos. 10:40; Jos. 11:16; Jos. 12:8; Jos. 15:19; Jos. 19:8; Jdg. 1:9; Jdg. 1:15; 1 Sam. 27:10; 1 Sam. 30:1; 1 Sam. 30:14; 1 Sam. 30:27; 2 Chr. 28:18; Isa. 21:1; Isa. 30:6; Jer. 13:19; Jer. 17:26; Jer. 32:44; Jer. 33:13; Ezek. 20:46; Ezek. 20:47; Obad. 1:19; Obad. 1:20; Zech. 7:7

Judges 1:10 So Judah went against the Canaanites who lived in Hebron (now the name of Hebron formerly was Kiriath-arba); and they struck Sheshai and Ahiman and Talmi.

- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- **Kirjatharba:** Jos 14:15
- **Struck Sheshai:** Jdg 1:20 Nu 13:22,33 Jos 15:13,14 Ps 33:16,17 Ec 9:11 Jer 9:23

Related Passages:

Judges 1:20 Then they gave **Hebron** to Caleb, as Moses had promised; and he drove out from there the three sons of Anak.

Joshua 14:14-15+ Therefore, Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite until this day, because he followed the LORD God of Israel fully. 15 Now the name of **Hebron** was formerly **Kiriath-arba**; for Arba was the greatest man among the Anakim. Then the land had rest from war.

Joshua 15:12-15+ Now he gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh a portion among the sons of Judah, according to the command of the LORD to Joshua, namely, **Kiriath-arba**, Arba being the father of Anak (that is, Hebron). 14 **Caleb drove out from there the three sons of Anak: Sheshai and Ahiman and Talmi, the children of Anak.**

HEBRON

So Judah went against the Canaanites who lived in Hebron - From Jerusalem Judah would have moved about 19 miles to south to Hebron. Although "Judah" is the subject in this verse, the context of the next verse ("he went against") and the fact that Caleb was noted to have defeated the 3 giants in (Jos 15:13,14) supports the premise that "Judah" here is being used more generically, referring to those from the Tribe of Judah and specifically in context referring to Caleb, a Kennizite, who had become a leader in the tribe of Judah.

Now the name of Hebron formerly was Kiriath-arba (Hebron) (city of Arba - Joshua 14:15): **Hebron** some 19 miles S of Jerusalem has highest elevation (3000') of any city in Judah and is famous as home of Abraham (Ge 13:18, Ge 18:1, Ge 23:2, Ge 25:9) and later as David's capital during the first 7.5 years of his reign..

And they struck Sheshai and Ahiman and Talmi - Stuck (nākāh) means to smite and is translated in the LXX with patasso which means to strike often with a violent blow intended to wound, slay or kill (of Jesus in Mt 26:31) These three names are the three famous giants of race of Anak (see [the Anakim](#)), who dwelt at Hebron when the Hebrew spies explored the land (Nu 13:22+) about 1440BC and who were driven out by Caleb (Jos 15:14+, Jdg 1:20+).

Related Resource:

- [What is the significance of Hebron in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)

Judges 1:11 Then from there he went against the inhabitants of Debir (now the name of Debir formerly was Kiriath-sepher).

- **Debir** - Jos 10:38,39 15:15
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

POSSESSING DEBIR

Then - Remember "**then**" is a time phrase and always calls us to stop and ask "What time is it?". It marks a progression in the narrative.

From there he went against the inhabitants of Debir - He In context seems to refer to Caleb, in Josh 15:15 we read "he (CALEB) went up from there against the inhabitants of Debir; now the name of Debir formerly was Kiriath-sepher."

Debir is in Judah's hill country (Jos 10:38,39) about 11 miles southwest of Hebron, in the Negev or southland and designated a city for the Levites (Jos 21:15; 1Chr 6:57,58). In Joshua's time the town, also called Kirjath Sannah (Jos 15:49) and Kirjath Sepher (Jos 15:15,16; Jdg 1:11,12) was inhabited by the giant people, the Anakim, and was captured by Joshua (Jos 10:38,39). Debir had to be recaptured later by the judge Othniel (Jos 15:15, 16, 17; Judges 1:11-13).

McGee - The town Debir was a center of culture for the Canaanite people. It is called the "town of books." I guess the library was there.

Now the name of Debir formerly was Kiriath-sepher - Keil & Delitzsch There is no discrepancy between the accounts of the taking of Debir (Jos 11:21,22; 15:13-19), for the expulsion of its inhabitants by Joshua did not preclude the possibility of their returning when the Israelite armies had withdrawn to the north.

Related Resources:

- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Debir](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Debir \(2\)](#) [Debir \(1\)](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Debir](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Debir](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Debir \(2\)](#) [Debir \(1\)](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Debir \(2\)](#) [Debir](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Kiriath-Sepher](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Kiriath-Sannah](#), [Kiriath-Sepher](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Kiriath-Sepher](#)

Judges 1:12 And Caleb said, "The one who attacks Kiriath-sepher and captures it, I will even give him my daughter Achsah for a wife."

- **And Caleb:** The whole of this account is found in Jos 15:13-19, and seems to be inserted here by way of recapitulation. Jos 15:16,17 1Sa 17:25 18:23
- **to him:** In ancient times fathers assumed an absolute right over their children, especially in disposing of them in marriage; and it was customary for a king or great man to promise his daughter in marriage to him who should take a city, etc.
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

And Caleb said, "The one who attacks Kiriath-sepher and captures it, I will even give him my daughter Achsah for a wife- Caleb makes an offer Othniel (later first judge of Israel) could not refuse. Some feel he had assisted Caleb in taking of Debir.

Jehovah sums up the character of **Caleb** in Numbers (see also note below)

But My servant Caleb, because he has had a different spirit and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land which he entered, and his descendants shall take possession of it. (Nu 14:24+)

(1) My servant = life was not his own but he belonged to Jehovah. Jehovah's will was Caleb's will. Notice the contrast "but" (cp Nu 14:22, 23) - as noted below Caleb listened to God's voice and did not put Him to the test (cp Dt 6:16, Ex17:2, 7, 1Co 10:9). [Nu 14:22 = The Ten Tests= (1) Red Sea (Ex 14:11,12) (2) Marah (Ex15:23,24) (3) wilderness of Sin (Ex 16:2); (4) & (5) connection with the manna (Ex16:20, 27) (6) Rephidim (Ex 17:1, 2, 3) (7) Horeb (Ex 32:7) (8) Taberah (Nu 11:1) (9) complaint of rabble (Nu 11:4) (10) Kadesh-barnea (Nu 14:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12).]

(2) Different spirit = Explains Caleb's servant's heart. It was different than the rebellious Israelites who refused to believe God's promise regarding the land and thus disobeyed.

(3) Followed fully = Unhesitating obedience

(4) I will bring into the land = Obedience brings blessing. Obedience inherits the promises of God.

(5) His descendants = Godly men, obedient men leave a legacy!

Caleb - 35x in OT - Num 13:6, 30; 14:6, 24, 30, 38; 26:65; 32:12; 34:19; Deut 1:36; Josh 14:6, 13f; 15:13f, 16ff; 21:12; Jdg 1:12, 13, 14, 15, 20; 3:9; 1 Sam 30:14; 1 Chr 2:18f, 42, 46, 48ff; 4:15; 6:56

The whole of this account is found in Jos 15:13-19, and seems to be inserted here by way of recapitulation.

Joshua 15:13-19 Now he gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh a portion among the sons of Judah, according to the command of the LORD to Joshua, namely, Kiriath-arba, Arba being the father of Anak (that is, Hebron). 14 Caleb drove out from there the three sons of Anak: Sheshai and Ahiman and Talmai, the children of Anak. 15 Then he went up from there against the inhabitants of Debir; now the name of Debir formerly was Kiriath-sepher. 16 And Caleb said, "The one who attacks Kiriath-sepher and captures it, I will give him Achsah my daughter as a wife." 17 Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, captured it; so he gave him Achsah his daughter as a wife. 18 It came about that when she came to him, she persuaded him to ask her father for a field. So she alighted from the donkey, and Caleb said to her, "What do you want?" 19 Then she said, "Give me a blessing; since you have given me the land of the Negev, give me also springs of water." So he gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.

1Sa 17:25; 18:23) Same promise in Jos 15:16. Achsah is mentioned here and in Jos 15:13-19; 1Chr 2:49.

Related Resource:

- Judges 1:12-15: Achsah's Asking, a Pattern of Prayer - Sermon by C H Spurgeon
- [What is the story of Joshua and Caleb in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)

Question: ["Who is Caleb in the Bible? |](#)

Answer: The story of Caleb, a faithful man of God, begins in the book of Numbers. After being delivered from bondage in Egypt, the Israelites were led by God to the border of the land of Canaan, a land "flowing with milk and honey" that God had promised they would inherit (Exodus 3:8, 17). Moses had chosen twelve men, one from each tribe, to scout the land before entering. Among them

was Caleb, representing the tribe of Judah. The twelve men spied out the land for forty days and then came back to Moses. They reported that the land was indeed fruitful but its inhabitants were the mighty descendants of Anak. Terrified by the size and strength of the Canaanites, ten of the spies warned Moses not to enter Canaan (Numbers 13:23–33).

Caleb silenced the murmuring, fearful men by saying, “We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it” (Numbers 13:30). Caleb took his stand because he followed the Lord wholeheartedly (Joshua 14:8–9). Caleb knew of the promises of God to the Israelites, and, despite the evidence of his own eyes regarding the obstacles, he had faith that God would give them victory over the Canaanites.

Unfortunately, the people of Israel ignored Caleb and listened to the report of the other spies. They were so frightened that they wept all night and even wished they had died at the hands of their slave masters in Egypt (Numbers 14:1–4). They turned on Caleb and Joshua (the spy from Ephraim) and wanted to stone them on the spot (Numbers 14:6–10). God was exceedingly angry with the people and threatened to destroy them until Moses interceded for them. God relented, but He decreed that the people would wander in the wilderness until all of that faithless generation had died. But God said that “my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly” and gave him the promise that he would own all the land he had seen as a spy (Numbers 14:11–24).

The Israelites wandered in the wilderness for forty years until all of that generation, except Joshua and Caleb, died (Numbers 14:29–30). After the forty years of wandering and five more years of war within Canaan, Caleb was 85 years old; yet he was as strong as ever and able to fight the same Anakites that had frightened his countrymen. His confidence was born out of his absolute faith in the promises of God (Joshua 15:13–14).

Caleb’s territory in Canaan included “Kiriath Arba, that is, Hebron. (Arba was the forefather of Anak.) From Hebron Caleb drove out the three Anakites—Sheshai, Ahiman and Talmi, the sons of Anak. From there he marched against the people living in Debir (formerly called Kiriath Sepher)” (Joshua 15:13–15). Othniel, a nephew of Caleb, captured Kiriath Sepher and was given Caleb’s daughter Aksah to wed (verses 16–17). Later, Aksah asked her father to include some springs of water as part of her inheritance (verses 18–19), and Caleb gave them to her. Later still, Othniel, Caleb’s son-in-law, became Israel’s first judge (Judges 3:7–11).

From the accounts of the life of Caleb, we see a faithful man who trusted God to fulfill His promises when others allowed their fears to override their small faith. Even into his later years, Caleb remained steadfast in his faith. God blessed Caleb for his faithfulness and patience, an encouragement to us to believe God. Like Caleb, we should be prepared to follow God in every circumstance, patiently waiting for Him to fulfill His promises and ready to take action when the time is right. (GotQuestions.org)

Judges 1:13 And Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, captured it; so he gave him his daughter Achsah for a wife.

- Jdg 3:9
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

And Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, captured it - Othniel (Othniel) - "God is powerful" or "Lion of God" - Jdg 3:9. Faith must have run in Caleb’s family, because the city of Debir was taken by Othniel, Caleb’s nephew, Israel’s first judge (Jdg 3:9, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11).

Captured it - This fulfills the prophecy about Caleb in Nu 14:24 ([see note](#))("and his descendants after him")

So he gave him his daughter Achsah for a wife. Two for one! A city and a bride!

McGee - Israel first took the hill country and held it the longest. The foothills, lying between the hill country and the coast, were the scene of constant fighting between Israel and the Canaanites. When the children of Israel settled in the Promised Land, they were subject to the influence and temptations of the Canaanite religion. It was a degrading religion, and they soon lapsed into idolatry and apostasy. Whoever took this city was promised a reward, and in this case it was Caleb’s daughter, Achsah. Grammatically, Othniel can be either Caleb’s nephew or younger brother, but his marriage to Achsah would also classify him as a son-in-law. He undoubtedly was chosen as a judge because of his relationship to Caleb. Nepotism was prevalent even in that day. If he had been the son-in-law of Joe Doakes, he probably would never have become a judge. Many men today occupy positions of prominence, not because of their ability, but because of a certain relationship or circumstance. Napoleon called himself a man of destiny. He became prominent because of the times in which he was born. If he had lived in our generation, probably he would have been unknown. So it was with Othniel. Nine of the twelve tribes mentioned in this chapter are mentioned in connection with failure. We have looked at the tribes of Judah and Simeon, and now Benjamin and Manasseh are the next to be considered. Failure is something that persisted in each one of the tribes.

Question - [Who was Othniel?](#)

Answer: Othniel, the first judge, is first mentioned in Joshua 15:17 as “Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb’s brother.” As a nephew of Caleb, Othniel took on the challenge of conquering the city of Debir (or Kiriath Sepher) and driving out the Canaanites there. As the victor, Othniel received the reward of Achsah, Caleb’s daughter, as his wife. Othniel had two sons named Hathath and Meonothai and was from the tribe of Judah (1 Chronicles 4:13).

Othniel lived in Debir in the land of Judah after this time. Through his wife’s influence, he obtained from his uncle Caleb the upper and lower springs in the land of the Negeb (Joshua 15:19).

Othniel is important in biblical history as the first judge listed in the Book of Judges. After eight years of bondage to Cushan-Rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia, the people cried out to God for help (Judges 3:9). In response, the LORD “raised up for them a deliverer, Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb’s younger brother, who saved them. The Spirit of the Lord came on him, so that he became Israel’s judge and went to war. The Lord gave Cushan-Rishathaim king of Aram into the hands of Othniel, who overpowered him. So the land had peace for forty years, until Othniel son of Kenaz died” (Judges 3:9–11).

We find in this passage that 1) Othniel was raised up as a judge and leader in Israel, 2) he defeated the king of Mesopotamia, and 3) Othniel and the Israelites lived in peace following this time. Othniel’s leadership spanned a long time, covering approximately 1350—1310 BC.

Othniel is the first of 12 judges listed in the Book of Judges. His judgeship covered a transitional period connecting the leaders of the past to the leaders of his time. He was related to Caleb, who had left Egypt as a freed slave and entered the Promised Land as a leader.

Important lessons learned from the life of Othniel include the influence of family, the role of the Holy Spirit in empowering a person’s life, and the tremendous value of godly leadership in keeping peace among a community of people.

Interestingly, the tomb of “Othniel Ben Kenaz” is believed to be located in Hebron. Preceded by Joshua and followed by Ehud in Israel’s history, Othniel’s important legacy endures still today among the great leaders of Israel.

Judges 1:14 Then it came about when she came to him, that she persuaded him to ask her father for a field. Then she alighted from her donkey, and Caleb said to her, "What do you want?"

- **Then it came:** Jos 15:18,19
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Then it came about when she came to him, that she persuaded him to ask her father for a field - As recorded in the book of Joshua.

"It came about that when she came to him, she persuaded him to ask her father for a field. So she alighted from the donkey, and Caleb said to her, “What do you want?” 19 Then she said, “Give me a blessing; since you have given me the land of the Negev, give me also springs of water.” So he gave her the upper springs and the lower springs. (Joshua 15:18,19)

Persuaded (sut) refers to behavior designed to incite or entice someone into following a course of action desired by the subject. It has the sense of stirring up persons with the intention to get them to deviate (evil sense) or of getting them to concede or agree to something in a neutral or positive sense. In Achsah’s case the translation “entice” or “charm” fits nicely

Then she alighted from her donkey, and Caleb said to her, "What do you want?" - She hastily or suddenly alighted, as if she had forgotten something, or was about to return. Achsah’s request was pragmatic because the area surrounding her home in the Judean Negev was arid.

Judges 1:15 "And she said to him, "Give me a blessing, since you have given me the land of the Negev, give me also springs of water." So Caleb gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.

- **Give a blessing** - Ge 33:11; 1Sa 25:18,27; 2Co 9:5; Heb 6:7; 1Pe 3:9
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

And she said to him, "Give me a blessing : Blessing ([berakah](#); Lxx = eulogia = good speech, then praise, He 12:17-refers to Esau's "blessing" from Jacob) - This Hebrew word conveys the general idea of this word is one of good favor bestowed on another. This may be expressed in the giving of a tangible gift (Achsah has the springs of water as a gift) or in the pronouncing of a verbal blessing by which one calls down God's favor upon another.

Since you have given me the land of the Negev: [Negev](#) is the transliteration of a Hebrew = "south" from word = be dry. It is a geographical term which refers to a specific section of Palestine (Ge 13:1) located between Debir and the Arabian Desert and is arid most of the year. Since this area was south of the larger part of Israel, the word also came to be used to denote that direction (Ge 13:14; Da 8:4,9; 11:5).

All uses of Negev (Negeb) - Gen. 12:9; 13:1, 3; 20:1; 24:62; Num. 13:17, 22, 29; 21:1; 33:40; Deut. 1:7; 34:3; Jos. 10:40; 11:16; 12:8; 15:19; 19:8; Jdg. 1:9, 15f; 1 Sam. 27:10; 30:1, 14, 27; 2 Sam. 24:7; 2 Chr. 28:18; Ps. 126:4; Isa. 21:1; 30:6; Jer. 13:19; 17:26; 32:44; 33:13; Ezek. 20:46f; Obad. 1:19f

Give me also springs of water." So Caleb gave her the upper springs and the lower springs - Springs (gullah) depicts a bowl or the bowl-shaped top of a pillar but in the present context probably refers to spring-fed pools. Like his acquisition of a worthy husband for his daughter, Caleb's gift of water demonstrates the protective concern that Israelite men should exhibit toward their wives and daughters. As the Book of Judges unfolds, women become victims of male oppression rather than the beneficiaries of male protection. Caleb's gift of life-giving springs stands in sharp contrast to the death and infertility that another Israelite daughter would experience as a result of her father's misguided zeal and lack of foresight in Judges 11:30 ff)

Judges 1:16 And the descendants of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, went up from the city of palms with the sons of Judah, to the wilderness of Judah which is in the south of Arad; and they went and lived with the people.

- **the Kenite:** Jdg 4:11,17 Nu 10:29-32 24:21,22 1Sa 15:6 1Ch 2:15 Jer 35:2
- **Moses':** Ex 3:1 4:18 18:1,7,12,14-17,27 Nu 10:29
- **city of palm:** Jdg 3:13 De 34:3 2Ch 28:16
- **which:** Nu 21:1 Jos 12:14
- **they went:** Nu 10:29-32 1Sa 15:6
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

And the descendants of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law

- **Moses** - Ex 3:1; 4:18; 18:1,7,12,14, 15, 16, 17,27; Nu 10:29

Moses' father-in-law - His name was [Jethro](#)

Went up from the city of palms with the sons of Judah, to the wilderness of Judah which is in the south of Arad; and they went and lived with the people:

- Nu 21:1; Jos 12:14
- Nu 10:29, 30, 31, 32; 1Sa 15:6

[City Of Palms - Jericho](#) - Dt 34:3, Jos 6:26 Jdg 3:13; 2Chr 28:16

[Arad](#) - 16 mi due south of Hebron in a very desolate region.

Judges 1:17 Then Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they struck the Canaanites living in Zephath, and utterly destroyed it. So the name of the city was called Hormah.

- **And Judah:** Jdg 1:3
- **Zephath:** 2Ch 14:10, Zephathah
- **Hormah:** Nu 14:45 21:3 Jos 19:4
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Then Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they struck the Canaanites living in Zephath, and utterly destroyed it

Zephath may have been about 20 miles SW of Hebron and had been taken in Nu 21:2-3 only to be rebuilt and now to be utterly destroyed.

Struck - Hebrew = nakah - smite, attack, kill ; Lxx = kopto - cut off (cp use Mt 21:8) or to smite, strike, knock down

Utterly destroyed (charam/haram) means to surrender something to God. It means to put something under a ban for utter destruction. To devote it to destruction even as a religious act of holy war. As Israel prepared for the conquest of the Promised Land, Moses instructed them to exterminate the native population of the land declaring that...

when the LORD your God shall deliver them before you, and you shall defeat them, then you shall utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them and show no favor to them. (Dt 7:2)

They were to do to the Canaanites just as they had done to the Amorites (see Dt 2:34; 3:6; Jos 2:10).

The city of Jericho was put under the "**ban**" (related Hebrew word cherem/herem) so that all living things were to be killed and the articles of gold, silver, bronze, and iron were to be placed in the Lord's treasury (Jos 6:17, 18, 19, 20, 21). When Achan violated the rules pertaining to the ban, Israel itself was placed under the ban until the offender, whose deeds had made him liable to destruction, was executed (Jos 7:1, 11, 12, 13).

Some might ask "Wasn't it cruel and unjust for God to command Israel to exterminate the nations in Canaan?" Not in the least! To begin with, God had been patient with these nations for centuries and had mercifully withheld His judgment (Ge 15:16; see note 2 Peter 3:9). Their society, and especially their religion, was despicably (even unspeakably) wicked and should have been obliterated and rooted out years before.

These nations had been warned by the judgments God had inflicted on others, especially on Egypt and the nations east of the Jordan (see Jos 2:8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13). Rahab and her family had sufficient information to be able to repent and believe, and God did in fact save them (Jos 6:22, 23, 24, 25). Therefore, we have every right to conclude that God would have saved anybody who had turned to Him. These nations were sinning against a flood of light in rejecting God's truth and going their own way and He was completely justified in calling for total annihilation.

So the name of the city was called Hormah -**Hormah** is from the verb meaning to devote to destruction, i.e. to destroy everything, animate and inanimate, as an offering to the gods (the custom was widely observed by nations other than Israel). It had been a pagan city devoted to pagan gods and now at the command of Yahweh was to be devoted to Him and totally destroyed. Here are several facts about Hormah...

- A city SW of the Dead Sea, Nu 14:45; 21:1, 2, 3; Dt. 1:44.
- Taken by Judah and Simeon, Jdg. 1:17; Josh. 12:14.
- Allotted to Simeon, Jos 19:4; 1Chr. 4:30.
- Within the territory allotted to Judah, Jos 15:30; 1Sa 30:30.

Note the Hebrew verbal derivative is used in this same verse translated "utterly destroyed" which gives you the picture that the name "Hormah" was meant to convey. Any Jew who heard the name "Hormah" or came to this place understood (or at least should have understood) clearly what God's judgment against sin was.

It is interesting that the LXX translates **Hormah** as **anathema**, a Greek noun referring to someone delivered over to divine wrath or curse (see Gal 1.8)

Judges 1:18 And Judah took Gaza with its territory and Ashkelon with its territory and Ekron with its territory.

- Jos 11:22 13:3 15:45-47 1Sa 6:17
- **Gaza**: Jud 3:3 16:1,2,21 Ex 23:31
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

And Judah took Gaza with its territory - The verb **took** (lakad) means to capture, to seize, to take possession and in context carries the idea of taking possession of one's allotted territory by dispossessing its present occupants. Note that in (Judges 1:17) they "**utterly destroyed**" Zephath but what did they do to **Gaza, Ashkelon, Ekron**? Why? Could it be they did not want to totally destroy these towns? Interesting to speculate... the point is that they reaped it later because Samson's sojournings took him to these cities - Jdg 14:19, Jdg 16:1, 21.

