

Judges Commentaries & Sermons

[JOSHUA](#)

[RUTH](#)

JUDGES RESOURCES

Judges Commentary, Sermon, Illustration, Devotional

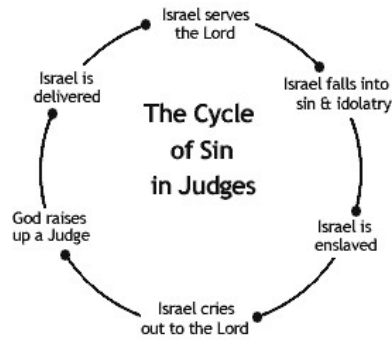
Chart from recommended resource [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#) - used by permission
[Chart on Judges](#) - Charles Swindoll

RECYCLING SIN (The High Cost of Compromise)						
Jdg 1:1-3:6		Jdg 3:7-16:31			Jdg 17:1-21:25	
Introduction		History of the Judges			Appendix	
Causes of the Cycles		Curse of the Cycles			Conditions in the Cycles	
THE REASON		THE RECORD			THE RESULTS	
Failure to Complete Conquest Jdg 1:1-36 God's Judgment for Failure Jdg 2:1-3:6		Curse of the Cycles			Conditions in the Cycles	
Living with Canaanites		War with the Canaanites			Living Like the Canaanites	
Religious Laxity		Political Uncertainty			Moral Anarchy	
About 350 Years of Israel's History - Almost 25%! From Compromise to Confusion!						
A TIMELINE OF ISRAEL'S HISTORY "in the days when the JUDGES governed" (Note: All dates are approximations & time gaps NOT to scale)						
Exodus	40 Years	Israel Enters Canaan	JUDGES	Saul	David	Messiah
Redemption from Slavery	Wilderness Wandering	Canaan Conquered Joshua Dies	LIGHT of book of RUTH Shines forth in Dark Days of Judges	To obey is better than sacrifice	Man after God's Own Heart	The Lamb that was slain
--	40 yrs	~24 yrs	350+ yrs	40 yrs	40 yrs	Forever
MESSIAH'S LINE		To Salmon was born Boaz by Rahab	To Boaz was born Obed by Ruth	To Obed was born Jesse	To Jesse was born David the King	Jesus Christ the Lord
1445BC	1445 -1405	1405 -1381	1381-1051	1051-1011	1011-971	4AD

[Borrow Ryrie Study Bible](#)

[ESV Introduction with Timeline](#)

Click to Enlarge (from [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#))



DESCRIPTIONS OF ISRAEL'S TRAGIC CYCLES

- Rest > Rebellion > Retribution > Repentance (???) > Restoration
- Sin > Suffering/Servitude > Supplication > Salvation
- Apathy > Apostasy > Affliction > Answered Prayer
- Disobedience > Desperation > Deliverance
- Disobedience > Bondage > Misery > Liberation and Rest > Compromises

The Book of Judges Contrasted with The Book of Joshua	
JOSHUA	JUDGES
Victory	Defeat
Freedom	Servitude
Faith	Unbelief
Progress	Declension
Spiritual vision	Earthly emphasis
Fidelity to the Lord	Apostasy from the Lord
Joy	Sorrow
Strength	Weakness
Sense of unity	Declension, anarchy
Sin judged	Sin lightly regarded
Borrow Unger's Bible Handbook- page 168	

The Book of Judges Contrasted with The Book of Ruth	
RUTH	JUDGES
Spiritual light	Spiritual darkness
Purity	Immorality
Deciding for the One true God	Pursuing Idols who are no gods
Devotion	Disloyalty
Love	Lust
Peace	War

Kindness	Cruelty
Obedience brings blessing	Disobedience brings sorrow
Oasis of righteousness	Desert of rebellion
Faithfulness of a Gentile alien	Faithlessness of the "chosen people"

Key Verses:

Jdg 2:19, 20-21+, Jdg 17:6+, Jdg 21:25+ (cf Dt 12:8+)

Key Words (NAS95):

Sons of evil (again) did evil - 5x/5v (Jdg 2:11; 3:12; 4:1; 10:6; 13:1)

Serve* - 17x/14v (Jdg 2:7, 11, 13, 19; 3:6ff, 14; 9:28, 38; 10:6, 10, 13, 16)

Sons of Israel cried - 7x/7v (Jdg 3:9, 15; 4:3; 6:6, 7; 10:10, 12)

LORD raised up - 4x/4v (Jdg 2:16, 18; 3:9, 15)

Judge, judged - 20x/16v (Jdg 2:16, 17, 18; 3:10; 10:2, 3, 11:27; 12:7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14; 15:20; 16:31)

Deliver, delivered, deliverance, deliverer - 28x/27v (Jdg 2:16, 18; 3:9, 15; 6:9, 14, 15, 31, 36, 37; 7:2, 7; 8:22, 34; 9:17; 10:11, 12, 13; 12:2, 3; 13:5; 15:18; 18:28; 20:13, 28)

Covenant - 4x/4v (Jdg 2:1-2, 20; 20:27)

Chart of Judges -

- [ESV Introduction with Timeline](#); [Global Message of Judges](#)

Geographic Locations of the Judges - click to enlarge
(Source of maps - On left: [New Unger's Handbook](#),
On right: [ESV Global Study Bible](#))

Judge	Reference	Tribe	Oppressor	Period of Oppression	of	Period of Rest	Total Length of Time*
Othniel	Jdg 3:7–11	Judah	Mesopotamians	8 years (Jdg 3:8)		40 years (Jdg 3:11)	48 years
Ehud	Jdg 3:12–30	Benjamin	Moabites	18 years (Jdg 3:14)		80 years (Jdg 3:30)	98 years
Shamgar	Jdg 3:31		Philistines				
Deborah	Jdg 4–5	Ephraim	Canaanites	20 years (Jdg 4:3)		40 years (Jdg 5:31)	60 years
Gideon	Jdg 6–8	Manasseh	Midianites	7 years (Jdg 6:1)		40 years (Jdg 8:28)	47 years
Tola	Jdg 10:1–2	Issachar				23 years (Jdg 10:2)	23 years
Jair	Jdg 10:3–5	Gilead-Manasseh				22 years (Jdg 10:3)	22 years
Jephthah	Jdg 10:6–12:7	Gilead-Manasseh	Ammonites			24 years (Jdg 10:8; 12:7)	24 years
Ibzan	Jdg 12:8–10	Judah or Zebulun?				7 years (Jdg 12:9)	7 years
Elon	Jdg 12:11–12	Zebulun				10 years (Jdg 12:11)	10 years

Abdon	Jdg 12:13–15	Ephraim		8 years (Jdg 12:14)	8 years
Samson	Jdg 13–16	Dan	Philistines	40 years (13:1)	20 years (Jdg 15:20; 16:31) 60 years

***NOTE:** Added together, the dates in this column total about 410 years. However, many of the episodes in Judges overlap each other, unfolding in different parts of the land. ([Source](#))

C H Ryrie - Purpose of Judges Historically, the book serves to link the conquest of Palestine and the monarchy. Theologically, it provides many examples of the principle that obedience to the law brings peace, whereas disobedience means oppression and death. Spiritually, the faithfulness of God in forgiving His penitent people is seen even in this period when "every man did what was right in his own eyes" (Jdg 17:6; 21:25).

J Sidlow Baxter - Failure Through Compromise - Its (Book of Judges) intent is to expose the cause and course of Israel's ruining downgrade in such a way as to sting the national conscience into repentant return to Jehovah... Incomplete mastery of an evil at the outset always means constant trouble from it afterwards, and often defeat by it in the end... Would that we might erase from the tablets of Israel's history the many dark doings and sad happenings which make up the bulk of this seventh book of the canon! But alas, the sin of Israel is written "with a pen of iron and with the point of a diamond." Though Israel wash herself "with nitre" and take "much soap," yet is her iniquity here marked for all time and for all to see. Says Jehovah, long afterwards, through His prophet Jeremiah: "I brought you into a plentiful country, to eat the fruit thereof - but when ye entered ye defiled My land, and made My heritage an abomination" (Jer 2:7). As we cannot obliterate the tragic record, let us be quick to learn from it; for although it is such a pathetic anticlimax to the book of Joshua, it is nevertheless one of the richest books of Scripture in the salutary lessons and examples which it contains. ([J.Sidlow Baxter: Explore The Book - Judges to Esther](#) online)

Thomas Constable has a number of excellent quotes - Arthur Cundall suggested that one of the purposes of Judges may have been to provide apologetic justification for Israel's monarchy. William Dumbrell believed its purpose was primarily to show the sovereign grace of God in preserving Israel in spite of Israel. Leon Wood wrote that its primary purpose was to show why Israel did not experience God's promised blessings. Herbert Wolf believed the primary purpose was to show that Israel's spiritual condition determined its political and material situation. Daniel Block argued that it was to reveal the Canaanization of Israel in the pre-monarchic period of Israel's history. David Howard wrote that the purpose was "to show the consequences of disobedience to God and to point the way to a king, who, if he were righteous, would lead the people to God." All these explanations seem to me to be in harmony with what the book records." (See Constable's excellent introductory comments, about 9 pages - [Judges](#))

Warren Wiersbe - The nation of Israel quickly decayed after a new generation took over, a generation that knew neither Joshua nor Joshua's God ... Instead of exhibiting spiritual fervor, Israel sank into apathy; instead of obeying the Lord, the people moved into apostasy; and instead of the nation enjoying law and order, the land was filled with anarchy. Indeed, for Israel it was the worst of times. (See context in [The Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

Gary Inrig applies the message of Judges to America - In our time, the winds of the "me generation" are blowing a strong and deadly virus. "Doing your own thing" has been enshrined as the national life-style, and the virus of relativism has infected every area of life, especially our concepts of spiritual truth and moral absolutes. Our society is increasingly secular, increasingly pagan, and vigorously anti-Christian. If ever a verse of the Bible has the ring of the twentieth century about it, it is the motto of the times of the judges: "Everyone did what was right in his own eyes."... The book of Judges is filled with people very much like us – people with God-given potential for greatness and unfailing capacity for catastrophe. When they dared to trust God and depend upon Him, they were indeed people with hearts of iron, who made a positive, godly impact on their times. But when even the greatest heroes depended upon the flesh, they were revealed as people with feet of clay, who not only experienced but caused spiritual catastrophe. (Borrow his excellent book on Judges - [Hearts of Iron, Feet of Clay](#) While you cannot copy and paste, this is still a useful resource. See also his 50 part series online [Journey Through Judges](#) - This is a 50 part series online. - [see the reader comments to which I would add - Highly Recommended especially if you are going to teach or preach through Judges!](#))

Henrietta Mears - Someone has called the book of Judges the account of the Dark Ages of the Israelite people. The people forsook God (Jdg 2:13) and God forsook the people (Jdg 2:23). Robert Ingersoll (American Agnostic) spoke much of "the liberty of man, woman and child." His was a godless liberty. The modern equivalent is "doing our own thing." You see this in the book of Judges. Judges covers the period after the death of their great leader, Joshua, to the ascension of Saul to the throne of Israel... The book of Judges is in a way another book of beginnings where we see a new nation adjusting her national life. It is filled with struggle and disasters, but also with the moral courage of a select few. There is a decided monotony in the description of each successive stage of sin in Israel, but there is an equally remarkable variety in the instruments and methods of deliverance God used. There is something different in the story of each judge. There are fourteen judges—Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah, Gideon, Tola, Jair,

Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon, Samson, Eli and Samuel. (Abimelech, a petty ruler, was not called of God to judge.) There were three types of Judges: The warrior-judges as Gideon and Samson; Priest-judges as Eli; Prophet-judges as Deborah and Samuel. The chief judges were Deborah, Gideon, Samson and Samuel... The book begins with compromise and ends with confusion. **This is what happens in every unsundered life!**... One thing we learn in the book of Judges is that a people who spend much of their time in disobedience to God make little progress during their lifetime. The book of Numbers recounts the forty years of wandering in the wilderness, but this book repeats again and again a record of departure from God... Here is an outline for Judges that is easy to remember. "Seven apostasies, seven servitudes to seven idolatrous and cruel nations, seven deliverances!" We read of humans' constant failure and God's constant mercy. (See context in [What the Bible Is All About](#) or borrow a copy of [What the Bible is All About](#))

Ray Stedman - Judges is essentially the story of a deteriorating nation, and as such, it is a picture for us of deteriorating Christian life... "These things," as the apostle Paul says, "were written down for our instruction." (1Corinthians 10:11) God retraces in our lives the very circumstances, the very battles, and the very conflicts that we find Israel going through. In Joshua, the land of Canaan is the picture of the Spirit-filled life... (In Judges) The principle that always meant defeat in the lives of the nation of Israel is given to us in the very last verse of the book. If you miss that, you miss the key to the book: In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes. (Judges 21:25) Notice that it does not say, "Every man did what was wrong in his own eyes." These people were not trying to do wrong. They were not essentially rebellious people determined to thwart the will of God in their lives. At this stage of Israel's history these people were very determined to do right, but they were trying to do what was right in their own eyes. The pattern of peril in this book of Judges can be simply put this way -- they were given over to the folly of consecrated blundering. They were consecrated, dedicated blunderers -- meaning to do right but ending up all wrong. I can tell you that no pattern repeats itself more frequently in my counseling sessions than this. Many, many times I have heard people say, "Oh, I don't know what went wrong. I meant to do right. I did what I thought was best. But everything seemed to go wrong."... **The great lesson of this book, then, is that we must take God seriously about the enemy.** Jesus Christ has come to save us from our sins -- not to allow us to settle down to live all our lives with them. He has come to drive them out from us and to separate us from them. If we do not take God seriously about these things that we call trivial we will experience an inevitable sequence, taking us step by step away from the intervening grace of God, onward to a course that brings us at last to moral collapse. I think this is the answer to those sudden moral collapses of men and women who have apparently been outstanding leaders for God, who present, on the outside at least, a fair and happy prospect that looks as though their spiritual life is strong. Then suddenly we read of some terrible moral collapse. What has happened? There has been an inward deterioration, exactly along the pattern of the book of Judges. ([Overview of Judges- The Pattern of Defeat - Recommended](#))

Charles R Swindoll - Ironically, in this book we meet many heroes of faith: Othniel, Gideon, Samson, Shamgar, Deborah, Jephthah, Ehud ... flawed individuals who answered God's call to deliver the Israelites in sometimes dramatic form. The book includes many of the most graphic, violent, and disturbing scenes in all Scripture—some in the name of righteousness, others in the name of evil. The primary message of Judges is that God will not allow sin to go unpunished. As Exodus established, Israel was God's people—He was their King... The people's inability to resist sinful Canaanite influences eventually revealed their desire for a centralized monarchy, led by a righteous king whom God would choose as His intermediary. How do I apply this? Memory is a gift. Remembering the past teaches us countless lessons about how to live today. The Israelites forgot. They did not remember the miraculous events that brought them to their land or the covenant that united them to their God. But God did not forget His covenant—and because of His great love for His people, He disciplined His sinful children so that they might return to Him. Have you forgotten the great works God has done in your life? Perhaps your difficult circumstances are overpowering your faith. Do you feel as if He is disciplining you right now? Know that He disciplines those He loves (Hebrews 12:5–11). Return to Him. Remember, trust, and obey. He is waiting with open arms. ([Insight for Living Ministries](#))

Judges - Driving Out Your Enemies - Precept Ministries International — Inductive Bible Study Today, as in the days of Judges, everyone does what is right in his own eyes! Absolutes and traditions are pushed aside. Many feel oppressed. The book of Judges is God's Word for our day of apathy and apostasy. **7 lessons** (Click for discussion of the value of Inductive Study)

JUDGES COMMENTARY

Verse by Verse Commentary

Bruce Hurt, MD

Note - This commentary has been revised Spring, 2022.

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JOSHUA

These sermons are excellent.

[Click here for list of 12 messages related to Judges](#)

PAUL APPLE Commentary on Judges

Recommended Resource

- [260 Page Commentary - Sept. 2012](#)

ARCHIVE.ORG RESOURCES TO BORROW

Explanation - The following list includes not only commentaries but other Christian works by well known evangelical writers. Most of the resources below are newer works (written after 1970) which previously were available only for purchase in book form or in a Bible computer program. The resources are made freely available by archive.org but have several caveats - (1) they do not allow copy and paste, (2) they can only be checked out for one hour (but can be checked out immediately when your hour expires giving you time to read or take notes on a lengthy section) and (3) they require creating an account which allows you to check out the books free of charge. To set up an account click archive.org and then click the picture of the person in right upper corner and enter email and a password. That's all you have to do. Then you can read these more modern resources free of charge! I have read or used many of these resources but not all of them so ultimately you will need to be a Berean (Acts 17:11+) as you use them. I have also selected works that are conservative and Biblically sound. If you find one that you think does not meet those criteria please send an email at <https://www.preceptaustin.org/contact>. The resources are listed in alphabetical order by the author's last name and some include reviews of the particular resource.

[Judges, Ruth. Vol. 6: New American Commentary](#), DANIEL BLOCK - Nashville: Broadman & Holman - 1999

[Cyril Barber](#) says this is "An exceedingly valuable exegetical and theological exposition. Based on the NIV, though Block gives evidence of working from the Hebrew text. Readers will find this a learned, discerning discussion that readily explains the meaning and message of these twin books. Recommended.

Rosscup - An evangelical contributes 586 pp. on Judges and 151 on Ruth. Introductory sections for both books survey the state of scholarly opinion and his belief in the integrity and reliability of the biblical books. Copious footnotes, often lengthy, reflect on others' views, verifications of points in the books and also in other scripture, etc. Verse by verse work offers detail on grammar, word meaning, background, customs, and interpretive problems. Block holds that Jephthah sacrificed his daughter in death. On passages overall, this is a standout commentary, yet at times it states convictions without a specific answer to other leading views. One instance is in not commenting on the view that Ruth acted indecently with Boaz at night. Some accounts, as episodes of Samson, seem for the most part to be explained in reasonable detail. (Commentaries for Biblical Expositors: An annotated bibliography of selected works)

Tim Challies - Tremper Longman, who has not reviewed Dale Ralph Davis' volume, gives Block's commentary a 5-star rating and says, "This contribution is clearly the best thing available on the book of Judges. Block is thoroughly aware of all the literature that precedes his own, and he incorporates what is good and criticizes what is bad." He also praises Block's insights along with his literary and theological analysis. This commentary is slightly more advanced and in-depth than Davis'.

[Judges Commentary](#) - DONALD CAMPBELL - Leaders in Crisis times (Living for God in a Society that has Forgotten God!)

Former president of Dallas Theological Seminary - has wonderful insights, illustrations and practical applications. Unfortunately this book is no longer being published but [you may be able to find used copies](#)
Excellent practical commentary on Judges with good illustrations for sermons.

Review by Cyril Barber - A well-informed, judicious exposition that combines a timely handling of the text with a practical application of it. Ideal for adult discussion groups. Recommended.

[Judges & Ruth: Tyndale Old Testament Commentary](#) - ARTHUR CUNDALL - Tyndale Old Testament Commentary (Judges and Ruth) (1968)

Arthur Cundall writes the commentary on Judges and Leon Morris writes the commentary on Ruth. These both get excellent reviews - [see reviews by several users](#).

Here is a more generic review - "The Tyndale volumes have long been the premier shorter-length commentary series on both Testaments throughout the English-speaking world." (Craig Blomberg, Denver Seminary)

[Judges Bible Study Commentary](#) PAUL ENNS - Everyman's Bible Commentary (1982) (Zondervan)

Cyril Barber - A practical, clearly outlined, conservative treatment. Ideal for laypeople.

James Rosscup - If one wants down to business exposition, well-organized, with keen sensitivity to providing help on problem texts, this is a very good, brief conservative work by a clear, diligent student. It almost always goes right to the point, deals with pertinent questions, and always upholds a high view of the passages as being the Word of God.

[Judges/Ruth - Everyman's Bible Commentary](#) - Arthur Lewis (1979) 132 pages. [1 rating](#)

[A Commentary on Judges and Ruth](#) ROBERT CHISHOLM

[Joshua, Judges and Ruth](#) A GRAEME AULD -

Cyril Barber - Daily Study Bible. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984. †Auld writes out of the conviction that these books are the Bible's prime witness to Israel's early history in Canaan. He expounds the text skillfully and incorporates important historical, linguistic, and archaeological information into his discussion.

[Studies in Joshua-Job](#) by Newell, William - [This same resource is found here](#). [Download Pdf](#) (allows copy and paste)

Wiersbe says it is "valuable for your library."

Brookman writes "Popular studies with an excellent synopsis of the historical books. It is written in a clear manner, and surveys each book giving key ideas and insights."

[Evangelical Commentary on the Bible](#) - Judges by Andrew Boling (20 pages); editor Walter Elwell (1989) 1239 pages. [User reviews](#). (See also his [380 page commentary on Judges](#) the Anchor Bible Series)

[Hearts of Iron, Feet of Clay](#) - GARY INRIG - Judges shows us our potential for greatness...our capacity for catastrophe (2005) This is one of my favorite practical commentaries on Judges. - [see reviews by users](#).

[Journey Through Judges](#) - This is a 50 part series online (no charge) walking you through the entire book of Judges (recommended)!

Rosscup - This little book is a "sleepers" and has flown under the radar of many evangelicals. I highly recommend it to supplement your teaching and/or preaching through the Book of Judges. Notice that all the reviewers have given it the highest rating possible..

[Not to the strong](#) by McQuaid, Elwood, former president of Friends for Israel -

The Chapters include - In the Grasp of Failure, A Program for Victory, Barak—The Faceless, Gideon—The Fearful, Jephthah—The Forsaken, Samson—The Failure. Conservative.

[Old Testament characters : Bible study guide](#) by Swindoll, Charles R (1991) 132 pages. Chapter 1 = Judges 13-15; Chapter 2 = Judges 16:4-31

[Bible Knowledge Commentary - Old Testament](#) - Dallas Theological Seminary Faculty

[Bible Exposition Commentary - Old Testament](#) - Warren Wiersbe - always worth checking

[Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament](#) by Warren W Wiersbe - can be very helpful for sermon prep.

