



and courageous, because you will lead these people to

I swore to their fathers to give them a land as good as

A Bible Study

By

Bishop Jerry F. Hutchins

Kingdom Now Ministries

- **OBSERVATIONS ABOUT JUDGES:**

Following the death of Joshua, Israel fell into a 350 year Dark Age.

The events covered in the Book of Judges range from about 1380 B.C. to 1045 B.C. (335 years).

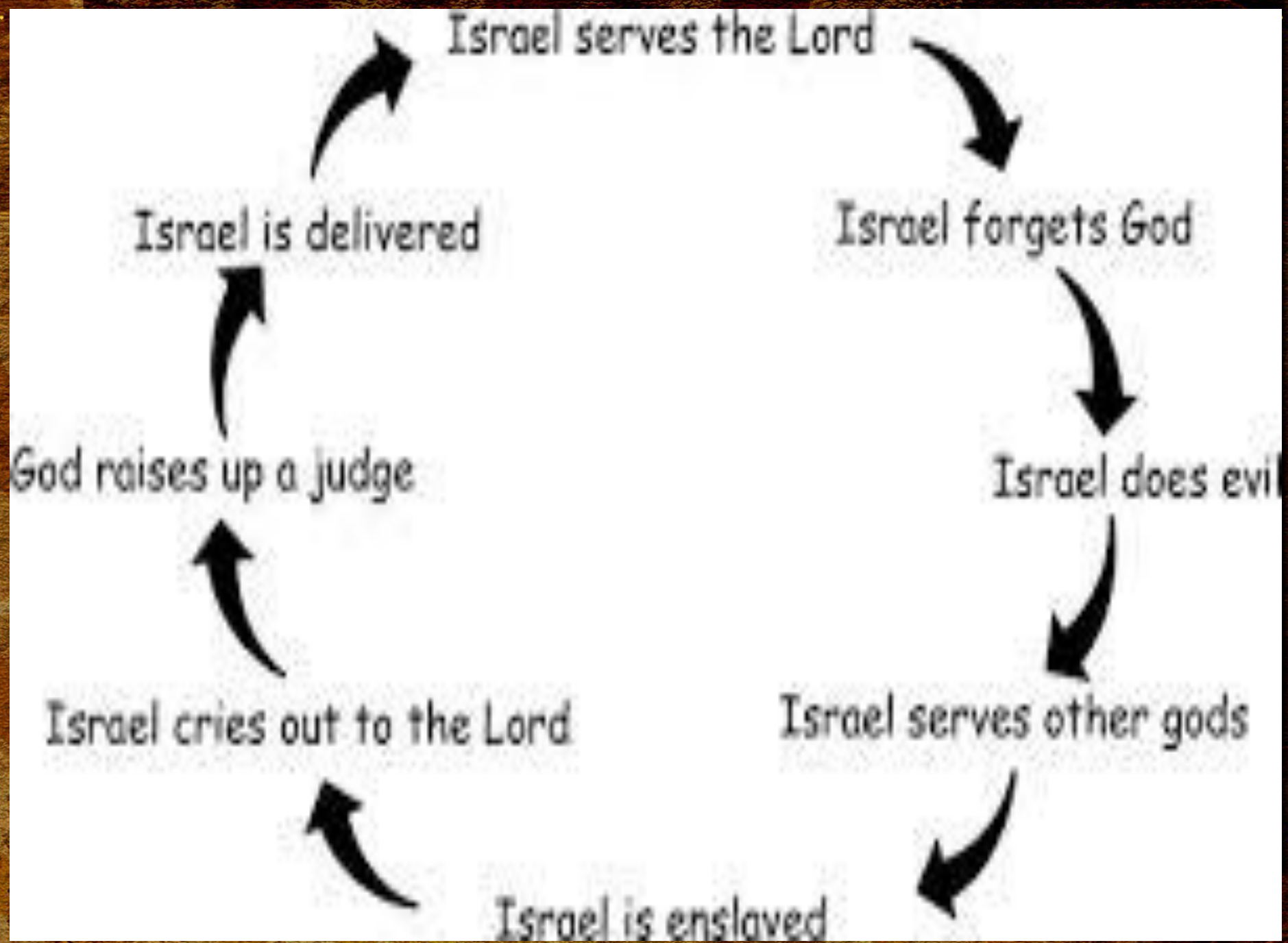
Estimated Timeline

- **1446 BC — Israel's exodus from Egypt**

1406 BC — Israel's entrance to the Promised Land

1383 BC — The death of Joshua

1056 BC — The Birth of Samuel



Judges is a book about sin and its consequences.

**Judges 21:25 is a most descriptive verse:
“In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”**

“In those days Israel had no king;
everyone did as they saw fit.”

THE JUDGES of ISRAEL

JUDGE	YEARS of SERVICE	OPPRESSOR	YEARS of OPPRESSION	YEARS of PEACE	BIBLICAL REFERENCES in JUDGES	PROVINCE or TRIBAL AFFILIATION
Othniel		Cushan-rishathaim (King of Aram naharim?) Aramean King?	8	40	3:8-11	Judah
Ehud		Eglon, King of Moab	18	80	3:12-30	Benjamin
Shamgar		Philistines			3:31	Son of Anath; possibly a non-Israelite
Deborah with Barak		Canaanites led by Jabin and Sisera	20	40	4:1-5:31	Issachar? Ephraim? Barak came from Naphtali
Gideon		Midianites and Amalekites	7	40	6:1-8:27	Manasseh
Tola	23				10:1-2	Issachar
Jair				22	10:3-5	Gileadite; East Manasseh?
Jephthah	6	Ammonites and Philistines	18		10:6-12:7	Gileadite; East Manasseh?
Ibzan	7				12:8-10	From Bethlehem: most likely in Judah, but possibly in Zebulun
Elon	10				12:11-12	Zebulun
Abdon	8				12:13-15	Piratonite (Ephraim)
Samson	20	Philistines	40		13-16	Dan

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 - Samson is the last judge mentioned in the book of Judges.

