



## Judges

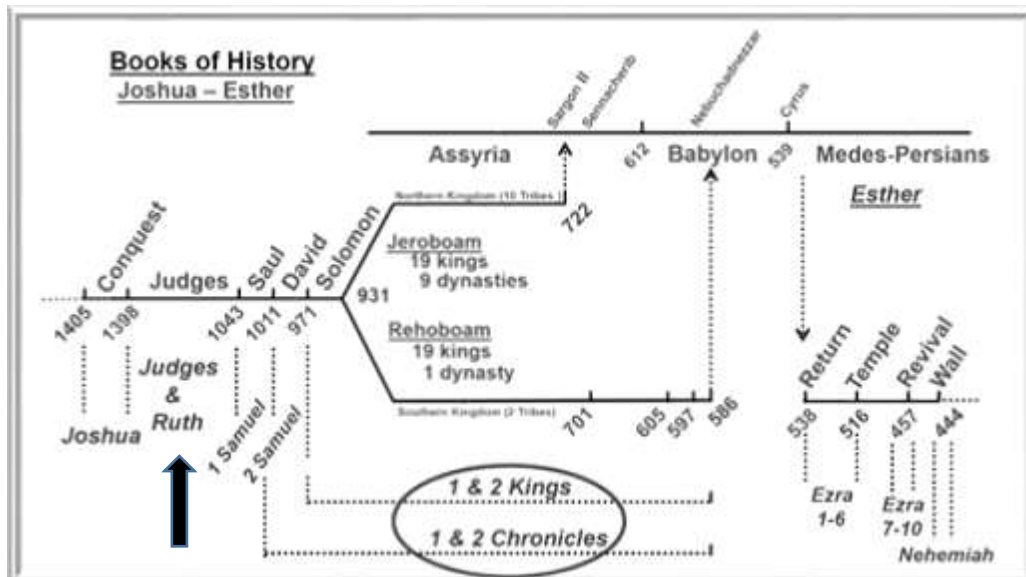
Israel enters a cycle of turning from God, crying out to God, and being delivered through leaders, otherwise known as “judges”. Stories include Samson and Delilah and Judges Deborah and Gideon.

**Author:** Traditionally Samuel

### In Judges – Jesus is the One who Saves us from Judgement

Judges 3:9

"But when they cried out to the LORD, He raised up for them a deliverer."



### The 12 Judges in the Book of Judges.

	NAME	CH. : VS.	YRS. OPPRESSION	YRS. REST
1.	OTHNIEL	3:7-11	8	40
2.	EHUD	3:12-30	18	80
3.	SHAMGAR	3:31	--	--
4.	DEBORAH	4:1-5:31	20	40
5.	GIDEON	6:1-8:35	7	40
6.	TOLA	10:1-2		23
7.	JAIR	10:3-5		22
8.	JEPHTHAH	10:6—12:7	18	6
9.	IBZAN	12:8-10		7
10.	ELON	12:11-12		10
11.	ABDON	12:13-15		8
12.	SAMSON	13:1-16:31	40	20

TEACHER: 21 CHAPTERS

Chapter 1 starts just after Joshua's death. Joshua slowed down some in his later years, and Israel was anxious to go to war. The 1<sup>st</sup> king they wanted to go after was a King called Adonibezek, who had a habit of conquering a city, and cutting off that king's thumbs and big toes.

STUDENT:

CH. 1

After Joshua's death the people of Israel asked the LORD, "Which of our tribes should be the first to go and attack the Canaanites?" <sup>2</sup> The LORD answered, "The tribe of Judah will go first. I am giving them control of the land."

<sup>3</sup> The people of Judah said to the people of Simeon, "Go with us into the territory assigned to us, and we will fight the Canaanites together. Then we will go with you into the territory assigned to you." So the tribes of Simeon <sup>4</sup> and Judah went into battle together. The LORD gave them victory over the Canaanites and the Perizzites, and they defeated ten thousand men at Bezek.

<sup>5</sup> They found Adonibezek there and fought him. <sup>6</sup> He ran away, but they chased him, caught him, and cut off his thumbs and big toes. <sup>7</sup> Adonibezek said, "Seventy kings with their thumbs and big toes cut off have picked up scraps under my table. God has now done to me what I did to them." He was taken to Jerusalem, where he died. (GNT)



STUDENT:

<sup>8</sup> The people of Judah attacked Jerusalem and captured it. They killed its people and set fire to the city. <sup>9</sup> After this they went on to fight the Canaanites who lived in the hill country, in the foothills, and in the dry country to the south. <sup>10</sup> They marched against the Canaanites living in the city of Hebron, which used to be called Kiriath Arba. There they defeated the clans of Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmi. (GNT)

TEACHER:

Remember from the last lesson the city of Kiriath Arba. This was where the Giants lived, with the giant king Arba the son of Anak, the father of the Anakims and Rephaim. Those last 3 names were his children and their clans. A young man who would distinguish himself as a man of God later as a judge, Othniel, started showing what he was made of next.

STUDENT:

<sup>11</sup> From there the men of Judah marched against the city of Debir, at that time called Kiriath Sepher. <sup>12</sup> One of them, called Caleb, said, "I will give my daughter Achsah in marriage to the man who succeeds in capturing Kiriath Sepher." <sup>13</sup> Othniel, the son of Caleb's younger brother Kenaz, captured the city, so Caleb gave him his daughter Achsah in marriage. <sup>14</sup> On the wedding day Othniel urged her to ask her father for a field. She got down from her donkey, and Caleb asked her what she wanted. <sup>15</sup> She answered, "I want some water holes. The land you have given me is in the dry country." So Caleb gave her the upper and lower springs. (GNT)

CH. 2

TEACHER:

Sounds like Othniel found a good wife. The children of Israel continue to seek to clear the land of its inhabitants with mixed results. In chapter 2 this causes some serious problems. Israel didn't drive out all the inhabitants of the land and after Joshua died, they backslid.

STUDENT:

The next generation forgot the LORD and what he had done for Israel.