As stated above the text does not state they **UTTERLY DESTROYED THEM!** Gaza was the major Philistine city located only about 50 miles from the Holy City! So here we find one of the chief strongholds of pagan PANTHEISM (including worship of fish god Dagon) in close proximity to the holy city of Jerusalem. If you don't drive out and destroy the enemies (Ex 23:28, Ex 33:2, Ex 34:11, 24, Lev 20:23), they will remain as thorns and snares! [Gaza](#), [Ashkelon](#) and [Ekron](#) were 3 of the 5 major Philistine cities, and proved to be a thorn in Israel's side!

Jehovah instructed Moses...

Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'When you cross over the Jordan into the land of Canaan, 52 then you shall **drive out** (yarash = take from someone and possess it for yourself, take possession, cp Jos 1:1, 2, 3,4) **all the inhabitants of the land** ("the land" a common OT phrase = the promised land, the land of Canaan) from before you, and destroy all their figured stones, and destroy all their molten images and demolish all their high places; 53 and you shall take possession of the land and live in it, for I have given the land to you to possess it. 54 'And you shall inherit the land by lot according to your families; to the larger you shall give more inheritance, and to the smaller you shall give less inheritance. Wherever the lot falls to anyone, that shall be his. You shall inherit according to the tribes of your fathers. 55 **'But** (dramatic contrast) if (conditional statement) you **do not drive out the inhabitants of the land** from before you, then (conclusion if condition is fulfilled) it shall come about that those whom you let remain of them will become as **pricks** in your eyes (**ED**: THINK OF SAMSON'S ROVING EYES IN Jdg 16:1) and as **thorns** in your sides, and they shall trouble you in the land in which you live. (Nu 33:51-55)

THOUGHT - Beloved, pause for a moment and do some personal moral/ethical inventory - Is there some "Canaanite" (remember they were especially known for their abominable sexual aberrations) in your life that needs to be **utterly destroyed**. Is there some "idol" you are clinging to and reluctant to release because you don't yet understand that "I Am" is the only one Who can fully satisfy your cravings. Is there some "secret closet" door you keep locked from everyone else (but not from God, Pr 15:3, 1Chr 16:9, Job 34:21,22 Je 16:17, 23:24, 32:19, Heb 4:13+)?

and Ashkelon with its territory: [Ashkelon](#) on coast ~10-12 mi N of Gaza. Apparently shortly after Joshua's death Ashkelon was captured and was briefly controlled by Judah, as evidenced by the Stele of Merneptah dated about 1220BC. This conquest, however, was not permanent. A few years later Samson killed 30 men from this city (Judges 14:19). During most of the OT, Ashkelon remained politically and militarily independent of Israel (thorn in her side fulfilling Joshua's sad prophecy in Joshua 23:13, cp Judges 2:3, Pr 22:5, Jer 12:13) but they would be ultimately destroyed (Amos 1:8, Zeph 2:4,7, Zec 9:5) Three of the golden tumors sent back with the ark by the Philistines were from these 3 unsubdued cities (1Sa 6:17). Scripture does not specify what Israel did with these golden pagan offerings!

and Ekron with its territory: [Ekron](#) only ~35 miles west of the holy city of Jerusalem

Cundall on Gaza, Ashkelon and Ekron - The reference to *Gaza*, *Ashkelon* and *Ekron* relates to a period before the main Philistine settlement in the coastal plain. The Philistines were part of a complex migratory movement from the Aegean area a generation or so after Israel's entry into the land (i.e. c. 1200 b.c.). These 'people of the sea' settled in large numbers in the coastal plain. Egypt, keeping them at bay with difficulty, allowed them to settle and form their pentapolis (Ekron, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gaza and Gath). This does not preclude the probability of earlier, but smaller, settlements of Philistines noted in Genesis 21:32; 26:1. ([Judges and Ruth: An Introduction and Commentary](#))

Judges 1:19 Now the LORD was with Judah, and they took possession of the hill country; but they could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley because they had iron chariots.

- **Now the LORD** - Jdg 1:2; 6:12,13; Genesis 39:2,21; Joshua 1:5,9; 14:12; 2Sa 5:10; 2Ki 18:7; Ps 46:7,11; 60:12; Eccl 9:11; Is 7:14; 8:10; 41:10,14,15; Mt 1:23; Ro 8:31
- **they took possession** - Exodus 14:7-31; Joshua 11:1-9; 17:16-18; Ps 46:9
- **But they could** - Jdg 1:27-32 Jos 7:12 Mt 14:30,31 17:19,20 Php 4:13
- **iron chariots** - Ex 14:7-31 Jos 11:1-9 17:16-18 Ps 46:9
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 20:1-4; 13; 16-18+ "When you go out to battle against your enemies and **see horses and**

chariots and people more numerous than you, do not be afraid of them; for (TERM OF EXPLANATION!) the LORD your God, Who brought you up from the land of Egypt, is with you. 2 "When you are approaching the battle, the priest shall come near and speak to the people. 3 "He shall say to them, 'Hear, O Israel, you are approaching the battle against your enemies today. **Do not be fainthearted. Do not be afraid, or panic, or tremble before them,** 4 for (TERM OF EXPLANATION!) the LORD your God is the One Who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you."....(Dt 20:13) "When the LORD your God gives it into your hand (METAPHOR FOR INTO YOUR POWER), you shall strike all the men in it with the edge of the sword.... (Dt 20:16-18) "Only in the cities of these peoples that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, **you shall not leave alive anything that breathes.** (See notes below) 17 "But **you shall utterly destroy (charam)** them, the Hittite and the Amorite, the Canaanite and the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite, **as the LORD your God has commanded you,** 18 so that (TERM OF PURPOSE) they may not teach you to do according to all their detestable things which they have done for their gods, so that you would sin against the LORD your God.

PARTIAL POSSESSION COMPLETE DISOBEDIENCE!

One could also subtitle this verse "**Living by Sight, Not by Faith!**" Note that this text does not state that the Israelites actually fought against the **chariots of iron** and were defeated. More to the point, it seems that Judah saw the **chariots of iron** and made the bad choice not to fight. Such a decision might seem very reasonable and proper if you are a people living by sight and not by faith. Why? Because the chariots of iron were the most powerful military weapon of that time. But something has happened between Judges 1:2 when they heard and acted on Yahweh's promise. With time and several military successes, Judah's faith in Yahweh's promise began to falter and was no longer fresh in their heart. O, how much like Judah we all are if we fail to fan the heart flames of love and devotion for God with steady intake of His word and humble submission and obedience. And soon whatever the "chariots of iron" are in our lives seem to have increased in size and power and we falter and fail to defeat them! Been there, done that! We need to re-read, memorize and meditate on the truth in Romans 15:4+

For whatever was written in earlier times (BOOK OF JUDGES) was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope (absolute assurance that God will do good to us in the future - truth which motivates present living!)

Now the LORD was with Judah, and they took possession of the hill country; but they could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley - Note that the text says "**they could not drive out**"... it does not say "**God could not drive out**" (or "would not")! There is a big difference! They looked at the small chariots, not at their big God. In the famous painting of [Daniel in the Lion's Den](#), it is notable that Daniel's eyes were not on the lions, but upward on the Lord! A good pattern to emulate! Obstacles are opportunities for God to show Himself mighty!

The Hebrew verb [yarash](#) is used twice, translated "**took possession**" and "**drive out.**" [Yarash](#) is a key verb in this last section of Judges 1 occurring 11 times (Jdg. 1:19; Jdg. 1:20; Jdg. 1:21; Jdg. 1:27; Jdg. 1:28; Jdg. 1:29; Jdg. 1:30; Jdg. 1:31; Jdg. 1:32; Jdg. 1:33; - all the other uses in Judges = Jdg. 2:6; Jdg. 2:21; Jdg. 2:23; Jdg. 3:13; Jdg. 11:21; Jdg. 11:22; Jdg. 11:23; Jdg. 11:24; Jdg. 14:15; Jdg. 18:7; Jdg. 18:9)

TSK note - Not because the iron chariots were too strong for Omnipotence, or because He refused to help them; but because their courage and faith failed when they saw them. (Jdg 1:27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 Jos 7:12 Mt 14:30,31 17:19,20 Php 4:13)

See discussion below. The upshot is that **diminished power** is always the result of **diminished/defective faith** (as manifest by partial obedience or overt disobedience). Judah's failure to believe God's promises paralyzed them, producing fear and ultimately retreat. **Fear of man always brings a snare** (Pr 29:25) and the only way to counter our **fear** of the enemy (be it the world, the flesh or the devil) is by **faith**.

Related Resources:

- [How To Handle Fear Part 1](#)
- [How To Handle Fear Part 2](#)
- [How To Handle Fear Part 3](#)
- [How To Handle Fear Part 4](#)
- [The Fear of the Lord](#)

We should all be better off if we kept in mind that even in this modern age of stealth bombers and A bombs, a faithful and righteous

reliance upon the Lord is the stoutest weapon in the believer's armor. Take up the shield of faith (cp Ep 6:16+).

Because they had iron chariots - Archaeology confirms the Old Testament picture of the Israelites confined in Canaan's hill country (Jdg 1:19). In the lowlands Canaanite chariot armies **seemed** (NOTE "SEEMED" NOT WERE!) too strong for the fearful Israelites to attack. Chariots like this one were the tanks of ancient warfare. By this era they were used to directly attack and smash formations of foot soldiers. Judah was afraid because of the chariots, which had poles between the horses armed with lances which cut their way through the crowd, and the axles of the wheels were fitted with great scythes: these inventions were novel, and caused a panic, and therefore the men of Judah lost faith in God's promise (Jdg 1:2) becoming weak and cowardly. They prayed in Jdg 1:1+ but we see no prayer here. If they had believed in God, and gone forth in His Name, the horses would soon have fled, as indeed they did when God gave his people faith in Judges 4-5 (but notice what they did in Jdg 4:3+ and the answer in Jdg 4:4-7). When Barak led the way with Deborah, then they smote Jabin, who had nine hundred chariots of iron!

THOUGHT - Perhaps you are looking (by sight, not with eyes of faith - 2Co 5:7+) at the "iron chariots" (e.g., addictions, etc) in your life. And you are becoming fearful, feeling certain they can never be defeated! If so, you might do what Israel did in Jdg 1:1+ and Jdg 4:3+, **CRY OUT! CRY OUT!** Play this old Maranatha chorus but don't just listen -- take this time to really cry out to your Heavenly Father beloved.

Cry Out, Cry Out, Cry Out to the Heavenly Father

Cry Out, Cry Out, Cry Out to the Heavenly Father

You're a child Your Heavenly Father

You're a part of His family

Shout for joy all you sons and daughters

Sing your newborn liberty!

Say goodbye to your old taskmaster

Say goodbye to your slavery

Lift your voices in joy and laughter

In Christ Jesus you've been set free!

God has given His Holy Spirit

Now your birthright is undenied

Call the Father and He will hear it

You're a child of the Lord on high!

Defeat here equates not with Judah's **lack of power** (cp Jdg 1:4 for their "power" Source = " the LORD gave the Canaanites..."), but with **lack of belief** -- they failed either to know what God's Word clearly stated as TRUTH (promise) in the Pentateuch (Josh 17:18+, Dt 20:1-4,13, 16-18+) and/or they failed to walk in faith (faith is the victory [1Jn 5:4+]) seeing the chariots thru the eyes of God (Heb 11:27+) instead of focusing on the chariots. One of the dangers of victory as Judah experienced earlier in this chapter is to think too highly of self, to think that we gained the victory by our own strength. Judah surely maintained too much confidence in self. See Spurgeon's comment at end of note.

These ancient chariots were wooden with iron fittings, perhaps axles and may have been the military reason for Israel's defeat, but disobedience to God's commands was the spiritual reason (Judges 2:1-3+).

The sweet psalmist of Israel, David, confidently declared ins Psalm 20:7...

Some boast in chariots, and some in horses; But we will boast in the name of the LORD, our God.

Comment- [Spurgeon's comment](#), cp Pr 18:10 - Spurgeon's Sermon on Pr 18:10 - Our Stronghold See also [Name of the LORD is a Strong Tower: Summary](#)

PARTIAL OBEDIENCE

God had told them the land was theirs! What's an iron chariot to God? When a person adds something to what God has said (v1), he is not fully FOCUSED on the Lord. (He 12:2+) His eyes are on the enemy, his circumstances. WHEN MOST OF TIME IS SPENT FOCUSING ON OUR CIRCUMSTANCES LOOK OUT! THAT'S WHEN THE DEFEAT COMES. What's a chariot to God? In Judges 4, Deborah defeats Sisera who had over 900 chariots (Jdg 4:13+)!

We say we just can't defeat the "iron chariot" in our life. Remember the picture of Daniel in the Lion's den... his eyes weren't on the lions but on the LORD. If you're looking at the "iron chariots" in your life, then you have not implemented the power harnessed by complete obedience. Not until I come to God with a whole and undivided heart will I possess what God says I am to possess (Ep 1:3-note). Faith is always what accesses Grace and Grace is the enabling power of God. When that ENABLING POWER is not

there, we will have defeat after defeat.

Gary Inrig - Judah did not drive out the Canaanites in the valley because the Canaanites had iron chariots. Now that seems logical —Judah was outgunned. But in fact, that was not the reason at all. God had promised that He would drive out the enemy. Later, in chapter 4, Deborah led Israel into victory against an army with 900 iron chariots. Furthermore, the greatest victories Israel would have would come under David, and he never used iron chariots. The real reason Judah did not have victory was that they did not trust God. Diminished power is always the result of diminished faith. ([Hearts of Iron, Feet of Clay](#))

THOUGHT- WHAT IS THE IRON CHARIOT IN YOUR LIFE? If you trust (and obey) God in that area, then the victory is already yours in Christ. If you fail to live out the word of the hymn "Trust and Obey," you will inevitably not be "happy in Jesus" as the hymn promises.

Judges 1:19 does not contradict (Jdg 1:18) for the conquered cities of Gaza, Ashkelon, and Ekron were situated in "the valley" or coastal plain. (V19) only indicates that after the initial victories in "the valley" the Israelites were unable to hold these cities were forced back into the hill country where the Canaanites were unable to use chariots against them.

We should all be better off today if we bore in mind that, in an age when the chariot has long since been superseded as a weapon of warfare, a faithful (and righteous) reliance upon the Lord is the stoutest weapon in the armoury of a nation or an individual.
-- Arthur Cundall

Cundall adds this note - The two verses (Jdg 1:18-19), taken together, appear contradictory, since Gaza, Ashkelon and Ekron were on the low-lying coastal plain indicated in verse 19. Probably the Israelites, having taken these towns and their suburbs (AV coast refers to 'suburbs' or territory, RSV), were forced back into the hill-country where the Canaanites could not employ their chariots effectively. The Israelites feared the chariot as a weapon of war and rarely matched the Canaanites in combat waged on level ground, unless, as in the battle noted in Judges 4, 5, the chariots were immobilized as a result of torrential rain (Jdg 5:4, 5). Thus Judah took possession of the hill country, but he could not drive out the inhabitants of the plain (RSV). The Canaanites, and later on the Philistines, were able to work in iron, whereas Israel did not emerge from the Late Bronze Age until the time of David. It is likely that verse 19 is a general reference including both Canaanites and Philistines. Later on the Israelites viewed the use of chariots with reserve, as indicating dependence upon human power rather than the divine might (e.g. Ps. 20:7). David was quite unable to utilize the chariots captured from Hadadezer (2 Sam. 8:4) and not until Solomon's reign was effective use made of this weapon (1 Kgs 9:19; 10:26). We should all be better off today if we bore in mind that, in an age when the chariot has long since been superseded as a weapon of warfare, a faithful (and righteous) reliance upon the Lord is the stoutest weapon in the armoury of a nation or an individual. ([Judges and Ruth: An Introduction and Commentary](#))

Charles Spurgeon Excerpt from Sermon "Chariots of Iron"

They evidently thought that there was somewhat in themselves; for their power went as far as smiting the men of the hills, but not so far as attacking the cavalry in the open plain where there was room for them to rush to and fro, Now, that is your weakness and mine. We tacitly imply that God can help us up to a certain point, Does not that mean that we can help ourselves up to that point? Being interpreted, the belief conceals a measure of self-trust; and the next akin to self-trust is distrust. If you have passed out of yourself, where have you entered now? Into the infinite. The man who has reached the infinite needs not to reckon any longer. It was of no use for Noah to keep a log of his vessel when there remained no more: when it was all sea, it did not matter to him where he drifted. And so when you once get right away from self there are no limits. God is unbounded: therefore trust him without stint. Act like Samson, the strong, because the childlike, hero. If there is a Philistine to meet, he is ready for him. There are two of them: 110 is quite ready for both. There are twenty of them: it makes no difference. A thousand of them are before him. All right, there are only the more for the hero to kill, for he will slay every mother's son of them, and pile up their carcasses heaps upon heaps. Numbers do not matter. "But, Samson, if you are to do this deed, you must wield a good Damascus blade." "Yes," says he, "if I am to do it, of course I must; but if the Lord is to do it, the jawbone of an ass will suffice." It made no difference to him when he had thrown himself simply and nakedly upon God whether foes were few or many, whether weapons were fit or feeble. Herein is the failure of our faith, if it rests not in God's bare

arm... Though a saint is sustained by nothing but the power of God, all the devils in hell cannot stir him. The hare arm of God is the source of all power. Next, the imperfection of their faith lay in this, as it may do in yours, my brethren,-that they believed one promise of God and did not believe another. There is a kind of faith which is strong in one direction, but utter weakness if tried in other ways. It is curious that persons generally speak out the easiest promises to believe, while those which are greater, and therefore are the more godlike, they cannot believe. Judah believed in smiting the hill-men, because he thought such warfare easy; but as to overcoming the cavalry with their chariots of iron that was difficult, and so he did not believe tip to that mark. Beware of being pickers and choosers of God's promises. When people pick the promises over they say- "That one? No, I cannot receive that." When they do believe a promise, it is the smallest in the book. Oh! for a faith that takes the promises in the bulk, and knows nothing of choosing or refusing. Whatsoever God has promised he is able also to perform; and if the promise be but suitable to my ease, I am to grasp it and expect to see it fulfilled. Some believe God at one time and not at another. Do you not find that you believe the Lord a good deal on Thursday nights after a sermon? How about Friday night? Ah! that is rather different. I have known friends who are wonderful believers on Sunday... We appear to be so grandly strong, so quietly believing; yet the first trouble that comes scatters our courage. That is the reason why Judah could not drive out the dwellers in the plain: he heard the rushing of those chariots of iron, and his heart failed him.

There was a further reason for failure arising out of this imperfection of their faith: they could not conquer the chariots of iron, because, first, they did not try. The Hebrew does not say that they could not drive them out. What the Hebrew says is that they did not drive them out. Some things we cannot do because we never make the attempt.

Dear friends, there was no excuse for this on the part of Judah, as there is really no excuse for us when we think any part of God's work to be too difficult for us,-for, recollect, there was a special promise made about this very case. Kindly look at Dt 20:1, and you will see how the Lord says, "When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies, and seest horses, and chariots, be not afraid of them: for the Lord thy God is with thee." If there be a special promise made to meet an emergency, who are we that we should be cast down by the difficulty? Besides that, they received a special commission, Read Jdg 1:2 "The Lord said, Judah shall go up: behold, I have delivered the land into his hand." Iron chariots or no chariots, God had delivered the country into their hand. Besides that, their God had done greater deeds than this: he had divided the Red Sea, and drowned the chivalry of Egypt; he had divided the Jordan into halves and led his people through the river dry-shod; and he had made the walls of Jericho to fall flat to the ground. Why then was he distrusted because of those wretched chariots of iron?

Come then, brothers and sisters, have you got into a cleft stick in the matter of your personal affairs; and are you saying to-night, "I cannot pray about it: I cannot trust God about it"? Is that right? Look your Bibles up, and see whether there be not a promise exactly suited to your singular condition. Look back upon your own experience and see whether God has not done already for you and others of his people a greater thing than your present trial requires. Why will you say that you cannot drive out the chariots of iron? Be of good courage, and go forward. God is able to deliver you; therefore fear not, he will supply your need; be not dismayed. (Read the full message [Chariots of Iron](#))

Why Israel Failed to Possess their Possessions

1. The Canaanites had superior arms and fortifications (Jdg 1:19)
2. Israel was disposed to make alliances with the people of the land (Jdg 2:1-5)
3. Israel sinned and must be punished (Jdg 2:20-21)
4. Yahweh was testing Israel to see if they would be faithful or not (Jdg 2:22-23; 3:4)
5. Israel needed to be instructed in the art of war (Jdg 3:1-3)

(Adapted from ESV Study Bible)

Took possession...drive out - (03423)([yarash](#)) used twice in Jdg 1:19 (took possession...drive out). **Yarash** means to take possession of, inherit, dispossess, to drive out. Possession of the land was directly connected to a person's relationship with the Lord; breaking the covenantal relationship led to dispossession. But even in exile, Israelites awaited the day when they would repossess the land (Jer. 30:3). The verb **yāraṣh** is an especially important word in contexts dealing with Israel's conquest of and possession of the land of Canaan. The first meaning, "to take possession of," is most commonly used in connection with possessing land, specifically, the Promised Land. Yahweh first announced "possession" of the land in the context of the Abrahamic covenant (Ge 15:7f). Although similar usage continues in Leviticus (Lev 20:24) and Numbers (Nu 13:30; 14:24; 21:24f), The first meaning, "to

take possession of," is most commonly used in connection with possessing land, specifically, the Promised Land. Yahweh first announced "possession" of the land in the context of the Abrahamic covenant (Ge 15:7f). Although similar usage continues in Leviticus (20:24) and Numbers (13:30; 14:24; 21:24f), *yārash* in the sense of covenant land possession is a key theme in Deuteronomy. "**Go in and possess the land,**" the Lord commanded (Dt. 1:8, 21, 39; 11:31; 17:14). The phrase, "**where you are going to possess it,**" with reference to the land, recurs in Deuteronomy and Joshua (Dt. 4:5, 14, 26; Josh. 1:11, 15; 12:1; 13:1; 21:43; 23:5). Emphasis on the idea of "**possessing**" the land continues in Judges (Jdg 11:21-24; 18:9).

Judges 1:20 Then they gave Hebron to Caleb, as Moses had promised; and he drove out from there the three sons of Anak.

- **Then they gave** - Numbers 14:24; Deuteronomy 1:36; Joshua 14:9-14; 15:13,14; 21:11,12
- **The three sons of Anak** - Jdg 1:10 Nu 13:22
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Then they gave Hebron to Caleb - This city was important to the Jews because of its connection with the patriarchs.

As Moses had promised - Moses tells us why it was Caleb's "So Moses swore on that day, saying, 'Surely the land on which your foot has trodden will be an inheritance to you and to your children forever, **because you have followed the LORD my God fully.**' 14 Therefore, Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite until this day, because he followed the LORD God of Israel fully." (Joshua 14:9; 14).

Cross reference Numbers - This is God's OWN testimony! Oh, to follow in the footsteps of this man Caleb!

Nu 14:24 ([see note](#)) - "But My servant Caleb, because he has had a different spirit and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land which he entered, and his descendants shall take possession of it.

