



By Jeff Smith  
teachpreach@gmail.com

Haymarket Church of Christ  
haymarketcofc@live.com  
<http://haymarketcofc.org>

Cover Art: The Word Cloud was created using Wordle.  
The text used was the first four chapters of Joshua. Word  
size is proportional to the number of times the word is  
used. The largest word occurs most often in the passage.

**Table of Contents**

Lesson	Book	Chapters	Topic	Page
1	Joshua	1:1-5:12	Preparing to Enter Canaan	2
2		5:13-8:35	Victory and Defeat: Jericho and Ai	3
3		9:1-12:15	Deception and Conquest	5
4		13:1-17:13	Dividing the Land, Part 1	7
5		18:1-21:45	Dividing the Land, Part 2	9
6		22:1-24:33	Victorious Israel Charged by Joshua	10
7	Judges	1:1-5:31	Introduction and the First 5 Judges	11
8		6:1-10:5	Gideon, Tola and Jair	12
9		10:6-12:15	Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon	14
10		13:1-16:31	Samson	15
11		17:1-21:25	Appendices	16
12	1 Samuel	1:1-8:22	The Last Judges	17
13	Ruth	1:1-4:22	The Book of Ruth	18



**Study Questions:**

1. What and where is the first Biblical reference to Joshua?
2. What does Joshua literally mean?
3. How old was Joshua when this book opened? (Joshua 5:6, 14:7, 10)
4. Locate Jericho on a map of Palestine (page 1). Why was it important for Israel to conquer Jericho?
5. How did it come to pass that Joshua was respected by the Israelites? (Joshua 3:7)
6. Who was Rahab and what did she do for Israel's spies? (Joshua 2:1-4)
7. What reputation had preceded Israel? (Joshua 2:9-11)
8. How and why was Rahab saved when Jericho fell? (Joshua 2:14)
9. When Israel crossed over the Jordan into the Promised Land what did the 12 stones signify?
10. How did Israel get across the swollen Jordan River? (Joshua 3:14-16)
11. What admonition did Jehovah repeatedly give Joshua? (Joshua 1:6,7,9)
12. Why were so many Israelites circumcised prior to crossing into Canaan? (Joshua 5:4-5)
13. How did God's food provision for Israel change at this time? (Joshua 5:12)

**Lesson Two: Victory and Defeat: Jericho and Ai**

Joshua 6:1 – 8:35

The inhabitants of Canaan were disheartened by the Jordan drying up to let Israel pass through on dry ground (Joshua 5:1). The captain of the Lord's host had appeared to Joshua to lead them to victory. All that remained was the actual conquest of Jericho. And that was no small task. For some background on the walls of Jericho please go to the following web site prior to class time.

<http://www.biblearchaeology.org/post/2008/06/09/The-Walls-of-Jericho.aspx#Article>

**Study Questions:**

1. What plan did the Lord's messenger give Joshua for defeating Jericho? (Joshua 6:3-5)
2. List the order of the groups that processed around Jericho. (Joshua 6:8-9)
3. Bible translations treat Joshua 6:17-18 differently. What does yours give as reason for Israelites to not plunder Jericho?
4. Did the plan to conquer Jericho work? Had this military tactic ever been used before? Has it ever worked since?
5. Did the Israelites comply with the ban to take plunder from Jericho? (Joshua 7:1)
6. Who saved Rahab during the conquest of Jericho and who was saved with her?
7. Joshua implemented a curse on the one who rebuilt Jericho (Joshua 6:26). Was Jericho ever rebuilt?
8. The Israelites initially sent only a small force against the small city of Ai (Joshua 7:3). Why was this force defeated by the people of Ai (Joshua 7:11-12)?
9. How were the transgressors identified and punished? (Joshua 7:16-26)
10. What tactics were used to defeat Ai? (Joshua 8:4-7)

## Joshua, Judges, Ruth

---

11. Did any of the residents of Ai survive the Israelite operation? (Joshua 8:21-29)
  
12. Briefly describe the altar Joshua erected to the Lord on Mount Ebal. (Joshua 8:30-32)
  
13. How much of the Law of Moses did Joshua read to the assembly between Mounts Gerazim and Ebal? (Joshua 8:33-35)
  
14. Who was present for this reading?

Lesson Three: **Deception and Conquest**

Joshua 9:1 – 12:24

With sin eliminated from the camp the conquest of Canaan was proceeding apace. However, some crafty emissaries avoided conquest by duping the Israelites into a treaty. After this error the Israelites resumed conquest of the land.