<sup>11</sup> Then the people of Israel sinned against the LORD and began to serve the Baals. <sup>12</sup> They stopped worshiping the LORD, the God of their ancestors, the God who had brought them out of Egypt, and they began to worship other gods, the gods of the peoples around them. They bowed down to them and made the LORD angry. <sup>13</sup> They stopped worshiping the LORD and served the Baals and the Astartes. <sup>14</sup> And so the LORD became furious with Israel and let raiders attack and rob them. He let the enemies all around overpower them, and the Israelites could no longer protect themselves. <sup>15</sup> Every time they would go into battle, the LORD was against them, just as he had said he would be. They were in great distress. (GNT)

TEACHERS:

The Lord then uses their enemies to test them for the rest of the Book of Judges.

STUDENT:

<sup>16</sup> Then the LORD gave the Israelites leaders who saved them from the raiders. <sup>17</sup> But the Israelites paid no attention to their leaders. Israel was unfaithful to the LORD and worshiped other gods. Their fathers had obeyed the LORD's commands, but this new generation soon stopped doing so. <sup>18</sup> Whenever the LORD gave Israel a leader, the LORD would help that leader and would save the people from their enemies as long as that leader lived. The LORD would have mercy on them because they groaned under their suffering and oppression. <sup>19</sup> But when the leader died, the people would return to the old ways and behave worse than the previous generation. They would serve and worship other gods, and stubbornly continue their own evil ways. <sup>20</sup> Then the LORD would become furious with Israel and say, "This nation has broken the covenant that I commanded their ancestors to keep. Because they have not obeyed me, <sup>21</sup> I will no longer drive out any of the nations that were still in the land when Joshua died. <sup>22</sup> I will use them to find out whether or not these Israelites will follow my ways, as their ancestors did." <sup>23</sup> So the LORD allowed these nations to remain in the land; he did not give Joshua victory over them, nor did he drive them out soon after Joshua's death. (GNT)

TEACHER:

This starts the cycle of revival, backsliding, hardship, repentance and revival. We meet the 1<sup>st</sup> judge in chapter 3.

STUDENT:

OTHNIEL

<sup>7</sup> The people of Israel forgot the LORD their God; they sinned against him and worshiped the idols of Baal and Asherah.

<sup>8</sup> So the LORD became angry with Israel and let King Cushan Rishathaim of Mesopotamia conquer them.

They were subject to him for eight years. <sup>9</sup> Then the Israelites cried out to the LORD, and he sent someone to free them.



CH. 3



This was Othniel, the son of Caleb's younger brother Kenaz. <sup>10</sup> The spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he became Israel's leader. Othniel went to war, and the LORD gave him the victory over the king of Mesopotamia. <sup>11</sup> There was peace in the land for forty years, and then Othniel died. (GNT)

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TEACHER:

After Othniel dies Israel backslides. The next Judge to rise starts with verse 12.

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STUDENT:

EHUD

<sup>12</sup> The people of Israel sinned against the LORD again. Because of this the LORD made King Eglon of Moab stronger than Israel. <sup>13</sup> Eglon joined the Ammonites and the Amalekites; they defeated Israel and captured Jericho, the city of palm trees. <sup>14</sup> The Israelites were subject to Eglon for eighteen years. (GNT)

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STUDENT:

<sup>15</sup> Then the Israelites cried out to the LORD, and he sent someone to free them. This was Ehud, a left-handed man, who was the son of Gera, from the tribe of Benjamin. The people of Israel sent Ehud to King Eglon of Moab with gifts for him. <sup>16</sup> Ehud had made himself a double-edged sword about a foot and a half long. He had it fastened on his right side under his clothes. <sup>17</sup> Then he took the gifts to Eglon, who was a very fat man. <sup>18</sup> When Ehud had given him the gifts, he told the men who had carried them to go back home. <sup>19</sup> But Ehud himself turned back at the carved stones near Gilgal, went back to Eglon, and said, "Your Majesty, I have a secret message for you." (GNT)

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STUDENT:

So the king ordered his servants, "Leave us alone!" And they all went out. <sup>20</sup> Then, as the king was sitting there alone in his cool room on the roof, Ehud went over to him and said, "I have a message from God for you." The king stood up. <sup>21</sup> With his left hand Ehud took the sword from his right side and plunged it into the king's belly. <sup>22</sup> The whole sword went in, handle and all, and the fat covered it up. Ehud did not pull it out of the king's belly, and it stuck out behind, between his legs. <sup>23</sup> Then Ehud went outside, closed the doors behind him, and locked them, <sup>24</sup> and left. The servants came and saw that the doors were locked, but they only thought that the king was inside, relieving himself. <sup>25</sup> They waited as long as they thought they should, but when he still did not open the door, they took the key and opened it. And there was their master, lying dead on the floor. (GNT)

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The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



TEACHER:

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Judge was Shamgar.

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STUDENT:

SHAMGAR

<sup>31</sup> The next leader was Shamgar son of Anath. He too rescued Israel, and did so by killing six hundred Philistines with an oxgoad. (GNT)

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TEACHER:

Shamgar was a great fighter but didn't fare well in domestic policy. According to the song of Deborah, village life collapsed and the roads were not maintained, making travel and commerce harder. After he died, the people backslid again.

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STUDENT:

CH. 4 After Ehud died, the people of Israel sinned against the LORD again. <sup>2</sup> So the LORD let them be conquered by Jabin, a Canaanite king who ruled in the city of Hazor. The commander of his army was Sisera, who lived at Harosheth-of-the-Gentiles. <sup>3</sup> Jabin had nine hundred iron chariots, and he ruled the people of Israel with cruelty and violence for twenty years. Then the people of Israel cried out to the LORD for help. (GNT)

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TEACHER:

There were some however, who served the Lord with gusto. 1 such person is our next judge. This the 4<sup>th</sup> Judge is also a prophet, and a lady!

