BIBLE
STUDENT BOOK

10th Grade | Unit 5
BIBLE 1005
The Judges and Spiritual Decline

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The Judges and Spiritual Decline

Introduction

Judges is the second book in the series of twelve historical books that immediately follow the Pentateuch (the five books of the Law) in the Old Testament. Keep in mind that the twelve historical books are: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther. The book of Joshua presents the history of the conquest and division of the land. The book of Judges contains the earliest history of Israel in possession of the land. It records the history of Israel from immediately following the death of Joshua through approximately three centuries. Ancient Jewish tradition supports Samuel as the author of Judges.

During the life and leadership of Joshua and the elders of Israel, reverence for and obedience to the Law of God continued. Shortly after the death of Joshua and the elders of Israel, the spiritual life of Israel began a steady decline. Failing to drive out all the Canaanites as God had commanded them, Israel intermarried with them and was led into idolatry by them. When God judged Israel's sin by an oppressor, they would repent; and God would raise up a deliverer, a judge, under whose authority they would be governed for a period of time. Then the cycle would be repeated: apostasy, servitude, repentance, deliverance.

The books of Judges and Ruth can be divided into major sections; the story of Ruth occurred during the period of the judges (Ruth 1:1) and will be studied with Judges.

1. The Book of Judges .................(Judges 1:1–3:4)
2. The History of Judges ...... (Judges 3:5–16:31)
3. Two Examples of Decay ..........(Judges 17–21)
4. The Story of Ruth..........................(Ruth 1–4)

Objectives

Read these objectives. The objectives tell you what you will be able to do when you have successfully completed this LIFEPAC. Each section will list according to the numbers below what objectives will be met in that section. When you have finished this LIFEPAC, you should be able to:

1. Outline the history of Israel from Joshua to Samuel, as presented in Judges.
2. Identify four stages in a recurring cycle of Israel's spiritual experience during the history of the judges.
3. Name and discuss twelve judges that exercised governing authority during the three centuries from Joshua to Samuel.
4. Cite an example of spiritual decay and an example of moral decay that increasingly characterized Israel during the period of the judges.
5. Relate the story of Ruth to the history of Israel and to the revelation of God's redemptive plan.
Survey the LIFEPAC. Ask yourself some questions about this study and write your questions here.
1. THE BOOK OF JUDGES

Judges 1:1-3:4 serves as an introduction to the book of Judges. In this section, the conditions in Israel following the death of Joshua are delineated—conditions of sin that made the judges necessary—and the recurring cyclical pattern of the content in Judges is previewed.

Section Objectives

Review these objectives. When you have completed this section, you should be able to:

1. Outline the history of Israel from Joshua to Samuel, as presented in Judges.
2. Identify four stages in a recurring cycle of Israel's spiritual experience during the history of the judges.

Vocabulary

Study these words to enhance your learning success in this section.

- apostasy
- oppressor
- repentance
- servitude
- shophetim

Note: All vocabulary words in this LIFEPAC appear in **boldface** print the first time they are used. If you are unsure of the meaning when you are reading, study the definitions given.

Read Judges 1:1–3:4
BACKGROUND

Immediately after the death of Joshua, the people did serve the Lord and waged war successfully against the Canaanites. The people to whom God had delivered the land as an inheritance, He commanded to possess the land and to drive out the Canaanites completely. Although Israel had conquered Canaan generally, they did not drive out the Canaanites. Judah drove out the inhabitants of the mountains but failed to drive out the inhabitants of the valley (1:19), “...because they had chariots of iron.” Of course, the real problem was not the chariots of iron, but rather a lack of faith in God and obedience to His command. Caleb drove out the Anakims from Hebron and the surrounding areas, but Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem. The sons of Joseph were successful in Bethel (1:22), but Manasseh did not drive the Canaanites from the land of their inheritance (1:27).

Instead of driving out the Canaanites, Israel put them under taxation and did not utterly drive them out (1:28-33). The Lord then informed Israel (2:1-5) that because of their disobedience, He would not drive the Canaanites out of the land; they would become thorns in Israel's sides; and the gods would be a snare to Israel. The relation of Israel to the remaining Canaanites formed the background of the book and the ensuing history therein. Faithlessness and disobedience were the forerunners of apostasy and servitude that followed.

Complete the following statements.

1.1 Judges 1:1-3:4 provides an ____________________________ to the book.

1.2 God commanded Israel to possess the land He gave them and to ____________________________ .

1.3 Judah drove out the inhabitants of the mountains but failed to drive out the inhabitants of the a. ____________________________ because they had b. ____________________________ .