1. How did the kings of Canaan react to news of Israel's victories at Jericho and Ai? (9:1-2)
2. How did the Gibeonites fool the Israelites and avoid being conquered? (9:3-13)
3. Why were the Israelites fooled? (9:14)
4. After the Israelites learned that they had been deceived by the Gibeonites why didn't they go ahead and destroy them? (9:18-20)
5. Although the Gibeonites avoided destruction what was their relationship with the Israelites afterward? (9:21, 27)
6. Under the heading of disambiguation, make sure you keep Adoni-zedek of Joshua 10 separate from Adoni-bezek of Judges 1. Very similar names.
7. How did the men and cities of Ai compare with those of Gibeon? (10:1-2)
8. Which five kings worked together against the Israelites? (10:3-5)
9. It's curious that not only did Israel not conquer Gibeon but they were now defending them against the five kings. How was Israel able to defeat these five kings? (10:9b14)
10. How did the five kings meet their end? (10:16-27)
11. Locate the following towns on the map on page 1 and tell what happened to them.
  - Makkedah (10:28)
  - Libnah (10:30)
  - Lachish (10:32)
  - Gezer (10:33)
  - Eglon (10:34)
  - Hebron (10:37)
  - Debir (10:39)

## Joshua, Judges, Ruth

---

- The Hill Country and the Negev (10:40)
  - Kadesh-barnea (10:41)
  - Goshen (10:41)
12. How were the Israelites able to conquer all these adversaries? (10:42)
  
  13. Which kings of which lands united to fight against Israel in Joshua 11:1-3?
  
  14. Describe the size and armament of this combined force. (11:4)
  
  15. Recall that Jericho was utterly destroyed and no spoils were to be taken. Was that the rule for the rest of the cities that the Israelites conquered? (11:13-15)
  
  16. Why was it that no city except Gibeon sought a treaty with the Israelites? (11:19-20)
  
  17. Who were the last ones that Joshua conquered? (11:21-22)
  
  18. List all the kings Joshua defeated. How many were there? (12:1-24)



Chapters 13 through 21 deal mostly with dividing the land of Canaan among the tribes of Israel. Intricate descriptions are given of the territorial borders. It is very difficult for us, 3000 plus years after the fact, to precisely understand the geography. As Bob Waldron said in his book, *In the Days of the Judges*, "Identifying the exact border lines between the tribes is the most difficult question of all Bible geography. – Thought there are questions that cannot be answered about the exact border lines, it is very important to learn where each tribe lived. The border lines fluctuated through the years, and their exact portions changed, but the tribes continued to live basically in their assigned areas throughout their history."<sup>1</sup> The map at the left<sup>2</sup> is as good as any at showing the approximate location of the tribes.

Use this map to answer the following questions.

1. Which tribes settled east of the Jordan River?
2. Which tribes received two areas?
3. Which tribe received no territory?
4. Between which two tribes is a boundary line missing?

<sup>1</sup> Bob and Sandra Waldron, *In the Days of the Judges*, 2006, page 37 Guardian of Truth Foundation,  
<sup>2</sup> [http://www.bible-history.com/geography/maps/map\\_canaan\\_tribal\\_portions.html](http://www.bible-history.com/geography/maps/map_canaan_tribal_portions.html)

## Joshua, Judges, Ruth

---

Interspersed among tribal boundary details are some important items we should note.