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STUDENT:

DEBORAH

<sup>4</sup> Now Deborah, the wife of Lappidoth, was a prophet, and she was serving as a judge for the Israelites at that time. <sup>5</sup> She would sit under a certain palm tree between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the people of Israel would go there for her decisions. <sup>6</sup> One day she sent for Barak son of Abinoam from the city of Kedesh in Naphtali and said to him, "The LORD, the God of Israel, has given you this command: 'Take ten thousand men from the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun and lead them to Mount Tabor. <sup>7</sup> I will bring Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, to fight you at the Kishon River. He will have his chariots and soldiers, but I will give you victory over him.'" <sup>8</sup> Then Barak replied, "I will go if you go with me, but if you don't go with me, I won't go either." <sup>9</sup> She answered, "All right, I will go with you, but you won't get any credit for the victory, because the LORD will hand Sisera over to a woman." So Deborah set off for Kedesh with Barak. (GNT)

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STUDENT:

<sup>14</sup> Then Deborah said to Barak, "Go! The LORD is leading you! Today he has given you victory over Sisera." So Barak went down from Mount Tabor with his ten thousand men. <sup>15</sup> When Barak attacked with his army, the LORD threw Sisera into confusion together with all his chariots and men. Sisera got down from his chariot and fled on foot. <sup>16</sup> Barak pursued the chariots and the army to Harosheth-of-the-Gentiles, and Sisera's whole army was killed. Not a man was left. (GNT)

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TEACHER:

General Sisera, the commander of the army that just lost to Deborah ran away on foot, and ran into the wrong girls' tent.

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STUDENT:

<sup>17</sup> Sisera ran away to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, because King Jabin of Hazor was at peace with Heber's family.

<sup>18</sup> Jael went out to meet Sisera and said to him, "Come in, sir; come into my tent. Don't be afraid." So he went in, and she hid him behind a curtain. <sup>19</sup> He said to her, "Please give me a drink of water; I'm thirsty." She opened a leather bag of milk, gave him a drink, and hid him again.

<sup>20</sup> Then he told her, "Stand at the door of the tent, and if anyone comes and asks you if anyone is here, say no."

<sup>21</sup> Sisera was so tired that he fell sound asleep. Then Jael took a hammer and a tent peg, quietly went up to him, and killed him by driving the peg right through the side of his head and into the ground. (GNT)

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TEACHER:

You will see the clan called Kenites on and off in the Bible, these are the family of Moses' wife. Chapter 5 is the song of victory that was sung by Deborah and Barak. The last line say's it all.

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STUDENT:

<sup>31</sup> So may all your enemies die like that, O LORD,  
but may your friends shine like the rising sun!  
And there was peace in the land for forty years. (GNT)

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CH. 5

TEACHER:

Judge # 5

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STUDENT:

GIDEON

Once again the people of Israel sinned against the LORD, so he let the people of Midian rule them for seven years. <sup>2</sup> The Midianites were stronger than Israel, and the people of Israel hid from them in caves and other safe places in the hills. <sup>3</sup> Whenever the Israelites would plant their crops, the Midianites would come with the Amalekites and the desert tribes and attack them.....

They and their camels were too many to count. They came and devastated the land, <sup>6</sup> and Israel was helpless against them.

<sup>7</sup> Then the people of Israel cried out to the LORD for help against the Midianites, <sup>8</sup> and he sent them a prophet who brought them this message from the LORD, the God of Israel: "I brought you out of slavery in Egypt. <sup>9</sup> I rescued you from the Egyptians and from the people who fought you here in this land. I drove them out as you advanced, and I gave you their land. <sup>10</sup> I told you that I am the LORD your God and that you should not worship the gods of the Amorites, whose land you are now living in. But you have not listened to me." (GNT)



CH. 6



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TEACHER:

The people sin, the people suffer, the people cry out to God, and God reminds them about Egypt. Notice a pattern here? "I am your God." That means "I am the boss." Just like Adam and Eve wanted to stay in the garden, and ignore God, and hide when He visits, Israel was doing the same thing. Many today, want all the good God has in store for us, to the exclusion of His Lordship. We need to make a conscious effort to seek God's face instead of seeking God's hands. God calls and prepares a deliverer.

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STUDENT:

<sup>11</sup> Then the LORD's angel came to the village of Ophrah and sat under the oak tree that belonged to Joash, a man of the clan of Abiezer. His son Gideon was threshing some wheat secretly in a wine press, so that the Midianites would not see him. <sup>12</sup> The LORD's angel appeared to him there and said, "The LORD is with you, brave and mighty man!"

<sup>13</sup> Gideon said to him, "If I may ask, sir, why has all this happened to us if the LORD is with us? What happened to all the wonderful things that our fathers told us the LORD used to do—how he brought them out of Egypt? The LORD has abandoned us and left us to the mercy of the Midianites."

<sup>14</sup> Then the LORD ordered him, "Go with all your great strength and rescue Israel from the Midianites. I myself am sending you." (GNT)

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TEACHER:

Gideon is overwhelmed that God would use him, as we all are on occasion I am sure. He says that he belongs to the smallest clan in a small tribe and he is the least important person in his family. Gideon has a broken spirit. Gideon doesn't believe God can use him, but he asks permission for the Lord to share a meal, so he can ask for a sign. The Lord agrees.

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STUDENT:

<sup>19</sup> So Gideon went into his house and cooked a young goat and used a bushel of flour to make bread without any yeast. He put the meat in a basket and the broth in a pot, brought them to the LORD's angel under the oak tree, and gave them to him. <sup>20</sup> The angel told him, "Put the meat and the bread on this rock, and pour the broth over them." Gideon did so. <sup>21</sup> Then the LORD's angel reached out and touched the meat and the bread with the end of the stick he was holding. Fire came out of the rock and burned up the meat and the bread. Then the angel disappeared.

<sup>22</sup> Gideon then realized that it was the LORD's angel he had seen, and he said in terror, "Sovereign LORD! I have seen your angel face-to-face!" (GNT)

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TEACHER:

After the burnt offering, God starts telling Gideon to clean house. He instructs him to tear down the altar his dad put up to Baal, and the symbol to Asherah that was next to it. He was frightened of the other people, so he did it at night. The next day, the people were mad and asked "who did this?" When they found out it was Gideon, they went to his house to kill him. His father Joash answered the door.

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STUDENT:

Joash said to all those who confronted him, "Are you arguing for Baal? Are you defending him? Anyone who argues for him will be killed before morning. If Baal is a god, let him defend himself. It is his altar that was torn down." <sup>32</sup> From then on Gideon was known as Jerubbaal, because Joash said, "Let Baal defend himself; it is his altar that was torn down." (GNT)

TEACHER:

All their enemies gathered a mighty army in response. But something happened to Gideon.