And he drove out (*yarash*) from there [the three sons of Anak](#) - **Drove out** is the Hebrew verb [yarash](#) a key verb in this last section of Judges 1 occurring 11 times (Jdg. 1:19; Jdg. 1:20; Jdg. 1:21; Jdg. 1:27; Jdg. 1:28; Jdg. 1:29; Jdg. 1:30; Jdg. 1:31; Jdg. 1:32; Jdg. 1:33; - all the other uses in Judges = Jdg. 2:6; Jdg. 2:21; Jdg. 2:23; Jdg. 3:13; Jdg. 11:21; Jdg. 11:22; Jdg. 11:23; Jdg. 11:24; Jdg. 14:15; Jdg. 18:7; Jdg. 18:9)

Numbers 13:22+ When they had gone up into the Negev, they came to Hebron where [Ahiman, Sheshai and Talmi, the descendants of Anak were](#). (Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.)

Drove out - dispossessed by driving out (Jos 15:14). Mortal enemies are not going to leave easily. They have to be driven out. And they **MUST** be driven out or they will become a snare and like thorns in our sides (Ouch!!!) And because many in Israel did not have a different spirit like Caleb, they did not drive them out and incurred God's judgment...

"Therefore I also said, 'I will not drive them out before you; but they shall become as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a **snare** ([moqesh](#)) to you.'" (Judges 2:3+)

Snare (4170)([moqesh](#) from [yaqosh](#)) is a masculine noun meaning a snare, a trap, bait. The picture is of the lure or bait being placed in the hunter's trap, which gives rise to *moqesh* referring to the snare itself. Traps were used to capture birds or beasts (Amos 3:5). As used in Judges 8:27 *moqesh* refers to a moral pitfall (Pr. 18:7; 20:25). *Moqesh* can be anything that lures one to ruin and disaster (Jdg. 2:3; Pr 29:6). The [Septuagint](#) translates **moqesh** in Jdg 8:27 (Jdg 2:3, 1 Sa 18:21, Ps 106:36) with the Greek word [skandalon](#) ([see word study](#)), which is literally, that part of a trap on which the bait was laid, when touched caused the trap to close on its prey and came to mean any entanglement of the foot. That's a picture of sin which looks alluring, but if touched, will surely captivate and capture its foolish prey. I



Boundaries of the 12 Tribes

Aged but Still Aggressive

"And they gave Hebron unto Caleb, as Moses said: and he expelled thence the three sons of Anak." Judges 1:20

Caleb followed the Lord fully. There is not one of us who cannot do that with the help of the infilling of the Holy Spirit of God.

Caleb's Foundation Was Sure

It was the granite of God's promise. From the day he left Egypt he was sure that God would enable him to possess his possessions in Canaan. His foundation was as sure as the God who laid it. It was impregnable,

Caleb's Future Was Secure

Nothing could depose him from his inheritance. God had promised it and He could not or would not go back on His word, Nothing can alter the Covenant ordered in all things and sure.

Caleb's Faith Was Strong

When everyone (except Joshua) in the spy ring which entered Canaan came back and gave a dishonest report, Caleb stood forth in faith and declared "We are well able to possess the land."

Faith, mighty faith the promises And looks to God alone laughs at impossibilities And cries, It shall be done. (Ian Paisley - A Text A Day Keeps the Devil Away)

Joshua 14:1-15:19, Judges 1:20

TODAY IN THE WORD

Billy Graham knows something more than the courage of battle or victory over oppression. His legacy is of moral courage, winning spiritual battles in an age of immorality. He said, "Courage is contagious. When a brave man takes a stand, the spines of others are often stiffened."

Caleb had that kind of courage. It's hard not to smile when reading his words. He's 85 and still as strong as ever. Bring on the Anakites!

The conversation between Joshua and Caleb must have been a sight to behold. Joshua was probably about one hundred years old (24:29). No one else in the entire country would have been within twenty years of those two venerable leaders. And Caleb brings us back in time to when he and Joshua were the lone voices of courage among the spies. That courage hadn't dwindled in either of

them, and it's so refreshing to hear confident words of faith from men who had walked with God for decades.

Notice that Caleb doesn't want his portion to be any of the lands conquered thus far. He specifically requests an inheritance in the land that is protected by fortified cities. He wasn't content just to have faith in God, he wanted to put his faith in action.

If you were to read past Joshua and into the first chapter of Judges, you'd see Caleb's story from chapter 15 repeated almost verbatim—Caleb delivered on his promise to drive the Anakites out from the land. But in the other battles recorded at the outset of Judges, Caleb is the only one mentioned who drove out the enemy from the land he inherited (Judg. 1:20). Every other tribe in that passage failed to rid the land of their opponents. An interesting note awaits us at the conclusion of chapter 14. The land changed names because Caleb drove out the descendants of the man for whom it was originally named.

Despite all the land Caleb received, a finer reward was the compliment he received in verse 14: "He followed the Lord, the God of Israel, wholeheartedly." No inheritance can ever take the place of such a legacy.

TODAY ALONG THE WAY - Caleb's example is an inspirational reminder of purpose for believers of all ages. Retirement was definitely not in Caleb's vocabulary. That isn't to say that retiring from a vocation is unbiblical or undeserved. Rather, following God with courage and confidence is a lifelong pursuit. And for those far younger than Caleb was in today's reading, remember that the end goal of life is not to rest from all labor but to serve Him wholeheartedly for as long as we can.

DISASTER! from Cyril Hocking - Day by Day thru the OT

JOSHUA is dead! A third generation, 2:7–10, is on the scene, knowing not the Lord nor His gracious works. The third generation of many movements proves to be a failure, a fact to be observed even in early church history in the days following the apostles and those who had known them. The book begins with promise, vv. 1–19a, although even after the Lord's specific direction and encouragement, Judah would not obey Him, vv. 2–3. The record is one of increasing failure until at last the Lord remonstrates with the nation at Bochim, 2:1–4.

The sad national landslide is plotted for us in 1:19b–36. Granting God's presence with Judah, v. 19a, the tribe still fails, for he "could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley". Why? Because "they had chariots of iron". Was Judah's God no match then for iron? What Judah apparently attempted and failed to do, Benjamin did not even try to do, "they did not drive out". Contrariwise, the enemy arrogantly "dwelt with them", and that "unto this day", v. 21 R.V. What impotency! Joseph has initial success, but also compromises; cf. vv. 24–25 and 2:2a. Manasseh "did not drive out" the enemy, the list of failures increasing, 1:27 R.V., and with even greater arrogance "the Canaanites would dwell in the land". Gaining a little strength, Israel merely puts them to taskwork, v. 28. Ephraim "drove not out" the enemy, but they rather "dwelt ... among" Ephraim, v. 29 R.V. Zebulun likewise succumbed, v. 30. How the residing enemy became "thorns in your (Israel's) sides", 2:3. Asher was content to dwell among the Canaanites, sharing the territory in a spirit of compromise, v. 32. The Naphtalites followed suit, v. 33. But now the battle swings adversely for Dan. They were forced into the hill country, and not suffered to come down, for the Amorites "would dwell" in the valley, vv. 34–35. The enemy dictates policy. Dan appears shamefully in chapter 18! Think about this!

How quickly spiritual decline leads to multiplied defeats, and these, in turn, lead to ultimate enslavement. Emancipated Israel's achievements should have been glorious. Alas, their successes were limited. Had God failed them?; cf. 2:11–15. Read Revelation 2–3. Has not history repeated itself?

Lesson. How does my life advertise the Divine redemption?

JUDGES 1:20—Did Caleb kill the sons of Anak or just expel them?

PROBLEM: In Judges 1:10, the three sons of Anak were "killed" by Judah. But, in verse 20 it says they were merely "expelled" from the land, which is what Joshua 15:14 says as well. Which was it?

SOLUTION: There are two basic views in response to this problem. One view assumes that these two passages refer to the same event, while the other view maintains that they refer to different events.

The Same Event. According to this position, the children of Judah were led by Caleb. Thus, one passage could refer to the men who did it and the other to their leader. Further, the Hebrew word for "expel" can mean to "drive out" or "destroy." In this sense they were expelled not only from the land of Judah, but also from the land of the living.

Different Events. According to this view, the first chapter of Judges does not follow in chronological order, being almost verbatim from Joshua 15:13–19. If so, the events would be as follows: when Joshua conquered the land, the sons of Anak were simply "expelled," only to return when Joshua turned elsewhere. Later, after the initial campaigns, Judah settled the land and Caleb and his men actually "killed" them. Either position would resolve the difficulty. (Geisler - When Critics Ask)

Judges 1:21 But the sons of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites who lived in Jerusalem; so the Jebusites have lived with the sons of Benjamin in Jerusalem to this day.

- Jdg 19:10-12 Jos 15:63 18:11-28 2Sa 5:6-9
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**SAD REFRAIN:
"DID NOT... "**

But - A sad term of contrast marking a 180 reversal from the success of Caleb.

The sons of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites who lived in Jerusalem This is a sad refrain in the book of Judges (and I fear too often in our lives [including mine!] as believers! Note that Jerusalem was situated on the tribal borders of Judah and Benjamin and both tribes felt a responsibility to expel the enemy, but sadly, both failed, not from lack of power but lack of faith!

Joshua 15:63 Now as for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the sons of Judah **could not drive them out**; so the Jebusites live with the sons of Judah at Jerusalem until this day.

Did not drive out p This refrain is the key phrase of the close of Judges 1 - Jdg 1:21, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33

**DANGEROUS "DID NOT'S"
IN JUDGES**

- **did not** know the LORD = Jdg 2:10+
- **did not** listen to their judges = Jdg 2:17a+
- **did not** do *as their fathers* = Jdg 2:17b+
- **did not** abandon their practices or their stubborn ways = Jdg 2:19+
- **did not** remember the LORD their God Jdg 8:34+
- **did not** serve Him = Jdg 10:6+

Joshua had defeated "the king of Jerusalem" (Jos 12:7,10), but apparently did not destroy the Jebusites. Judah fought against Jerusalem and captured it and struck it (Judges 1:8). The Jebusites apparently later returned to reoccupy their city. It was not until David's time that they were finally expelled permanently from Jerusalem (2Sa 5:5-9).'

So the Jebusites have lived with the sons of Benjamin in Jerusalem to this day.The zeal of Israel did not long continue. In fact, all that follows after the campaign of Judah and Simeon is a record of failure and neglect, with the single exception of the taking of Bethel by the house of Joseph.

Note what God said He would do

Exodus 23:23+ "For My angel will go before you and bring you in to the land of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hivites and the Jebusites; and **I will completely destroy them**. (YES, THAT IS TRUE BUT THAT DOES NOT RELIEF US OF OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO THROW THEM OUT! IDOLS ARE LIKE STICKY BUNS IN CASE YOU HAVE NOT NOTICED. OR LIKE THE ENERGIZER BUNNY THEY KEEP COMING BACK AND COMING BACK! THEY MUST BE ANNIHILATED. PERIOD!)

Deuteronomy 7:1+; "When the LORD your God brings you into the land where you are entering to possess it, and clears away many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and stronger than you, 16 "You shall consume (HERE WE SEE MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY) all the peoples whom the LORD your God will deliver to you; your eye shall not pity them, nor shall you serve their gods, for that would be a snare to you.

Exodus 34:11-16+ "Be sure to observe what I am commanding you this day: behold, I am going to drive out the Amorite before you (GOD'S PART), and the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite. 12 "Watch yourself that you make no covenant with the inhabitants of the land into which you are going (OUR RESPONSIBILITY), or it will become a snare in your midst. 13 "But rather, you are to tear down their altars and smash their sacred pillars and cut down their Asherim 14 -for you shall not worship any other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God- 15 otherwise you might make a covenant with

the inhabitants of the land and they would play the harlot with their gods and sacrifice to their gods, and someone might invite you to eat of his sacrifice, 16 and you might take some of his daughters for your sons, and his daughters might play the harlot with their gods and cause your sons also to play the harlot with their gods.

Judges 3 - a little disobedience will lead in time to a big sin!

The sons of Israel lived among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; 6 and **they took their daughters for themselves as wives, and gave their own daughters to their sons, and served their gods.** 7 The sons of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and forgot the LORD their God and served the Baals and the Asheroth. 8 Then the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, so that He sold them into the hands of Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia; and the sons of Israel served Cushan-rishathaim eight years. (Judges 3:5-8-note)

Benjamin, Ephraim, Manasseh, Zebulun, Asher, Naphtali, and Dan all failed to overcome the enemy and had to allow these godless nations to continue living in their tribal territories. This series of tribal defeats was the first indication that Israel was no longer walking by faith and trusting God to give them victory.

The priests possessed a copy of the Book of Deuteronomy and were commanded to read it publicly to the nation every Sabbatical Year during the Feast of Tabernacles (Dt 31:9-13+, see esp Dt 31:12, cp Jos 1:8-note, Josh 8:34, 35). Had they been faithful to do their job, the spiritual leaders would have read Dt 7:1-12ff and warned the Israelites not to spare their pagan neighbors. The priests also would have reminded the people of God's promises that He would help them defeat their enemies (Dt 31:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8). It was by receiving and obeying the Book of the Law that Joshua had grown in faith and courage (Jos 1:1-9; Ro 10:17-note), and that same Word (if obeyed) would have enabled the new generation to overcome their enemies and claim their inheritance.

Judges 1:21-2:5

Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the Lord? - 1 Samuel 15:22

TODAY IN THE WORD

The Treaty of Versailles, signed in 1919 to conclude World War I, imposed restrictions on Germany that Adolph Hitler would exploit to spur the growth of his Nazi Party. Within twenty years, Germany would move from feeling oppressed to invading its neighbors and murdering millions of people, particularly Jews. Throughout history, people who have been oppressed themselves turn into oppressors when given an opportunity—an example of this is in our passage.

Yesterday we saw the obedience of Judah. Today, the story of Judges makes its first downward turn as we read that the Benjamites failed to drive out the Jebusites (v. 21). The chronicle of Israel's failure has begun. Tribe after tribe did not remove the wicked peoples living in the land as God had commanded.

Note that this wasn't due to Israel's weakness. They were clearly strong enough to subdue the people into forced labor (Jdg 1:28). It was partial obedience—but the consequences of partial obedience were the same as of complete disobedience. After their experience of forced labor in Egypt, Israel should have known that this was not a long-term solution to their problem of possessing the land. And in fact, the Canaanites would lead Israel into the grave sin of idolatry.

An observer at the time might conclude that the Israelites looked successful. They controlled large portions of the land, they were strong enough to dominate the Canaanites in most areas, and they had several notable military victories. But material success does not equal spiritual success. Israel had failed to follow the commands of the Lord.

After Israel failed to obey God, choosing the comfort of having forced laborers instead of obeying the Lord, they learned the consequences of their sin: God would no longer drive out the Canaanites. The people responded with loud weeping and sacrifices ("Bokim" means weepers in Jdg 2:5). But the text has no reference to any repentance on the part of the Israelites.

TODAY ALONG THE WAY

You may feel like you're reading a geography lesson in this first chapter of Judges! Most modern readers aren't familiar with these ancient places and names. Like every other detail in this book, the geography gives us a richer understanding of the message. One resource that can help you track the geographical movement of the tribes and the surrounding peoples is the Moody Atlas of Bible Lands, available from your local Christian bookstore or online book distributor.

Diminished power is always

the result of diminished faith.

And I would add that faith is intimately linked with obedience and so it follows that disobedience reflects faulty faith and quenches the Spirit and impedes the flow of supernatural power we all desperately need to drive out the "Canaanites" in our life! How are you doing with your extermination of these usurpers of God's seat on the throne of your heart? Listen, do not be deceived, as Judges 1 shows so very clearly, a little compromise with sin can lead to a long and dark journey away from the holiness of God! Kill sin before it be killing you to paraphrase John Owen!

Related Resources:

- [Relationship of faith and obedience - Covenant](#)
- [Obedience of faith](#) - Ro 1:5, 16:26

Gary Inrig - First Steps on a Slippery Slope: Israel's Partial Obedience

These verses certainly don't make very interesting reading, at least at first glance. This passage seems to be a long list of obscure names that catalog ancient battles in distant places, matters that can have no possible relevance to our lives thirty centuries later. A closer look suggests, however, a pattern that is all too familiar, and one against which we must carefully guard ourselves. In fact, Judges 1 probes us in places we might prefer the Holy Spirit leave alone.

The description of Israel's conquest begins in the southern region of the country and traces the course of Judah's campaign in Jdg 1:3-19. As we shall discover, Judah is much more successful than the other tribes, and we follow its conquests, sometimes in alliance with the much smaller tribe of Simeon, in the upland campaign around Jerusalem (Jdg 1:4-8); the capture of the Hebron region (Jdg 1:9-15); the southern campaign (Jdg 1:16, 17); and the coastal plain (Jdg 1:18). It is an impressive record of conquest against all kinds of Canaanite strongholds.

But the writer is not entirely happy. There are two disturbing notes that deserve more careful attention since they begin a pattern that will grow increasingly prominent. The first is found in Jdg 1:6. Judah conquered a town called Bezek, capturing the "king" and then cutting off his thumbs and his big toes. That was obviously both a very effective and brutal way of ending his military career; he could handle neither bow nor sword again. **But mutilation was a pagan practice, not a biblical one, and the men of Judah were under command to put him to death.** They were drawing their standards from people around them, adopting Canaanite practices. Judah's obedience was only partial.

The second disturbing note is found in Judges 1:19. Judah, we are told, could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley because they had iron chariots. On the one hand, that seems perfectly logical—the Canaanites had superior military technology that gave them a huge advantage on the plains. However, that explanation has one major flaw. **Yahweh had promised that He would drive out the enemy.** In fact, when the people of Manasseh had earlier complained to Joshua that they could not defeat their enemies because "all the Canaanites who live in the plain have iron chariots," Joshua had declared, "**though the Canaanites have iron chariots and though they are strong, you can drive them out**" (Joshua 17:16-18+). In Judges 4:1-24, Deborah leads Israel into victory against a Canaanite army that possessed 900 iron chariots! Furthermore, the greatest victories Israel would have would come under David, and he **never** used iron chariots. The real reason Judah did not have victory was that they did not fully trust their God.

Diminished power is always the result of diminished faith.

The author has told us that God's people "**were unable to drive the people from the plains**" (Judges 1:19). That phrase now rings like a chime through the rest of the chapter, occurring seven more times in all (Judges 1:21, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 33). **Benjamin** failed to drive out the Jebusites (Judges 1:21), while **Manasseh** did not drive out the pagan inhabitants of its area. Even when the men of Manasseh did possess power to drive out the Canaanites, they preferred to use them as forced labor, a cheap source of energy (Judges 1:27-28). **Their problem was not a lack of power but a lack of obedience.** The same record is given of **Ephraim** (Judges 1:29), **Zebulun** (Judges 1:30), and **Asher** (Judges 1:31-32). With monotonous regularity the clause recurs, "**They did not drive out the inhabitants.**" Gradually the diminished success of the tribes becomes more evident. In Judges 1:10-30, the Canaanites live among the Israelite tribes, who are the dominant population in their region. But then, in Jdg 1:31-33, we learn that the two tribes of **Asher** and **Naphtali** live among the Canaanites, who form the base population of the region. With the tribe of **Dan**, we reach the lowest point (Jdg 1:34-36). They were pressed into the hill country because the Amorites wouldn't allow them to come down to the plain. The pagans dominate the area, and God's people are reduced to forced labor, virtual prisoners in a land God had promised to those who would trust and obey Him.

In a few short verses we have moved from conquest to compromised coexistence to capitulation.

The lesson of Judges 1 is very clear. The people of Israel chose deliberately to obey God only partly (ED: PARTIAL OBEDIENCE IS COMPLETE DISOBEDIENCE!). Rather than following the Lord wholeheartedly, they compromised. In a few short verses we have moved from conquest to compromised coexistence to capitulation. It was a pattern that would yield very bitter fruits. ([Hearts of Iron](#), [Feet of Clay](#))

REALIZE THE DANGER OF TOLERATING SIN IN YOUR HEART!

Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it flow the springs of life.
-- Solomon (Proverbs 4:23+)

Judges 1 gives us the symptoms of **partial obedience** (of which of course there is no such thing for partial obedience is always disobedience!)

1). When we add something to what God has said...this is in Jdg 1:3: The LORD had told Judah to go up, but Judah then said "I'll just help God out" by taking Simeon. That's not what God had said to do. You need to listen and when He speaks you move without question. They had victory you say. That's true but God is always faithful to what He says, not to who we are or what we do.

2). Next when we stoop to the behavior of our enemy.I'm going to do it my way. See v7.

3). Iron Chariots: When fear keeps us from doing what God commands When you are partially obedient to God, you are not fully looking at Him. v8-20 records the victories that they had when they did what God said to do.

4). Judges 1:21 Trying to peacefully coexist with evil. They did not eradicate completely the pagans. How (See Ex 23:32, Dt 7:1, 20:17 How bad were some of these pagans? Why would God say to drive them out? Lev 20:1,23, Dt 7:4 tells us about the power of sin. Tragically many Christians are living with some pet sin that they are tolerating. They have some "secret closet" they are not willing to surrender to the Lord. They will not repent of it. Oh, they may confess it. But their modus operandi is to deal with it their own way and to continue to "peacefully coexist". Mark it down - There can never be a peaceful coexistence with unconfessed, unrepented of sin.

God gave Israel a **land** but He gave believers a **life**. Just as they had to drive out the pagans who would lead to their destruction in time, so too must believers drive out the sin which so easily entangles (Heb 12:1+). We can learn from Israel's battle with "sin" as we walk in this body of sin under the New Covenant (see Ro 15:4+).

The sins described in Judges fall in 3 major categories:

(a) **IMMORALITY** (desire for people): **THOUGHT** - Are you on the Web visiting sites you should not be visiting? Why did you stay up late last night after your wife and children went to bed?! For a detailed study on Solomon's advice regarding this sexual immorality - Proverbs 5:1-14+; Pr 5:15-23+; Pr 6:20-35+; Pr 7:1-27+.

(b) **COVETOUSNESS** - Desire for things (THOUGHT - Including other people's spouse!)

(c) **BITTERNESS, RESENTMENT and UNFORGIVENESS:** You have your quiet time, etc, but God says "I can't use you until you are willing to put it under the blood. My way." Let Jesus **OVERCOME** you and then you start possessing what He says is rightfully yours in Him. There is no other way to do it. Ephesians (see notes our spiritual blessings in **Ephesians**) tells us what is ours and Ephesians 3:17+ is the way to possess.

If you are trying to hang on to a sin in your life, you are just like Israel and the **LIGHT OF GOD'S TRUTH CANNOT COME IN!** Jesus warned in Mt 6:23+ that "if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

Judges 1:22 Likewise the house of Joseph went up against Bethel, and the LORD was with them.

- **The house** - Nu 1:10,32; Jos 14:4; 16:1-4; 1Chr 7:29; Re 7:8
- **The LORD** - Jos 17:18, Dt 20:1, Jdg 1:19; Ge 49:24; 2Ki 18:7

- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

THE LORD WAS WITH THEM

Likewise the house of Joseph went up against Bethel - [Bethel](#) - Ge 28:19 - 12mi N of Jerusalem. The action now centers in central Palestine. Bethel is mentioned more often in the Bible than any other city except Jerusalem.