1. In Joshua 13:7 God tells Joshua to apportion the land to the tribes. However the land had not been completely conquered. Why did God tell them to apportion the land at this time? (Joshua 13:1)
2. Although the tribe of Levi did not receive a territory like the other tribes, they did receive an inheritance. What was it? (Joshua 13:33)
3. In his old age how was Caleb like Moses? (Compare Joshua 14:11 and Deuteronomy 34:7)
4. What was the last territory conquered by Joshua? (Joshua 14:12-15)
5. What groups in Canaan were the Israelites unable to drive out? (Joshua 15:63, 16:10)

Lesson Five: **Dividing the Land, Part 2**

Joshua 18:1-21:45

In the preceding lesson territories were given to less than half of the tribes. Seven tribes had not received their inheritance yet. The tribes which are discussed in this section are, in order, Benjamin, Simeon, Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, Dan and the Levites.

1. Note that in Joshua 18:1 all Israel gathered together Shiloh and set up the tent of meeting. Where the tabernacle had been prior to this is not specified. Locate Shiloh on a map.
2. Why had seven tribes not received their land by this time? (Joshua 18:3)
3. How many spies were chosen to survey the remainder of the land? (Joshua 18:2-4)
4. After the land was surveyed how did they decide which tribe received which portion? (Joshua 18:6, 8)
5. Cities of Refuge were initially described in Numbers 35:1-34. In fulfillment of God's promise they were established in Joshua 20:1-9. Review the purpose for these cities and see if you can locate all six on a map.
6. Finally the Levites approached Joshua for their inheritance which would be cities, not territories. Please complete the following table.

Levite Family	Reference in Joshua 21	Number of Cities	Located in Which Territories?
Kohathites	4		
	5		
Gershonites	6		
Merarites	7		
			<b>Total Number of Levite Cities</b>

7. What epic pronouncement was made at the close of chapter 21? (Joshua 21:43-45)
8. How many of the three promises made to Abraham were fulfilled at this point? (Genesis 12:1-3)

**Digging Deeper:**

1. Compare the regions occupied by Israel as shown on the map on page 6 with the territory described in Numbers 34:1-15. Did the Israelites actually possess more land than promised, less, or the same? How is this significant?

Moses granted Reuben and Gad's request for land east of the Jordan prior to conquering the land upon the condition that both Reuben and Gad's soldiers assisted with conquering the land (Numbers 32:20-27). 40,000 of their soldiers had crossed over to take part (Joshua 4:12-13). In the first part of chapter 22 Joshua released these men because they had fulfilled their obligation.

1. Men from which three tribes crossed over the Jordan (west to east) to go home? (Joshua 22:1-7)
2. What did they take with them? (Joshua 22:8)
3. When the men arrived upon the east side of the Jordan they built an altar (Joshua 22:10). When the Israelites on the west side of the Jordan heard about it they came out against them for war (Joshua 22:11-12). What was wrong with building an altar and how was this resolved?
4. Review Joshua's remarks to Israel's leaders in Joshua 23:1-16. Summarize what he said.
5. Review Joshua's remarks to Israel in Joshua 24:1-28. Summarize what he said.
6. How old did Joshua live to be? (Joshua 24:29)
7. After Joshua's death how long did Israel remain faithful to God? (Joshua 24:31).

### **Review:**

Please write a brief summary of the Book of Joshua.

**Lesson Seven: Introduction and the First Five Judges**

Judges 1:1-5:31

As an introduction to the Book of Judges please read, "The Long Defeat" by Tack Chumbley, located inside the rear cover of this book.

**Questions:**

1. After Joshua died who led the Israelites against the Canaanites? (1:3)
2. How did the law of sowing and reaping come true for Adoni-Bezek? (1:7)
3. List the nations, cities, and people overthrown by Israel in Judges 1:4, 8, 10, 17-20.
4. List the nations, cities, and people NOT overthrown by Israel in Judges 1:21, 27-35.
5. An angel accused Israel of what sin in Judges 2:1-2? What was their punishment? (2:3)
6. How is the generation that arose after Moses' death described in Judges 2:1?
7. The events recorded in Judges are cyclic. Read Judges 2:11-23 and see if you can identify the cycle.
8. Which nations remained in Canaan after Joshua's death? (3:1-6)
9. Please complete the following chart to summarize the times of the first five judges. Note: You might not have enough information to fill in every box.