STUDENT:

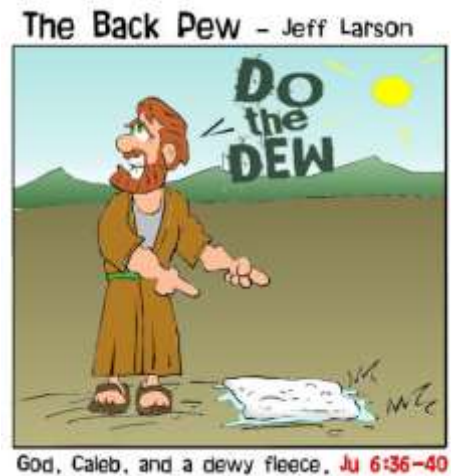
<sup>34</sup> The spirit of the LORD took control of Gideon, and he blew a trumpet to call the men of the clan of Abiezer to follow him. <sup>35</sup> He sent messengers throughout the territory of both parts of Manasseh to call them to follow him. He sent messengers to the tribes of Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, and they also came to join him. (GNT)

TEACHER:

Gideon appeals to God again, still lacking faith, he lays out a fleece.

STUDENT:

<sup>36</sup> Then Gideon said to God, "You say that you have decided to use me to rescue Israel. <sup>37</sup> Well, I am putting some wool on the ground where we thresh the wheat. If in the morning there is dew only on the wool but not on the ground, then I will know that you are going to use me to rescue Israel." <sup>38</sup> That is exactly what happened. When Gideon got up early the next morning, he squeezed the wool and wrung enough dew out of it to fill a bowl with water. <sup>39</sup> Then Gideon said to God, "Don't be angry with me; let me speak just once more. Please let me make one more test with the wool. This time let the wool be dry, and the ground be wet." <sup>40</sup> That night God did that very thing. The next morning the wool was dry, but the ground was wet with dew. (GNT)



TEACHER:

Gideon camps with all his army assembled and God talks to him.

CH. 7

STUDENT:

<sup>2</sup> The LORD said to Gideon, "The men you have are too many for me to give them victory over the Midianites. They might think that they had won by themselves, and so give me no credit. <sup>3</sup> Announce to the people, 'Anyone who is afraid should go back home, and we will stay here at Mount Gilead.'" So twenty-two thousand went back, but ten thousand stayed. (GNT)

TEACHER:

Still too many men for God's liking, so He tells Gideon to watch them drink from the spring Harod. Anyone who laps the water like a dog on his knees, he was to send home. Anyone who scooped the water with his hands, and lapped, was to stay. Gideon's army was now down to 300 men.

STUDENT:

<sup>6</sup>There were three hundred men who scooped up water in their hands and lapped it; all the others got down on their knees to drink. <sup>7</sup>The LORD said to Gideon, "I will rescue you and give you victory over the Midianites with the three hundred men who lapped the water. Tell everyone else to go home." <sup>8</sup>So Gideon sent all the Israelites home, except the three hundred, who kept all the supplies and trumpets. (GNT)

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TEACHER:

God wants Gideon to operate in faith, so He tells Gideon to spy out the camp with his servant Purah, to see what the enemy was saying about him. He must have been weakened by the sight of all the men leaving. Having started out with thousands of men, and now standing in front of multiple well equipped armies with 300 men must have been daunting to say the least. Verse 12 say's the armies of his enemies were like locusts spread as far as the eye could see. This is some of what Gideon heard as he spied.

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STUDENT:

"I dreamed that a loaf of barley bread rolled into our camp and hit a tent. The tent collapsed and lay flat on the ground."

<sup>14</sup>His friend replied, "It's the sword of the Israelite, Gideon son of Joash! It can't mean anything else! God has given him victory over Midian and our whole army!" (GNT)

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TEACHER:

Gideon falls to his knees and worships. He divides his army of 300 into 3 groups. They each have a trumpet and a clay jar with a torch in it. When they get to the camp, they are to watch him, and do what he does.

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STUDENT:

<sup>19</sup>Gideon and his one hundred men came to the edge of the Camp a while before midnight, just after the guard had been changed. Then they blew the trumpets and broke the jars they were holding, <sup>20</sup>and the other two groups did the same. They all held the torches in their left hands, the trumpets in their right, and shouted, "A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!" <sup>21</sup>Every man stood in his place around the camp, and the whole enemy army ran away yelling. <sup>22</sup>While Gideon's men were blowing their trumpets, the LORD made the enemy troops attack each other with their swords. (GNT)

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TEACHER:

In chapter 8 Gideon crosses the Jordan in pursuit of the runaway soldiers and their kings. When he comes to some of the Israelite towns the people wouldn't feed them because he hadn't killed the kings yet. Gideon gets filled with anger and say's "I'll be back." He chases down and defeats the armies, and captures the kings. He then returns to the towns that wouldn't feed his men with the captured kings in chains.

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STUDENT:

CH. 8  
“Remember when you refused to help me? You said that you couldn't give any food to my exhausted army because I hadn't captured Zebah and Zalmunna yet. Well, here they are!” <sup>16</sup> He then took thorns and briers from the desert and used them to punish the leaders of Sukkoth. <sup>17</sup> He also tore down the tower at Penuel and killed the men of that city. (GNT)

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TEACHER:

Gideon kills the 2 kings, and the Israelites asked him to be their ruler. Gideon said no, that God would be their ruler. Gideon then asks for the jewelry the men took from the armies and they all were happy to give it all to him. Then Gideon does the unthinkable.

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STUDENT:

<sup>26</sup> The gold earrings that Gideon got weighed over forty pounds, and this did not include the ornaments, necklaces, and purple clothes that the kings of Midian wore, nor the collars that were around the necks of their camels. <sup>27</sup> Gideon made an idol from the gold and put it in his hometown, Ophrah. All the Israelites abandoned God and went there to worship the idol. It was a trap for Gideon and his family. <sup>28</sup> So Midian was defeated by the Israelites and was no longer a threat. The land was at peace for forty years, until Gideon died.(GNT)

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TEACHER:

Gideon returns home and marries many wives. Some legitimately believe over 30 wives. He has 70 legitimate sons. What does a rich guy with 30 wives do? He rapes a slave woman he owns. She gets pregnant and has a son named Abimelech. After Gideon dies some of his skeletons would come back to haunt him. Israel turned from God and worshipped Baal. Abimelech, the illegitimate son, starts trouble. He makes a deal with the people to be their ruler, and kills all 70 of his brothers, but 1 that escaped. He rules for 3 years, and a civil war breaks out that you can read at home in chapter 9. As he attacks the city, he meets an untimely end.