Note that in the ritual of Ge 48:5-20, Manasseh and Ephraim, Jacob's grandsons, were adopted so as to be legally his own sons. Therefore their descendants became two tribes in Israel. The adoption is reminiscent of Nuzi Law. Manasseh the older son and Ephraim substituted for Joseph and Levi in the 12 tribe territorial allocation in the Promised Land.

And the LORD was with them - Compare this same phrase "**the LORD was with Judah**" (Jdg 1:19). Then note that for the next 6 chapters this phrase is absent until we come to the story of Gideon (Jdg 6:12) which records "**The LORD is with you, O valiant warrior.**"

THOUGHT- This is the key phrase in for victory in the life of a saint. It refers to physical warfare here but in our lives applies to spiritual warfare (indeed all physical warfare has a spiritual component). And so we see this vital truth declared by Paul rhetorically asking "What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?" (Ro 8:31+).

THOUGHT - Notice that in this passage we see the pattern of the [Paradoxical Principle of 100% Dependent and 100% Responsible](#)" (100/100). This principle is somewhat similar to the frequent juxtaposition of God's Sovereignty and Man's Responsibility (See [note](#) and Jdg 1:4+). The point is that God never asks His men to do what He does not enable His men to accomplish. Obstacles are merely opportunities for God to show Himself mighty! And so here we see that Judah went up but they did not go solely in their power, numbers or military prowess, but they went up with the presence of Yahweh. Beloved, this is the pattern God's children must always seek to follow lest their efforts/labor be in vain! Solomon says it this way in Psalm 127:1-2...

Unless the LORD builds the house, They labor in **vain** (see note on [shav](#); Lxx = see [maten](#)) who build it; Unless the LORD guards the city, The watchman keeps awake in vain (see note on [shav](#); Lxx = [maten](#)).
2 It is vain (see note on [shav](#); Lxx = [maten](#)) for you to rise up early, To retire late, To eat the bread of painful labors; For He gives to His beloved even in his sleep.

COMMENT - Note the key word is vain ([shav](#); Lxx = [maten](#))! Note the clear pattern - God builds, man labor. God guards, watchmen watch. Reliance on self is vain! This is the Old Testament version of [100/100](#)! It begs the question -- Are your plans for today, this year, the future, your plans or God's plans for you? In Eph 5:17+ Paul commands "So then **do not be** ([present imperative with a negative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) foolish ([aphron](#)), but **understand** ([suniemi](#)) in the [present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#) what the will of the Lord is." Solomon adds "**Commit** (a command) your works to the LORD and your plans will be established." (Pr 16:3, cf Pr 15:22, 16:9, 19:21, 20:18)

SPURGEON - The word **vain** is the keynote here, and we hear it ring out clearly three times. Men desiring to build know that they must labour, and accordingly they put forth all their skill and strength; but let them remember that if Jehovah is not with them their designs will prove failures. So was it with the Babel builders; they said, "Go to, let us build us a city and a tower"; and the Lord returned their words into their own bosoms, saying, "Go to, let us go down and there confound their language." In vain they toiled, for the Lord's face was against them. When Solomon resolved to build a house for the Lord, matters were very different, for all things united under God to aid him in his great undertaking: even the heathen were at his beck and call that he might erect a temple for the Lord his God. In the same manner God blessed him in the erection of his own palace; for this verse evidently refers to all sorts of house building. Without God we are nothing. Great houses have been erected by ambitious men; but like the baseless fabric of a vision they have passed away, and scarce a stone remains to tell where once they stood. The wealthy builder of a Non such Palace, could he revisit the glimpses of the moon, would be perplexed to find a relic of his former pride: he laboured in vain, for the place of his travail knows not a trace of his handiwork. The like may be said of the builders of castles and abbeys: when the mode of life indicated by these piles ceased to be endurable by the Lord, the massive walls of ancient architects crumbled into ruins, and their toil melted like the froth of vanity. Not only do we now spend our strength for nought without Jehovah, but all who have ever laboured apart from him come

under the same sentence. Trowel and hammer, saw and plane are instruments of vanity unless the Lord be the Master builder.

Unless the LORD guards the city, The watchman keeps awake in vain - Around the wall the sentinels pace with constant step; but yet the city is betrayed unless the alert Watcher is with them. We are not safe because of watchmen if Jehovah refuses to watch over us. Even if the guards are wakeful, and do their duty, still the place may be surprised if God be not there. "I, the Lord, do keep it", is better than an army of sleepless guards. Note that the Psalmist does not bid the builder cease from labouring, nor suggest that watchmen should neglect their duty, nor that men should show their trust in God by doing nothing: nay, he supposes that they will do all that they can do, and then he forbids their fixing their trust in what they have done, and assures them that all creature effort will be in vain unless the Creator puts forth his power, to render second causes effectual. Holy Scripture endorses the order of Cromwell "Trust in God, and keep your powder dry": only here the sense is varied, and we are told that the dried powder will not win the victory unless we trust in God. Happy is the man who hits the golden mean by so working as to believe in God, and so believing in God as to work without fear. ([Treasury of David - Psalm 127](#))

And again we see the Psalmist testifies that...

If the LORD had not been my help (['ezrah](#); Lxx = [boetheo](#) used in Heb 2:18+), My soul would soon have dwelt in the abode of silence. (Psalm 94:17)

COMMENT - Spurgeon: Without Jehovah's **help**, the psalmist declares that he should have died outright, and gone into the silent land, where no more testimonies can be borne for the living God. Or he may mean that he would not have had a word to speak against his enemies, but would have been wrapped in speechless shame. Blessed be God, we are not left to that condition yet, for the Almighty Lord is still the helper of all those who look to him. Our inmost soul is bowed down when we see the victories of the Lord's enemies -- we cannot brook it, we cover our mouths in confusion; but He will yet arise and avenge His own cause, therefore have we hope. The word (['ezrah](#)) signifieth not only **help**, but *summum et plenum auxilium*, ("end and full support"), a helpfulness, or full help: the Hebrew hath a letter more than ordinary, to increase the significance - "*there is the sufficiency of help.*" (Nathaniel Whiting)

Judges 1:23 And the house of Joseph spied out Bethel (now the name of the city was formerly Luz).

- **spied out:** Jdg 18:2 Jos 2:1 7:2
- **Luz:** Ge 28:19 35:6 48:3
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

And the house of Joseph spied out Bethel (now the name of the city was formerly Luz)- Luz (almond tree) is the name of the ancient name of a royal Canaanite city near the site of Bethel (Ge 28:19; 35:6), on the border of Benjamin (Jos 18:13) where Jacob had a prophetic vision. See more in [note below on Luz](#).

House of Joseph - Phrase used in Jos. 17:17; 18:5; Jdg. 1:22, 23, 35; 2 Sam. 19:20; 1 Ki. 11:28; Amos 5:6; Obad. 1:18; Zech. 10:6

Judges 1:24 And the spies saw a man coming out of the city, and they said to him, "Please show us the entrance to the city and we will treat you kindly."

- **treat you kindly** - Josh 2:12-14; 1Sa 30:15
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

COMPROMISE BEGINS

And the spies saw a man coming out of the city, and they said to him, "Please show us the entrance to the city and we will treat you kindly ([hesed/chesed/heced](#)) - Is this what God had said to do? Is this another example of man adding to what God said

He would do to Israel's enemies? (THIS IS A RHETORICAL QUESTION!) See Judges 1:25 to help answer.

Treat you kindly is the Hebrew word [hesed/chesed/heced](#) which is a covenant word. The Hebrew reads literally, "we will deal with you fairly." In the idiom in this verse **hesed** normally refers to fair and/or benevolent treatment as a reward for good deeds rendered, usually as an act of allegiance as in this case. However in this context the promise was misguided (aka "disobedient to God"). In contrast, the Israelite spies made this same promise to Rahab in exchange for her aid (Joshua 2:12, 14+) and she allied herself with Israel from that day forward. In the present context, the spies solicited the help of the unnamed man of Bethel, who subsequently moved to a foreign land, built a city, and called it Luz (the earlier Canaanite name for Bethel). His actions were motivated purely by self-interest and Israel's conquest of the city made no significant impact on him. Canaanite Luz had not been totally conquered; it had merely been moved to another location (Jdg 1:26).

The compromise with this foreigner foreshadowed a more serious form of compromise described in the following verses.

Judges 1:25 So he showed them the entrance to the city, and they struck the city with the edge of the sword, but they let the man and all his family go free.

- **struck** - Jos 6:22-25
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

COMPROMISE WITH THE ENEMY

So he showed them the entrance to the city, and they struck the city with the edge of the sword, but they let the man and all his family go free - So they showed this man favor. But what had God said? Moses gave the clarion call emphasizing that...

When the LORD your God shall deliver them (Dt 7:1) before you, and you shall defeat them, **then** (marks succession of events) you shall **utterly destroy** ([charam](#); Lxx - "*aphanismo aphanieis*" = "*disappearance, cause to disappear*") them. You shall **make no covenant** with them and **show no favor** to them. (Dt 7:2+)

Deuteronomy 20:13; 16-18+ **"When the LORD your God gives it into your hand (GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY), you shall strike all the men in it with the edge of the sword (MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY)...."**16 "Only in the cities of these peoples that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, you **shall not leave alive anything that breathes**. 17 "But (STRONG CONTRAST) you shall **utterly destroy** ([charam](#); Lxx = "curse them with a curse" = utterly curse) them, the Hittite and the Amorite, the Canaanite and the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite, as the LORD your God has commanded you (THIS IS THE KEY - GOD COMMANDED - THEY MUST OBEY), 18 **SO THAT** (PURPOSE CLAUSE - PURPOSE FOR UTTER DESTRUCTION) they may not teach you to do according to all their detestable things which they have done for their gods (**IDOLATRY**), **SO THAT** (PURPOSE CLAUSE) you would sin against the LORD your God (NOTE THAT **IDOLATRY** VIRTUALLY ALWAYS IS ASSOCIATED WITH **IMMORALITY!**).

So here we see more **compromise** with the enemy! This represents direct disobedience and sin against God (missing the mark of His perfect will.) Verses like this have led many to question the goodness and kindness of the Living God. And indeed to focus solely on declarations such as Dt 7:2 without understanding God's other attributes, leads to a gross misrepresentation of His matchless, majestic character with is perfect in every way (Ps 34:8, 100:5, 106:1, 107:1, 118:1, 29, 135:3, 136:1, 145:9)!

THOUGHT- Compromise = The expedient acceptance of standards that are lower than is desirable. An intermediate state between opposing alternatives. Beware of expediency in your Christian life beloved, as the sowing of this "seed" will virtually always reap "thorns and snares" in your side (spiritually speaking)! (Ga 6:7-8+, Ho 8:7)

Doug McIntosh - Believers can make a similar mistake. We are to have no mercy on the sins that lie resident within us. We are persistently and without hesitation to drive them out of our lives, or they will become causes for spiritual stumbling. (See [Holman Old Testament Commentary – Deuteronomy](#))

Utterly destroy ([02763](#))([charam](#)) to destroy, to doom, to devote. This word is most commonly associated with the Israelites destroying the Canaanites upon their entry into the Promised Land (Deut. 7:2; Josh. 11:20).

Surrendering something irrevocably to God = devoting to service of God, excluding it from use or abuse of man &/or putting it under a ban for utter destruction. [Dt 7:2, 20:17 - [see note below](#)] Usually **haram** meant a ban for utter destruction, compulsory dedication

of thing impeding or resisting God's work which is considered to be accursed before God. Thus the basic idea = setting something aside strictly for God's use. Whatever was set aside was considered most holy by God & could not be sold or redeemed by any substitutionary measure. Once invoked it was absolutely compulsory.

Walter Kaiser adds that "**Herem** (charam) is something devoted to God; however, it is not a voluntary but an involuntary dedication. It is now set apart to be banned from the earth and will totally come back to God. Thus a wall, as it were (cf. the king's wives, or harem, who were walled off from others), isolates the anathematized person, place, or thing from anyone touching, using, or benefiting from it ever again. Compare Achan's sin of taking the "devoted" items set apart for destruction in Josh 7:13." (EBC-Ex)

(hif) devote to God, give a gift exclusively to God

once given must be destroyed so there will be no human use made of it Lev 27:28

gift may apparently be voluntary or commanded by deity

with the associative meaning of a gift given for destruction

All such designated objects were to be given to the priests for the support of the religious ceremonies (Nu 18:14; Josh. 6:19; Eze 44:29).

(hof) be devoted Ex 22:19; Lv 27:29; Ezra 10:8

to be doomed; to be exterminated.

Herem/charam means ban, devote (esp. religiously, objects hostile to the theocracy; this involved generally their destruction; when a city was 'devoted' the inhabitants were put to death, the spoil being destroyed -- most often of devoting to destruction cities of Canaanites and other neighbours of Israel, exterminating inhabitants, and destroying or appropriating their possessions ([see note below](#)):

- Canaanite cities were treated like contraband Nu 21:2,3; Dt 7:2-6;13:12-15; 20:17,18; Jos 6:21; 8:26;10:28;11:11
- The lure toward idolatry was removed by devastating the sources. Jdg 1:17 "utterly destroyed"
- If people were included (Lev 27:28, 29; 1Sa15:3), they were executed.
- The root, qadhash (06942), is a setting apart of non-offensive objects from ordinary use in surrender to God.
- root **hrm** used only in causative stems; 48x Hiphil, 3x Hophal.
- related to an Arabic root meaning "prohibit, especially to ordinary use." The word "**harem**," meaning the special quarters for Muslim wives, comes from it.
- related also to an Ethiopic root = "to forbid, prohibit, lay under a curse."
- The idea of devoting an object for service to God Lv 27:28

Whatever is devoted to the Lord, whether man, animal, or property, is considered most holy by God and is therefore not to be sold or redeemed by substituting something else. All such objects are to be given to the priests for the support of the religious ceremonies (Nu 8:14+ Eze 44:29) The gold, silver, bronze, and iron from Jericho, for instance, were so designated (Jos 6:19, qodesh layhwh),

Usually **haram** means a ban for utter destruction, compulsory dedication of thing impeding or resisting God's work which is considered to be accursed before God. The idea first appears in Nu 21:2-3+, where the Israelites vowed that, if God would enable them to defeat a southern Canaanite king, they would "utterly destroy" (i.e. consider as devoted and accordingly utterly destroy) his cities.

This word is used regarding almost all the cities which Joshua's troops destroyed [e.g. **Jericho**, Joshua 6:21; **Ai**, Joshua 8:26; **Makkedah**, Joshua 10:28; **Hazor**, Joshua 11:11] thus indicating the rationale for their destruction.

In Dt 7:2-6, the command for this manner of destruction is given, with the explanation following that, otherwise, these cities would lure the Israelites away from the Lord (cf Dt 20:17,18). Any Israelite city that harbored idolaters was to be "utterly destroyed" (Dt 13:12-15; cf. Ex 22:19).

A man who was the object devoted to God came under the same ban. Lev 27:28-29 states that he was to be put to death. He could hardly be assigned to ceremonial service, for this was the work of Levites. To make this regulation agree with the sixth commandment (Ex 20:13; cf Ex 21:20), however, the thought must be that the persons so devoted were captives in wars such as those of Jericho or others under the ban, e.g. the Amalekites (1 Sa 15:3).

Because the root qadash "to be holy," also carries the thought of setting apart from ordinary use in surrender to God (especially in the Piel), we must distinguish objects set apart because "devoted," from those set apart because "holy." In a text discussed above, Lev 27:28-29, the two were brought together in that the devoted object was considered most holy by God. This suggests that the two were closely related, and this was true in respect to objects devoted for ceremonial service. But in respect to the objects to be

destroyed, they were considered to be offensive to God and injurious to his work. Objects to be set apart because holy were pleasing to him and useful.

A few times the root is used in respect to foreign nations "utterly destroying" a city or country (cf. 2 Ki 19:11; 2 Ch 20:23). Light on this may come from the Mesha inscription. On line 17 King Mesha (cf. 2 Ki 3:4) uses the word as he explains that he slaughtered all the inhabitants of Nebo because he made the city a "devoted" city to his god Chemosh.

Charam - 51x in 47v - annihilate(1), covet(1), destroy them utterly(1), destroy utterly(1), destroyed them utterly(1), destroying(1), destroying them completely(2), destruction(2), devote(2), forfeited(1), set apart(1), sets apart(1), utterly destroy(11), utterly destroyed(22), utterly destroying(3). Ex. 22:20; Lev. 27:28; Lev. 27:29; Num. 21:2; Num. 21:3; Deut. 2:34; Deut. 3:6; Deut. 7:2; Deut. 13:15; Deut. 20:17; Jos. 2:10; Jos. 6:18; Jos. 6:21; Jos. 8:26; Jos. 10:1; Jos. 10:28; Jos. 10:35; Jos. 10:37; Jos. 10:39; Jos. 10:40; Jos. 11:11; Jos. 11:12; Jos. 11:20; Jos. 11:21; Jdg. 1:17; Jdg. 21:11; 1 Sam. 15:3; 1 Sam. 15:8; 1 Sam. 15:9; 1 Sam. 15:15; 1 Sam. 15:18; 1 Sam. 15:20; 1 Ki. 9:21; 2 Ki. 19:11; 1 Chr. 4:41; 2 Chr. 20:23; 2 Chr. 32:14; Ezr. 10:8; Isa. 11:15; Isa. 34:2; Isa. 37:11; Jer. 25:9; Jer. 50:21; Jer. 50:26; Jer. 51:3; Dan. 11:44; Mic. 4:13

The first use sets the standard -

Exodus 22:20+ "He who sacrifices to any god, other than to the LORD alone, shall be **utterly destroyed**."

Gilbrant on charam -

Chāram means "to devote to the ban" or "to dedicate." It has cognates in Phoenician, Moabite, Akkadian, Old South Arabian, Arabic, Ethiopic, Middle Hebrew and a number of later Aramaic dialects. Its basic meaning involves taking things or people out of ordinary use and devoting them irrevocably to God. The word is related to "harem," whose root means "to prohibit especially from ordinary use" (TWOT 1:328), and which refers to the living space of royal Muslim wives and other women. Whatever was put under the ban was either to be devoted to the Lord's service permanently or destroyed.

Although chāram occurs mostly in the Hiphil stem, it also occurs once in the Qal and three times in the Hophal. The verb is often used of completely destroying a conquered town's people and wealth in dedication to the Lord. On their journey to Moab during their traveling in the wilderness, Israel encountered the hostile king of Arad. The people of Israel called out to God, vowing to totally destroy the town of Hormah if the Lord would help them to be victorious (Num. 21:2).

Before Israel entered the Promised Land, Moses reviewed the history of Israel's conquest of Canaan. They had completely destroyed such kings and their territories as Sihon, the king of Heshbon and Og, the king of Bashan (Deut. 3:6). The policy of completely destroying the nations which Israel would drive out of Canaan is stated in Deut. 7:1-6. The Israelites were to kill all the people of the cities without making a treaty with them. They were not to intermarry with the native peoples. Furthermore, they were to destroy the pagan altars and idols so that they would not be tempted to follow the gods of the Canaanites.

Not everything put under the ban was to be destroyed. Sometimes people or objects were to be dedicated irrevocably to the service of the Lord. Animals, family land, people and tithe were not always to be destroyed, neither could they be redeemed (Lev. 27:28f). What was devoted to the Lord, but not destroyed, belonged to the priests and Levites (Nu 18:14).

In some passages, the Lord is pictured as the agent of destruction. For example, the Lord said through Jeremiah, "Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north... and Nebuchadnezzar... and will bring them against this land... and will utterly destroy them" (Jer. 25:9).

In some cases, Israelites were put under the ban. The Law commanded that anyone who worshiped foreign gods was to be destroyed (Ex. 22:20). This law applied even to entire cities (Deut. 20:12-18). The people of Jabesh-Gilead were put to the sword after failing to assemble before the Lord at Mizpah (Jdg. 21:11).

Sometimes chāram is used of the actions of foreign kings. Sennacherib reminded Hezekiah that the Assyrian army had completely destroyed many countries, and he threatened that the same fate would befall Judah (2 Ki. 19:11). Daniel prophesied of a king who would destroy many people in a rage (Dan. 11:44). Further, this concept is found in the Mesha Stele. The inscription of the Moabite king Mesha proclaims how he reclaimed land lost in battle to Israel. In the course of his victory, Israelite towns were put under the ban to Chemosh, the national god of Moab.

In one verse, chāram takes on a meaning completely separate from the idea of the ban. In the verb's only

occurrence in the Qal stem, it means "destroyed" or "mutilated." The Lord commanded that people who had deformations were not allowed to come before Him as a priest—even those who had a "destroyed" or "mutilated" nose (Lev. 21:18). ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

Curse - Charles Feinberg - In its specific usage the curse was an act of dedicating or devoting to God. Things or persons thus devoted could not be used for private purposes (Lev. 27:28). In time of war a city was devoted to the Lord. This included the slaying of men and animals (Dt. 20:12-14; Josh 6:26); the redeeming of children and virgins (Dt. 21:11-12); the burning of combustibles (Dt. 7:25); the placing of metals in the temple (Josh 6:24); and the imposition of the ban on those who violated these provisions (Josh. 6:18). How literally the last named ban was carried out may be seen from the tragic history of Achan and his family, and the experience of Hiel the Bethelite (Josh 7:1ff. and 1Ki 16:34). The Canaanites as a nation were set apart for this kind of destruction (Josh. 2:10; 6:17). (See [Wycliffe Dictionary of Theology](#))

QUESTION - [Why did God command the extermination / genocide of the Canaanites, women and children included?](#)

ANSWER - In 1 Samuel 15:2-3, God commanded Saul and the Israelites, "This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'I will punish the Amalekites for what they did to Israel when they waylaid them as they came up from Egypt. Now go, attack the Amalekites and totally destroy everything that belongs to them. Do not spare them; put to death men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys.'" God ordered similar things when the Israelites were invading the promised land (Deuteronomy 2:34; 3:6; 20:16-18). Why would God have the Israelites exterminate an entire group of people, women and children included?

This is a difficult issue. We do not fully understand why God would command such a thing, but we trust God that He is just – and we recognize that we are incapable of fully understanding a sovereign, infinite, and eternal God. As we look at difficult issues such as this one, we must remember that God's ways are higher than our ways and [His thoughts are higher than our thoughts](#) (Isaiah 55:9; Romans 11:33-36). We have to be willing to trust God and have faith in Him even when we do not understand His ways.

Unlike us, God knows the future. God knew what the results would be if Israel did not completely eradicate the Amalekites. If Israel did not carry out God's orders, the Amalekites would come back to trouble the Israelites in the future. Saul claimed to have killed everyone but the Amalekite king Agag (1 Samuel 15:20). Obviously, Saul was lying—just a couple of decades later, there were enough Amalekites to take David and his men's families captive (1 Samuel 30:1-2). After David and his men attacked the Amalekites and rescued their families, 400 Amalekites escaped. If Saul had fulfilled what God had commanded him, this never would have occurred. Several hundred years later, a descendant of Agag, Haman, tried to have the entire Jewish people exterminated (see the book of Esther). So, Saul's incomplete obedience almost resulted in Israel's destruction. God knew this would occur, so He ordered the extermination of the Amalekites ahead of time.

In regard to the Canaanites, God commanded, "In the cities of the nations the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, do not leave alive anything that breathes. Completely destroy them — the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites — as the LORD your God has commanded you. Otherwise, they will teach you to follow all the detestable things they do in worshiping their gods, and you will sin against the LORD your God" (Deuteronomy 20:16-18). The Israelites failed in this mission as well, and exactly what God said would happen occurred (Judges 2:1-3; 1 Kings 11:5; 14:24; 2 Kings 16:3-4). God did not order the extermination of these people to be cruel, but to prevent even greater evil from occurring in the future.