"Even the most difficult Scriptures come alive as Warren Wiersbe leads you book-by-book through the Old Testament and helps you to see the "big picture" of God's revelation. In this unique volume, you will find: •

Introductions and/or outlines for every Old Testament book • Practical expositions of strategic chapters • Special studies on key topics, relating the Old Testament to the New Testament • Easy-to-understand expositions that are practical, preachable, and teachable If you have used Dr. Wiersbe's popular BE series, you know how simple and practical his Bible studies are, with outlines that almost teach themselves. If not, you can now discover a wonderful new resource. This work is a unique commentary on every book of the Old Testament. It contains new material not to be found in the BE series.

[With the Word](#) - Devotional Commentary - Warren Wiersbe

STUDY BIBLES, ETC

Note: The first 3 resources have no time restriction and allow copy and paste function:

(1) [KJV Bible Commentary](#) - Hindson, Edward E; Kroll, Woodrow Michael. Over 3000 pages of the entire OT/NT. Well done conservative commentary that interprets Scripture from a literal perspective. Pre-millennial. [User reviews](#) - it generally gets 4/5 stars from users.

Very well done conservative commentary that interprets Scripture from a literal perspective [user reviews](#)

The King James Version Bible Commentary is a complete verse-by-verse commentary. It is comprehensive in scope, reliable in scholarship, and easy to use. Its authors are leading evangelical theologians who provide practical truths and biblical principles. Any Bible student will gain new insights through this one-volume commentary based on the timeless King James Version of the Bible.

(2) [The King James Study Bible Second Edition](#) 2240 pages (2013) (Thomas Nelson) General Editor - Edward Hindson with multiple contributing editors. Pre-millennial. See [introduction on How to Use this Study Bible](#)

(3) [NKJV Study Bible: New King James Version Study Bible](#) (formerly "The Nelson Study Bible - NKJV") by Earl D Radmacher; Ronald Barclay Allen; Wayne H House. 2345 pages. (1997, 2007). Very helpful notes. Conservative. Pre-millennial.

[The MacArthur study Bible](#) : new King James version - John MacArthur

[ESV study Bible](#) - Excellent resource but not always literal in eschatology and the nation of Israel

[NIV Study Bible](#) - (2011) 2570 pages - Use this one if available as it has more notes than edition below. This resource has been fully revised in 2020.

[HCSB Study Bible : Holman Christian Standard Bible](#) - General Editor Jeremy Royal Howard (2010) 2360 pages. Conservative. Good notes. Include Holmans excellent maps. One hour limit

[Life Application Study Bible](#) : New Living Translation. Has some very helpful notes

[NLT Study Bible](#) (Illustration Version)

[The Living Insights Study Bible : New International Version](#) - Charles Swindoll. Notes are good but somewhat sparse and not verse by verse.

[The David Jeremiah study bible](#) - (2013) 2208 pages. [Logos.com](#) - "Drawing on more than 40 years of study, Dr. David Jeremiah has compiled a legacy resource that will make an eternal impact on generations to come. 8,000 study notes. Hundreds of enriching word studies"50+ Essentials of the Christian Faith" articles."

[The Experiencing God Study Bible: the Bible for knowing and doing the will of God](#) - Blackaby, Henry (1996) 1968 pages - CHECK THIS ONE! Each chapter begins with several questions under the title "PREPARE TO MEET GOD." Then you will interesting symbols before many of the passages. The chapter ends with a "DID YOU NOTICE?" question. This might make a "dry chapter" jump off the page!

[NIV archaeological Study Bible](#) (2005) 2360 pages

[The Ryrie study Bible](#) - Charles Ryrie (1978) 2142 pages. Conservative.

[The Defender's Study Bible : King James Version](#) by Morris, Henry M.

[Wycliffe Bible Commentary](#) - Charles Pfeiffer - 1560 pages (1962). Less detailed than the KJV Bible Commentary. Conservative. Notes are generally verse by verse but brief.

Rosscup - Conservative and premillennial scholars here have been experts in their fields. The work contains brief introductions and attempts to give a verse-by-verse exposition, though it does skip over some verses. The treatments vary with the authors, but as a whole it is a fine one-volume commentary for pastors and students to use or give to a layman. Outstanding sections include, for example: Whitcomb on Ezra-Nehemiah-Esther; Culver on Daniel; Ladd on Acts; Harrison on Galatians; Johnson on I Corinthians; and Ryrie on the Johannine Epistles.

[Believer's Bible Commentary](#) - OT and NT - MacDonald, William (1995) 2480 pages. Conservative. Literal. Often has very insightful comments. John MacArthur, says "Concise yet comprehensive - the most complete single-volume commentary I have seen." Warren Wiersbe adds "For the student who is serious about seeing Christ in the Word." One hour limit.

James Rosscup - This work, originally issued in 1983, is conservative and premillennial, written to help teachers, preachers and people in every walk of life with different views, explanation and application.

MISCELLANEOUS RESOURCES

[Jensen's Survey of Bible - Old Testament and New Testament \(online\)](#) by Jensen, Irving This is an outstanding resource and a great place to begin your study on any book of the Bible.

[IVP Background Commentary - OT - John Walton](#)

[Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary](#) - Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel. Well done notes explaining cultural/historical aspects of the texts with color pictures. Interesting resource to supplement your study of the major prophets.

[Back toward the future : hints for interpreting Biblical prophecy](#) by Kaiser, Walter C.,

[The Old Testament in contemporary preaching](#) by Kaiser, Walter

[The uses of the Old Testament in the New](#) by Kaiser, Walter C

[Nelson's Expository Dictionary of the Old Testament](#) by Unger, Merrill

[Toward Old Testament ethics](#) by Kaiser, Walter C.

[Toward an Old Testament theology](#) by Kaiser, Walter

[The promise-plan of God : a biblical theology of the Old and New Testaments](#) by Kaiser, Walter C - Excellent.

[The Messiah in the Old Testament](#) by Kaiser, Walter C

[Every prophecy of the Bible](#): Walvoord, John F

[Zondervan Atlas of The Bible](#) By: Umair Mirza

[Dictionary of Biblical Imagery](#) - free for use online with no restrictions (i.e., you do not need to borrow this book). Editors Leland Ryken, J C Wilhoit, Tremper Longman III - This is a potential treasure chest to aid your preaching and teaching as it analyzes the meaning of a host of Biblical figures of speech. **Clue** - use the "One-page view" which then allows you to copy and paste text. One downside is there is no index, so you need to search 3291 pages for entries which are alphabetical.

[Archaeology and the Bible - OT and NT](#) - only 123 pages. No division by books. Strictly confines itself to discussion of archaeology.

[Dictionary of deities and demons in the Bible \(DDD\)](#) - 950 pages (1995) Read some of the [65 ratings](#) (4.8/5 Stars). A definitive in depth resource on this subject. Very expensive to purchase.

[Unger's bible handbook : a best-selling guide to understanding the bible](#) by Unger, Merrill F

Rosscup - A former Professor of Old testament at Dallas Seminary, evangelical writer of many scholarly books, did this in his late years. He has sections on each Bible book, archaeology, Major Prophets, Minor Prophets, between the testaments, the four gospels, epistles of Paul, how the Bible came to us, Bible statistics, outline of church history, creation stories, Ur of Abram's day, Egypt, Assyria, the Chaldean empire, demonism, miracles, Bethlehem, Dead Sea scrolls, Corinth, Ephesus, Rome, etc. The work includes more than 20 charts and 30 maps and has color sections. Unger has good material at some points in surveying passages, dealing with certain problems, etc., and handles the long-range prophecies in a premillennial way. Often he is very cursory.

[Halley's Bible Handbook](#) Henry H. Halley - (2000) 2720 pages (much larger than original edition in 1965 and no time limit on use).

([Halley's Bible handbook : an abbreviated Bible commentary - one hour limit](#) 1965 872 pages)

Rosscup - A much-used older evangelical handbook bringing together a brief commentary on Bible books, some key archaeological findings, historical background, maps, quotes, etc. It is helpful to a lay Bible teacher, Sunday School leader, or pastor looking for quick, pertinent information on a Bible book. This is the 72nd printing somewhat revised. Halley packed in much information. Unger's is better overall, but that is not to say that Halley's will not provide much help on basic information.

[The Shaw Pocket Bible Handbook](#) - Editor - Walter Elwell (1984) 408 pages.

"This hardback is small in size but packed full of content: Brief summaries of every book of the bible, cultural, archaeological and historical info, word definitions, pictures, maps and charts." Worth checking!

[Eerdmans' Handbook to the Bible](#) (1983) 688 pages

[What the Bible is All About](#) Henrietta Mears

[The New Unger's Bible Dictionary](#) by Unger, Merrill Frederick, 1909-

J.Sidlow Baxter: Explore The Book - pdf

- [Vol. 1 Genesis to Joshua](#)
- [Vol. 2 Judges to Esther](#)
- [Vol. 3 Job to Lamentations](#)
- [Vol. 4 Ezekiel to Malachi](#)
- [Vol. 5 The Gospels](#)
- [Vol. 6 Acts to Revelation](#)

APOLOGETICS

[The Apologetics Study Bible Understand Why You Believe](#) - Comments from over 90 leading apologists, including: Ted Cabal, Lee Strobel, Chuck Colson, Norm Geisler, Josh McDowell, Albert Mohler, J.P. Moreland, [see reviews](#). Here is a review from [The Christian Reviewer](#).

[Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics](#) by Norman Geisler

Cyril Barber - This is a goldmine of valuable information! Well-indexed. Covers everything from "Absolute Truth" to "Zen Buddhism." Extensive articles on such topics as "Agnosticism," "Annihilationism," "Bible, Alleged Errors in," "Gnosticism," "Miracles in the Bible," "New Testament Manuscripts," and "Objections to Resurrection," "Big Bang Theory," "Edward John Carnell," "Christ, Death of," are only a few of the insightful essays in this masterful work. Each article has been written in an understandable way, and a 28 page bibliography forms a valuable source for further research. An excellent resource.

[The Kingdom of the Cults](#) by Walter Martin ([another source without restrictions](#) or [here](#))

[Mormons : answered verse by verse](#) David Reed

[Jehovah's Witnesses : answered verse by verse](#) David Reed

[Evidence That Demands A Verdict](#) - Josh McDowell (no restrictions)

[The New Evidence that Demands a Verdict](#) - Josh McDowell (no restrictions)

[More Than A Carpenter](#) - A modern classic by Josh McDowell - Great resource for those who are skeptical that Jesus is fully God, fully Man.

[Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties](#) by Archer, Gleason L - or [here with no restrictions](#)

[Hard Sayings of the Bible](#) - Walter Kaiser

[When Critics Ask](#) - Norman Geisler

[When Cultists Ask](#) - Norman Geisler

[When Skeptics Ask A Handbook](#) - Norman Geisler

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS IN THE BIBLE

[Today's Handbook of Bible Times & Customs](#) by Coleman, William L

[Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Manners & Customs : How the People of the Bible Really Lived](#) by Vos, Howard Frederic

[Manners & Customs of the Bible](#) (The New Manners and Customs) Freeman, James M., 1827-1900 Published 1998

[The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times](#): Gower, Ralph, 1933- Published 1987

[Manners and Customs of Bible lands](#) By: Wight, Fred Published 1983

[Manners and Customs in the Bible](#) By: [Matthews, Victor Harold](#) Published 1991

[Handbook of life in Bible times](#) By: Thompson, J. A. (John Arthur), 1913-2002 Published 1986

[Illustrated dictionary of Bible manners and customs](#) By: Deursen, A. van (Arie), 1891-1963 Published 1982

[The Illustrated Guide to Bible Customs & Curiosities](#) by Knight, George W.