Reference	Oppression			Relief	
	King	Nation	Years	Judge(s)	Years
3:7-11					
3:12-30					
3:31					
4:1-24, 5:31					

10. Read the song of Deborah (Judges 5:1-31). Summarize its content.

1. What provoked the Lord to allow the Midianites to oppress Israel? (6:1)
2. To avoid marauders where were Israelites living? (6:2)
3. What was Gideon doing when the angel approached him? (6:11)
4. What did the angel say about Gideon? (6:12)
5. In 6:17 Gideon asked for a sign. When Gideon returned with a sacrifice what sign did the angel provide? (6:21)
6. When did Gideon realize he had been talking with an angel? (6:22)
7. After the altar of Baal was destroyed Israel sought to punish Gideon. Who defended Gideon and what defense did he make? (6:25-32)
8. Briefly summarize the second and thirds signs Gideon requested and received. (6:36-40)
9. How did Gideon come by another name? What was it? (6:32, 7:1)
10. Describe how God winnowed Gideon's army down to 300. (7:3-6).
11. Briefly summarize Gideon's battle plan. (7:19-24)
12. How many Midianites did Gideon's army overcome? (8:10)
13. During the pursuit Gideon requested food from Succoth and Pennuel. They each refused. How were they punished for refusing to help Gideon? (8:14-17)
14. Who killed the kings of Midian? (8:18-21) Why?



15. Abimelech literally means “father of a king.” Five different people in the Old Testament bore that name. We read of the others in Genesis 20, Genesis 26, Psalm 34, and 1 Chronicles 18. Who were the parents of the Abimelech of Judges 9?
  
16. How did Abimelech persuade the men of Shechem to go along with his plan? (9:2-4)
  
17. What violence did Abimelech commit against his brothers? (9:5)
  
18. How did the men of Shechem honor him for his deeds? (9:6)
  
19. Briefly summarize Jotham’s parable of the tree-king and give it’s point. (9:8-15)
  
20. What curse did Jotham bring upon Abimelech and Shechem? (9:20)
  
21. How did Jotham and Shechem die? (9:34-54)
  
22. Who killed Abimelech? (9:54)
  
23. The next judge of Israel has only two verses devoted to him. Who was he and what do we know about him? (10:1-2)
  
24. The next judge of Israel has three verses devoted to him. Who was he and what do we know about him? (10:3-5)
  
25. Please complete the following table to summarize the judges discussed in this lesson. Note: You might not have enough information to fill in every box.

Reference	Oppression			Relief	
	King	Nation	Years	Judge(s)	Years
6:1-8:35					
9:1-54					
10:1-2					
10:3-5					

# Joshua, Judges, Ruth \_\_\_\_\_

**Lesson Nine: Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon**

Judges 10:6-12:15

1. Which idols was Israel serving at this time? What do we know about them? (10:6)
2. Please complete the following table to summarize the judges of this lesson. Note: You might not have enough information to fill in every box.

Reference	Oppression			Relief	
	King	Nation	Years	Judge(s)	Years
10:6-12:7					
12:8-10					
12:11-12					
12:13-14					

3. Jehovah initially refused to deliver Israel (10:13-14). Why did He change His mind? (10:16)
4. What do we learn about Jephthah when he is introduced? (11:1-3)
5. What vow did Jephthah make prior to battle? (11:30-31)
6. Upon his return from victorious battle what was the first thing Jephthah saw? (11:34)
7. What exactly was sacrificed to fulfill Jephthah’s vow? (11:35-40)
8. When someone uses the term “shibboleth” today to what does it refer and what does it mean? (12:6)