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STUDENT:

CH. 9  
<sup>50</sup> Then Abimelech went to Thebez, surrounded that city, and captured it. <sup>51</sup> There was a strong tower there, and every man and woman in the city, including the leaders, ran to it. They locked themselves in and went up to the roof. <sup>52</sup> When Abimelech came to attack the tower, he went up to the door to set the tower on fire. <sup>53</sup> But a woman threw a millstone down on his head and fractured his skull. <sup>54</sup> Then he quickly called the young man who was carrying his weapons and told him, “Draw your sword and kill me. I don't want it said that a woman killed me.” So the young man ran him through, and he died. <sup>55</sup> When the Israelites saw that Abimelech was dead, they all went home. (GNT)

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TEACHER:

Judge #6

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CH. 10

STUDENT:

TOLA

After Abimelech's death Tola, the son of Puah and grandson of Dodo, came to free Israel. He was from the tribe of Issachar and lived at Shamir in the hill country of Ephraim.

<sup>2</sup> He was Israel's leader for twenty-three years. Then he died and was buried at Shamir. (GNT)



TEACHER:

Judge #7

STUDENT:

JAIR

<sup>3</sup> After Tola came Jair from Gilead.

He led Israel for twenty-two years.

<sup>4</sup> He had thirty sons who rode thirty donkeys.

They had thirty cities in the land of Gilead, which are still called the villages of Jair.

<sup>5</sup> Jair died and was buried at Kamon. (GNT)



TEACHER:

Here in chapter 10 we find the children of Israel in a bad state. They are worshipping every nation's god's but theirs. The list in verse 6 includes Baals, Astartes, god's of Syria, Sidon, Moab, Ammon and Philistia. God then allowed these nations to oppress them for 18 years.

STUDENT:

<sup>10</sup> Then the Israelites cried out to the LORD and said, "We have sinned against you, for we left you, our God, and worshiped the Baals."

<sup>11</sup> The LORD gave them this answer: "The Egyptians, the Amorites, the Ammonites, the Philistines, <sup>12</sup> the Sidonians, the Amalekites, and the Maonites oppressed you in the past, and you cried out to me. Did I not save you from them? <sup>13</sup> But you still left me and worshiped other gods, so I am not going to rescue you again. <sup>14</sup> Go and cry out to the gods you have chosen. Let them rescue you when you get in trouble." (GNT)

TEACHER:

They continue to seek God's forgiveness, and God raises Judge #8

CH. 11

STUDENT:

JEPHTHAH

Jephthah, a brave soldier from Gilead, was the son of a prostitute.

His father Gilead <sup>2</sup> had other sons by his wife, and when they grew up, they forced Jephthah to leave home. They told him, "You will not inherit anything from our father; you are the son of another woman." <sup>3</sup> Jephthah fled from his brothers and lived in the land of Tob. There he attracted a group of worthless men, and they went around with him. (GNT)





TEACHER:

Never heard that story before. LOL. But there is more than meets the eye with this guy. Son of a prostitute, no inheritance, runs around with the wrong people. A fighter that attracts the wrong type of people. But, he knew what God did, and gave God credit for it. He didn't make excuses for his own life's choices, and gave God the credit for what God had done in Israel. Verses 14 -28 is a long paragraph of what God had done. All from the lips of this outcast son of a prostitute. We will read 1 very good line.

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STUDENT:

.....it was the LORD, the God of Israel, who drove out the Amorites for his people, the Israelites. <sup>24</sup> Are you going to try to take it back? You can keep whatever your god Chemosh has given you. But we are going to keep everything that the LORD, our God, has taken for us. (GNT)

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TEACHER:

You want the Devil? You can have him. I want God. Jephthah was rash though. Be careful what you say.

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STUDENT:

<sup>29</sup> Then the spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah. He went through Gilead and Manasseh and returned to Mizpah in Gilead and went on to Ammon. <sup>30</sup> Jephthah promised the LORD: "If you will give me victory over the Ammonites, <sup>31</sup> I will burn as an offering the first person that comes out of my house to meet me, when I come back from the victory. I will offer that person to you as a sacrifice."

.....the LORD gave him victory. <sup>33</sup> He struck at them from Aroer to the area around Minnith, twenty cities in all, and as far as Abel Keramim. There was a great slaughter, and the Ammonites were defeated by Israel. (GNT)

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TEACHER:

As he returns home, he is watching for who comes out of his house to meet him 1<sup>st</sup>, probably hoping a servant or guest. No such luck.

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STUDENT:

<sup>34</sup> When Jephthah went back home to Mizpah, there was his daughter coming out to meet him, dancing and playing the tambourine. She was his only child. <sup>35</sup> When he saw her, he tore his clothes in sorrow and said, "Oh, my daughter! You are breaking my heart! Why must it be you that causes me pain? I have made a solemn promise to the LORD, and I cannot take it back!" (GNT)

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TEACHER:

The daughter says "do what you must." She then asks if she can take 2 months with her friends to mourn that she will die childless. After the 2 months, she returned and he fulfilled his promise to the Lord. Tradition goes 2 ways. He killed her and burned the body as a sacrifice. Or, that she stayed a virgin her whole life. I must think, had he known the Levitical law, he should have redeemed her. Offered a bullock in her place. Either way, watch what you say, and don't add your works to what God has promised. Keep your mouth shut. The background sources when The R.U.S.H. Bible Study mentions tradition are Mishnah, Talmud, Midrash and Hermetic Kabbalah if you're in the mood for a google rabbit hole. Best compilations on-line are Earlyjewishwritings.com, and the Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon Project.

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**"Don't add your works, to what God has promised. Keep your mouth shut, and receive." DH**

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Next Judges # 9, # 10, and # 11.