[Orientalisms in Bible lands, giving light from customs, habits, manners, imagery, thought and life in the East for Bible students](#) By: Rice, Edwin Wilbur, 1831-1929 Published 1910

[Bible manners and customs](#) By: Mackie, G. M. 1854-1922 Published 1898

[Teach it to your children : how kids lived in Bible days](#) By: Vamosh, Miriam Feinberg, author

[Everyday life in Bible times : work, worship, and war](#) By: Embry, Margaret Published 1994

[Everyday living : Bible life and times : fascinating, everyday customs and traditions from the people of the Bible](#) Published 2006

[The Land and the Book; or, Biblical illustrations drawn from the manners and customs, the scenes and scenery, of the Holy land](#) By: Thomson, William M. (William McClure), 1806-1894 Published 1880

[Eastern manners illustrative of the Old Testament history](#) By: Jamieson, Robert, 1802-1880 Published 1838

[Scripture manners and customs : being an account of the domestic habits, arts, etc., of Eastern nations mentioned in Holy Scripture](#) Published 1895

HEBREW WORD STUDY RESOURCES

[Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament](#) by Harris, R. Laird - (5/5 Stars) One of the best OT lexicons for studying Hebrew words.

[Here is another link to the TWOT](#) which has **no time limit on use** and **does allow copy and paste**. Can be downloaded as PDF.

[Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament and New Testament Words](#) - Online pdf

[Hebrew Honey: a simple and deep word study of the Old Testament](#) - 330 pages. The definitions have more of a devotional flavor. For example, see the descriptive definition for ["Abide" \(Hebrew - gur\)](#).

[Expository Dictionary of Bible Words](#) by Richards, Larry. It does not go into great depth on the Greek or Hebrew words but does have some excellent insights.

[So That's What it Means \(Theological Wordbook\)](#) - Formerly titled **"Theological Wordbook" edited by Charles Swindoll**. It is now under this new title [So That's What it Means](#) and can be borrowed - it is more like a dictionary than a lexicon but the comments are superb! The contributors include Donald Campbell, Wendell Johnston, John Witmer, John Walvoord

[Nelson's Expository Dictionary of the Old Testament](#) by Unger, Merrill. Indexed by English word and then any related Hebrew nouns or verbs. Definitions are solid and geared to the lay person.

[Synonyms of the Old Testament-Robert Girdlestone](#)

WAYNE BARBER

SERMON SERIES

This is only available in audio, but is listed because Dr Barber's "down home" preaching style draws out many practical insights on the Christian life from the ancient book of Judges. This series was preached in 1996. Wayne is now with the Lord.

- [The Symptoms of Partial Obedience: Judges 1](#)
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- [A Preview of the Book of Judges: Judges 2](#)
- [The Righteous Wisdom of God: Judges 3:1-8](#)
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JIM BOMKAMP
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- Judges 3 "The First Three Judges: Othniel, Ehud, and Shamgar"
- Judges 4 "The Story Of Deborah And Barak"
- Judges 5 "The Song Of Deborah And Barak"
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- Judges 17-18 "Micah Makes An Idol / Dan Moves Its Territory"
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GEORGE BUSH

Judges Notes

1852

Spurgeon: Like other works of this author—of considerable value.

Cyril Barber - A pleasing synthesis of scholarship and devotion, historical background and relevant exposition. Bible students, whether laypeople or pastors, should eagerly acquire the writings of this fine biblical scholar and for their own edification and enrichment read what he wrote. This valuable reprint of the 1852 edition makes available the rare and rich homiletic suggestions of this Princeton scholar.

Brookman - A valuable classic reprint that will enhance sermon preparation. Even though this work was published in 1852, it is still loaded with rich expository thoughts on the books of Joshua and Judges.

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ADAM CLARKE

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Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown. 1871

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THOMAS CONSTABLE
Commentary Notes
The Book of Judges

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RON DANIEL

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A R FAUSSET Judges - An Expository Commentary

Cyril Barber - A work of immeasurable value. Remains one of the finest treatments extant. A must for the expositor.

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PRINCIPLES FROM JUDGES

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- Judges 1:17-19; **Partial Obedience:** We should guard against our human tendency to retreat when we face difficult challenges. [Video](#)
- Judges 1:20-36; **Tests of Faith:** We should view various difficulties in our walk with God as opportunities to demonstrate our faithfulness. [Video](#)
- Judges 2:1-5; **Forsaking Sin:** When we persist in sin, we must understand that we are offending God the Father and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. [Video](#)
- Judges 2:6-13; **Modeling and Teaching:** Adults are to model and teach God's will to the younger generation. [Video](#)
- Judges 2:14-15; **God's Discipline:** When we persistently disobey God, He will discipline us in order to help us live more godly lives. [Video](#)
- Judges 2:16-18; **God's Compassion:** Though the Lord will eventually judge all those who ultimately reject His gift of salvation, we should be assured that He is a God of love, mercy, and forgiveness. [Video](#)
- Judges 2:19-23; **Internalizing God's Values:** With God's help we are to internalize biblical values. [Video](#)
- Judges 3:1-11; **Spiritual Leadership:** We should always select and appoint leaders in the church who are qualified spiritually. [Video](#)
- Judges 4:1-24; **Leadership Qualities:** When appointing women to leadership positions in the church, we should take seriously the maturity profile outlined specifically for them. [Video](#)
- Judges 6:1-13; **Blaming God:** We should not blame God for our misfortunes when we've caused these problems through our flagrant disobedience. [Video](#)
- Judges 6:14-16; **Overcoming Intimidation:** Even if we lack status and position in the Christian community, we are to trust God to use us to carry out His work in this world. [Video](#)
- Judges 6:17-40; **Determining God's Will:** We must be very cautious in asking God to verify what He has already made clear in His direct revelation in Scripture. [Video](#)
- Judges 7:1-23; **Quality versus Quantity:** In measuring success and doing God's work, we are to focus on quality rather than quantity. [Video](#)
- Judges 8:22-35; **Thinking Consistently:** To make decisions that glorify God, we must develop a value system that is consistent with God's character. [Video](#)
- Judges 9:1-57; **Reciprocal Experiences:** We are to treat others fairly and justly or God may discipline us by allowing what we have done to others to happen to us. [Video](#)
- Judges 10:6-18; **Light in the Darkness:** Followers of Jesus Christ are to view the decadence that surrounds them as an opportunity to be God's light in the darkness. [Video](#)
- Judges 13:1-16:31; **Stories that Teach:** When we read biblical stories of people's lives, we should look for the lessons we can learn from both their successes and their failures. [Video](#)
- Judges 17:1-13; **Religious Syncretism:** We must be extremely cautious that we never combine pagan concepts with true biblical values. [Video](#)
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GOTQUESTIONS

BOOK OF JUDGES

Have also included selected articles from [Fausset's Bible Dictionary](#) which is an older but excellent resource.

- [Book of Judges - Bible Survey \(Fausset's article\)](#)
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- Judges 3:31 [What is an ox goad / oxgoad in the Bible? \(Wikipedia\)](#)
- Judges 4:4-14, 5:1-15 [What is the story of Deborah and Barak? \(Fausset's article - Deborah\)](#) ([Fausset-Barak](#))
- Judges 4:17-5:24 [Who was Jael in the Bible? \(Fausset's article\)](#)
- Judges 6-8 [What can we learn from the life of Gideon? \(Fausset's article\)](#)
- Judges 6:32, 7:1 [Why is Gideon referred to as Jerubbaal?](#)
- Judges 6:37-40 [Is it acceptable to "lay out a fleece" before God in prayer?](#)
- Judges 8-9 [Who was Abimelech in the Book of Judges?](#)
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- Judges 13-16 [What can we learn from the life of Samson? \(Fausset's article\)](#)
- Judges 16 [Who was Delilah in the Bible? \(Fausset's article\)](#)
- Judges 16 [What should we learn from the account of Samson and Delilah?](#)
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- Judges 17-18 [What can we learn from the account of Micah and the idol in Judges?](#)
- Judges 19 [What can we learn from the story of the Levite and his concubine?](#)

JOHN GILL

Judges Commentary

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L. M. GRANT

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DAVE GUZIK

Judges Commentary

Brief Notes from Conservative, Evangelical, Millennial Perspective

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ROBERT HAWKER

Poor Man's Commentary

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DAVE HATCHER

Judges Sermons

THESE ARE AUDIO WITH BRIEF NOTES -- When you click the page select **Notes** for brief transcript

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MATTHEW HENRY

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HOMILETICAL COMMENTARY

"The Preacher's Commentary"

Book of Judges

Rich Resource - Check it out. (E.g. 120 pages of notes on Judges 3!)

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HYMNS

Relating to Judges

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INTERNATIONAL CRITICAL COMMENTARY ON THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

Judges Commentary

George F Moore

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S LEWIS JOHNSON

Sermons on Judges

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KEIL AND DELITZSCH

Commentary on the Old Testament

Judges

Spurgeon on Keil & Delitzsch: We cannot read Keil with pleasure, for we want spiritual meat, but yet it is most desirable for us to know what the text really means. Without indicating either the spiritual lesson or the moral of the history, Keil simply explains the facts, and in so doing aids the reader to realize them. We confess we should like something more. A work for the learned. It has received the highest commendations from competent scholars. But it is somewhat dull and formal.

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JUDGES DEVOTIONALS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

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JOHN KITTO

Studies on Judges

From his Daily Bible Illustrations & The Pictorial Bible on the Old Testament

C H Spurgeon comments of John Kitto's work on Judges writing that it is '**Exceedingly meritorious. Refer to it frequently.**' High praise from the prince of preachers! ([Commenting and commentaries](#))

- [Judges 1 - Pictorial Bible](#)

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Paulus Cassel

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ALEXANDER MACLAREN Judges Sermons

- Judges 2:1-10 A Summary of Israel's Faithlessness & God's Patience
- Judges 2:11-23 Israel's Obstinacy and God's Patience
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J VERNON MCGEE Judges Commentary Thru the Bible

Mp3 Audio

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F B MEYER
Our Daily Homily
Judges

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F B MEYER
Commentary
Judges

Rosscup comments: Meyer (1847–1929) published this originally in 1895. He left a big witness as a Christian, husband and expositor on the spiritual life. Here he is clear, simple, to the point, and practical in application. The book is especially suited for pastors, Sunday School teachers and laypersons. Sometimes he overdoes things, as in seeing Hittites and confederates as

depicting "The evil habits of the old past" (p 12). Yet in many cases he is apt, as using Gideon to show the need to look to God for adequacy. He sees Saul as unsaved, having the Spirit on him but not in him (Commentaries for Biblical Expositors: An annotated bibliography of selected works)