Probably the most difficult part of these commands from God is that God ordered the death of children and infants as well. Why would God order the death of innocent children? (1) Children are not innocent (Psalm 51:5; 58:3). (2) These children would have likely grown up as adherents to the evil religions and practices of their parents. (3) These children would naturally have grown up resentful of the Israelites and later sought to avenge the "unjust" treatment of their parents.

Again, this answer does not completely deal with all the issues. Our focus should be on trusting God even when we do not understand His ways. We also must remember that God looks at things from an eternal perspective and that His ways are higher than our ways. God is just, righteous, holy, loving, merciful, and gracious. How His attributes work together can be a mystery to us – but that does not mean that He is not who the Bible proclaims Him to be. [GotQuestions.org](#)

Related Resources: All from [Gotquestions.org](#)

- [Does God killing people make Him a murderer?](#)
 - [Why did God command the Israelites to completely destroy the Midianites in Numbers 31:17?](#)
 - [Why did God condone such terrible violence in the Old Testament?](#)
 - [What happened during the conquest of Canaan?](#)
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Doug McIntosh has an excellent discussion of this difficult topic of God's command to completely destroy the inhabitants:

As Israel entered the land of promise, they were told, "When the Lord your God has delivered them over to you and you have defeated them, then you must destroy them totally. Make no treaty with them, and show them no mercy" (Deut. 7:2). Few statements of Scripture have received harsher criticism than this one. It seems to conflict with repeated biblical commands to show mercy to others (see Zech. 7:9; Mic. 6:8; Mt. 23:23). What are we to make of this divinely announced policy of extermination?

In part, the policy represents God's own justice at work through Israel's weapons of war. God waited until this period of time to bring Israel into the land, at the moment Canaanite culture was at its most depraved (cp. Ge 15:16). The Canaanites needed to be judged, and Israel was God's instrument of judgment.

However, it should also be noted that extermination does not represent the standard policy that God commanded Israel to pursue. When describing Israel's behavior toward the inhabitants of Canaan, the normal imperative was not exterminate but drive out: "When you cross the Jordan into Canaan, drive out all the inhabitants of the land before you. Destroy all their carved images and their cast idols, and demolish all their high places" (Nu 33:51-52). Calls to expel or drive out far outnumber commands to kill the Canaanites.

The two commands are actually compatible when seen from God's perspective. He had two primary purposes in bringing Israel into Canaan. First, he wanted to give the land to Israel and fulfill his promises to the patriarchs. Second, he desired to provide Israel a homeland that was free of the temptations to moral depravity that were part of Canaanite religion. As a result, the culture had to be destroyed—an action as easily accomplished by expulsion as by extermination.

Israel's slow approach over a period of forty years was closely observed by the native peoples (cp. Josh. 2:9-11). Many of them must have left voluntarily as Israel drew near, particularly after the dramatic and early victory at Jericho. Those who held out and remained behind the walls of Canaanite cities would have been the people who had the most to lose by leaving: the civic and religious leaders most committed to the blasphemous and degraded Canaanite cult. God knew that if they survived they would prove enthusiastic evangelists for the twisted cult—and so they did.

Israel's greatest danger would come after the fighting was over, when they saw the survivors of the battles they fought. Their natural inclination would have been to bring those devotees to paganism into their own homes and to adopt their guests' immoral and destructive religious practices. Their most profound danger, in effect, came in showing mercy toward those who posed a lethal danger to them.

Regrettably, that danger became a reality. Because Israel refused to exterminate that hard core of survivors, God's people became infected with idolatry so deeply that they themselves eventually had to be driven from the land. Israel exhibited an incomplete dedication to an important task. They thought so little of God's commands and their own spiritual lives that they permitted small pockets of wickedness to infect their nation.

(ED: THOUGHT) Believers can make a similar mistake. We are to have no mercy on the sins that lie resident within us. We are persistently and without hesitation to drive them out of our lives, or they will become causes for spiritual stumbling. (See [Holman Old Testament Commentary – Deuteronomy](#))

James Coakley on utterly destroy them - God's call to exterminate all the people groups currently occupying the land has been thought of as unloving and severe. Several factors may help explain the reasons such a command was given. .

First, all people are sinners and are under God's judgment. Only by God's mercy are any people groups allowed to live.

Second, the context (Dt 7:10) implies that these nations hated the Lord, so they were not neutral toward the God of Israel.

Third, Ge 15:13 states that God had been patient with these nations for hundreds of years and had delayed their punishment until this exact point in history. God was giving the Canaanites as much time as was needed to become as wildly corrupt as possible. God's command to annihilate them is tied to this circumstance alone and should not be used as justification for any genocide.

(ED COMMENT) - The patience of the Lord reminds me of the days of Noah - In Genesis 6:3 God gave man 120 years before the judgment of the flood would fall. cf 1 Peter 3:20+ and 2 Pe 3:15+ speaking of the delay in the return of the Lord thus providing an opportunity for men to repent. God provided righteous, tormented Lot as a witness and warning to Sodom before He destroyed them - 2 Pe 2:7-9+)

Fourth, if Israel let these nations live in their land, their pagan practices would be propagated and emulated by the people of God (Dt 20:17-18).

Fifth, the command to exterminate the Canaanite nations is mitigated somewhat by God's allowing individual non-Jewish women like Rahab and Ruth to enter into the messianic line. God always had a plan that included the nations (Ge 12:2-3), but He promised

Israel they would occupy this land as gift from Him. Israel was actually to offer peace with any nation outside her borders (Dt 20:10–18), but to exterminate any pagan nation within its borders.

Even though not specifically mentioned here, extending annihilation to Canaanite children is an affront to modern sensibilities. The totality of this destruction is connected in this text (Dt 7:3) to the prohibition of assimilation to other nations. If these children were allowed to live they would become a snare for Israel. **The killing of all Canaanites, including the children, served as a preventative measure against assimilating with the Canaanite way of life and as a stark reminder that Israel was to be set apart exclusively for God.** (See [The Moody Bible Commentary](#))

Judges 1:26 And the man went into the land of the Hittites and built a city and named it Luz which is its name to this day.

- **the land** - 2Ki 7:6; 2Chr 1:17
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

And the man went into the land of the Hittites [Hittites \(note\)](#) Was this a city that was "friendly" towards Israel in subsequent years? Scripture is silent but think about this question in the context of Judges.

Hittites - In later times the "**land of the Hittites**" (Josh 1:4+; Jdg 1:26) was in Syria and near the Euphrates; though Uriah (2Sa 11) lived in Jerusalem, and Ahimelech (1Sa 26:6) followed David. In the time of Solomon (1Ki 10:29), the "kings of the Hittites" are mentioned with the "kings of Syria," and were still powerful a century later (2Ki 7:6). Solomon himself married Hittite wives (1Ki 11:1), and a few Hittites seem still to have been left in the South (2Chr 8:7), even in his time, if not after the captivity (Ezra 9:1; Neh 9:8).

And built a city and named it Luz which is its name to this day. Luz The man who had been freed from Bethel (house of God) named the new city NOT Bethel but its old name Luz.

Luz: a town of Canaanites about 20 km north of Jerusalem later named Bethel by the Israelites a town established in the land of the Hittites by a refugee from old Luz - separation; departure; an almond

Hebrew Strongs [03870](#): Luz = "almond tree"

- 1) the early name of Bethel and probably the name of the town in close proximity to the actual location of the altar and pillar of Jacob
- 2) the name of a town in the land of the Hittites; site unknown.

Luz (looz) probably from 3869 (as growing there); Luz, the name of two places in Palestine:-Luz.

Luz [EBD] a nut-bearing tree, the almond. (1.) The ancient name of a royal Canaanitish city near the site of Bethel (Gen. 28:19; 35:6), on the border of Benjamin (Josh. 18:13). Here Jacob halted, and had a prophetic vision. (See BETHEL.) (2.) A place in the land of the Hittites, founded (Judg. 1:26) by "a man who came forth out of the city of Luz." It is identified with Luweiziyeh, 4 miles north-west of Banias.

Luz [NAVE] Gen. 28:19; 35:6; 48:3; Josh. 16:2; 18:13; Jdg. 1:23, 26

LUZ [Smith's Bible Dictionary] (almond tree). It seems impossible to discover with precision whether Luz and Bethel represent one and the same town--the former the Canannite, the latter the Hebrew, name--or whether they were distinct places, though in close proximity. The most probable conclusion is that the two places were, during the times preceding the conquest, distinct, Luz being the city and Bethel the pillar and altar of Jacob that after the destruction of Luz by the tribe of Ephraim the town of Bethel arose. When the original Luz was destroyed, through the treachery of one of its inhabitants, the man who had introduced the Israelites into the town went into the "land of the Hittites" and built a city which he named after the former one. (Judges 1:28) Its situation, as well as that of the land of the Hittites," has never been discovered, and is one of the favorable puzzles of Scripture geographers.

LUZ [ISBE] LUZ - (luz):The Hebrew word means "almond tree" or "almond wood" (OHL, under the word). It may also mean "bone," particularly a bone of the spine, and might be applied to a rocky height supposed to resemble a backbone (Lagarde, Uebersicht., 157 f). Winckler explains it by Aramaic laudh, "asylum," which might be suitably applied to a sanctuary (Geschichte Israels). Cheyne (EB, under the word) would derive it by corruption from chalutsah, "strong (city)."

(1) This was the ancient name of Bethel (Gen 28:19; Jdg 1:23; compare Gen 35:6; 48:3; Josh 16:2; 18:13). It has been thought that Josh 16:2 contradicts this, and that the two places were distinct. Referring to Gen 28:19, we find that the name Bethel was given to "the place," ha-maqom, i.e. "the sanctuary," probably "the place" (28:11, Hebrew) associated with the sacrifice of Abraham (12:8), which lay to the East of Bethel. The name of the city as distinguished from "the place" was Luz. As the fame of the sanctuary grew,

we may suppose, its name overshadowed, and finally superseded, that of the neighboring town. The memory of the ancient nomenclature persisting among the people sufficiently explains the allusions in the passages cited.

(2) A Bethelite, the man who betrayed the city into the hands of the children of Joseph, went into the land of the Hittites, and there founded a city which he called **Luz**, after the ancient name of his native place (Jdg 1:26). No satisfactory identification has been suggested. W. Ewing

Judges 1:27 But Manasseh did not take possession of Beth-shean and its villages, or Taanach and its villages, or the inhabitants of Dor and its villages, or the inhabitants of Ibleam and its villages, or the inhabitants of Megiddo and its villages; so the Canaanites persisted in living in that land.

- **Manasseh did not take possession** Jos 17:11-13
- **Taanach** - Judges 5:19
- **Canaanites** - Ex 23:31,32, 33, Dt 7:2, Ps 106:34,35
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Joshua 17:11-13+ In Issachar and in Asher, **Manasseh** had **Beth-shean** and its towns and Ibleam and its towns, and the inhabitants of **Dor** and its towns, and the inhabitants of En-dor and its towns, and the inhabitants of **Taanach** and its towns, and the inhabitants of **Megiddo** and its towns, the third is Napheth. 12 **But the sons of Manasseh could not take possession of these cities, because the Canaanites persisted in living in that land.** 13 It came about when the sons of Israel became strong, they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but they **did not drive them out completely** ([Yarash](#)).

Joshua 17:14-18+ Then the sons of Joseph spoke to Joshua, saying, "Why have you given me only one lot and one portion for an inheritance, since I am a numerous people whom the LORD has thus far blessed?" 15 Joshua said to them, "If you are a numerous people, go up to the forest and clear a place for yourself there in the land of the Perizzites and of the Rephaim, since the hill country of Ephraim is too narrow for you." 16 The sons of Joseph said, "The hill country is not enough for us, and all the Canaanites who live in the valley land have chariots of iron, both those who are in Beth-shean and its towns and those who are in the valley of Jezreel." 17 Joshua spoke to the house of Joseph, to Ephraim and Manasseh, saying, "You are a numerous people and have great power; you shall not have one lot only, 18 but the hill country shall be yours. For though it is a forest, you shall clear it, and to its farthest borders it shall be yours; **for you shall drive out the Canaanites, even though they have chariots of iron and though they are strong.**"

COMMENT - Read Joshua 17:18 again! The tribes of Joseph had either forgotten or did not believe the Lord's word in Joshua or the word through Moses in Dt. 7:17-22 and Dt 20:1. Their words contrast sharply with those of Caleb (Josh 14:6-12).

But Manasseh did not take possession- The key word in this last section is [Yarash](#) which basically means to take something from someone else and possess it for yourself and thus to occupy, take possession of, or inherit, by driving out previous tenants, and possessing in their place.

[Manasseh](#) is actually the "half tribe of Manasseh" located on the Western side of the Jordan River. The tribe of Joseph was composed of Ephraim and Manasseh, and Manasseh was divided into two half tribes, one on the Eastern side of the Jordan (this territory included Bashan and was N of Gad (their territory often referred to as "Gilead"), in turn N of Reuben. The other half tribe of Manasseh was on the Western side of the Jordan and included Shechem, Beth-Shan, Megiddo.

of Beth-shean and its villages: [Beth Shan](#) See most likely why they did not take possession and also note Joshua's charge to them in [Jos 17:15-18] Note esp that Joshua says they have "great power"! (Jos 17:17) Now compare what God said to Israel in {Dt 20:1-4, esp Dt 20:3,4!}.

THOUGHT- Where are God's "priests" today (cp 1Pe 2:5-note, 1Pe 2:9-note, Rev 1:6-note; Rev 5:10-note) who are crying out to God's people "Do not be fainthearted. Do not be afraid, or panic, or tremble before (your enemies)... God is the One Who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you."? Remember [1Sa 17:47, 2Co 10:3, 4, 5-note, Ep 6:10-note, Ep 6:11-note, Ep 6:12-note].

Note that Beth-Shean was located at a critical geographic juncture just south of the Sea of Galilee, serving as the most important

fortress guarding any Jordan River crossing. It was also at the East end of the Jezreel Valley (Valley of Megiddo) and thus on a road that carried heavy traffic from Egypt and the Mediterranean Sea to Damascus. Egyptian troops were stationed there well into the twelfth century.

When Saul was defeated the Philistines (they controlled Beth-shan at that time) took his decapitated body and ignominiously hung it on the wall at Beth-Shan (note absence of "e" in "shean" but still same city - 1Sa 31:10). God had warned that if they did not completely destroy their enemies, that these enemies would be as thorns in their side (Nu 33:55, Jos 23:13, Jud 2:3, Pr 22:5)! With the disgrace and humiliation of their first king, Saul, Israel had tragically reaped what they had sown! Do not be deceived. God is not mocked. Let him who has ears hear what the Spirit is saying. (Galatians 6:7,8). Archaeologists have found many cult objects at Beth-shean suggesting it was a center of snake worship!

or Taanach and its villages, Note that each place the NASB translates "villages" the Hebrew is "BATH" which is also translated "daughters". When used with a town it can mean have reference to satellite villages (as if they are "daughters"). But what is very interesting is that the LXX translates "bath" using "thugater" the Greek word for daughter... one wonders if there is a play on words here? (cp Dt 7:3, 4). Also Greek has a specific word ("kome") which means "village" and that could have been used. Keep in mind I am just speculating so be a Berean.

[Taanach](#) was 5 mi SE of Megiddo, and the two cities frequently are mentioned together (cf. Jdg 5:19).

or the inhabitants of Dor and its villages, : [Dor](#) - Canaanite town on the Mediterranean coast S of Mt Carmel and about 8 mi N of Caesarea. Captured by Joshua (Jos 11:2; 12:7,23; 1Chr 7:29) and assigned to Manasseh (Jos 17:11). Its people were tributary to King Solomon (1Ki 4:11).

or the inhabitants of Ibleam and its villages; The ruins of [Ibleam](#) are identified with a site about 12 miles SE of Megiddo, at the southern end of the [Jezreel](#) Valley near Dothan

or the inhabitants of Megiddo and its villages; The cities formed an E to W line of Canaanite fortifications along the plain of Esdraelon. The king of Megiddo is included among the 31 kings conquered by Joshua (Jos 12:21). In the days of Deborah and Barak, the Canaanite military strength under Jabin, king of Hazor, was gathered in the vicinity of Megiddo, and the battle of Taanach, "near the waters of Megiddo" (Jdg 5:19-note), was celebrated in their famous song.

[Megiddo](#), located on the main route from Egypt to the north (the "way of the sea"), controlled the pass at the entrance to the Jezreel Valley. It too remained under Egyptian domination till about 1150 B.C.

The valiant but foolish King Josiah tried to intercept Pharaoh [Necho](#) at Megiddo in 609bc [Necho](#) was on his way to assist the Assyrians and, hopefully, prevent their imminent collapse. Josiah reckoned that Judah would be safer once the Assyrian power was finally crushed, but he was killed in the first encounter in the plain before the city (2Ki 23:29, 30; 2Chr 35:22, 23, 24).

Sso the Canaanites persisted in living in that land - Persisted (ya'al) means to make a volitional decision to commence a given activity and clearly indicates the function of one's mind to initiate. It also conveys the nuance of determination and resolve. This "persistence" of the "cancer cells" would cost Israel dearly.

The other tribes did not follow Judah's example. They hesitated to attack the Canaanites in their territory. **The Canaanites were more determined to stay than Israel was to obey God and drive them out!** This hesitation to obey God led to direct disobedience. When Israel did become strong, rather than attack the Canaanites they simply enslaved them. Any failure to obey is a step toward direct disobedience. - Lawrence Richards - 365 Day Devotional Commentary

THOUGHT - Is our fallen flesh more determined to stay (in control) than we are determined to drive it out (or more accurately to "subdue" it or kill it)? We cannot "drive it out" (so to speak - it will always be in our mortal bodies, but we do not have to let it "reign"! See Ro 6:12-14+). The only way believers can subdue the fallen flesh and keep it from reigning in our mortal bodies is by killing it as enabled by the Spirit (Ro 8:13+). There is absolutely no other way to mortify our fallen flesh except by relying on God's supernatural power! How are you doing with the "Canaanites" still resident in your "land" (your mortal body)?

Judges 1:27, Judges 2

Today in the Word

Those who have interacted with children know that their reckless behavior can sometimes bring about pain. We warn them, but they do not listen, and sooner or later someone gets hurt. No good parent, however, would refuse to comfort a hurting child simply because it was "their fault." Today we see that God's care for us is no different, and how His love should move us toward repentance.

Judges 1:27–36 presents the incomplete conquest of the land. God wanted the occupying nations driven out to protect His people, knowing that they would easily slip back into idolatry if surrounded by them. God had pledged to go before them in conquest, so the fault lay with the Israelites. They were warned (Jdg 2:2), but they disobeyed (Jdg 2:12–14). In turn, they suffered occupation and oppression from their enemies. God acted as He promised He would, and this is no surprise.

God's reaction to their suffering may surprise us, however. Out of nowhere He "raised up judges" (Jdg 2:16) who delivered them from their enemies. There is no indication that God acted because of any movement back toward God in the text that "earned" them this deliverance. Even in spite of this unexpected gift, the Israelites again "prostituted themselves to other gods" (Jdg 2:17). But God did not leave His people.

In Jdg 2:18 we see the reason for God's deliverance. He cannot stand to sit by for long and have His people suffer. Again, we should not assume that Jdg 2:28 describes Israel's repentance, as none of the traditional Hebrew words for "repent" are used here. Simply put, God pities us. One might almost say He looks for excuses to shower us with blessings. True repentance would obviously be best. But crying out, "Daddy, I'm hurt, please help me," does move the heart of God.

Apply the Word

God will hand us over to the consequences of our own behavior. But such disasters are never what God truly wants for us. If you suffer and are not at the place of repentance, tell God of your suffering. It is a fine beginning. But while we can begin with crying out in pain, we cannot stop there. Without true repentance, the Israelites fell back into destructive habits (Jdg 2:19). God hears us in our suffering—how much more will He hear our cry, "God, have mercy on me, a sinner!" (Luke 18:13).

F B Meyer Our Daily Homily JUDGES 1:27

How persistent evil habits are! They have dwelt in our lives so long that they dislike being dislodged. Why should they quit their dwelling-place and go out into the void? Sometimes, at the beginning of our Christian life, we make a feeble effort against them, and hope to cast them out; but they stubbornly resist. Whenever a remonstrance is addressed to us, we are apt to reply, "Do not find fault; we couldn't help it. **These Canaanites are self-willed and persistent, they would dwell in the land.**"

But the one point that Israel should have borne in mind was that they had no right there. The land was not theirs, it had become Israel's. And, moreover, God was prepared to drive them out; so that his people would have no fighting to do, but only to chase a flying foe. One man was to chase a thousand (Joshua 23:10).

So these evil habits have no right to persist in the believers life The whole soil of his heart has been made over to the Son of God, and there should be no part left to weeds. "Sin shall not have dominion over you," said the Apostle (Ro 6:14KJV+). Nor is this all. The Holy Spirit is prepared to lust (set its desire - [epithumeo](#) in present tense) against the flesh, that we may not fulfil it in the lusts thereof, or do the things we otherwise would (Gal 5:16-17+). The hasty temper (**ED**: THIS "ROVING EYE") may be **natural** to you: but seeing that your position is Christ is **supernatural**, this Canaanite must be conquered. There is a complete deliverance possible to all who will open their hearts to the might of the Spirit of God (Zech 4:6). Talk no more of these Canaanites who would stay in the land; but say of the blessed Spirit, "He is well able to drive them out."

But **put on** the Lord Jesus Christ,
and **make no provision** for the flesh in regard to its lusts.
(Ro 13:14+)

Judges 1:28 And it came about when Israel became strong, that they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but they did not drive them out completely.

- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passage:

Deuteronomy 10:12-13 - "Now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require from you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, 13 and to keep the LORD'S commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today for your good?"

And it came about when Israel became strong, that they put the Canaanites to forced labor. This is a sad verse. Israel did increase in strength but then they misused God's blessing! This can happen to believers also beloved! The LXX translates **forced**

labor with Greek word **phoros** = tribute paid to a foreign ruler whether levied on houses, lands, or persons (Lu 20:22). Incompleteness of the destruction of the Canaanites was the basic problem. And at the core of that problem was the problem of Israel's heart. They failed to heed the warnings of Moses (see the related passage above, one that could only be fulfilled by a circumcised heart Dt 10:16).

Forced labor - 5x - Judg 1:28 Judg 1:30 Judg 1:33 Judg 1:34 Judg 1:35

Why "forced labor"? The obvious reason is to maximize income! Make money using other people! Why not, as this is an easy way to increase wealth!

Moses earlier had instructed the nation to use the residents of peaceful cities near Canaan as FORCED LABORERS, but the peoples of Canaan were to be totally destroyed (Dt 20:11-17).

Instead of expelling these enclaves which Israel was perfectly able to do she put them to forced labor, in violation of Jehovah's commands. The picture Judges 1 demonstrates that Israel was largely in control of Canaan, clearly successful and yet disobedient. Pragmatic success and spiritual failure — a sad combination. Believers of every age much take heed for it is possible for the believer to demonstrate the marks of success and yet be a failure in the eyes of God. Christian success (whether in secular business or in an ostensibly "successful" church) does not necessarily equate with pleasing God.