1. As the cycle of the Judges continues who does Jehovah use to punish the Israelites in 13:1?
2. Who were Samson's parents? (13:2)
3. Summarize the unusual circumstances of Samson's conception, gestation, birth, and youth. (13:2-25)
4. Do the circumstances of Samson's birth remind you of another Biblical character? Who?
5. Why did Samson choose to marry a Philistine woman and not an Israelite? (14:1-4)
6. How were the Philistines able to solve Samson's riddle? How did he pay (14:14-19)
7. How did Samson's first marriage end? (14:20-15:2)
8. When the Philistines came to apprehend Samson for burning their fields the Israelites bound him and turned him over. What happened next? (15:9-15)
9. When Samson was behaving thus was he doing God's will? (15:18-20)
10. Samson's affection for Delilah gave the Philistines an advantage. Summarize Delilah's attempts to learn the source of Samson's strength. (16:6-20)
11. Why did Samson ultimately tell her how to defeat him?
12. Summarize how Samson died. (16:23-31)
13. Did Samson commit suicide? Explain.

1. Chapters 17 and 18 summarize the events concerning Micah, his idol, and his Levite. Briefly summarize these events.
2. Why do you suppose these events are recorded in scripture? What should we learn from them?
3. Note the unusual origin of the City of Dan (18:27-31). Can you find another Old Testament event in which the City of Dan figures prominently?
4. Chapters 19-21 record a horrific offense committed by the tribe of Benjamin against a Levite and his concubine. Please read these chapters.
5. Why did the man of the house offer up his virgin daughter to the men? (19:24)
6. Perhaps you have noticed that through the Book of Judges morality declines in Israel. Notice the depths to which they have fallen by 19:30.
7. How did Israel punish Benjamin for their sins? (20:12-35)
8. Note the recurring theme in 17:6, 18:1, 19:1, and 21:25.

### **Review:**

Please write a brief summary of the Book of Judges.

Lesson Twelve: **The Last Judges**

1 Samuel 1:1-8:22

1. Eli is introduced as a priest (1 Samuel 1:9). How do we know he was also a judge? (1 Samuel 4:18)
2. Eli's two sons were also priests. What were their names? (1 Samuel 1:3)
3. Were they good or bad priests? (1 Samuel 2:12-17, 22-25)
4. Summarize Eli's methods and efforts to correct his sons. (1 Samuel 2:23-25) Were they effective?
5. How frequent were messages from God at this time? (1 Samuel 3:1)
6. Why did Eli think Hannah was intoxicated? (1 Samuel 1:12-13)
7. At what age was Samuel presented to Eli? (1 Samuel 1:23-24)
8. Be prepared to discuss Hannah's song in class. (1 Samuel 2:1-10)
9. Read the record of God's calling Samuel (1 Samuel 3:1-18). Why didn't the Lord divulge His message before Samuel answered correctly?
10. As with Eli, Samuel is introduced as a prophet (1 Samuel 3:20). How do we know he also was a judge? (1 Samuel 7:6, 15-17)
11. How did Eli die? (1 Samuel 4:All)
12. Samuel's sons were appointed judges of Israel. Why didn't they endure as judges? (1 Samuel 8:3-5)

1. Why did Elimelech and family go to Moab and settle there? (1:1-2)
2. After the boys were grown and married what happened to all the men? (1:3-5)
3. Why did Naomi urge her daughters-in-law to return to their parents' homes? (1:8-13)
4. Why would Ruth not leave Naomi? (1:16-17)
5. As widows Naomi and Ruth had few prospects for income back in Bethlehem. What is gleaning? (2:2)
6. Into whose field did Ruth go to glean? (2:3)
7. How did Boaz treat Ruth? (2:4-16)
8. What was the duty of a near kinsman to a childless widow? (Leviticus 25:25-27; Deuteronomy 25:5-10)
9. In what way did Naomi and Ruth ensure Boaz would grant their request to perform the duty of a near kinsman? (3:1-5)
10. How did Boaz respond to Ruth's request? (3:8-4:10)
11. How did the townspeople respond to Boaz's proclamation? (4:11-12)
12. What famous King of Israel descended from the union of Boaz and Ruth? (4:22)

## The Long Defeat

### Introduction to the book of Judges

Reading the book of Judges reminds me of a memorable line from Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*. When the fellowship of the ring reaches the city of Galadhrim, Lady Galadriel tells Frodo how she and the elves, "together through ages of the world . . . have fought *the long defeat*" ("The Mirror of Galadriel").