- Judges 1 Commentary - Enemies Cast Out
- Judges 2 Commentary - Apostasy and Failure
- Judges 3 Commentary - The First Judges
- Judges 4 Commentary - Jabin and Sisera
- Judges 5 Commentary - Deborah's Song
- Judges 6 Commentary - Gideon
- Judges 7 Commentary - Trumpets and Pitchers
- Judges 8 Commentary -Rule Thou Over Us
- Judges 9 Commentary - Abimelech the Usurper
- Judges 10 Commentary - Rebellious and Brought Low
- Judges 11 Commentary - Jephthah
- Judges 12 Commentary -Shibboleth
- Judges 13 Commentary - The Birth of Samson
- Judges 14 Commentary - Samson's Marriage Feast
- Judges 15 Commentary -The Jawbone of an Ass
- Judges 16 Commentary - Delilah
- Judges 17 Commentary - Micah's Idols
- Judges 18 Commentary - A Distant Colony
- Judges 19 Commentary - A Terrible Crime
- Judges 20 Commentary - A National Indignation
- Judges 21 Commentary - Returning Home

MISCELLANEOUS RESOURCES

Judges

Conservative, Evangelical

FREE THEOLOGICAL JOURNAL ARTICLES

- [Unspeakable Crimes: The Abuse of Women in the Book of Judges -- By: Daniel I. Block](#)
- ['No King In Israel': Narrative Criticism And Judges 17-21 Philip Satterthwaite](#)
- [History and Theology in Joshua and Judges - Dennis Bratcher](#)
- [The Judges of Israel - Dennis Bratcher](#)
- [Will The Real Gideon Please Stand Up? Narrative Style And Intention In Judges 6-9 - Daniel Block](#)
- [Judges 6-8 The Gideon Narrative as the Focal Point of Judges - J Paul Tanner](#)
- [The Conquest and Early Hebrew Poetry - Peter Craigie](#)
- [Judges 5 - Parallel Word Pairs in the Song of Deborah - Peter Craigie](#)
- [Antecedents of the Monarchy in Ancient Israel - Arthur E Cundall](#)
- [The Book of Judges: The Israelite Tribal Federation and Its Discontents - Daniel J. Elazar](#)
- [The Symbolism of the Lion and the Bees: Another Irony Twist in the Samson Cycle - Martin Emmrich](#)
- [The Shaving of Samson: A Note on Judges 16:19 - F C Fensham](#)
- [Enigma Variations: Aspects of the Samson Story Judges 13-16 - Mark Greene](#)
- [A Literary Appreciation of the Book of Judges - J P U Lilley](#)
- [The Altar in Joshua and Judges - J P U Lilley](#)
- [Moral Formation and the Book of Judges - Paul Miller](#)
- [12 Pages of Questions on Judges chapter 1](#)

BEST COMMENTARIES ON THE BOOK OF JUDGES:

[Judges, Ruth - New American Commentary, 1999 - Daniel Block](#) (OR [BORROW copy](#))

Rosscup comments: An evangelical contributes 586 pp. on Judges and 151 on Ruth. Introductory sections for both books survey

the state of scholarly opinion and his belief in the integrity and reliability of the biblical books. Copious footnotes, often lengthy, reflect on others' views, verifications of points in the books and also in other scripture, etc. Verse by verse work offers detail on grammar, word meaning, background, customs, and interpretive problems. Block holds that Jephthah sacrificed his daughter in death. On passages overall, this is a standout commentary, yet at times it states convictions without a specific answer to other leading views. One instance is in not commenting on the view that Ruth acted indecently with Boaz at night. Some accounts, as episodes of Samson, seem for the most part to be explained in reasonable detail. (Commentaries for Biblical Expositors: An annotated bibliography of selected works)

[Such A Great Salvation. Grand Rapids: 1990. - Dale R Davis](#) (Listen to Mp3 - [Judges](#)) (**BORROW** [Such a great salvation : expositions of the book of Judges](#))

Rosscup comments: A flowing, popular conservative exposition that can be suggestive for pastors on individual messages or series. Davis deals with problems in footnotes. He keeps the vital message foremost and points out the relevance to today. The book is usually refreshing to help one grow in grace. Davis keeps spotlighting the beauty of God. Cf. also his book on Joshua.

My comment: Anything on the Old Testament by Dale Davis is worth consulting if you are teaching or preaching because he does such a wonderful job of making the OT text applicable and practical to NT saints!

[Distressing days of the judges](#) by Leon J Wood - **BORROW**

Rosscup comments: This is an outstanding work by a firm evangelical scholar. The book discusses in detail many of the key problems expositors need help on in the book, It provides solid help in understanding the main aspects of most sections. It is one of the most valuable books on the period of the Judges and on character sketches of the main judges.

Cyril Barber - A most important work. It is well researched, reliable, and ideally suited to the needs of the expositor who desires relevant data to support his exposition of the text. Wood makes this colorful period of Israelite history come alive with his apt descriptions and careful use of historical, linguistic, and archaeological material. This book is deserving of a place in every preacher's library

[Hearts of Iron, Feet of Clay](#) - Gary Inrig - **BORROW** See also his 50 part series online [Journey Through Judges](#))

Comment: This little book is a "sleeper" in my opinion and has flown under the radar of many evangelicals. I highly recommend it to supplement your teaching and/or preaching through the Book of Judges. Notice that all the reviewers have given it the highest rating possible..

- [Book Review by James Rosscup - Judges, A Narrative of God's Power - Cyril Barber](#)
- [OT Commentaries For Expositors 1987-92](#) <https://tms.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/tmsj4d.pdf>
- [Book Review - Judges, Ruth. Vol. 6 of The New American Commentary - Reviewed by William Barrick](#)

Cyril Barber - The Minister's Library recommendations ([Volume 2](#) and [Volume 3](#))

- Auld, A. Graeme. [Joshua, Judges, and Ruth](#). **BORROW** Daily Study Bible. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984. †Auld writes out of the conviction that these books are the Bible's prime witness to Israel's early history in Canaan. He expounds the text skillfully and incorporates important historical, linguistic, and archaeological information into his discussion.
- Barber, Cyril John. Judges: A Narrative of God's Power. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2004. First published in 1990. James Rosscup, in his Commentaries for Biblical Expositors, wrote: "[This is] a well-organized conservative exposition arising out of much study and skill in showing how alive biblical passages are.... Barber uses captivating headlines for sections, a vivid flow, arousing descriptions, analogies, illustrations, and applications. He deals with many problems awarely, using notes that sometimes are lengthy and meaty.... He is competent, thought provoking, and often sharp in exposing the timeliness of the book for life today."
- Block, Daniel. [Judges, Ruth. Vol. 6: New American Commentary](#) **BORROW** - Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999. An exceedingly valuable exegetical and theological exposition. Based on the NIV, though Block gives evidence of working from the Hebrew text. Readers will find this a learned, discerning discussion that readily explains the meaning and message of these twin books. Recommended.
- Boling, Robert G. [Judges The Anchor Bible](#) **BORROW**. The Anchor Bible. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1975. A new translation with scholarly notes and commentary. Neither as helpful to the expository preacher as [Fausset's exemplary treatment](#), nor as abreast of the latest scholarly research as Wood's invaluable work. What is presented, however, is valuable for its correlation of linguistic and historical data.
- Bush, George. Joshua and judges ([click here](#)). Minneapolis: Klock & Klock Christian Publishers, 1981. These formerly separate studies have now been combined into one volume. They provide a pleasing synthesis of scholarship and devotion,

historical background and relevant exposition. Bible students, whether laypeople or pastors, should eagerly acquire the writings of this fine biblical scholar and for their own edification and enrichment read what he wrote. This valuable reprint of the 1852 edition makes available the rare and rich homiletic suggestions of this Princeton scholar.

- Campbell, Donald [Judges Leaders in Crisis Times](#): **BORROW** Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1989. A well-informed, judicious exposition that combines a timely handling of the text with a practical application of it. Ideal for adult discussion groups. Recommended. (- archive.org allows you to borrow for an hour and renew)
- [Enns, Paul P Bible Study Commentary](#): Judges. **BORROW** Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1982. A practical, clearly outlined, conservative treatment. Ideal for laypeople.
- Fausset, Andrew Robert. ([click here](#)) A Critical and Expository Commentary on the Book of Judges. Minneapolis: James & Klock Publishing Co., 1977. A work of immeasurable value. Remains one of the finest treatments extant. A must for the expositor. One of the finest expositions on Judges available today. Deals fairly with interpretative problems. Of great value to the expository preacher. **Recommended.**
- [Garstang, John. Joshua Judges: The Foundations of Bible History](#). **BORROW** Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1978. Reprinted after years of neglect, this epochal work treats history, geography, archaeology, and the settlement of Israel in the land. Though he adheres to a modified form of the documentary hypothesis, Garstang's treatment is nevertheless possessed of a freshness and vitality seldom found in works of this nature.
- Goslinga, C. J. [Joshua, Judges, Ruth](#) Bible Student's Commentary. **BORROW** Translated by R. Togtman. Grand Rapids: Regency Reference Library, 1987. Brief, perceptive comments on each verse of these canonical books. Adheres to the standard evangelical interpretation of major critical issues. In applying the text to life, Goslinga follows a typological approach. As a commentary, this work serves as a handy guide to laypeople studying these books for the first time. Pastors and lay preachers may find the outlines helpful.
- Hamlin, E. John. [At risk in the Promised Land : a commentary on the book of Judges](#)(**BORROW**) International Theological Commentary. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990. A fresh, original, imaginative commentary. Each chapter concludes with "Perspectives" on the text that take the form of reflections on the historic context.
- Lang, John Marshall, and Thomas Kirk. Studies in the Book of Judges. 2 vols. in 1. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock Christian Publishers, 1983. Though all conservative believers boldly affirm that the Bible exists in sixty six books, most relegate the teaching of portions of judges to the early Sunday school years. Not so with the able Scots who took on the task of explaining the relevancy of this section of Scripture to our lives. [Lang concentrates on Gideon, with incidental comments on the other judges](#). Kirk focuses attention on Samson. Together they provide a satisfying work that covers the material and shows to readers how the incidents of the OT find a parallel in our day.
- Lindars, Barnabas. Judges 1--5: A New Translation and Commentary. Edited by A. D. H. Mayes. International Critical Commentary. Edinburgh: T. And T. Clark, 1995. Lindars died before completing his exegetical commentary on Judges. What he has provided is a detailed, technical exposition that follows the Hebrew text verse-by-verse and phrase-by-phrase.
- Martin, James D. The Book of Judges. Cambridge Bible Commentary. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1975. Based on the NEB, this work follows the pattern of the series. The author repeatedly calls in question the historicity of the events, expresses doubt over the Samson narrative, and believes that sun mythology underlies much of what is recorded. **Unreliable.**
- Rogers, Richard. [A Commentary on judges](#). **BORROW** Carlisle, Pa.: Banner of Truth Trust, 1983. Described by C. H. Spurgeon as "THE work upon judges," this facsimile of the 1615 edition contains a wealth of practical and relevant material. Throughout his discussion of the events of this book, Rogers reveals a pastor's heart. Though his messages mirror the experience of God's people in England during the time of Sir Francis Drake and the Spanish Armada, their application is to any people facing external threat and the struggle for spiritual, economic, and social freedom. Beautifully reproduced with handsome binding and printed on excellent paper, **this is a worthy acquisition all the more so because it has been unobtainable for more than a century. Recommended.**
- Soggin, J. Alberto. [Judges. a Commentary. \(Another Copy\)](#) **BORROW** Old Testament Library. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1981. An able commentary that readily makes available to the busy pastor a wealth of textual material.
- Wiersbe, Warren Wendell. Be Available. [Bible Exposition Commentary](#) Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1994. Greed. Immorality. Disregard for moral absolutes. These "modern" lifestyles and attitudes were also prevalent during the era of the Judges. In the darkest of times, God raised up unique individuals to do His will. Here is their story. Be Available is a book for each one of us. It breathes encouragement. Read it and see.
- Wilcock, Michael. [The Message of Judges: Grace Abounding](#). **BORROW** The Bible Speaks Today. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993. Covers the contents in eight chapters. Focuses on the major issues revealing mankind's inherent sinfulness and God's grace. Too brief to be of lasting value.
- [Wiseman, Luke H. Practical Truths from Judges](#) Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1985. Formerly published as Men of Faith, this work contains a wealth of practical material; applications are offered to encourage and challenge us today. The author presents a general view of the period of the judges along with an indepth study of the lives of Barak, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson.