Ralph Davis comments that Judges 1 underscores the importance of faithfulness in the "small" things writing that...What seemed so reasonable proved lethal. Living with Canaanites led to worshiping with Canaanites. Tolerate Baal's people and sooner or later you bow at Baal's altar. But it seemed like a rather small matter at the time. After all, Sinai didn't smoke when Israel "did not dispossess" the Canaanites. "Faithful in little" (cf. Luke 16:10) hardly describes our idea of a glamorous career, but nothing else much matters in the kingdom of God. Let each man examine himself. (Ralph Davis, D. Focus on the Bible: Judges)

But they did not drive them out completely. Compare Judges 1:30,33,35. This **but** is a tragic term of contrast. They could have and they should have but they would not drive them out completely.

Seven times we read that they **did not drive them out completely.** (Judg 1:27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33).

It is interesting to note that Jos 10:40 reports that Joshua had "utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the LORD God of Israel commanded (Jos 11:14,15+). In the early part of his conquests, Joshua evidently swept rapidly through the southern cities, destroying everyone he encountered. Presumably there were many who escaped by hiding in the hills or elsewhere. Furthermore, the conquest of northern and western regions was never completed. So the an evil seed in the form of remnants of the various Canaanite nations obviously remained and either retained or regained enough strength to cause great problems to Israel during the period of the judges.

THOUGHT - Isn't this the nature of sin not totally vanquished? Sin is deceitful (Heb 3:13+). It ever seeks by [subterfuge](#) or overt conquest to take over the control center of our heart (Ro 6:12,13+). Thus vigilance against and merciless destruction of the sin in our hearts (Mt 5:29-30+) is mandatory for the one who desires to walk uprightly with the Lord.

A lesson for today - The most miserable people in the world are believers who will not commit themselves to the Lord Jesus. They do not have the best of both worlds but the worst. That was true in the time of Judges, and it is true today. If as Christians we try to walk the tightrope of compromise and partial obedience, we will not know spiritual victory and God's blessing and power in our lives! We will know the bitterness of defeat and frustration in our Christian lives.

Tolerance and suicide are congenial bedfellows.

-- D R Davis

Davis writes that "The motivation for driving out Canaanites was not pragmatic but spiritual. Yahweh had warned through Moses: "Do not let those people live in your country; if you do, they will make you sin against me. If you worship their gods, it will be a fatal trap for you" (Ex 23:33TEV). **Remaining Canaanites would not be so much a military threat as a spiritual cancer**(see Ex 23:23-33; Ex 34:11-16; Dt 7:1-5). That's why Israel was to eliminate the Canaanites and other "-ites." That's why Israel was to wreck and demolish all their worship centers (every Saint-Baal-on-the-Hill Shrine and Our Lady of Harvest Chapel). To be sure, Yahweh would make them able to do this in a somewhat gradual manner (Ex 23:29, 30). But it was to be done. If Canaan's native populations are tolerated, it will lead Israel willy-nilly to intermarriage with them — and you can kiss covenant faith good-bye (Ex 34:15,16; Dt. 7:3, 4). **Grandkids will know Yahweh as an also-ran fertility god** So our writer's phrase "they **did not dispossess**" rings with spiritual emergency. It is the preacher's accusation of God's people for covenant failure. They are like a surgeon who removes only part of the cancer because even cancer has a right to grow and find fulfillment. Tolerance and suicide are congenial bedfellows. ([Ralph Davis, D. Focus on the Bible: Judges](#))

QUESTION - [Why did the Israelites take the Canaanites as slaves instead of destroying them as they were instructed?](#)

ANSWER - Joshua 17:12–13 notes, “The Manassites were not able to occupy these towns, for the Canaanites were determined to live in that region. However, when the Israelites grew stronger, they subjected the Canaanites to forced labor but did not drive them out completely.” Why didn’t the Israelites completely [destroy the Canaanites](#) as God had commanded?

Jdg 1:27–33 also describes the failure of the Israelites to complete the conquest of the land through removing the Canaanites. Jdg 1:27–28 states, “Manasseh did not drive out the people of Beth Shan or Taanach or Dor or Ibleam or Megiddo and their surrounding settlements, for the Canaanites were determined to live in that land. When Israel became strong, they pressed the Canaanites into forced labor but never drove them out completely.”

At the height of their power during this time, the Israelites made the Canaanites slaves rather than wiping them out. Perhaps the Israelites believed putting these people into forced labor was more beneficial than destroying them, though the text does not directly mention a reason. However, it is clear from Judges 2 that this decision was part of Israel’s disobedience that led to additional problems.

In Judges 2:1–3 the [angel of the Lord](#) delivers a message to Israel: “I brought you up out of Egypt and led you into the land I swore to give to your ancestors. I said, ‘I will never break my covenant with you, and you shall not make a covenant with the people of this land, but you shall break down their altars.’ Yet you have disobeyed me. Why have you done this? And I have also said, ‘I will not drive them out before you; they will become traps for you, and their gods will become snares to you.’” These Canaanites would remain in the land and serve as enemies to the Israelites, a thorn in their side for years to come. The struggles recounted in the [Book of Judges](#) are the result of the incomplete obedience in the [Book of Joshua](#).

It is clear that God chose Israel as His people not because they were the most faithful but because of His love for them (see Dt 7:7–8). God chose to fulfill His [covenant with Abraham](#) and his descendants, bringing the children of Israel into their land despite their many failures.

While it is easy to look back and note the weaknesses of the ancient Israelites, their example illustrates our need for God as well. Despite God’s many blessings, we fail Him, too. That is why God sent His perfect Son, Jesus Christ, to be the substitute for our sins. Through faith in Him, we can have a relationship with God today as well as eternal life (Jn 3:16; Eph 2:8–9). [GotQuestions.org](#)

JUDGES 1:28ff—Were the Canaanites destroyed or merely subjugated?

PROBLEM: Joshua 10:40 declares that “Joshua conquered all the land ... he left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the Lord God of Israel had commanded.” But only a short time later, when the people occupied the land they had conquered, Judges 1:28 says Israel “did not completely drive them out,” but “put the Canaanites under tribute.” But if they had been utterly destroyed, then how could they still be there a few years later?

SOLUTION: It seems evident that Joshua at first only conquered the land as a whole, but did not literally destroy every part of it. He first swept through and gained the major victories, leaving the minor battles for the later settlers to fight. So, “utterly destroying all that breathed” is either a figure of speech for his general victory or a hyperbole for his complete success. However, even if it is understood more literally, it is qualified by the phrase “left none remaining” (Josh. 10:40). This says nothing about those who fled only to return after Joshua’s armies turned northward to fight other battles. No doubt, in this interim, many of the Canaanites returned to occupy their homes and to be a continual thorn in Israel’s flesh. (Geisler - When Critics Ask)

Judges 1:29 Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites who were living in Gezer; so the Canaanites lived in Gezer among them.

- Joshua 16:10; 1Ki 9:16
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites who were living in Geze Neither did - It does not say "could not" but in essence they would not! Disobedience. Compromise. Sin. Sowing seeds which will be reaped (Ga 6:7, Ho 8:7)

Yarash is a key verb in this last section of Judges 1 occurring 11 times (Jdg. 1:19; Jdg. 1:20; Jdg. 1:21; Jdg. 1:27; Jdg. 1:28; Jdg. 1:29; Jdg. 1:30; Jdg. 1:31; Jdg. 1:32; Jdg. 1:33; - all the other uses in Judges = Jdg. 2:6; Jdg. 2:21; Jdg. 2:23; Jdg. 3:13; Jdg. 11:21; Jdg. 11:22; Jdg. 11:23; Jdg. 11:24; Jdg. 14:15; Jdg. 18:7; Jdg. 18:9)

The tribe of Joseph was composed of Ephraim and Manasseh, Manasseh being divided into two half tribes, one on the Eastern side of the Jordan (this territory included Bashan. The other half tribe of Manasseh was on the Western side of the Jordan and included Shechem, Beth-Shan, Megiddo.

As a believer are you settling for less than complete victory?

THOUGHT - "We read this story, and we think, How foolish these Israelites were not to obey the commandment of God! But don't we do exactly the same? Don't we settle for less than complete victory over our sins and bad habits? Don't we say, "Well, yes, I do have a problem with anger (or gossip, or swearing, or impure thoughts, or alcohol, or tobacco), but it's just one little bad habit! I mean, we all need one small vice, don't we?" No! God says that it is these little things that we accommodate ourselves to and compromise with that eventually defeat us and destroy us! (**ED**: cf Song 2:15+) We cannot afford to settle for anything less than complete victory. (Ray Stedman Adventuring through the Bible:)

So the Canaanites lived in Gezer among them: Ephraim settled for compromise which ultimately meant catastrophe. Gezer was a chief city of Palestine strategically located in the foothills, 18 mi W of Jerusalem overlooking miles of fertile fields and controlling the juncture of the arterial highway from Egypt to Syria and the main road from the Mediterranean coast up the valley of Aijalon to the interior of the hill country and Jerusalem. Gezer guarded the approaches to the foothills and Jerusalem from the NW as Lachish did from the SW. Gezer was one of the last major cities to come under full control of Israel. Gezer was conquered by Joshua (Jos 12:12;16:10).

Among is a key word in this last section of Judges 1 - Jdg 1:29, Jdg 1:30, Jdg 1:32, Jdg 1:33 - all are translated with same words in Hebrew (qereb - in the midst of; Lxx = en mesos - meaning "in the middle" used in Php 2:15+ of believers in a good sense as "salt and light" but in the present context Israel's salt had lost its flavor and was good for nothing - cf Mt 5:13+!)

By 1200 B.C. the city had succumbed to the Philistine invasion of S Palestine. Gezer later fell to an Egyptian Pharaoh, who gave it to his daughter on her marriage to Solomon. Excavations have revealed extensive fortifications from the Solomonic period (1Ki 9:17). Gezer (then called Gazara) served as an important military fortress during the time of the Maccabees.

Related Resources:

- [Who was Ephraim in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What can we learn from the tribe of Ephraim? | GotQuestions.org](#)

Judges 1:30 Zebulun did not drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, or the inhabitants of Nahalol; so the Canaanites lived among them and became subject to forced labor.

- **Nahalol** - Josh 19:15
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Zebulun did not drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, or the inhabitants of Nahalol; so the Canaanites lived among them-
Again we encounter that sad refrain "**Did not drive out.**"

So - Introduces the result.

Among them - Right in their midst; LXX = mesos = in the middle of , cp Jdg 1:29, 30, 32,33) Among is Hebrew **'qereb**" which means primarily in the midst of by the Greek word "kardia" for heart (seat of physical, spiritual, mental life)! Kardia is not the Gk word used here but the thought is still is worth pondering. What occupies the middle of your heart?

And became subject to forced labor: Note the progression.

Failure to drive out

v

Lived in middle of

v

Integrated into their work & social life

This progressive insidious infiltration of the evil Canaanites reminds me of the little saying...

**Sow an act, and you reap a habit.
Sow a habit and you reap a character.
Sow a character and you reap a destiny**

for yourself
your family
your church
your world.

Judges 1:31 Asher did not drive out the inhabitants of Acco, or the inhabitants of Sidon, or of Ahlab, or of Achzib, or of Helbah, or of Aphik, or of Rehob.

- **Asher:** Jos 19:24-30
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Asher did not drive out the inhabitants of Acco: The first four cities are on the Mediterranean coast north of Mount Carmel and in this area the Canaanites retained much of their former strength that was lost elsewhere. **Acco** - Mediterranean seaport N of Mt Carmel. NT city of Ptolemais or present-day Acre. Acco, the Ptolemais of the Greeks and Romans (Acts 21:7), and called Saint John of Acre by the Crusaders, is situated on the Mediterranean, in a fine plain, at the north angle of a bay to which it gives name, and which extends in a semicircle of three leagues as far as Carmel, and nine leagues from Tyre.

Yarash is a key verb in this last section of Judges 1 occurring 11 times (Jdg. 1:19; Jdg. 1:20; Jdg. 1:21; Jdg. 1:27; Jdg. 1:28; Jdg. 1:29; Jdg. 1:30; Jdg. 1:31; Jdg. 1:32; Jdg. 1:33; - all the other uses in Judges = Jdg. 2:6; Jdg. 2:21; Jdg. 2:23; Jdg. 3:13; Jdg. 11:21; Jdg. 11:22; Jdg. 11:23; Jdg. 11:24; Jdg. 14:15; Jdg. 18:7; Jdg. 18:9)

Or the inhabitants of Sidon, or of Ahlab, or of Achzib, or of Helbah, or of Aphik, or of Rehob **Sidon (note)** The northern part of Asher's territory became an important maritime kingdom of Phoenicia, with which David and Solomon entered into alliance (2 Sam. 5:11; 1 Kgs 5:1-12). Here the cities of Tyre and Sidon led a strong **Canaanite culture** with vigorous **Baal worship**. Their culture and religion had a strong influence on Israel, especially during the reigns of King Solomon (he intermarried with a Sidonian woman - 1Ki 11:1) and King Ahab. **Jezebel came from Phoenicia and married Ahab**, introducing **Baal worship** into Israel (1Ki 16:31) and thus the **tribe of Asher** reaped for Israel what she had sown, a principle in both the Old and New Testaments as shown in the following passages...

Hosea 8:7 For they sow the wind And they reap the whirlwind. The standing grain has no heads; It yields no grain. Should it yield, strangers would swallow it up.

Hosea 10:13 You have plowed wickedness, you have reaped injustice, You have eaten the fruit of lies. Because you have trusted in your way, in your numerous warriors,

Galatians 6:7-8+ **Do not be deceived**, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. 8 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

Campbell observes "The passage before us shows a sharply deteriorating situation. In Judges 1:27-30 the Canaanites are pictured living among the Israelites and are eventually reduced to slave laborers; in verse 31-33 Asher and Naphtali live among the Canaanites, but the Canaanites dominate; finally in verse 24 the Danites are completely dispossessed by the enemy!"

Related Resource:

- [Why was the worship of Baal and Asherah a constant struggle for the Israelites? | GotQuestions.org](#)

Judges 1:32 So the Asherites lived among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land; for they did not drive them out.

- Ps 106:34-35
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

So - Term of conclusion. Based on Asher's failure to drive out the enemy.

The Asherites lived among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land - Note the change in this verse compared with Jdg 1:27, 29, 30 where we read the Canaanites persisted or lived among the Israelites. Now it reads that the **Asherites lived among the Canaanites!** (cf Similar descriptions of Naphtali and Dan - Jdg 1:33-35). This suggests Asher seems to have failed completely in dislodging the Canaanites, and thus the change in their description. The way this verse is phrased suggests Asher in direct disobedience to God made little or no attempt to drive out the Canaanites, merely moving in among them! Woe!

Campbell comments - The price of disobedience was high. From this territory (later known as Phoenicia) came Jezebel who married Ahab and introduced Baal Worship into Israel (1Kin 16:31)!

Among the Canaanites - in their midst and the Greek (LXX) uses **mesos** which means in the middle of! (Compare Jdg 1:29, 30, 32,33)

Psalm 106:34; 35 They did not destroy the peoples, As the LORD commanded them, 35 But they **mingled** (Lxx = mignumi = blend into one substance, mingle 2 or more substances - Mt 27:34) with the nations And **learned** (Lxx = [manthano](#)) their practices,

for they did not drive them out. ([Yarash](#) take possession, dispossess):

[Yarash](#) is a key verb in this last section of Judges 1 occurring 11 times (Jdg. 1:19; Jdg. 1:20; Jdg. 1:21; Jdg. 1:27; Jdg. 1:28; Jdg. 1:29; Jdg. 1:30; Jdg. 1:31; Jdg. 1:32; Jdg. 1:33; - all the other uses in Judges = Jdg. 2:6; Jdg. 2:21; Jdg. 2:23; Jdg. 3:13; Jdg. 11:21; Jdg. 11:22; Jdg. 11:23; Jdg. 11:24; Jdg. 14:15; Jdg. 18:7; Jdg. 18:9)

Judges 1:33 Naphtali did not drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh, or the inhabitants of Beth-anath, but lived among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land; and the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and Beth-anath became forced labor for them.

- **Naphtali:** Jos 19:32-38
- **he dwelt:** Jdg 1:32
- **became:** Jdg 1:30,35 Ps 18:24
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Naphtali did not drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh [Naphtali \(note\)](#) [Beth Shemesh](#): "house of the sun" probably derives from a place where the Semitic god Shemesh (Shamash) was worshiped. Another more famous Beth Shemesh was located in Judah (1Samuel 6).

[Yarash](#) is a key verb in this last section of Judges 1 occurring 11 times (Jdg. 1:19; Jdg. 1:20; Jdg. 1:21; Jdg. 1:27; Jdg. 1:28; Jdg. 1:29; Jdg. 1:30; Jdg. 1:31; Jdg. 1:32; Jdg. 1:33; - all the other uses in Judges = Jdg. 2:6; Jdg. 2:21; Jdg. 2:23; Jdg. 3:13; Jdg. 11:21; Jdg. 11:22; Jdg. 11:23; Jdg. 11:24; Jdg. 14:15; Jdg. 18:7; Jdg. 18:9)

Or the inhabitants of Beth-anath: [Beth Anath](#): Contains the name of Anath, the Canaanite goddess of war and both consort and sister of Baal.

But lived among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land; and the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and Beth-anath became forced labor for them: Beth-Shemesh (home of the sun) and Beth-Anath ("house of Anath") most likely a reference to Canaanite shrines (the sun god and Anath, the fertility goddess and consort of Baal). The implication is that idolatry would become entrenched in the land. Idolatry always destroys moral fiber (for one reason because it is usually closely linked to immorality).

Canaanites are a picture of the world which is intractably, irrevocably opposed to Jehovah, His Word and His sheep. To live among them as "friends" is to invite sure disaster to our soul. This does not at all rule out "friendship evangelism", which in fact is the "Jesus Way" (cp Lk 4:18, 19, Mt 9:10, 11, 12, 13). It is merely a word of caution that we maintain our separateness (not "weirdness") and not "assimilate" with their anti-god mindset and actions.

Lived among (literally remained or dwelt in the midst - Lxx = [katoikeo](#) = This verb is used repeatedly in Judges 1 and in the NT means to settle down and abide, even take up permanent abode (A key verb in Judges 1 - Jdg. 1:9; Jdg. 1:10; Jdg. 1:11; Jdg. 1:16; Jdg. 1:17; Jdg. 1:19; Jdg. 1:21; Jdg. 1:27; Jdg. 1:29; Jdg. 1:30; Jdg. 1:31; Jdg. 1:32; Jdg. 1:33; Jdg. 1:35) **Katoikeo** is used repeatedly in the Revelation of those who chose the world over God - Rev 6:10; 8:13; 11:10; 13:8, 12, 14; 17:2, 8 - See discussion of the fate of **Earth Dwellers**)

Jesus prayed for His sheep to be *in* the world but not *of* the world...

Jn 17:14 "I have given them Thy word; and the world has hated them, because they are **not of the world**, even as I am not **of the world**. 15 "I do not ask Thee to take them out **of the world**, but to keep them from the evil one. 16 "They are not of the world, even as I am **not of the world**. 17 "Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth. 18 "As Thou didst send Me into the world, I also have sent them **into the world**.

THOUGHT - Note that setting apart by the Truth, the Word, precedes sending out into the world! Without the Word, the World will ensnare and destroy the Lord's "sheep". Are you in the Word, so you might be able to be in but not of the World? Or are you in the World, because you are not allowing the Word to richly dwell within your heart and mind? (cp Col 3:16-note)

Forced labor = Jdg 1:28, 30, 33, 35. This speaks of the inevitable bondage to sin (Ro 6:16-note, Jn 8:34, Pr 5:22-note, 2Pe 2:19-note) when we chose to commit adultery with the world (Jas 4:4-note)

Judges 1:34 Then the Amorites forced the sons of Dan into the hill country, for they did not allow them to come down to the valley;

- Jdg 18:1 Jos 19:47
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

DANITES DON'T DEFEAT AND ARE "DEFEATED"!

Then the Amorites forced the sons of Dan into the hill country --The Hebrew verb **forced** ([lachats](#)) means to exert pressure, as pictured by Balaam's donkey **squeezing** his foot against a wall (Nu 22:25) or of holding a door shut (2Ki 6:32). In the present context [lachats](#) describes how the Amorites restricted the Danites to the hill country. Forced in the Greek **LXX** is the verb [ekthlibo](#) which means squeezed much, greatly distressed. This verb presents a vivid picture of what happens when one refuses God's will and way (His provision of power) in lieu of his own will and way.

Like all other tribes, Dan had a territory given them, but they failed to claim the power of God to conquer that territory. Later they capitulated even more by accepting defeat and migrating to another territory in the north, becoming idolatrous (Jdg 18:1-31). One wonders if Dan's blatant rebellion in failing to lay hold of what God promised them has anything to do with their not being mentioned in the list of tribes in Revelation 7:4-6? (See [Why is the tribe of Dan missing from the 144,000 in Revelation chapter 7?](#))

For (term of explanation) **they did not allow them to come down to the valley**. Dan was eventually forced to search for new territory to the north (Judges 18:1-31+), doing what appeared right in their own eyes (though it was wrong in God's eyes). The Danites felt that the boundary lines had not fallen for them **"in pleasant places"** (Ps 16:6). Their desire to move in (Judges 18:1-31) revealed a lack of faith in the Lord who had allotted to them their original territory. How many of us are like Dan? We have been given all things necessary for life and godliness, we have Christ in us the hope of glory, and yet we still find ourselves squeezed by our circumstances, grumbling at the lot the Lord has given us?

These facts taken together may suggest that the events in Jdg 17+ and Jdg 18 occurred relatively early in the 300+ year period of Judges. Samson however was the last judge (excepting Samuel) in this book and chronologically appears to be near the end of the 300 years of cycles. There may have been a small remnant of Dan remaining in the region of their original possession.

Cundall comments that there is "An evidence of design on the part of the writer may be observed at this stage. He notes the increasing deterioration of the situation; in Jdg 1:27-30 the Canaanites dwell amongst the Israelites and are eventually reduced to the status of slave-labourers; in the case of **Asher and Naphtali** (Jdg 1:31-33) the Canaanites dominate but the Israelites remain; but in Jdg 1:34 the **Danites** are completely dispossessed. ([Judges and Ruth: An Introduction and Commentary](#))

Forced ([03905](#)) [lachats](#) means to physically push against someone or something, to squeeze, to crush and has the sense of pressing, crowding or tormenting. Used literally twice of Balaam's donkey in [Nu 22:25](#) "When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, she **pressed** herself to the wall and **pressed** Balaam's foot against the wall, so he struck her again." "Hold the door shut" in [1 Ki 6:32](#). [Lachats](#) is used repeatedly in the dark days of Judges (lasted some 1200 years!) when Israel would be oppressed by some pagan enemy and would cry out to God for deliverance. The only problem was they kept falling back into sin after a period of rest! Sounds too familiar to my life sometimes!

QUESTION - [What can we learn from the tribe of Dan?](#)

ANSWER - The tribe of Dan was the group of people who descended from the fifth son of Jacob, [Dan](#). Jacob had twelve sons who became the patriarchs of the twelve tribes of Israel. **The history of the tribe of Dan is especially instructive to us in that it contains multiple examples of the tendency of people to follow man-made religion over biblical faith in God.** This is totally contrary to the Scriptures that teach us “no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law” (Romans 3:20) and “without faith it is impossible to please God” (Hebrews 11:6).

As the Israelites came into the land of Canaan, by lot certain areas of territory were assigned to each tribe. The tribe of Dan was given a tract of land that was smaller than the other land grants but was fertile and also had a boundary along the Mediterranean Sea where there was fishing and commerce available to them.

