

Judges: The Sin Spiral

Introduction

Hebrew title—*shophetim* which refers to heroes, deliverers, or warrior rulers.

English title—comes from the Septuagint (*Liber Judicum*)

Judges covers a period of about 340 years—from the time of Joshua (1390 B.C.) to the time of Samuel and the rise of the kings (1050 B.C.). Turbulent, transitional times.

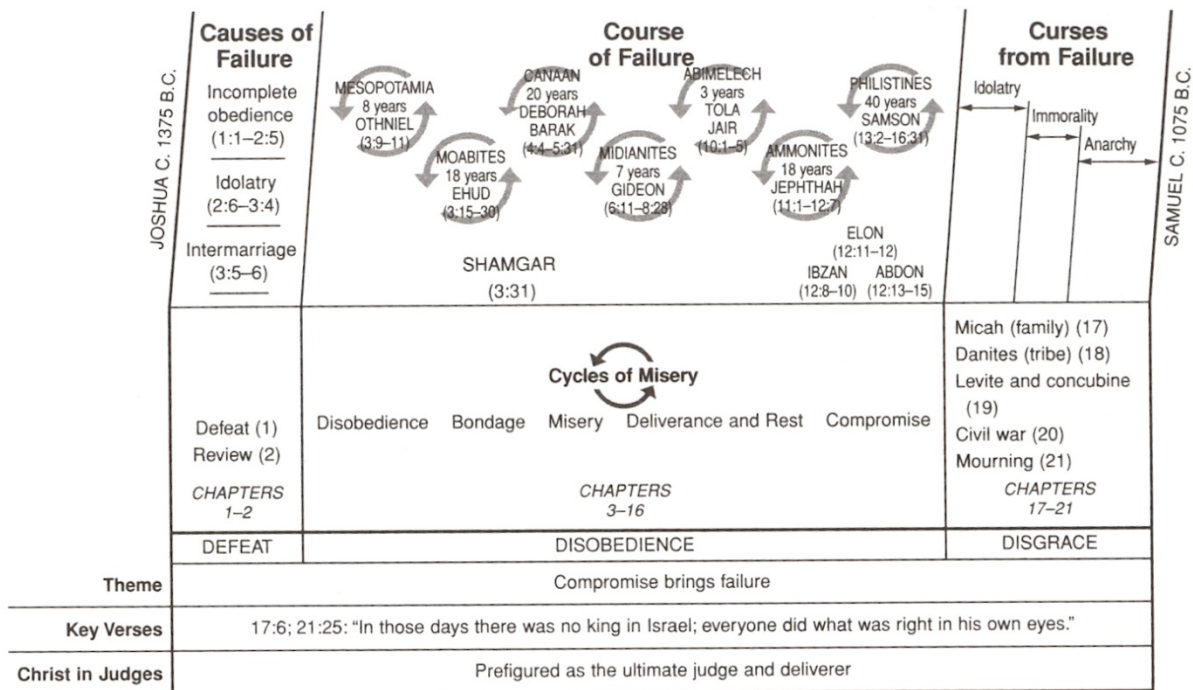
I. The Author—probably written by Samuel in about 1020 B.C. (Jewish Talmud).

II. The Audience—the people of Israel in the Promised Land

III. The Aim—to demonstrate God’s discipline of the people for their disobedience and blessing and deliverance when they would turn to Him in repentance and to demonstrate the need for a king.

IV. The Arrangement Main story revolves around 7 cycles of sin, subjugation and salvation

The “Dark Ages” of Israel’s History



The book begins by looking backward (1:1) and ends by looking forward (21:25). The people settled for *coexistence* rather than *conquest*.

V. The Analysis “There was no king in Israel . . . everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”

Four Judges are listed in the Hall of Faith in **Hebrews 11:32** (Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah)

The Days of the Judges

Judge	Tribe	Enemy Defeated	Years of	
			Oppression	Rest
<u>Othniel</u>	Judah	Mesopotamia	8 yrs	40 yrs
<u>Ehud</u>	Benjamin	<u>Moabites</u>	18 yrs	80 yrs
<u>Shamgar</u>	?	Philistines	?	?
Deborah	Ephraim	Canaanites	20 yrs	40 yrs
Gideon	Manasseh	<u>Midianites</u>	6 yrs	40 yrs
<u>Tola</u>	Issachar	?		23 yrs
<u>Jair</u>	Manasseh	?		22 yrs
Jephthah	Manasseh	Ammonites	18 yrs	6 yrs
<u>Ibzan</u>	Judah	?		7 yrs
<u>Elon</u>	<u>Zebulun</u>	?		10 yrs
<u>Abdon</u>	Ephraim	?		8 yrs
Samson	Dan	Philistines	40 yrs	20 yrs

Jephthah’s Vow

Judges 17—21 3 gruesome stories: Idolatry and prostitution of the priesthood (17-18); gang rape and murder of a Levite’s concubine (19); and a punitive battle against the tribe of Benjamin (20-21)

The “Bethlehem Trilogy”

VI. The Application

1. God relentlessly offers His grace to those who don’t deserve it, seek it, or even appreciate it after they’ve received it.
2. God wants lordship over every area of our lives, not just some (no half-hearted discipleship).
3. There’s a need for continual spiritual renewal in our lives. Spiritual decline is inevitable, so renewal is always needed.
4. We need a true Savior.
5. God is present and in control, no matter what it looks like.

VII. The Assignment