- Judges 1:7 [Threescore and ten kings toes cut off under my table](#)
- Judges 1:10 [And Judah went Ahinan, and Talmai](#)
- Judges 1:19 [chariots of iron](#)
- Judges 1:20 [sons of Anak](#)
- Judges 1:21 [the Jebusites dwell](#)
- Judges 1:28 [Canaanites to tribute](#)
- Judges 2:1 [my covenant](#)
- Judges 2:3 [their gods shall be a snare](#)
- Judges 2:7 [all the days of Joshua](#)
- Judges 2:8 [hundred and ten years old](#)
- Judges 2:13 [Baal and Ashtaroth](#)
- Judges 2:16 [LORD raised up judges](#)
- Judges 3:8 [Chushan-rishathaim](#)
- Judges 3:11 [And Othniel](#)
- Judges 3:14 [eighteen years](#)
- Judges 3:15 [A man lefthanded](#)
- Judges 3:31 [Shamgar](#)
- Judges 4:2 [Jabin Jabin king of Canaan Hazor](#)
- Judges 4:3 [chariots of iron](#)
- Judges 4:4 [Deborah, a prophetess](#)
- Judges 4:6 [children of Naphtali](#)
- Judges 4:15 [LORD discomfited Sisera](#)
- Judges 4:24 [children of Israel prospered](#)
- Judges 5:15 [divisions of Reuben](#)
- Judges 5:20 [the stars](#)
- Judges 5:23 [Curse ye Meroz](#)
- Judges 5:24 [blessed shall she be](#)
- Judges 6:3 [the Midianites...the Amalekites](#)
- Judges 6:15 [I am the least](#)
- Judges 6:22 [angel of the LORD](#)
- Judges 6:32 [Jerubbaal](#)
- Judges 6:40 [dew on all the ground](#)
- Judges 7:7 [three hundred men that lapped](#)
- Judges 7:20 [sword of the LORD](#)
- Judges 8:1 [men of Ephraim](#)
- Judges 8:14 [described](#)
- Judges 8:16 [taught the men](#)
- Judges 8:27 [ephod](#)
- Judges 8:28 [the days of Gideon](#)
- Judges 9:1 [went to Shechem](#)
- Judges 9:6 [men of Shechem](#)
- Judges 9:7 [mount Gerizim](#)
- Judges 9:8 [trees went forth](#)
- Judges 9:18 [king over the men of Shechem](#)
- Judges 9:20 [let fire come out](#)
- Judges 9:45 [beat down the city](#)
- Judges 10:5 [And Jair died](#)
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- Judges 20:28 [Phinehas](#)
- Judges 20:46 [twenty and five thousand men](#)
- Judges 20:48 [all that came to hand](#)
- Judges 21:3 [one tribe lacking](#)
- Judges 21:25 [right in his own eyes](#)

DANNY AKIN - SERMONS

- [Essential Characteristics of a Bad Leader – Judges 11:1-12:7](#)
- [From Great To Bad – Judges 13-16](#)

GOSPEL COALITION

- [The Gospel Coalition - Mp3's on Judges](#)

DICTIONARY

- [Judges, Theology of - Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#)
- [Judges, Book of - Holman Bible Dictionary](#)
- [Judges, book of - Bridgeway Bible Dictionary](#)
- [Judges, the Book of - Fausset's Bible Dictionary](#)
- [Judges, Book of- - International Standard Bible Encyclopedia](#)
- [Judges, Period of - International Standard Bible Encyclopedia](#)
- [Judges, Period of - The 1901 Jewish Encyclopedia](#)

KENNETH BOA

- [Judges Survey - Mp3](#)

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- [Judges: Key Message/ Key Verses](#)

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- [Women of the Bible - Deborah and Jael](#)

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GUSTAVE DORE WOODCUTS

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- [Gideon, et al](#)
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- [Death of Samson](#)

JAMES FREEMAN

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- [Judges 4-5 A Smashing Salvation](#)
- [Judges 6:1-8:21 A Work of Faith in Progress](#)
- [Judges 8:22-9:57 From Great to Gone](#)
- [Judges 10:6-12:7 Failure of the Family](#)
- [Judges 13:1-16:31 A Saved Soul, A Wasted Life](#)
- [Judges 17-21 From Worse to Worst](#)

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- [Judges 21:25 Our Ethical Basis](#)
- [Judges 2:11; 21:25 The Basis of Ethics](#)
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- [Judges and Ruth Survey - Mp3](#)

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- [Judges - Discussion of Title, Author, Date, Background, Historical and Theological Themes, Interpretative Challenges](#)

Outline of the Book of Judges

I. Introduction and Summary—The Disobedience of Israel (Judges 1:1–3:6)

- A. Incomplete Conquest over the Canaanites (Judges 1:1–36)
- B. The Decline and Judgment of Israel (Judges 2:1–3:6)

II. A Selected History of the Judges—The Deliverance of Israel (Judges 3:7–16:31)

- A. First Period: Othniel vs. Mesopotamians (Judges 3:7–11)
- B. Second Period: Ehud and Shamgar vs. Moabites (Judges 3:12–31)
- C. Third Period: Deborah vs. Canaanites (Judges 4:1–5:31)
- D. Fourth Period: Gideon vs. Midianites (Judges 6:1–8:32)
- E. Fifth Period : Tola and Jair vs. Abimelech's Effects (Judges 8:33–10:5)
- F. Sixth Period: Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon vs. Philistines and Ammonites (Judges 10:6–12:15)
- G. Seventh Period: Samson vs. Philistines (Judges 13:1–16:31)

III. Epilogue—The Dereliction of Israel (Judges 17:1–21:25)

- A. The Idolatry of Micah and the Danites (Judges 17:1–18:31)
- B. The Crime at Gibeah and War Against Benjamin (Judges 19:1–21:25)

MAPS

MAPS FROM ESV STUDY BIBLE -

Note - Those links that are titled "**Introduction to....**" or "**at the Time of...**" include Timelines, Introductory Background and usually a Map related to the specific time.

- [Near East at the Time of Genesis](#)
- [Garden of Eden](#)
- [Table of Nations](#)
- [Abram Travels to Canaan](#)
- [Jacob Returns to Canaan](#)
- [Egypt at the Time of Joseph](#)
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- [Introduction to Leviticus](#)
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- [Introduction to Deuteronomy](#)
- [Introduction to Joshua](#)
- [Conquest of Canaan: Southern Campaign](#)
- [Conquest of Canaan: Northern Campaign](#)
- [Allotment of the Land](#)
- [Introduction to Judges](#)
- [Judges of Israel](#)
- [Gideon Defeats Midianites](#)
- [Samson's Exploits](#)
- [Introduction to Ruth](#)

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- [Twelve Tribes of Israel](#) - Swindoll Study Bible.
- [Conquest of Canaan](#) - Swindoll Study Bible.
- [Ancient Near East from 1200-100 BC](#)
- [The Conquest of Canaan](#)
- [The Sea Peoples](#)
- [The Levant from 1200-1000 BCE](#)
- [The Conquest by Joshua](#)
- [Joshua's Central and Southern Campaigns](#)
- [Joshua's Northern Campaign](#)
- [The Limits of Israelite Settlement](#)
- [Israel in Canaan from Joshua to Samuel to Saul](#)
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- [The Division of the Land Among the Tribes](#)
- [Levitical Cities and Cities of Refuge \(1\)](#)
- [The Levitical Cities \(2\)](#)
- [The Judges of Israel](#)
- [Judges 13-16 Map and Timeline - Steve Rudd](#)
- [The Period of the Judges](#)
- [Ehud and the Oppression of the Moabites](#)
- [Deborah's Victory over the Canaanites](#)
- [Gideon's Battles with the Amalekites](#)

- [Jephthah and the Ammonites](#)
- [Samson the the Philistines](#)
- [The Battle at Ebenezer and the Loss of the Ark](#)
- [The Ministry of Samuel and Anointment of Saul](#)
- [The Kingdom of Saul and His Wars](#)
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Wiersbe says it is "valuable for your library."

Brookman writes "Popular studies with an excellent synopsis of the historical books. It is written in a clear manner, and surveys each book giving key ideas and insights."

- [Studies in Joshua-Job](#) by Newell, William - [This same resource is found here. Download Pdf](#) (allows copy and paste)

WILLIAM W ORR

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- [Through the Bible Book by Book - Judges](#)

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- [Judges - Cycles of Revival - Pdf](#)

STEVE RUDD

- [Judges Timeline from 1350-950](#) - this may have the approximate dates of the various Judges
- [Book of Ruth - timeline maps, with Judges](#) - Harmony of Judges, Othniel, Ehud, Ruth

RAY STEDMAN

- [The Message of History \(Historical books\)](#)
- [Judges: The Pattern of Defeat - Overview](#)

CHARLES SWINDOLL

- [Book of Judges Overview - Insight for Living Ministries](#)
- [See Judges Overview Chart at bottom of the page](#)

Sample Excerpt - What's the big idea? The primary message of Judges is that God will not allow sin to go unpunished. As Exodus established, Israel was God's people—He was their King. They had forsaken the covenant established at Mount Sinai. In Judges, He disciplined them for following other gods, disobeying His sacrificial laws, engaging in blatant immorality, and descending into anarchy at times. Yet because they were His people, He listened to their cries for mercy and raised up leaders to deliver them. Unfortunately, even these godly individuals did not wield sufficient influence to change the nation's direction. The people's inability to resist sinful Canaanite influences eventually revealed their desire for a centralized monarchy, led by a righteous king whom God would choose as His intermediary.

How do I apply this? Memory is a gift. Remembering the past teaches us countless lessons about how to live today. The Israelites forgot. They did not remember the miraculous events that brought them to their land or the covenant that united them to their God. But God did not forget His covenant—and because of His great love for His people, He disciplined His sinful children so that they might return to Him. Have you forgotten the great works God has done in your life? Perhaps your difficult circumstances are overpowering your faith. Do you feel as if He is disciplining you right now? Know that He disciplines those He loves (Hebrews 12:5–11). Return to Him. Remember, trust, and obey. He is waiting with open arms.

ISBE ARTICLE

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- [Judges, period of](#)

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- [Judges. Extraordinary \(Topical List by Torrey\)](#)

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- [Judges - The Old Testament Presents... Reflections of Christ - interesting](#)

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- [Othniel, Deborah, Gideon's fleece, 300 Men, King of Trees, Jephthah's Vow, The Birth of Samson - Lessons for Sunday School classes](#)

JUDGES RESOURCES COMMENTARIES, SERMONS, ETC

J S BLACKBURN

- [Samson and Delilah](#)

DANIEL BLOCK - Judges, Ruth. Vol. 6: New American Commentary. Nashville: Broadman & Holman - 1999

Cyril Barber says this is "An exceedingly valuable exegetical and theological exposition. Based on the NIV, though Block gives evidence of working from the Hebrew text. Readers will find this a learned, discerning discussion that readily explains the meaning and message of these twin books. Recommended.