However, the tribe of Dan never fully conquered this area as a result of a lack of faith in God. This was true of the other tribes as well, as the early chapters of the book of Judges clearly teach, and led to a time during the period of Judges where it was said, “In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.” Judges 18:1–31 tells the story of the people of Dan falling into idolatry. They also did not like the territory that was theirs, so they sent out spies to find a better area. In the north, some representatives of Dan learned of an area where a peaceful group of people lived. The tribe of Dan took things into their own hands and wiped out the people of that land so they could then move the entire tribe up to a region close to the sources of the Jordan River, just south of present-day Lebanon. There they established their main city and called it Dan.

Later in the history of the Hebrews, the kingdom was divided after the reign of Solomon. The kingdom split into Israel's ten tribes in the north and Judah's two in the south. The people of Dan were in the northern kingdom of Israel. We learn in 1 Kings 12:25–33 that King Jeroboam was afraid that those who lived in his kingdom in the north would still go down to the southern kingdom to worship at Jerusalem, since that was where the temple that God had authorized was located. So Jeroboam built two additional altars for the people of his nation to worship. He established worship in the south at Bethel and in the north at Dan. He built a golden calf at each location and instituted special days and feasts when people would meet. Sadly, this man-made worship at Dan has been one of its lasting legacies.

Today, many people follow various man-made religions and are convinced that all ways lead to God. Unfortunately, these groups follow the ways of the tribe of Dan. Proverbs 16:25 tells us that “there is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.” Jesus taught that the way to God was specific when He said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except by Me” (John 14:6). John 3:36+ teaches that “he who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.” To learn from the mistakes of Dan would be to worship the God of the Bible alone and live for Him by faith. [GotQuestions.org](#)

Judges 1:35 yet the Amorites persisted in living in Mount Heres, in Aijalon and in Shaalbim; but when the power of the house of Joseph grew strong, they became forced labor.

- **Aijalon** Jdg 12:12; Jos 10:12
- **Shaalbim** Jos 19:42; 1Ki 4:9
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passage:

Joshua 17:13 It came about when the sons of Israel became strong, they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but they did not drive them out completely.

Yet the Amorites persisted in living in Mount Heres, in Aijalon and in Shaalbim --The Hebrew verb **persisted** (ya'al) means they made a choice to stay and it conveys the nuance of determination and resolve.

Heres - on border between Judah and Dan. In successive phases of Israel's history Aijalon was inhabited by Danites (who could not expel the Amorites), Ephraimites and Benjaminites (Jos 19:42; Jdg 1:35; 1Chr 6:69; 8:13).

But when the power (yad - literally hand ~ power) **of the house of Joseph grew strong** ("became heavy" - [kabad](#)), **they became forced labor** (Jdg 1:30, 33, 35): **Amorites became forced labor** - The darkness is no match for the light (cp Jn 1:5 = The light can never be conquered or overcome because it keeps on shining [present tense]. The darkness continually attempts to overcome [or comprehend] the light, but is unsuccessful.)

Judges 1:36 And the border of the Amorites ran from the ascent of Akrabbim, from Sela and upward.

- Nu 34:4 Jos 15:2
- [Judges 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

And the border of the Amorites ran from the ascent of Akrabbim: Ascent of Akrabbim Fittingly this name means "ascent of scorpions"! This final statement in the chapter shows how much land was in the hands of the Amorites. The "Ascent of [Akrabbim](#)" (cf. NIV mg.), or "Scorpion Pass," is located south of the Dead Sea, at the southern border of the Promised Land (Jos 15:2, 3).

From Sela and upward: (Isa 16:1 Obadiah 1:3 2Ki 14:7) [Sela](#) ("the rock") also known as [Petra](#) - This famous rock city was the capital of Edom. The Edomites thought it was a completely safe fortress, almost impregnable because some of the surrounding cliffs are 2,000 ft high and because of the very narrow gorges which were its only access routes. Pride in human ingenuity (Ob 1:3) and security is blind to the matter of God's all-seeing eye. Such pride is antithetical to the person of God. Edom also controlled the chief trade routes between Asia and Egypt, becoming very prosperous because of close proximity to the King's Highway.

F B Meyer...JUDGES 1 ENEMIES CAST OUT

Whether this book is taken to represent the disorders of the professing Church, or those darker ones which convulse the soul, this chapter is full of holy lessons and instruction. Israel began right by asking counsel of God, and by endeavoring to ascertain His plan (Judges 1:1). If only we would build according to God's pattern, seek the works He has prepared, and war in this spirit, we should be more successful and useful. And there is much beauty in the suggestion that the different tribes of the one Church should help each other in the war (Judges 1:3).

There should be more of this holy alliance between Christian brethren -- Judah asking Simeon to go with him, and then going with Simeon (Judges 1:3, 17). We should beckon to our partners in the other ship (Luke 5:7) to come and help us; if we did, we should lose nothing. We cannot have more than what our boat can carry, and it is an additional pleasure if their boat is also full to the water's edge. When shall we learn that the success of one is the success of all (1Cor. 12:26)? We must never fail to go up against our foes, though we know and are sure that our going up is useless, unless the Lord deliver.

Judges 1:4-11 Judah's success. -- Judah was to be first, because the strongest tribe; strength is given for service. To whom much is given, of him much is required. And is it not true that the Lion of the tribe of Judah must ever lead the way? But our strength avails not unless God gives the victory. The fate of the tyrant Adoni-Bezek was acknowledged by himself to be deserved (Jas 2:13; Rev 13:10-note); at the same time it was a barbarous infliction, which shows how vast is the change wrought on the world by the Spirit of Jesus. It was impossible for God to lead men immediately into the gentle manner of the Gospel (Mt 19:8).

Judges 1:12-15 Caleb's portion. -- Twice over is this incident told (Josh. 15:13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19). Thus does God love to emphasize the exploits of His people. Kirjath-sepher is "the city of books" and was perhaps the university town, for the records of the nations were kept there. Othniel afterwards became the first Judge (Judges 3:9). The request of Caleb's daughter for "springs of water" was cheerfully granted. Our Father, like Caleb, loves His children to ask freely for what they want. He gives to all liberally, and upbraideth not.

But it is only the men, who, like Caleb, wholly follow the Lord, they who are entirely consecrated to His service, who are able to give a blessing to others. It is the privilege of those who have received the fulness and anointing of the Holy Ghost to open up that blessing to others, teaching them how to receive it. Alas for these repetitions of "could not" (Judges 1:19) (**Ed: "did not"** = Jdg 1:21, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33). The strength of the "chariots of iron" seem to have unnerved Judah, who, in their own strength, were not able to subdue the people in the valleys; but the Lord could have done it for them, if only they had obeyed and trusted Him. It is not our strength or weakness that is in question, but our faith in God's ability (**Ed:** In a sense, is is our trust in God's strength in our weakness that allows Him to work as He will - 2Co 12:9+; 2Cor 12:10+).

Judges 1:19-36 Failure. -- Among the failure of the tribes to drive out the inhabitants of the land, Joseph stands out as an exception -- "the Lord was with them" or, as the Chaldee version puts it, "the Word of the Lord was their helper," i.e., the Lord Himself, the true Captain of the host. But the people of the other tribes did not avail themselves of God's help. Either through unbelief or cowardice, or both, Israel failed to expel their foes, and settled down among them, laying up for themselves some very bitter experiences. Asher even submitted to the predominance of the Canaanites among whom it dwelt.

Oh, how many of us shrink from the cross, and from waging war against inbred sin to the knife? And thus, when we had seemed to be free from Satan's slavery, we are brought again into his captivity. We must give no place to sin. We must pursue each evil with relentless severity. We must, by the grace of the Spirit, appropriate the cross of Christ as our lot and destiny, and mortify each unholy passion. We have only to avail ourselves of God's help, and all this is possible. (F. B. Meyer. CHOICE NOTES ON JOSHUA

EXCURSUS ON TYPOLOGY

(See more notes on **Typology**)

As an aside, the preceding NT verses from 1 Corinthians 10 are examples of the important doctrine of **typology** which on one hand is neglected by many in the church or on the other extreme is misused and abused by others. The abuse by some should not detract us from an honest Spirit illuminated study of **typology** in the Scriptures, as it will be not only edifying, but increase our faith and hope in God's redemptive plan for mankind and for each of us individually.

Dr S Lewis Johnson defines **typology** as

"the study of spiritual correspondences between persons, events and things within the historical framework of revelation."

([Lectures on Typology on Leviticus 3 \[Pdf, MS Word, Mp3\]](#) - 12 part series highly recommended if you are struggling to understand the relevance of Leviticus to you as a NT believer. You will be edified and blessed! If you are really serious I would recommend downloading Lesson 1 [\[click here for Pdf\]](#) from Precept Ministries, which will give you an excellent introduction to Leviticus as Lesson 1 covers chapters 1-7. If you want more, you can get the book and do the other 6 lessons.)

Secular dictionaries define **typology** as a doctrine which holds that things in Christian belief are prefigured by things in the Old Testament.

Typology describes the situation when something done in the OT is brought to notice and is shown to have signified something done or about to be done in the NT.

The typological relation between the two Testaments was summed up in Augustine

In the OT the NT lies hidden; in the NT the OT stands revealed.

(Paraphrase "The Old is the New concealed, while the New is the Old revealed.")

Stated another way **typology** is the study of Biblical comparisons made between persons, events, things and institutions of one biblical period and those of another, most often between the OT and the NT (there are also comparisons between persons, events, etc in the Old Testament but these are less common).

Typology in Scripture serves to demonstrate the unbroken continuity in God's plan of redemptive history between the Old and New Testaments, and this alone should encourage us in our faith in God's Word of Truth and His trustworthy character (1Th 5:24-ntoe).

The New Bible Dictionary has an interesting definition of **typology** describing it as...

A way of setting forth the biblical history of salvation so that some of its earlier phases are seen as anticipations of later phases, or some later phase as the recapitulation or fulfilment of an earlier one... In the NT the Christian salvation is presented as the climax of the mighty works of God, as the 'antitype' of His 'typical' mighty works in the OT. (Wood, D. R. W. New Bible Dictionary. InterVarsity Press)

The Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible writes that typology as the...

Branch of biblical interpretation in which an element found in the OT prefigures one found in the NT. The initial one is called the **type** and the fulfillment is designated the **antitype**. Either **type** or **antitype** may be a person, thing, or event, but often the type is Messianic and frequently refers to salvation. In working with types, the safest procedure is to limit them to those expressly mentioned in the Bible (cf. 1Cor 4:6). On the other hand, it is argued that such an approach limits the legitimate use of types, for some obvious types are not mentioned in the NT. Further, the types given in the NT are examples which demonstrate how to find others in the OT.

Some examples may serve to identify some biblical **types** and **antitypes**: Jesus said to Nicodemus,

As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up" (Jn 3:14; cf. Nu 21:9)

The Passover lamb (Ex 12:1-13, 49) is a type of Christ (1Cor 5:7)

The rock from which Israel drank in the wilderness (Ex 17:6) prefigures Christ (1Cor 10:3, 4).

The Book of Hebrews is replete with examples of **types** which represent the **Messiah**. All of the sacrifices ordained by the ritual law which God gave at Sinai typified some aspect of the person and work of Jesus. The blood that was sprinkled on the altar spoke of the blood of the One Who was slain once for all (Heb 9:12-22-see notes).

In biblical study a **type** differs from **allegory**, which generally spiritualizes Bible history (**Ed note**: for more discussion of allegory and related topics see [\[i.\] Art and Science of Interpretation](#); [\[ii.\] The Rise of Allegorical Interpretation](#); [\[iii.\] Understanding Symbols and Figures](#) and [\[iv.\] Understanding Numbers](#)) . In the early church this technique was carried to exaggerated lengths by Origen and followed by others...

There are details which are singled out as types. For example, in the directions for the celebration of the **Passover**, it is said of the roasted lamb, "*you shall not break a bone of it*" (Ex 12:46). This is repeated by the psalmist in Psalm 34:20 as a predictive prophecy. In the account of the crucifixion of Jesus (John 19:31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36), the Jews requested that the legs of the victims be broken to hasten their death so the bodies could be removed from the crosses before the Sabbath. When the soldiers came to Jesus, they found that he was already dead and did not break his legs. (more discussion of typology including differentiation from illustration, parable, (Elwell, W. A., & Beitzel, B. J. Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible. Page 2109. Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Book House. 1988) (Bolding added)

See related article on [Typology in Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#)

The **type** is the initial person, event, thing or institution while the corresponding and later person, event, thing or institution is called the **antitype** (copy, counterpart). And thus the Apostle Paul portrays **Christ as the antitype of Adam (the type)** in Romans 5:12-21 writing...

Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him Who was to come. (Ro 5:14-note) (**Comment**: To summarize Romans 5:12-21, just as Adam the **type** represented all mankind in the fall, so that when he sinned, all mankind sinned, so too Christ the **antitype**, in His death, burial and resurrection represented all mankind who are to be redeemed by grace through faith in His finished work. All mankind is either in Adam or in Christ [cf 1Cor 15:22]. In Christ believers have access to a high position and glorious privileges that we could never have had in Adam [e.g., seated in Christ at the right hand of the Father! Ep 2:6-note])

The essential components of typology include...

(1) Correspondence - There is a correspondence (agreement of things with one another) between the events of the OT and their fulfillment in the NT.

(2) Historicity (historical actuality or authenticity) - Typology does not speak of allegory (symbolic representation) but of events which actually occurred in time and space. Typology deals with events that are historically true and actually happened. In short, typology should not be confused with allegorical interpretation which assigns so-called "deeper meanings" to biblical persons, events, things or institutions. The actual history of the biblical story is unimportant in allegorical interpretation whereas in typology the history is essential. And thus the original **historical** event is viewed as the **type** and the later **corresponding** event is the **antitype** that parallels, fulfills and/or even transcends the type (as Christ the antitype did Adam the type - see note above).

The historical context and grammatical meaning of the Old Testament texts must to be sought out and adhered to diligently or otherwise the OT events would have had no validity if they had not actually happened. Typology seeks to interpret how these historical texts foreshadowed the historical Christ.

(3) Predictiveness - This feature arises out of the fact that God works according to the patterns that are revealed in the OT and they find their fulfillment in the NT. It follows that the "types" of the Old Testament point forward to their ultimate fulfillment in the NT.

In regard to this latter point **S T Gundry** writes that...

That one point of agreement is that the essence of a type is that it is in some sense predictive, every bit as predictive as a verbal utterance of predictive prophecy. Typology was regarded as a species of predictive prophecy. The correspondence between type and antitype, whatever the nature of that correspondence, was not a mere analogy nor an artificially imposed scheme on the part of the writers of scripture; the Old Testament types were foreshadowings in a predictive sense of Christ and his saving person and work. Though

the Old Testament writers may have been unaware of these things, still God in His inspiration of them intended this result. This universally accepted point of typology must be recognized before the significance of the next development can be seen. (Gundry, S T, Typology as a Means of Interpretation: Past and Present. Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society Volume 12:237, Fall, 1969)

The Pocket Dictionary for Biblical Studies gives us an excellent example of a *historical, corresponding, predictive type* and *antitype* writing that...

the sacrifice of Isaac, Abraham's "beloved son," in Genesis 22 is picked up in the NT as a type of Christ, God's beloved Son given for all. God's redemptive activity in the one event comes to completion in the second. Both occurrences are real and concrete, but they transcend mere chronological or causal correspondence and signify the ongoing redemptive activity of God in creation. (Patzia, A. G., & Petrotta, A. J. Pocket Dictionary of Biblical Studies. Page 120. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press. 2002).

The **basic presuppositions** which justify the use of **typology** as an interpretative method include...

(1) The OT history is divine salvation history. The writer of Hebrews says that...

God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son (see **notes** Hebrews 1:1; 1:2)

In other words, God's revelation came to man in various ways - dreams, vision, institutions (e.g., the tabernacle, the priesthood) , by events (e.g., the Passover and the Exodus from bondage in Egypt) and the events that followed (e.g., wilderness wanderings) and led to Israel's entrance into the "promised land". In short, the OT history is divine salvation history.

(2) The OT history is Christological and all points forward to various facets (think of the facets of a diamond) of the life and ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ, not just His first coming but also His second coming. The OT from Moses through the prophets constitutes a revelation of the things that specifically point to and describe the Messiah.

One danger in interpretation of OT types as pointing to Christ is to look for "hidden" meanings underlying the primary and obvious meaning and when this happens typology shades into allegory. This practice has in fact caused many to shy away altogether from typological interpretation of the Old Testament, but that is akin to proverbially "throwing the baby out with the bath water." Typology has a valid place in hermeneutics (science or study of the methodological principles of interpretation, in this context referring to the Scriptures), but it must stay within well defined bounds, lest it become fanciful and foolish. The shift from typology to allegorical interpretation occurred in the first century AD and unfortunately dominated the interpretative methods throughout the Middle Ages, unto the time of the Reformation.

Gundry records that...

Calvin and Luther brought about a new epoch in the typological interpretation of scripture with their return to the **literal sense** and **methodical exegesis** of scripture. With this renewed concern for the **grammatico-historical** sense came a new appreciation of **typology**. A typology grounded in an appreciation of the historical verities (cf "**Historicity**") precipitated a distinction once more between the typological and allegorical, though neither Calvin nor Luther worked out a system of typology of his own. But through them typology had gained a new lease on life. But once again it soon began to run wild in the fanciful production of far-fetched types. (Ibid)

A popular question in Christian circles has been "**What would Jesus do?**" which is a good question to ask of **typology**. What saith the Scriptures?

In **Luke 24**, as the two believers in Messiah were walking on the road to Emmaus discussing the events of Jesus' crucifixion, the Lord appeared to them (but his identity was veiled to them)...

And He said to them, "O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! "Was it not necessary for the Christ (the Messiah) to suffer these things (betrayal, unjust trial, cruel crucifixion) and to enter into His glory?" And beginning with Moses (the first 5 books of the OT, the Pentateuch) and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures. (Luke 24:25, 26, 27, cf "*all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms*" in Luke 24:44, cf also Peter's pronouncement in Acts 3:18 to the Jews at Pentecost - "*the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ should suffer, He has thus fulfilled.*" See also **notes** on the phrase "**according to the Scriptures**" in 1Co 15:3, 4-notes).

In **John 3** as Jesus explained the new birth to Nicodemus, He used a reference to the Old Testament to make His point to the spiritually blind "teacher of Israel" (Jn 3:10)...

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness (**type**), even so must the Son of Man be lifted up (**antitype**); that whoever believes may in Him have eternal life." (Jn 3:14,15 compare with Nu 21:7, 8, 9)

In **John 6** Jesus' followers after having been served bread by the Lord, asked Him...

"What then (Jesus had just declared "*This is the work of God, that you believe in Him Whom He has sent!*") do You do for a sign, that we may see, and believe You? What work do You perform? "Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'HE GAVE THEM BREAD OUT OF HEAVEN TO EAT.'"

Jesus therefore said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven (**type**), but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven (**antitype**). For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world... I am the living bread (**antitype**) that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread also which I shall give for the life of the world is My flesh." Jn 6:30, 31, 32, 33, 51 compare the "**type**" in Ex 16:4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, cp. Neh 9:15, Ps 78:24,25)

(3) The OT history is pedagogical (relating to, or befitting a teacher or education). This means the the OT Scriptures were divinely planned and intended to teach us certain truths today.

For whatever was written in earlier times (refers to OT) was written for our instruction, that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope (absolute assurance that God will do God to us and for us in the future). (See **note** Romans 15:4)

And so we see that Paul clearly taught that the OT was divinely planned not only to instruct the OT saints but NT saints as well. (cf 1 Corinthians 10:6, 11).

(4) The OT history is partial and incomplete. Peter alluded to this in his first letter recording that...

As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful search and inquiry, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ (cf prediction = "the type"; fulfillment = "the "antitype") and the glories to follow. (1Pe 1:10, 11-note)

The OT prophets sought to know the times and circumstances by which their prophecies would come to pass but their knowledge was **partial and incomplete**. Peter then explains that "these things... now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you (believers in the NT era) by the Holy Spirit" (1Pe 1:12-note). In other words, these truths which were **partial and incomplete** in the OT had now been revealed to saints in the NT. The OT clearly had a meaning in its historical context but also had a "fore" meaning in light of NT revelation.

It needs to be underscored that **typology** is not an invitation to fanciful interpretations of the truths in the OT. On the other hand, some teach that we should *never* attempt to see things in the OT which are not there in a historical-grammatical sense. There is clearly some truth in this caution for we are not to attempt to see typology that has no support (no historicity, correspondence or predictiveness). To do so would lead to fanciful, potentially erroneous and harmful interpretation.

On the other hand, there is no validity to the idea that we are not to interpret the OT in light of the NT. The NT in fact was written in light of the foundational teaching in the OT. For example, it would be very difficult to understand the Messianic promise in Genesis 3:15 if we did not understand the rest of the Bible. But from the perspective of NT revelation, when we look at the OT, we are able to see things that we could not have seen without the light of revelation of the NT. The truth of the OT is unchanged, but our ability to see the different facets of that truth is changed.

In the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, **William G. Moorehead** has a balanced, well reasoned discussion on **typology** noting that...

The Bible furnishes abundant evidence of the presence of **types** and of **typical instruction** in the Sacred Word. The New Testament attests this fact. It takes up a large number of persons and things and events of former dispensations, and it treats them as adumbrations (**Ed note**: vague foreshadowing) and prophecies of the future.

A generation ago a widespread interest in the study of typology prevailed; latterly the interest has largely subsided, chiefly because of the vagaries and extravagances which attended its treatment on the part of not a

few writers. Pressing the typical teaching of Scripture so far as to imperil the historical validity of God's word is both dangerous and certain to be followed by reaction and neglect of the subject.

1. Definition of Type:

The word **type** is derived from a Greek term **tupos**, which occurs 16 times in the New Testament. It is variously translated in the King James Version, e.g. twice "print" (Jn 20:25); twice "figure" (Acts 7:43; Romans 5:14 [note]); twice "pattern" (Titus 2:7 [note]; He 8:5 [note]); once "fashion" (Acts 7:44); once "manner" (Acts 23:25); once "form" (Ro 6:17 [note]); and 7 times as example" (1Cor 10:6,11; Php 3:17 [note]; 1Th 1:7 [note]; 2 Thess 3:9; 1Ti 4:12; 1Pe 5:3 [note]).

It is clear from these texts that the New Testament writers use the word **type** with some degree of latitude; yet one general idea is common to all, namely, **likeness**.

A **person, event or thing** is so fashioned or appointed as to resemble another; the one is made to answer to the other in some essential feature; in some particulars the one matches the other. The two are called **type** and **antitype**; and the link which binds them together is the **correspondence**, the similarity, of the one with the other...

Types are pictures, object-lessons, by which God taught His people concerning His grace and saving power. The Mosaic system was a sort of kindergarten in which God's people were trained in divine things, by which also they were led to look for better things to come. An old writer thus expresses it:

"God in the types of the last dispensation was teaching His children their letters. In this dispensation He is teaching them to put the letters together, and they find that the letters, arrange them as they will, spell Christ, and nothing but Christ."

In creation the Lord uses one thing for many purposes. One simple instrument meets many ends. For how many ends does water serve! And the atmosphere: it supplies the lungs, conveys sound, diffuses odors, drives ships, supports fire, gives rain, fulfills besides one knows not how many other purposes. And God's Word is like His work, is His work, and, like creation, is inexhaustible. Whatever God touches, be it a mighty sun or an insect's wing, a vast prophecy or a little type, He perfects for the place and the purpose He has in mind.