STUDENT: IZBAN



ELON



ABDON



<sup>8</sup> After Jephthah, Iban from Bethlehem led Israel. <sup>9</sup> He had thirty sons and thirty daughters. He gave his daughters in marriage outside the clan and brought thirty young women from outside the clan for his sons to marry. Iban led Israel for seven years, <sup>10</sup> then he died and was buried at Bethlehem. (GNT)

STUDENT:

<sup>11</sup> After Iban, Elon from Zebulun led Israel for ten years. <sup>12</sup> Then he died and was buried at Aijalon in the territory of Zebulun. (GNT)

STUDENT:

<sup>13</sup> After Elon, Abdon son of Hillel from Pirathon led Israel. <sup>14</sup> He had forty sons and thirty grandsons, who rode on seventy donkeys. Abdon led Israel for eight years, <sup>15</sup> then he died and was buried at Pirathon in the territory of Ephraim in the hill country of the Amalekites. (GNT)

TEACHER:

Chapter 13 starts after Israel sins and backslides. Fast forward 40 years under philistine rule. An angel of the Lord appears to a barren woman. She is to give birth to the next Judge. Samson.

STUDENT:

SAMSON

The LORD's angel appeared to her and said, "You have never been able to have children, but you will soon be pregnant and have a son.

<sup>4</sup> Be sure not to drink any wine or beer, or eat any forbidden food;

<sup>5</sup> and after your son is born, you must never cut his hair, because from the day of his birth he will be dedicated to God as a nazirite.

He will begin the work of rescuing Israel from the Philistines."

(GNT)



TEACHER:

She tells her husband what happened and he prays and asks God to send the angel back, and God does. The angel repeats the commands he gave to the wife, (her name is never mentioned, according to tradition she is Hazeleponi, the daughter of Etam, and sister of Ishma.) Next Manoah and his wife see something extraordinary.

CH. 12

CH. 13

STUDENT:

"Now then, when your words come true, what must the boy do? What kind of a life must he lead?"

<sup>13</sup> The LORD's angel answered, "Your wife must be sure to do everything that I have told her. <sup>14</sup> She must not eat anything that comes from the grapevine; she must not drink any wine or beer, or eat any forbidden food. She must do everything that I have told her."

<sup>15-16</sup> Not knowing that it was the LORD's angel, Manoah said to him, "Please do not go yet. Let us cook a young goat for you."

But the angel said, "If I do stay, I will not eat your food. But if you want to prepare it, burn it as an offering to the LORD."

<sup>17</sup> Manoah replied, "Tell us your name, so that we can honor you when your words come true."

<sup>18</sup> The angel asked, "Why do you want to know my name? It is a name of wonder."

<sup>19</sup> So Manoah took a young goat and some grain, and offered them on the rock altar to the LORD who works wonders. <sup>20-21</sup> While the flames were going up from the altar, Manoah and his wife saw the LORD's angel go up toward heaven in the flames. Manoah realized then that the man had been the LORD's angel, and he and his wife threw themselves face downward on the ground. They never saw the angel again. (GNT)

TEACHER:

Samson grows strong and God starts to bless him. A pretty girl catches his eye from among the Philistines. His parents disagree, but he insists. You might be thinking, young men are dumb. And you might be right. But this time it was the Lord.

STUDENT:

CH. 14

Samson told his father, "She is the one I want you to get for me. I like her."

<sup>4</sup> His parents did not know that it was the LORD who was leading Samson to do this, for the LORD was looking for a chance to fight the Philistines. At this time the Philistines were ruling Israel. (GNT)

TEACHER:

Samson is in love, so the parents set it up for Samson to marry the Philistine girl. On the way there Samson hears a lion roar, and runs after it because the Lord came upon him. He kills the Lion with his bare hands. Continuing on he didn't tell his parents what happened, and they go to the girl's family to make sure it's a good match. A few days later he is returning with his parents again, to marry her. On the way he goes to look at the lion carcass, and finds honey bees inside, and the carcass is filled with honey. He eats some, and takes some back to his parents to eat as they walk. But he doesn't tell them the story. At the wedding he is sitting with 30 young philistine men and posits a riddle, and a wager.

STUDENT:

<sup>12-13</sup> Samson said to them, "Let me tell you a riddle. I'll bet each one of you a piece of fine linen and a change of fine clothes that you can't tell me its meaning before the seven days of the wedding feast are over."

"Tell us your riddle," they said. "Let's hear it."

<sup>14</sup> He said,

"Out of the eater came something to eat;  
Out of the strong came something sweet." (GNT)

TEACHER:

His wife cons Samson into telling her the riddles answer. They threatened her and her father's lives to do so. Instead of her telling him of the threat as she should have, she gets him to tell her, and she tells them.



STUDENT:

<sup>18</sup> So on the seventh day, before Samson went into the bedroom, the men of the city said to him,

“What could be sweeter than honey?

What could be stronger than a lion?”

Samson replied,

“If you hadn't been plowing with my cow,

You wouldn't know the answer now.”

<sup>19</sup> Suddenly the power of the LORD made him strong, and he went down to Ashkelon, where he killed thirty men, stripped them, and gave their fine clothes to the men who had solved the riddle. After that, he went back home, furious about what had happened, <sup>20</sup> and his wife was given to the man that had been his best man at the wedding. (GNT)

TEACHER:

CH. 15

Sometime later Samson cools down and goes to visit his wife. The father tells him she is married to the best man because they thought he hated her. The girl's father offers her younger sister but Samson is furious, and says “I'm not responsible for what I am about to do.” He catches 300 foxes, ties them 2 x 2 at the tails, with a torch tied to each pair. He sets the torches on fire, and lets them run the wheat crop. The Philistines learn what was done, and burn the girl to death, and her father's house. Then Samson went on a killing spree. The Philistines attack Israel in return and negotiate a swap. Peace for Samson. They agree, and so does Samson. Remember, none of this would have happened if he just settled down with a nice Jewish girl like his mom wanted.