Rosscup - An evangelical contributes 586 pp. on Judges and 151 on Ruth. Introductory sections for both books survey the state of scholarly opinion and his belief in the integrity and reliability of the biblical books. Copious footnotes, often lengthy, reflect on others' views, verifications of points in the books and also in other scripture, etc. Verse by verse work offers detail on grammar, word meaning, background, customs, and interpretive problems. Block holds that Jephthah sacrificed his daughter in death. On passages overall, this is a standout commentary, yet at times it states convictions without a specific answer to other leading views. One instance is in not commenting on the view that Ruth acted indecently with Boaz at night. Some accounts, as episodes of Samson, seem for the most part to be explained in reasonable detail. (Commentaries for Biblical Expositors: An annotated bibliography of selected works)

[Read more user reviews.](#)

- [Judges, Ruth. Vol. 6: New American Commentary](#) - [archive.org](#) allows you to borrow this book for an hour at no charge and renew. While you cannot copy and paste, this is still a useful resource.
- Note you must log in to borrow this book but login is free! Click picture of the person in right upper corner and set up your free login. Then you can read many excellent modern commentaries free of charge!

DONALD CAMPBELL - **Leaders in Crisis times (Living for God in a Society that has Forgotten God!)**

Former president of Dallas Theological Seminary - has wonderful insights, illustrations and practical applications. Unfortunately this book is no longer being published but [you may be able to find used copies](#)
Excellent practical commentary on Judges with good illustrations for sermons.

Review by Cyril Barber - A well-informed, judicious exposition that combines a timely handling of the text with a practical application of it. Ideal for adult discussion groups. Recommended.

- [Judges Commentary](#) - [archive.org](#) allows you to borrow for an hour at no charge and renew. While you cannot copy and paste, this is still a useful resource.

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ALAN CARR

- [Sermons on the Book of Judges](#)

ARTHUR CUNDALL - Tyndale Old Testament Commentary (Judges and Ruth) (1968)

Arthur Cundall writes the commentary on Judges and Leon Morris writes the commentary on Ruth. These both get excellent reviews - [see reviews by several users](#).

Here is a more generic review - "The Tyndale volumes have long been the premier shorter-length commentary series on both Testaments throughout the English-speaking world." (Craig Blomberg, Denver Seminary)

- [TOTC Judges & Ruth: Tyndale Old Testament Commentary](#) - archive.org allows you to borrow for an hour at no charge and renew. While you cannot copy and paste, this is still a useful resource.
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- [Lecture 3 \(Week 4\): Don't Forget Who God Is](#)
- [Lecture 3 \(Week 4\): Handout](#)
- [Week Five: Know your God](#)
- [Lecture 4 \(Week 5\): Jephthah, the Self-Promoter](#) Judges 10:1-12:15
- [Week Six: Don't Waste God's Gifts](#) Judges 13:1-16:31
- [Lecture 5 \(Week 6\): The Spiritual Fog: Ignorance, Complacency, And Apathy](#)
- [Lecture 5 \(Week 6\): Handout](#)
- [Week Seven: Don't Seek What Glitters](#) Judges 17:1-18:31
- [Week Eight: Live Without Compromise](#) Judges 19:1-21:25
- [Lecture 6 \(Week 8\): The Canaanite Within Us](#) Judges 19:1-21:25
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J DAVIES

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- [Judges 1-21 Stalemate - The Message of Judges \(Dever\).](#)
- [Judges 18: An Unlikely Salvation \(M. Lawrence\)](#)
- [Judges 3:13-30 An Unlikely Savior \(M. Lawrence\)](#)

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- [Judges: Sketches from Judges - chapters entitled = Joshua, Gideon, Jotham, Jephthah, Samson, Eli The Blessings of the Tribes](#)

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- [The Domino Effect Judges 17:1-8, 12-13; 18:30-31](#)

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- [Judges 2:1-23 Betrayal and Its Consequences](#)
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- [Judges 2:11-19 A Spiral of Disobedience](#)
- [Judges 3:7-11 How Our Covenant God Loves His People](#)
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The Royal Appearance of God S Children	J. Burns, D. D.	Judges 8:18-21
The Royal House of Jesus	T. De Witt Talmage.	Judges 8:18-21
Gideon and the Theocracy	W.F. Adeney	Judges 8:22, 23
Noble Self-Abnegation	A.F. Muir	Judges 8:22-27
Gideon At His Best	Wm. Burrows, B. A.	Judges 8:22-35
Gideon, the Deliverer	T. Guthrie, D. D.	Judges 8:22-35
Gideon's After-Life	W. Miller, M. A.	Judges 8:22-35
Gideon's Unambitious Spirit	A. R. Fausset, M. A.	Judges 8:22-35
Kingship Offered and Refused	R. A. Watson, M. A.	Judges 8:22-35
A Mock Ephod	A. Whyte, D. D.	Judges 8:24-27
Gideon, the Ecclesiastic	R. A. Watson, M. A.	Judges 8:24-27
Gideon's Great Error	A. R. Fausset, M. A.	Judges 8:24-27
Ruler or Priest	R. A. Watson, M. A.	Judges 8:24-27

The Mistake of a Good Man	A.F. Muir	Judges 8:24-27
The After Life	A.F. Muir	Judges 8:29-32
Gideon At His Worst	Wm. Burrows, B. A.	Judges 8:29-35
The Origin, Nature, and Baseness of Ingratitude	R. South, D.D.	Judges 8:29-35
The Consequence of the Imperfect Recognition of Jehovah	A.F. Muir	Judges 8:33-35
Forgetfulness and Ingratitude	W.F. Adeney	Judges 8:34, 35

JUDGES 9

ON SITE COMMENTARY

- [Judges 9 Verse by Verse Commentary](#)
- [Judges 9 Devotionals and Illustrations](#)

H L ROSSIER

- [Judges 9 Fresh Declension and Fresh Revivals \(Judges 9-12\) - Abimelech, or the Usurpation of Authority](#)

TODAY IN THE WORD

- [Judges 9:1-25 Devotional](#)

C H SPURGEON

- [Judges 9:8, 9 The Faithful Olive Tree](#)
Judges 9:9 The Faithful Olive Tree - Sermon Notes

Ambitious Usurpation	A.F. Muir	Judges 9:1-6
Abimelech, the Adventurer	R. A. Watson, M. A.	Judges 9:1-22
Ambition Destroys the Finer Feelings of Men	H. E. Channing.	Judges 9:1-22
Bramble Rule; Or, the People and Their Leaders	Homilist	Judges 9:1-22
Forms of Usefulness in Life	Marcus Dods, D. D.	Judges 9:1-22
Jotham's Parable	R. A. Watson, M. A.	Judges 9:1-22
King Bramble and His Subjects	A. F. Vedder.	Judges 9:1-22
Misleading Self-Judgments	A. Rowland, B. A.	Judges 9:1-22
Pulpit Brambles	Homilist	Judges 9:1-22
Self-Fulfilment	E. G. Murphy.	Judges 9:1-22
The Bramble	H. Whittaker.	Judges 9:1-22
The Election of the Usurper to be King	J. P. Millar.	Judges 9:1-22
The Faithful Olive-Tree	Spurgeon, Charles Haddon	Judges 9:1-22
The Parable of Jotham	A London Minister	Judges 9:1-22
The Parable of the Trees	J. Bayley, Ph. D.	Judges 9:1-22
The Parable of the Trees	A. Raleigh, D. D.	Judges 9:1-22
The Refusing of Leadership	W. Morison, D. D.	Judges 9:1-22

Unrighteous Claims of Kindred	A.F. Muir	Judges 9:2, 3
Shortcomings of Unscrupulous Schemes	A.F. Muir	Judges 9:5
Abimelech	W.F. Adeney	Judges 9:6
Jotham's Fable; Or, Popular Election, its Dangers and Abuses	A.F. Muir	Judges 9:7-20
Jotham's Parable	W.F. Adeney	Judges 9:8-15
Strength in Weakness	A.F. Muir	Judges 9:21
The Nemesis of Usurpation	A.F. Muir	Judges 9:22-57
Disunion	R. Rogers.	Judges 9:23
A Worthy Servant of a Worthless Master	A.F. Muir	Judges 9:30-33, 36-38
The Storming of the Temple of Berith	T. De Witt Talmage.	Judges 9:48-49
Reputation	W.F. Adeney	Judges 9:53, 54
Without a Leader	A.F. Muir	Judges 9:55

JUDGES 10

ON SITE COMMENTARY

- [Judges 10 Verse by Verse Commentary](#)
- [Judges 10 Devotionals and Illustrations](#)

H L ROSSIER

- [Judges 10:1-5 Tola and Jair](#)
- [Judges 10:6-18 A Fresh Revival in Israel](#)

A B SIMPSON

- [Judges 11-12 Jephthah or the Faith that Keeps Faith with God](#)

Quiet Times	W.F. Adeney	Judges 10:1-5
The Calm After the Storm	A.F. Muir	Judges 10:1-5
Recurring Habits of Evil	A.F. Muir	Judges 10:6
Immediate and Effectual Retribution	A.F. Muir	Judges 10:7-10
From God to Baal	W.F. Adeney	Judges 10:10
God Answering Hardened Transgressors	A.F. Muir	Judges 10:10-14
The Test of Trouble	W.F. Adeney	Judges 10:13, 14
Helpless Gods	R. Rogers.	Judges 10:14
Man in Trouble Crying to His God	Homilist	Judges 10:14
No Help in Trouble Save from God	G. Swinnock.	Judges 10:14
The Misery of Forsaking God	Bp. Shuttleworth.	Judges 10:14
Repentance	W.F. Adeney	Judges 10:15, 16
Works Meet for Repentance	A.F. Muir	Judges 10:15, 16

JUDGES 11

ON SITE COMMENTARY

- [Judges 11 Verse by Verse Commentary](#)
- [Judges 11 Devotionals and Illustrations](#)

JOEL BEEKE

- [Judges 11:29-40 Contagious Sacrificial Submission](#)

H L ROSSIER

- [Judges 11 Jephthah and His Daughter](#)

DAVID COOK

- [Judges 11 Jephthah - From Zero to Hero](#)

C H SPURGEON

- [Judges 11:35 Retreat Impossible](#)

GOOGLE

- [Judges 11 Jephthah and His Daughter Pictures Related to this Topic](#)

DON FORTNER

- [Judges 11:1-40 I Cannot Go Back](#)