2. Distinctive Features:

What are the distinctive features of a type? A type, to be such in reality, must possess three well-defined qualities.

(1) It must be a true picture of the person or the thing it represents or prefigures. A **type** is a draft or sketch of some well-defined feature of redemption, and therefore it must in some distinct way resemble its **antitype**, e.g. Aaron as high priest is a rough figure of Christ the Great High Priest, and the Day of Atonement in Israel (Leviticus 16:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7f) must be a true picture of the atoning work of Christ.

(2) The type must be of divine appointment. In its institution it is designed to bear a likeness to the antitype. Both **type** and **antitype** are preordained as constituent parts of the scheme of redemption. As centuries sometimes lie between the type and its accomplishment in the antitype, of course infinite wisdom alone can ordain the one to be the picture of the other. Only God can make types.

(3) A type always prefigures something future. A Scriptural type and predictive prophecy are in substance the same, differing only in form. This fact distinguishes between a **symbol** and a **type**. A **symbol** may represent a thing of the present or of the past as well as of the future, e.g. the symbols in the Lord's Supper. A **type** always looks to the future; an element of prediction must necessarily be in it.

3. Classification of Types:

Another thing in the study of types should be borne in mind, namely, that a thing in itself evil cannot be the type of what is good and pure. It is somewhat difficult to give a satisfactory classification of **Biblical types**, but broadly they may be distributed under three heads:

(1) Personal types, by which are meant those personages of Scripture whose lives and experiences illustrate some principle or truth of redemption. Such are Adam, who is expressly described as the "figure of him that was to come" (see note Romans 5:14),

Melchizedek, Abraham, Aaron, Joseph, Jonah, etc.

(2) **Historical types**, in which are included the great historical events that under Providence became striking foreshadowings of good things to come, e.g. the Deliverance from the Bondage of Egypt; the Wilderness Journey; the Conquest of Canaan; the Call of Abraham; Deliverances by the Judges, etc.

(3) **Ritual types**, such as the Altar, the Offerings, the Priesthood, the Tabernacle and its furniture. There are typical persons, places, times, things, actions, in the Old Testament, and a reverent study of them leads into a thorough acquaintance with the fullness and the blessedness of the Word of God (**Ed note**: Amen!)

4. How Much of the Old Testament Is Typical?:

How much of the Old Testament is to be regarded as typical is a question **not easily answered**. Two extremes, however, should be avoided.

First, The extravagance of some of the early Fathers, as Origen, Ambrose, Jerome (revived in our time by Andrew Jukes and his imitators). They sought for types, and of course found them, in every incident and event, however trivial, recorded in Scripture. Even the most simple and commonplace circumstance was thought to conceal within itself the most recondite truth. Mystery and mysticism were seen everywhere, in the cords and pins of the tabernacle, in the yield of herds, in the death of one, in the marriage of another, even in the number of fish caught by the disciples on the night the risen Saviour appeared to them--how much some have tried to make of that number, 153! The very serious objection to this method is, that it wrests Scripture out of the sphere of the **natural** and the **historical** and locates it in that of the arbitrary and the fanciful; **it tends to destroy the validity and trustworthiness of the record.** (**Ed note**: And this latter is the gravest potential danger, for if the Scriptures lose their trustworthiness, our faith is affected. We don't lose our salvation but we can become spiritually "weak" for "*faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.*" see note Ro 10:17)

Second, the undue contraction of the typical element. "Professor Moses Stuart expresses this view as follows: "Just so much of the Old Testament is to be accounted typical as the New Testament affirms to be so, and no more." This opinion assumes that the New Testament writers have exhausted the types of the Old Testament, while the fact is that those found in the later Scripture are but samples taken from the storehouse where many more are found. If they are not, then nothing is more arbitrary than the New Testament use of types, for there is nothing to distinguish them from a multitude of others of the same class. Further, the view assumes that divine authority alone can determine the reality and import of types--a view that applies with equal force against prophecy.

This rule may be safely followed: wherever the three characteristics of types are found which have been already mentioned, there is the type.

Weighty are the words of one equally eminent for his piety as for his learning:

"That the Old Testament is rich in types, or rather forms in its totality one type, of the New Testament, follows necessarily from the entirely unique position which belongs to Christ as the center of the history of the world and of revelation. As we constantly see the principle embodied in the vegetable and animal kingdoms, that the higher species are already typified in a lower stage of development, so do we find, in the domain of saving revelation, the highest not only prepared for, but also shadowed forth, by that which precedes in the lower spheres" (Van Oosterzee).

(**Ed note**: Gundry in his article amplifies Moorehead's comments writing that...

Though the man whose name designates this group was not the originator of this view, a group known as the school of Bishop Marsh propagated the rule of thumb that a type is a type only when the New Testament specifically designates it to be such. Since this is a clear and precise formula, it has exercised a great influence on conservative Protestant interpretation since the time of Marsh. However, a more moderate school of thought pointed out that the New Testament practically invites the interpreter to find additional

types in Scripture. Thus, this mediating school tried to resist the wild extravagances of the Cocceian school (The Cocceian school of the mid-seventeenth century fell into the irregularities of the ancient allegorists), but it still insisted that the possibilities of a typological interpretative method were certainly greater than Bishop Marsh had suggested. Hence, **the mediating school** suggested that there were two varieties of types:

- 1) **innate types**, or those specifically declared to be types in the New Testament; and
- 2) **inferred types**, or those not specifically designated in the New Testament but justified for their existence by the nature of the New Testament materials on typology.

The most able systematizer and defender of this approach has been Patrick Fairbairn, and he is supported by Terry in his *Biblical Hermeneutics*. In present-day conservative Protestantism (fundamentalism, evangelicalism, orthodoxy or whatever other term may be regarded as descriptive) the above three approaches to typology continue to co-exist. There are those who play the typological theme to the point that it practically amounts to allegorical interpretation. In reaction to these excesses, Bishop Marsh has many modern followers; but probably the majority of modern conservative Protestants seek to maintain a mediating position similar to that of Fairbairn and Terry. ([Gundry, S. T. Typology as a Means of Interpretation: Past and Present. Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society Volume 12:237, Fall, 1969](#))

LITERATURE - P. Fairbairn, *Typology of Scripture*, 2 volumes ([Free online](#)); Angus, *The Bible Handbook*; Andrew Jukes, *Law of Offerings in Leviticus*; Mather, *Gospel of Old Testament, Explanation of Types*; McEwen, *Grace and Truth: Types and Figures of the Old Testament*; Soltau, *Tabernacle, Priesthood and Offerings*. (**Orr, J., M.A., D.D. The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia: 1915 edition**)

STUDY GUIDE - JUDGES

LESSON 1

Goals - · Cover the overview of book of Judges placing primary emphasis on the purpose for the writing of the book of Judges

- Understand the setting of the book of Judges (Jdg 1) > shows the incomplete obedience of the children of Israel due to their not driving out the enemies completely.
- Review the cycle (Jdg 2) which was a consequence of failure to completely drive out their enemies
- Cycle: forsook God, followed other gods, oppressed by enemies, cried out to God, God raised up judges to deliver. etc.
- This cycle of events affected their general lifestyle. (Jdg 17-21)
- Lifestyle result of fact that bc there was no king in Israel, everyone did what was right in his own eyes

Application

1. Is your obedience to the Lord complete or is your obedience only partial? Partial obedience is complete disobedience!
2. Are you becoming comfortable with the mores and morals of the "Canaanites?" (What do you watch on Netflix?)
3. Are you being seduced by the false gods of this godless world system?
4. In what ways are you compromising with the [world](#), the [flesh](#) and/or the [devil](#)?
5. Are you willing to obey Paul's charge in Romans 13:14+ to "put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts." Or are you already making provision for the lusts of your flesh today, even as you read this application point?
6. Is your allegiance to the Living God alone, or have you become your own god and are doing what is right in your own eyes?
7. What "Canaanites" are you refusing to drive out of your life?
8. Are you beginning to become comfortable with the "Canaanites," even being willing to live in their midst?
9. What are the "iron chariots" in your life? How are you handling them? Are you fearful (fear full) or faithful (faith full)?
10. Have you [cried out](#) to your Heavenly Father to come to your aid (cf Heb 2:18+) in the face of these fearful "iron chariots"?
11. Do you fully understand the important spiritual dynamic of God's Sovereignty and Your (my) Responsibility?

What type of literature is Judges?

History (and even though there was no king it is still "His-Story")

When in history of Israel did book of Judges take place?

Links the entrance of CoI under Joshua > promised land with inception of a series of kings over united Israel (Saul, David, Solomon).

When?

after the death of Joshua (Jdg 1:1)

Because Judges historical literature, the easiest things to see will be the events. Easiest way to understand book is to look at the **people, places, and things mentioned in the various events**. Start by looking at events in Judges 1. Your goal is to watch the key repeated phrases and subjects in the chapters that help recognize purpose of book of Judges. You want to understand the reason for the Judges account in the Bible.

Gives far more than just a historical account of the reign of the various Judges in the history of the Children of Israel. Vital message for our lives.

Emphasis is to handle the book by segments.

But to do so must begin with Judges 1.

What was the main theme of ch1 ?

- Repeated Key Phrase > theme
- "Enemies not completely driven out"(Not used after Jdg 1)
 - "drive out" 6x
 - "lived among" 3x
 - "forced labor" 4x
- Pattern emerges early - Israel did not drive out the enemies.

Ask - which tribes mentioned in this list that did not drive out the enemies?

- (1) Judah took possession of the hill country but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley. (Jdg 1:19)
 - "bc had iron chariots"
- (2) Benjamin did not drive out (Jdg 1:21)
 - [Jebusites]
- (3) Manasseh did not take possession of the country (Jdg 1:27)
 - [Canaanites]
- (4) Ephraim did not drive out the Canaanites completely.(Jdg 1:29)
 - [Canaanites]
- (5) Zebulun did not drive out the inhabitants(Jdg 1:30)
 - [Canaanites]
- (6) Asher did not drive out the inhabitants(Jdg 1:31,32)
 - [Canaanites]
- (7) Naphthali did not drive out the inhabitants(Jdg 1:33)
 - [Canaanites]
- (8) Dan not allowed into valley (Jdg 1:34)
 - [by Amorites]

As pattern seen, ASK - what is the theme of Jdg 1?

- They did not drive out the enemies completely.
- Record as title for first Jdg 1.

Want to understand the book from seg divisions which will show purpose for the writing of the book.

Ask -

What did you see the relationship to be between Jdg 1 and the rest of the judges?

Or to ask another way...

What does Ch1 show that would set it off as a segment division?

- The setting of the times
- Record as seg division.

- All rest of book understood in this setting
- Setting = did not drive out the enemies completely

What does the segment show regarding the problem that the Children of Israel are experiencing?

Problem = disobedience.

Did not drive out the enemies completely.

Incomplete obedience.

Setting = enemies not driven out.

Problem = disobedience = Incomplete obedience

SUMMARIZE:

Webster's "setting" = place, time & circumstances in which something occurs or develops

Place = Canaan (Promised Land)

Time = "after Joshua died"

Circumstances = did not drive out their enemies bc partial obedience (~disobedience)

What about Ch2? What is the theme of Ch2?

Look for key repeated phrases or events.

What happens over and over in Ch2?

- Result of disobedience of Children of Israel => did not tear down idolatrous altars
- Cycle that repeats itself over and over

What requirements had been placed on Israel and what had Israel failed to do that shows the results of the incomplete obedience to drive out the enemies?

- God reminds them in Jdg 2 that he'd told them not to make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land but to tear down their altars. [Jdg 2:2]
- Says - you have not obeyed me.
- Result = cycle began in hx of Children of Israel. Spelled out in Jdg 2

What is cycle as summarized in Jdg 2:11?

- Did evil in the sight of the Lord and they served the Baals (Jdg 2:11). They served the gods of the people
- In serving the Baals, the cycle is that
- Forsook the Lord, Jdg 2:12
 - Did evil 2:11
- Followed other gods from among the people & bowed Jdg 2:12
- Provoked the Lord to anger, Jdg 2:12
- Lord gave them > hands of plunderers
 - Sold then > enemies or their oppressors, Jdg 2:14
 - Severely distressed Jdg 2:15
- Cried out (groaning) to the Lord Jdg 2:18
- Lord raised up judges who delivered them Jdg 2:16
- Israel did not listen to their judges Jdg 2:17
- But followed the gods of the people again and started through the cycle again
- Result was that God declared that he would no longer drive the nations out from among them. Jdg 2:3, 21

Capsule the message in Jdg 2. How title Jdg 2?

- Identify the cycle

Did evil > Were oppressed > Cried out > God delivered

What is the relationship of Ch2 to the rest of the book?

Trying to understand the purpose of the book by looking at the various segment division, by being able to identify the structure of the book.

In Jdg 2 = overview (general survey) of the times.

Jdg 2 gives capsule of events recorded in chap3-16

Record on VA. Help to show segments

The cycle repeated over and over in Ch2 that serves as an overview =>> Ch3-16 give the very specific historical accounts of the

experiences of the Children of Israel that are described in the overview in Jdg 2.

REVIEW:

Ch1 - The Setting. Children of Israel were not obedient to the Lord. Incomplete obedience = disobedience. They did not drive out the enemies completely.

Ch2 - The Overview for book of Judges & shows results or consequences of incomplete obedience.

forsook the Lord.

did evil.

God gave over to oppressors.

Cried out.

God raised up a judge.

God delivered them.

The judge would die and then the cycle would begin again.

=====

VA. Opposite Chs 3-16 block off segment = history of times

Ask - can they identify that segment?

What do chs3-16 relate?

Specific history of the times.

The different times that the Children of Israel did evil, forsook God, cried out, and God raised up a judge, and God delivered them.

ASK -- What about chs17-21?

Hint: Ask - what phrase repeated several times in Chs17-21?

no king in Israel and everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

If everyone is doing what is right in his own eyes, what would these chapters be showing?

Lifestyles of the Times. Record as segment.

Now go through structure of the book as labeled in Segments.

If the book is going to be properly understood and handled in the weeks to come, it needs to be understood within its context. Not just the specific historical events, but want to understand these events in light of the purpose that God is trying to accomplish through giving us this account.

Setting - incomplete obedience. Did not drive out their enemies.

Jdg 1

Overview - result of not driving out enemies. Cycle.

Jdg 2

History - cycle spelled out ch by ch with various events.

Jdg 3-16

Lifestyle - in 17-21 see lifestyle is not in chronological order but was representative of the life during this entire period of judges.

Historical account of the judges 3-16 somewhat chrono order.

Events of 17 -21, simply picture of the way people lived during the time of the judges.

ASK - what would you say the book of judges is showing?

What would the purpose for writing the book be?

As the segments are evaluated - one of the purposes of this book would be to show the results of incomplete obedience.

All of the tragic historical events & the lifestyle flow form the

Setting which ~ incomplete obedience.

What was result?

When took first step and decide not to fully obey God, the second step was that they forsook God. & this Incomplete obedience led to idolatry which ultimately led to immorality.

Record opposite segments.

Once God was forsaken, they became their own gods in that THEY DID WHAT WAS RIGHT IN THEIR OWN EYES!

See that the book has been given to us to SHOW US THE RESULT OF INCOMPLETE OBEDIENCE.

ASK - what about you?

- Does your life exemplify total, absolute obedience to the Lord?
- Is there incomplete obedience in your life?
- Is there any area in your life that you know God has told you to walk a certain way, that He has told you to drive out the enemies, yet you have chosen incomplete obedience. (1Co10:6,11,12, Ro15:3, Pr30:5, Ps12:6, 2Ti3:16,17)

These things are written as warnings to instruct us

See that incomplete obedience leads to idolatry

Ultimately to immorality

Bottom line to incomplete obedience = you do what is right in your own eyes.

THINK FOR A MOMENT:

Do you know someone involved in immorality? what is their root problem? who is the god in their life? what does God call being your own god? (idolatry). What is idolatry associated with? (immorality)

Before begin to title the chapters,

ASK - based on what seen, how identify the theme of the book of Judges?

Two ways to look at theme:

- See the theme from the author's obvious reason for writing - the results of incomplete obedience.
- Look at book from historical perspective - theme is to give the history of the judges. Ultimately, history of judges shows purpose and results of incomplete obedience.

LOOK AT HISTORY OF THE JUDGES.

Theme of each historical chapter and then lifestyle chapters.

Relate historical facts back to purpose of book - show results of incomplete obedience.

=====

ASK - what theme of Ch3?

Set stage: Context:

Why did God left the nations to test Israel -two reasons?

- Be taught war Jdg 3:2
- Test Israel to see if Israel would obey Jdg 3:4

What historical accounts given in Ch3 that show this cycle?

Cycle summarized in Jdg 3:7 (cp 2:11)

- Children of Israel sold into hands of king of Mesopotamia Jdg 3:8
- Children of Israel cry out to God. Jdg 3:9
- He raises up a judge - Othniel Jdg 3:9
- Delivered them from hands of Mesopotamia Jdg 3:9
- Rest for 40yr Jdg 3:11

Cycle begins again - Why? What is the timing?

- Did evil Jdg 3:12
- Moab takes over the Children of Israel and oppressed them
- Ehud raised up to deliver them

Last deliverer Jdg 3:31

- Shamgar struck down 600 Philistines and saved Israel

Record. Othniel/Ehud/Shamgar

=====

Chap 4. Cycle repeats.

- Children of Israel did evil Jdg 4:1
- Taken over by Canaanites
- Col cried to the Lord Jdg 4:3
- God raised up Deborah who was given a word from God for Barak, who agreed to fight if she fight with him so the honor of killing General Sisera went to Jael

What took place historically in Jdg 4?

- Deborah and Barak and Jael's victory over the Canaanites.

Record. Deborah/Barak/Jael

REMEMBER:

Chs 3 - 16, history of cycle, result of incomplete obedience.

Remind - the setting is incomplete obedience, but cycle [because it repeats itself over and over] shows insincere repentance.

Jdg 5. Theme? Has to do with Song of Deborah.

Record. Song of Deborah.

Ask - what does Jdg 5 accomplish?

· More specific details concerning the defeat of the enemy by Deborah and Barak and Jael.

Be sure understand that the various accounts of deliverance by the judges shows God's deliverance. God raised up judge. God, through the judge, accomplished the deliverance.

Jdg 4,5 = segment in that both chs have to do with Deborah, Barak & Jael deliverance of the Children of Israel.

NEXT SEGMENT CONCERNING THE Hx OF THE TIMES?

Segment on Gideon.

CHs6-8 give account of Gideon's deliverance of Israel.

What is the repeated phrase? What is the timing? Jdg 6:1

after God's deliverance of the Children of Israel from the Canaanites through Deborah, the Children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord and the Midianites then oppressed Israel. God raises up Gideon.

What takes place in Ch6? How title?

· Gideon's call.

· Shows God's dealing with Gideon as He calls Gideon out as the deliverer of Israel.

What about Ch7? How title? What took place historically?

· Gideon and 300 defeating Midian.

· Record as title.

ASK - why did God have Gideon reduce his army to 300 in order to defeat the Midianites?

· See that God is ultimate deliverer.

· Reduced army to 22,000 => 300 so could be clearly seen that the defeat of Midian was a result of the hand of God and not their own efforts or their own armies.

What about Ch8? What takes place historically?

· Gideon defeats Midian. (135,000) Jdg 8:10

· Gideon refuses being crowned king but makes an ephod. [Will deal with tragic account of building the ephod and leading Children of Israel to play harlot against God.]

Chs6, 7, 8 show life and deliverance of Gideon from Midian

CH9? What event takes place? Who is the deliverer?

· Gideon's son Abimelech

· He proclaims himself the leader after assassinating Gideon's heirs

· Abimelech slays the enemy Gaal

· Abimelech slain fulfilling the curse of Jotham (one survivor)

Record. Abimelech Slays and Is Slain

The specific details of these historical events will be studied in great depth in weeks to come. Today, as deal with accounts, want to see cycle of events that took place bc originally the Children of Israel did not drive out the enemies. The incomplete obedience resulted in idolatry. Idolatry resulted in being given over to the enemy. Each time, once oppressed and cried out, God delivers them and raised up a judge and cycle begins again. Result of incomplete obedience, in every case, did what was right in their own eyes.

What about Ch10?

· Accounts of Tolar and Jair.

· They judged Israel for a period of time.

Significant statement concerning God's attitude toward Israel's disobedience. Ch10:6,13 ASK - what was the statement?

- God reminded Children of Israel that when they cried out before, He had delivered them and they had still forsaken Him.
- Therefore, He said that He would deliver them no more.
- But the mercy of God is seen clearly, bc when the Children of Israel cried out to the Lord, He says that He can bear their misery no longer.
- See God's deliverance of the Children of Israel once again.

What about Ch11,12?

- Have account of Jephthah
- Jephthah's victory and vow in Ch11. Record for Jdg title.
- Jdg 12 - conclusion of Jephthah's deliverance and mention of:
 - Ibzan
 - Elon
 - Abdon

Each account shows cycle of events in lives of Children of Israel.

Remind that these very specific historical accounts of the judges show us lessons that we can learn. Clearly seen as the book is understood in light of the various segments which clearly show the purpose of the writing of the book.

Who was the last deliverer mentioned in the book of Judges?

- Samson
- Jdg 13-16 give account of Samson's deliverance

Who was the enemy?

- Nation of the Philistines

What about Ch13? How title? What subject?

- Concerned Samson's birth & Setting Apart from Womb. Record.

What about Ch14? How title?

- Samson's Philistine wife

What about Ch15?

- Samson kills 1000 Philistines

What about Ch16?

- Samson, Delilah & Death

What remember about Samson's ultimate deliverance?

- In his death, when he pushed down the pillars of the Temple, he killed more than he did in his life.
- See Samson as the deliverer.

Chs17-21 show lifestyle of the Children of Israel.

What is subject in Ch17?

- Account of Micah hiring a Levite priest. Record.

Chp Jdg 18?

- Events surrounding the Danites taking the priest, land, and image. Record.

These two chps show lifestyle of Children of Israel.

- Show that Children of Israel were doing what was right in their own eyes.
- They were determining their own standard for how they were to worship.
- See in study in weeks to come that they were going against God's ordained ways for worship

What about Ch19?

- Account of the Levite and the concubine.
- Record.
- Lifestyle one of immorality.

What about Judges 20?

- Children of Israel warring against the sons of Benjamin.
- Record.

What about Judges 21?

- Account of Israel's search for wives for the sons of Benjamin.
- As result of war between Israel and Benjamin, had to find wives for sons of Benjamin bc had almost destroyed one whole tribe.

Remind - Judges 17-21 record events indicative of lifestyle of entire period.

As conclude - remind that

- purpose of the book is to show that incomplete obedience led to idolatry and idolatry led to immorality
- Disobedience to God resulted in forsaking God and resulted in their becoming their own gods.
- These are the results/consequences of disobedience.
- The book of Judges clearly shows God's wrath.
- But it also shows God's mercy and deliverance.

ASK - what about you? Are you living in incomplete obedience?

1. Is your obedience to the Lord total and complete or is your obedience only partial?
2. Are you walking in incomplete obedience to the Lord as the Children of Israel were in the book of Judges?
3. Are you following after other gods?
4. Is your allegiance to God and God alone, or have you become god and are doing what is right in your own eyes?