STUDENT:

<sup>14</sup> When he got to Lehi, the Philistines came running toward him, shouting at him. Suddenly the power of the LORD made him strong, and he broke the ropes around his arms and hands as if they were burnt thread. <sup>15</sup> Then he found a jawbone of a donkey that had recently died. He reached down and picked it up, and killed a thousand men with it. <sup>16</sup> So Samson sang,

“With the jawbone of a donkey I killed a thousand men;  
With the jawbone of a donkey I piled them up in piles.” (GNT)

STUDENT:

<sup>17</sup> After that, he threw the jawbone away. The place where this happened was named Ramath Lehi. <sup>18</sup> Then Samson became very thirsty, so he called to the LORD and said, “You gave me this great victory; am I now going to die of thirst and be captured by these heathen Philistines?” <sup>19</sup> Then God opened a hollow place in the ground there at Lehi, and water came out of it. Samson drank it and began to feel much better. So the spring was named Hakkore; it is still there at Lehi. <sup>20</sup> Samson led Israel for twenty years while the Philistines ruled the land. (GNT)

TEACHER:

Samson just couldn't get those Philistine women off of his mind. He visits a prostitute, escapes a murder plot, and rips the city gates, beams and all, out of the ground and leaves them on top of a hill for all to see. Then he falls for another Philistine girl named Delilah. The Philistine kings bribe her to betray him with 5500 pieces of silver. She works him over big time, and finally he tells her his secret after several lies. You still have to wonder, why couldn't he just marry a nice Jewish girl?

STUDENT:

<sup>15</sup> So she said to him, “How can you say you love me, when you don't mean it? You've made a fool of me three times, and you still haven't told me what makes you so strong.” <sup>16</sup> She kept on asking him, day after day. He got so sick and tired of her bothering him about it <sup>17</sup> that he finally told her the truth. “My hair has never been cut,” he said. “I have been dedicated to God as a nazirite from the time I was born. If my hair were cut, I would lose my strength and be as weak as anybody else.” <sup>18</sup> When Delilah realized that he had told her the truth, she sent a message to the Philistine kings and said, “Come back one more time. He has told me the truth.” Then they came and brought the money with them. <sup>19</sup> Delilah lulled Samson to sleep in her lap and then called a man, who cut off Samson's seven locks of hair. Then she began to torment him, for he had lost his strength. <sup>20</sup> Then she shouted, “Samson! The Philistines are coming!” He woke up and thought, “I'll get loose and go free, as always.” He did not know that the LORD had left him. <sup>21</sup> The Philistines captured him and put his eyes out. They took him to Gaza, chained him with bronze chains, and put him to work grinding at the mill in the prison. <sup>22</sup> But his hair started growing back. (GNT)



TEACHER:

The kings of Philistia put on a great feast to honor their god Dagon. They had Samson come out blind and shackled. As he was standing there, being guided by a young boy.....



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STUDENT:

<sup>26</sup> Samson said to the boy who was leading him by the hand, "Let me touch the columns that hold up the building. I want to lean on them." <sup>27</sup> The building was crowded with men and women. All five Philistine kings were there, and there were about three thousand men and women on the roof, watching Samson entertain them. (GNT)

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STUDENT:

<sup>28</sup> Then Samson prayed, "Sovereign LORD, please remember me; please, God, give me my strength just this one time more, so that with this one blow I can get even with the Philistines for putting out my two eyes." <sup>29</sup> So Samson took hold of the two middle columns holding up the building. Putting one hand on each column, he pushed against them <sup>30</sup> and shouted, "Let me die with the Philistines!" He pushed with all his might, and the building fell down on the five kings and everyone else. Samson killed more people at his death than he had killed during his life.

(GNT)

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TEACHER:

He had been Israel's leader for 20 years. Chapters 17- 21 deal with people on the fringes. Not so much national stories, more regional. Chapters 17-18 covers the story of Micah. A religious zealot but not for the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He builds a shrine, made an Ephod which is a sort of vest with jewels on it symbolizing different truths worn by priests. He made household idols and then hired his own priest. He liked religious things, with no desire to make God the Lord of his life.

This is not the same man as the Prophet who wrote the Book of Micah.

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STUDENT:

<sup>5</sup> This man Micah had his own place of worship. He made some idols and an ephod, and appointed one of his sons as his priest. <sup>6</sup> There was no king in Israel at that time; everyone did whatever they wanted.

<sup>7</sup> At that same time there was a young Levite who had been living in the town of Bethlehem in Judah. <sup>8</sup> He left Bethlehem to find another place to live. While he was traveling, he came to Micah's house in the hill country of Ephraim. <sup>9</sup> Micah asked him, "Where do you come from?"

He answered, "I am a Levite from Bethlehem in Judah. I am looking for a place to live."

<sup>10</sup> Micah said, "Stay with me. Be my adviser and priest, and I will give you ten pieces of silver a year, some clothes, and your food." <sup>11</sup> The young Levite agreed to stay with Micah and became like a son to him. <sup>12</sup> Micah appointed him as his priest, and he lived in Micah's home. <sup>13</sup> Micah said, "Now that I have a Levite as my priest, I know that the LORD will make things go well for me." (GNT)

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TEACHER:

This is where the regional story of Micah intersects with amore national story. The tribe of Dan, still hasn't received land for their inheritance. They were scoping out possible locations and came upon Micah. They find out he has a priest, and ask his advice. The priest tells them the Lord is taking care of them. The priest was wrong. He was speaking presumption. 600 men from Dan go and camp, ready to take the land. The men from Dan take Micah's priest and religious items and leave. Micah is helpless to stop them. The people of Dan sin.

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STUDENT:

CH. 18

They killed the inhabitants and burned the town. There was no one to save them, because Laish was a long way from Sidon, and they had no dealings with any other people. The Danites rebuilt the town and settled down there. <sup>29</sup> They changed its name from Laish to Dan, after their ancestor Dan, the son of Jacob. <sup>30</sup> The Danites set up the idol to be worshiped, and Jonathan, the son of Gershom and grandson of Moses, served as a priest for the Danites, and his descendants served as their priests until the people were taken away into exile. <sup>31</sup> Micah's idol remained there as long as the Tent where God was worshiped remained at Shiloh. (GNT)

=====

TEACHER:

If you would take a vote, to remove 1 chapter of the Bible. It would be Judges Chapter 19. There was a Levite who had a concubine. He was a real piece of work. The girl gets angry with him and left to go to her father's house. After 4 months, he decides to go get her, and try to win her back. He stayed with the in-laws for 5 nights. They leave together, the priest, his concubine, and his servant and head towards home. It was several days journey. As they look to settle down for the night, there is nowhere for them to stay. Finally and old farmer, heading home invites them in.