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- Just when you thought it couldn't get any worse
 - Samson is the last judge mentioned in the book of Judges.
 - Judges 17 through 21 are merely records of the worse times in the history of Israel. Bear this in mind **Judges 21:25** “**In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.**”

Brace Yourself

- Judges 17 records the story of a man named Micah who built a shrine and worshiped human-made idols.
- He built a shrine, made an ephod to use in religious activities, and fashioned some household idols. He even hired his own, personal priest, a Levite: “Now I know that the LORD will be good to me, since this Levite has become my priest” (Judges 17:13).

Micah, the thief

- **17** And there was a man of mount Ephraim, whose name was Micah.
- **2** And he said unto his mother, The eleven hundred shekels of silver that were taken from thee, about which thou cursedst, and spakest of also in mine ears, behold, the silver is with me; I took it. And his mother said, Blessed be thou of the LORD, my son.

- ³ And when he had restored the eleven hundred shekels of silver to his mother, his mother said, I had wholly dedicated the silver unto the LORD from my hand for my son, to make a graven image and a molten image: now therefore I will restore it unto thee.
- ⁴ Yet he restored the money unto his mother; and his mother took two hundred shekels of silver, and gave them to the founder, who made thereof a graven image and a molten image: and they were in the house of Micah.

- ⁵ And the man Micah had an house of gods, and made an ephod, and teraphim, and consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest.

- ⁶ In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.
- ⁷ And there was a young man out of Bethlehemjudah of the family of Judah, who was a Levite, and he sojourned there.

- ⁸ And the man departed out of the city from Bethlehemjudah to sojourn where he could find a place: and he came to mount Ephraim to the house of Micah, as he journeyed.
- ⁹ And Micah said unto him, Whence comest thou? And he said unto him, I am a Levite of Bethlehemjudah, and I go to sojourn where I may find a place.

- ¹⁰ And Micah said unto him, Dwell with me, and be unto me a father and a priest, and I will give thee ten shekels of silver by the year, and a suit of apparel, and thy victuals. So the Levite went in.

11 And the Levite was content to dwell with the man; and the young man was unto him as one of his sons.

12 And Micah consecrated the Levite; and the young man became his priest, and was in the house of Micah.

13 Then said Micah, Now know I that the LORD will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my priest.

Brace Yourself

Judges 18 gets worse and the underlying reason is:

Judges 21:25

“In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”

- Judges 18

18 In those days there was no king in Israel: and in those days the tribe of the Danites sought them an inheritance to dwell in; for unto that day all their inheritance had not fallen unto them among the tribes of Israel.

² And the children of Dan sent of their family five men from their coasts, men of valour, from Zorah, and from Eshtaol, to spy out the land, and to search it; and they said unto them, Go, search the land: who when they came to mount Ephraim, to the house of Micah, they lodged there.

- ³ When they were by the house of Micah, they knew the voice of the young man the Levite: and they turned in thither, and said unto him, Who brought thee hither? and what makest thou in this place? and what hast thou here?
- ⁴ And he said unto them, Thus and thus dealeth Micah with me, and hath hired me, and I am his priest.
- ⁵ And they said unto him, Ask counsel, we pray thee, of God, that we may know whether our way which we go shall be prosperous.
- ⁶ And the priest said unto them, Go in peace: before the LORD is your way wherein ye go.

- Judges 18:1–31 tells the story of the people of Dan falling into idolatry. They 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.

Brace Yourself

Judges 19 gets worse and the underlying reason is:

Judges 21:25

“In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”

- The Levite had a concubine who had run away and been unfaithful to him. husband

- The Levite found his concubine back at her parents' home. As the Levite was bringing the concubine back to his own home, he stopped for the night in Gibeah, a town of the Benjamites. An older man insisted, for safety, that the Levite and his concubine stay at his home instead of in the town square. That night, "some of the wicked men of the city surrounded the house. Pounding on the door, they shouted to the old man who owned the house, 'Bring out the man who came to your house so we can have sex with him'" (Judges 19:22).

- The host tried to reason with them, but they would not listen. To spare himself, the Levite sent his concubine outside. The degenerate mob abused her all that night (verse 25). When the man opened the door in the morning, the mob had departed, and the concubine's dead body lay "in the doorway of the house, with her hands on the threshold" (verse 27).

- The Levite picked up the concubine's body and placed it on his donkey and traveled home. He then cut up her body into twelve pieces—one for each tribe of Israel—and sent the pieces throughout the land. Everyone who learned of the crime began talking: “Such a thing has never been seen or done, not since the day the Israelites came up out of Egypt. Just imagine! We must do something! So speak up!” (Judges 19:30).

Brace Yourself

Judges 20-21 gets worse and the underlying reason is:

Judges 21:25

“In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”

- The tribes of Israel (minus Benjamin) came together and decided to have the men who raped and murdered the Levite's concubine put to death. But when they confronted the people of Benjamin, the Benjamites chose to protect the guilty parties and refused to turn them over for justice (Judges 20:12–14). A civil war erupted, and the tribe of Benjamin was eventually defeated. All but 600 men of Benjamin were killed (Judges 20:47–48).

- Judges 21 records the aftermath of the war over the Levite and his concubine. After a period of mourning, the leaders of the other eleven tribes sought to find a way to keep the tribe of Benjamin alive. Their solution was to punish the city of Jabesh Gilead, who did not respond to the call to gather against the Benjamites. The punishment was that the 600 Benjamite men were allowed to steal young women from Jabesh Gilead to take as their wives.