1.4 Judah’s real problem was their a. ____________________________ and b. ____________________________ .

1.5 Instead of driving out the Canaanites, Israel put them under ____________________________ .

1.6 God informed Israel that because of their disobedience, He would not drive the Canaanites out of the land; they would be a. ____________________________ and their gods would be b. ____________________________ .

1.7 The relation of Israel to the remaining Canaanites formed the background of the book of Judges and the ensuing ____________________________ therein.

1.8 Faithlessness and disobedience were the forerunners of a. ____________________________ and b. ____________________________ .
PREVIEW

Judges 2:6-3:4 presents in a recurring cyclic pattern a preview of the historical period covered in the book. The Hebrew word for judges is shophetim. The shophetim were not ordinary special tasks of the shophetim were to deliver the people of Israel from the servitude of their oppressors, usually by war, and then to govern the people during the peaceful period that followed.

The recurring experience of Israel from Joshua to Samuel was marked by alternate apostasy, servitude, repentance, and deliverance. The Israelites intermarried Canaanites and worshiped their false gods. God punished their unbelief, disobedience, and idolatry by foreign oppressors. Under the affliction of their oppressions and from their state of servitude, Israel cried out to God in repentance. In response to their repentance, God raised up judges (shophetim) to deliver them from their oppressors and to govern them under His authority and covenant. In blessing and prosperity, again they forgot the Lord and returned to apostasy; and this cycle was repeated again and again for about three centuries.
Complete the following statements.

1.9 Judges 2:6-3:4 presents in a recurring cyclic pattern a ___________________________ of the historical period covered in the book.

1.10 The Hebrew word for judges is ________________________________ .

1.11 The recurring experience of Israel from Joshua to Samuel was marked by alternating
   a. __________________________________________ ,
   b. __________________________________________,
   c. __________________________________________ ,
   d. __________________________________________.

Answer the following questions.

1.12 How did God punish Israel's unbelief, disobedience, and idolatry? __________________________
   ________________________________ .

1.13 What were the special functions of the shophetim? a. ________________________________
   and b. ________________________________ .

1.14 When did the people of Israel return to the Lord? In a. ________________________________
   and b. ________________________________ .

Review the material in this section in preparation for the Self Test. The Self Test will check your mastery of this particular section. The items missed on this Self Test will indicate specific areas where restudy is needed for mastery.
SELF TEST 1

Answer true or false (each answer, 2 point).

1.01 ________ God commanded Israel to take possession of Canaan and to tax the Canaanites.

1.02 ________ Judah drove out the inhabitants of the mountains but failed to drive out the inhabitants of the valley.

1.03 ________ Judah’s real problem was not the enemy with the chariots of iron.

1.04 ________ In blessing and prosperity, Israel turned to the Lord.

1.05 ________ The special task of the shophetim was to deliver and to govern.

On the blanks, write the letters to correctly complete these statements (each answer, 3 points).

1.06 God informed Israel that, because of their disobedience, ____________ .
   a. He would not drive the Canaanites out of Israel
   b. the Canaanites would become thorns in Israel's sides
   c. the Canaanites' gods would be a snare to Israel
   d. a, b, and c

1.07 The recurring cyclical experience of Israel from Joshua to Samuel was ____________ .
   a. blessing, prosperity, apostasy, servitude
   b. apostasy, servitude, repentance, deliverance
   c. apostasy, servitude, blessing, prosperity,
   d. blessing, prosperity, repentance, deliverance

1.08 In blessing and prosperity, the people of Israel returned to ____________ .
   a. apostasy       b. servitude       c. repentance       d. deliverance

1.09 The introduction of the book of Judges, which includes both background and a preview, is found in Judges ____________ .

1.10 The book of Judges records the history of Israel from immediately following the death of Joshua through approximately ____________ centuries.
   a. two       b. four       c. five       d. three
Complete the items (each answer, 5 points).

1.011 Judges is the second book in the series of a. ________________________________
books of b. ________________________________ .

1.012 Judges presents the earliest history of Israel in ________________________________
of the land.

1.013 An objective of this LIFEPAC is to be able to outline the history of Israel from
a. _____________________________ to b. ______________________________ , as presented in Judges.

1.014 The books of Judges and Ruth can be divided into four major sections: (include references)
a. __________________________________________________________________________________________
b. __________________________________________________________________________________________
c. __________________________________________________________________________________________
d. __________________________________________________________________________________________

1.015 The relation of Israel to the remaining Canaanites formed the ____________________________
of the book of Judges and the ensuing history therein.

“And an angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt,
and have brought you unto the land which I sware unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my
covenant with you. And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land, ye shall throw down
their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this? Wherefore I also said, I will not
drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare
unto you.” — Judges 2:1-3