=====

STUDENT:

CH. 19

"You are welcome in my home! I'll take care of you; you don't have to spend the night in the square." <sup>21</sup> So he took them home with him and fed their donkeys. His guests washed their feet and had a meal. <sup>22</sup> They were enjoying themselves when all of a sudden some sexual perverts from the town surrounded the house and started beating on the door. They said to the old man, "Bring out that man that came home with you! We want to have sex with him!" (GNT)

=====

STUDENT:

<sup>23</sup> But the old man went outside and said to them, "No, my friends! Please! Don't do such an evil, immoral thing! This man is my guest. <sup>24</sup> Look! Here is his concubine and my own virgin daughter. I'll bring them out now, and you can have them. Do whatever you want to with them. But don't do such an awful thing to this man!" <sup>25</sup> But the men would not listen to him. So the Levite took his concubine and put her outside with them. They raped her and abused her all night long and didn't stop until morning. (GNT)

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STUDENT:

<sup>26</sup> At dawn the woman came and fell down at the door of the old man's house, where her husband was. She was still there when daylight came. <sup>27</sup> Her husband got up that morning, and when he opened the door to go on his way, he found his concubine lying in front of the house with her hands reaching for the door. <sup>28</sup> He said, "Get up. Let's go." But there was no answer. So he put her body across the donkey and started on his way home. <sup>29</sup> When he arrived, he went in the house and got a knife. He took his concubine's body, cut it into twelve pieces, and sent one piece to each of the twelve tribes of Israel. <sup>30</sup> Everyone who saw it said, "We have never heard of such a thing! Nothing like this has ever happened since the Israelites left Egypt! We have to do something about this! What will it be?" (GNT)

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TEACHER:

Misogyny. Subjugation. Rape. Murder. Dismemberment. The end result of a bad priest, a bad husband, a bad father, a bad attitude, and a bad city. In chapter 20 we see how far the damage can go, as if the death of a young woman wasn't tragic enough. All of Israel gather at Mizpah to search out the matter. The priest blames the town of Gibeah in the land controlled by Benjamin. Israel goes to war.

=====

CH. 20

STUDENT:

<sup>12</sup> The Israelite tribes sent messengers all through the territory of the tribe of Benjamin to say, "What is this crime that you have committed? <sup>13</sup> Now hand over those perverts in Gibeah, so that we can kill them and remove this evil from Israel." But the people of Benjamin paid no attention to the other Israelites. (GNT)

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STUDENT:

<sup>19</sup> So the Israelites started out the next morning and camped near the city of Gibeah. <sup>20</sup> They went to attack the army of Benjamin, and placed the soldiers in position facing the city. <sup>21</sup> The army of Benjamin came out of the city, and before the day was over they had killed twenty-two thousand Israelite soldiers. <sup>22-23</sup> Then the Israelites went to the place of worship and mourned in the presence of the LORD until evening. They asked him, "Should we go again into battle against our brothers the Benjaminites?" The LORD answered, "Yes." (GNT)

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TEACHER:

They fight again and lose 18,000 men. They fast and mourn. God tells them, "Tomorrow I will give you victory."

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STUDENT:

<sup>34</sup> Ten thousand men, specially chosen out of all Israel, attacked Gibeah, and the fighting was hard. The Benjaminites had not realized that they were about to be destroyed. <sup>35</sup> The LORD gave Israel victory over the army of Benjamin. The Israelites killed 25,100 of the enemy that day, <sup>36</sup> and the Benjaminites realized they were defeated. (GNT)

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STUDENT:

<sup>44</sup> Eighteen thousand of the best Benjaminite soldiers were killed. <sup>45</sup> The others turned and ran toward the open country to Rimmon Rock. Five thousand of them were killed on the roads. The Israelites continued to pursue the rest to Gidom, killing two thousand. <sup>46</sup> In all, twenty-five thousand Benjaminites were killed that day—all of them brave soldiers. (GNT)

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TEACHER:

All of Israel makes a vow not to let their daughters marry into Benjamin. That is a problem. They need 12 tribes. When they 1<sup>st</sup> set out against Benjamin, they said anyone who doesn't send men to this war would die. At roll call, nobody from Jabesh in Gilead was present. The solution they came up with was to kill all the military aged men, kill all the women, and save only young virgins. Those virgins would be wives for the tribe of Benjamin. The last sentence in Judges explains what was wrong during much of Judges.

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STUDENT:

<sup>25</sup> There was no king in Israel at that time. Everyone did whatever they pleased. (GNT)

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CH. 21

TEACHER:

1<sup>st</sup> The Lie. There was no king in Israel. God is the King of Israel.

2<sup>nd</sup> The Sin. They all did whatever they pleased. Not whatever God pleased.

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NEXT LESSON RUTH

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*"....The Lord is with you,  
Mighty Warrior."*

**Judges 6:12b**

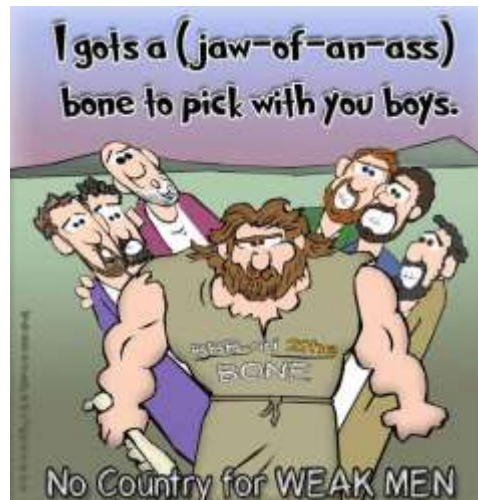


## The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



Samson visits Delilah's Salon, asks for a little off the sides. **SURPRISE! Ju 16:19**

A	P	M	N	B	J	R	E	J	J
A	B	D	O	N	A	O	A	J	X
L	R	I	S	G	I	T	H	E	Y
O	G	O	M	N	R	H	E	P	Z
T	H	A	A	E	A	N	G	H	A
B	H	Z	S	R	L	I	U	T	T
S	B	J	O	A	D	E	Y	H	G
I	Z	B	F	E	U	L	C	A	X
F	E	Y	O	D	H	V	Q	H	M
D	J	N	O	L	E	X	L	E	F



Judges  
ABDON  
ABIMELECH  
DEBORAH  
EHUD  
ELON  
GIDEON  
IBZAN  
JAIR  
JEPHTAH  
OTHNIEL  
SAMSON  
SHAMGAR  
TOLA