Judges chronicles Israel's long defeat, describing how God's people, through spiritual half-measures, continually snatched defeat from the jaws of victory. The divine verdict on the history recorded in the book is found in Jeremiah: "I brought you into a plentiful country, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof; but when ye entered, ye defiled my land, and made mine heritage an abomination" (2.7). Judges is a diary of deterioration, recording the moral chaos and apostasy that characterized Israel between Joshua and Samuel.

#### Office

The *judges* were more military leaders than civil magistrates, although they sometimes did adjudicate disputes (4.4–5). They were not an unbroken succession of governors, but occasional deliverers called by God to free Israel from Gentile oppressors. Typically, their authority was only recognized by one or several of the tribes.

#### Outline

The book naturally divides into three parts:

**Chapters 1–3.6 Explanatory Prologue**

**Chapters 3.7–16.31 The Judges**

**Chapters 17–21 Illustrative Epilogue**

1. The *prologue* summarizes the story that follows. The phrase, "from Gilgal to Bochim" (2.1) could well serve as the book's theme. *Gilgal*, the name given to Israel's first encampment after crossing the Jordan (Josh. 4.19), symbolized the victory and success granted the nation by God. *Bochim*, however, means *weeping* (Judg. 2.4–5), reflecting the pain and sorrow that would result from the nation's apostasy. The four-fold cycle of sin/suffering/supplication/salvation is sketched in 2.16–19. From the start of the book until the end, we see Israel on a gradual, spiritual slide, which is only temporarily arrested by the appearances of the judges.
2. The *main part* of the book lists twelve judges. Of these, six are dealt with in some detail (Othniel, Ehud, Deborah, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson) and six are barely mentioned (Shamgar, Tola, Jair, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon). In general, the judges represented the best Israel had to offer, but as products of their culture, they also reflected the nation's sin and decay. The spiritual slide seen in the nation is reflected in the judges from Othniel, *the lion of God*, to Samson, who only mentions the name of the Lord once, shortly before his death (16.28).
3. Twice, the *epilogue* repeats the phrase, "In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (17.6, 21.25), thus providing the relativistic cause behind the idolatry and debauchery, described in the two appendices in chapters 17–21, that characterized the spiritual and social situation in the land. To quote political philosopher Thomas Hobbes, when God was forgotten, life in Israel became "nasty, brutish, and short."

What I find most remarkable about Judges, however, is that in the midst of relentless degeneracy are four examples of faith, so notable, that they are cited by the Hebrews writer (11.32). If God allows me, I intend to devote the next four essays to these extraordinary individuals who fought the long defeat and were justified by faith (Heb. 10.38).



# The Judges of Israel

Reference					Oppression			Judge	Rest
Begin		End		Oppressor	Nation	Yrs			
Chpt	Vs	Chpt	Vs						
Book of Judges									
3	8	-	3	11	Cushan-Rishathaim	Mesopotamia	8	Othniel	40
3	12	-	3	30	Eglon	Moab	18	Ehud	80
3	31					Philistines		Shamgar	
4	1	-	5	31	Jaban	Canaan	20	Deborah	40
6	1	-	8	35		Midian	7	Barak	40
9	1	-	9	57	Abimelech	Shechem		Gideon	40
10	1	-	10	2				Tola	23
10	3	-	10	5				Jair	22
10	6	-	12	7	Sons of Ammon	Philistines	18	Jephthah	6
12	8	-	12	10				Ibzan	7
12	11	-	12	12				Elon	10
12	13	-	12	15				Abdon	8
13	1	-	16	31		Philistines		Samson	20
First Samuel									
1	1	-	4	18				Eli	40
7	3	-	25	1			20	Samuel	