The Shaping Influences of Life	A.F. Muir	Judges 11:1-3
Different Views Held as to Jephthah's Vow	L. H. Wiseman, M. A.	Judges 11:1-33
Jephthah	W. G. Blaikie, D. D.	Judges 11:1-33
Jephthah's Vow	T. Taylor, D. D.	Judges 11:1-33
Why are Ye Come unto Me Now When Ye are in Distress?	J. Parker, D. D.	Judges 11:1-33
Magnanimity of Patriotism	A.F. Muir	Judges 11:4-11
The Friend in Need	A.F. Muir	Judges 11:7
Recognition of God in Positions of Honour and Responsibility	A.F. Muir	Judges 11:11
The Model Diplomatist	A.F. Muir	Judges 11:12-28
The Spirit of the Lord	W.F. Adeney	Judges 11:29
The Spirit of Sacred Warfare	A.F. Muir	Judges 11:29-33
Jephthah's Vow	A.F. Muir	Judges 11:30, 31, 34-40
Jephthah's Vow	W.F. Adeney	Judges 11:30-40
A Sacrifice of the World to High Principle	M. Nicholson, D. D.	Judges 11:34-40
Did with Her According to His Vow	Marcus Dods, D. D.	Judges 11:34-40

Jephthah's Payment of His Vow	M. Nicholson, D. D.	Judges 11:34-40
Modern Jephthahs: Or, Parental Immolations	Homilist	Judges 11:34-40
No Trifling with God	Spurgeon, Charles Haddon	Judges 11:34-40
Retreat Impossible	Spurgeon, Charles Haddon	Judges 11:34-40
The Vow Performed	R. A. Watson, M. A.	Judges 11:34-40
The Wail of Jephthah's Daughter	Marcus Dods, D. D.	Judges 11:34-40
Typical Aspect of Jephthah's Vow	Arthur Ritchie.	Judges 11:34-40
Vows Which Should not be Kept	Marcus Dods, D. D.	Judges 11:34-40

JUDGES 12

ON SITE COMMENTARY

- [Judges 12 Verse by Verse Commentary](#)
- [Judges 12 Devotionals and Illustrations](#)

H L ROSSIER

- [Judges 12:1-6 Strife Between Brethren](#)
- [Judges 12:7-15 Notes on Ibzan, Elon and Abdon](#)

ROBERT E NEIGHBOUR

- [Judges 13 \(Living Water Commentary\)](#)

Jealousy	W.F. Adeney	Judges 12:1
Ingratitude the Frequent Reward of Benefactors	A.F. Muir	Judges 12:1-3
Shams and Frauds	C. Leach, D. D.	Judges 12:1-3
Vaulting Ambition, Which O'Erleaps Itself	A.F. Muir	Judges 12:1-6
The Reproach of the Righteous	A.F. Muir	Judges 12:4
Sectarianism -- its Origin, Evils, Cures	T. De Witt Talmage.	Judges 12:6
Shibboleth	L. H. Wiseman, M. A.	Judges 12:6
Shibboleth	S. B. James, M. A.	Judges 12:6
Shibboleth	W.F. Adeney	Judges 12:6
Social and Religious Tests	Goyn Talmage.	Judges 12:6
The Shibboleths of the Churches	R. Collyer, D. D.	Judges 12:6
Trifles Indicate Character	Marcus Dods, D. D.	Judges 12:6
Shibboleth: - the Importance of Little Defects, Faults, Etc	A.F. Muir	Judges 12:5, 6
Vaulting Ambition, Which O'Erleaps Itself	A.F. Muir	Judges 12:7
The Time of Peace	R. Rogers.	Judges 12:13-15

JUDGES 13

ON SITE COMMENTARY

- [Judges 13 Verse by Verse Commentary](#)
- [Judges 13 Devotionals and Illustrations](#)

H L ROSSIER

- [Judges 13 A Remnant](#)

C H SPURGEON

- [Judges 13:22-23ff: Her Excellent Argument](#)
- [Judges 13:23](#)

STEVE RUDD

- [Judges 13-16 Samson - Map and Timeline](#) - click on timeline for full page view

GOOGLE IMAGES

- [Judges 13-16 Samson and Delilah - Pictures related to this topic](#)

A B SIMPSON

- [Judges 13-16 Samson or the Faith that Brings Physical Strength](#)

H L ROSSIER

- [Judges 13-16 Samson](#)

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MIDDLETOWN BIBLE

- [Judges 13-16 Weak Samson \(simple study\)](#)

W A CRISWELL

- [Judges 13:25 Moved by the Spirit](#)

DON FORTNER

- [Judges 13 Samson as a Type of Christ](#)
- [Judges 14:1 Samson and Me - A Picture of Christ](#)

SERMON CENTRAL - most have transcripts but quality variable. Be a Berean!

- [Judges 13 Sermons](#) - sermons

SERMONS BY VERSE

[Divine Punishment and Preparation of Deliverance
Simultaneous](#)

[A.F. Muir](#)

Judges 13:1-5

[Cheer for the Faint-Hearted](#)

[Spurgeon, Charles Haddon](#)

Judges 13:1-25

[Education of Children](#)

[W. A. Scott, D. D.](#)

Judges 13:1-25

Fears Removed	W. Jay.	Judges 13:1-25
God and His People	Thomas Kirk.	Judges 13:1-25
God's Past Mercies a Ground of Hope for the Future	W. A. Scott, D. D.	Judges 13:1-25
Manoah and His Wife	Homilist	Judges 13:1-25
Manoah and His Wife	R. Halley, D. D.	Judges 13:1-25
Manoah's Wife	J. Parker, D. D.	Judges 13:1-25
Manoah's Wife and Her Excellent Argument	Spurgeon, Charles Haddon	Judges 13:1-25
Money Bequeathed by Parents to Their Children	W. Arnot.	Judges 13:1-25
Mysteries of Providence	A. P. Peabody.	Judges 13:1-25
Past Tokens of Divine Favour an Encouragement Against Fears		Judges 13:1-25
Some Lessons of Catastrophes	John Jamieson, M. A., Arthur Ritchie.	Judges 13:1-25
The Angelic Appearances to Manoah and His Wife	H. J. Bevis.	Judges 13:1-25
The Spectacle of Life and the Opposite Conclusions Drawn from It	W. W. Newton.	Judges 13:1-25
The Spirit World	Homilist	Judges 13:1-25
Unrecognised Angels	Wm. Ewen, B. D.	Judges 13:1-25
A Natural Desire and its Gracious Fulfilment	A.F. Muir	Judges 13:2-5
God's Use of Unlikely Means for Gracious Ends	A.F. Muir	Judges 13:2-5
The Difficulty of Salvation	A.F. Muir	Judges 13:5
The Training of Children	W.F. Adeney	Judges 13:8
Repetition of Divine Favours	A.F. Muir	Judges 13:8-11
Parental Anxiety and its Satisfying	A.F. Muir	Judges 13:12-14
The Mystery of a Name	A.F. Muir	Judges 13:17, 18
The Wonderful Name	A.F. Muir	Judges 13:17, 18
Reassurance of Divine Favour	A.F. Muir	Judges 13:22, 23
The Fear of the Vision of God	W.F. Adeney	Judges 13:22, 23
From Weakness to Strength	J. Vaughan, M. A.	Judges 13:24-25
Fulfilment of Promise	A.F. Muir	Judges 13:24-25
Man Under the Influence of the Divine Spirit	C. E. Searle, M. A.	Judges 13:24-25
Samson	W. A. Scott, D. D.	Judges 13:24-25
Samson	W. G. Blaikie, D. D.	Judges 13:24-25
Samson	W. J. Heaton.	Judges 13:24-25
Samson, the Judge	Bp. S. Wilberforce.	Judges 13:24-25
Samson: Inferior Influences Over Large Minds	E. Monro, M. A.	Judges 13:24-25
Samson's Gift	S. A. Tipple.	Judges 13:24-25
The Place of Samson in Jewish History	Professor W. G. Elmslie.	Judges 13:24-25
The Young Samson	W.F. Adeney	Judges 13:24-25

JUDGES 14

ON SITE COMMENTARY

- [Judges 14 Verse by Verse Commentary](#)
- [Judges 14 Devotionals and Illustrations](#)

H L ROSSIER

- [Judges 14 The Serpent and The Lion. The Feast](#)

C H SPURGEON

- [Judges 14:8,9 Hands Full of Honey](#)

VANCE HAVNER

- [Judges 14 - Nothing in His Hand - from Road to Revival](#)

SERMON CENTRAL - most have transcripts but quality variable. Be a Berean!

- [Judges 14 Sermons](#) - 30 sermons

SERMONS BY VERSE

Human Desire Overruled for Divine Ends	A.F. Muir	Judges 14:1-4
Bodily Strength	T. De Witt Talmage.	Judges 14:1-20
Brawn and Muscle Consecrated	T. De Witt Talmage.	Judges 14:1-20
Estrangement from Home Influences	John Bruce, D. D.	Judges 14:1-20
Fruits of Conflict	C. Easton.	Judges 14:1-20
God Overrules Evil for Good	Thomas	Judges 14:1-20
Hands Full of Honey	Spurgeon, Charles Haddon	Judges 14:1-20
Honey Out of the Dead Lion	H. J. Bevis.	Judges 14:1-20
Out of Strength, Sweetness	C. Beard, B. A.	Judges 14:1-20
Resist the Devil	J. McNeill.	Judges 14:1-20
Samson's First Love	W. A. Scott, D. D.	Judges 14:1-20
Samson's Marriage	J. Bigwood.	Judges 14:1-20
Samson's Riddle	G. Burder.	Judges 14:1-20
Samson's Riddle	T. L. Cuyler.	Judges 14:1-20
Samson's Silence Respecting the Honey	Thomas Kirk.	Judges 14:1-20
The Choice of a Wife	T. De Witt Talmage.	Judges 14:1-20
The Sweet Memory of Triumph	T. Davies.	Judges 14:1-20
The Wedding Riddle and Tragedy	W. A. Scott, D. D.	Judges 14:1-20
Samson and the Lion	W.F. Adeney	Judges 14:5, 6
The Lion in the Way	A.F. Muir	Judges 14:5, 6
The Mystery of Spiritual Might	A.F. Muir	Judges 14:6

Recalling Past Deliverances	A.F. Muir	Judges 14:8, 9
Samson's Riddle	A.F. Muir	Judges 14:14
Samson's Riddle	W.F. Adeney	Judges 14:14
Unlawful Methods of Interpreting Divine Mysteries	A.F. Muir	Judges 14:15-20
Ploughing with Another's Heifer	A.F. Muir	Judges 14:18
How Confidence in Wicked Men is Rewarded	A.F. Muir	Judges 14:20

JUDGES 15

ON SITE COMMENTARY

- Judges 15 Verse by Verse Commentary
- Judges 15 Devotionals and Illustrations

H L ROSSIER

- [Judges 15 Victories](#)

C H SPURGEON

- Judges 15:18 - Devotional
- [Judges 15:18 The Fainting Hero](#)

SERMON CENTRAL - most have transcripts but quality variable. Be a Berean!

- [Judges 15 Sermons](#) - 14 sermons

SERMONS BY VERSE

Atonements of the Unrighteous	A.F. Muir	Judges 15:1-3
God's Servant Set Free by the Providences of Life	A.F. Muir	Judges 15:1-5
How We May Burst the Bonds of Sin	Thomas Kirk.	Judges 15:1-20
Infliction of Wrong is Sometimes Overruled	Thomas Kirk.	Judges 15:1-20
Samson's Prayer	Thomas Kirk.	Judges 15:1-20
Samson's Weapon	D. Davies.	Judges 15:1-20
Spiritual Renewal in Answer to Prayer	Thomas Kirk.	Judges 15:1-20
The Fainting Hero		Judges 15:1-20
The Fate of Samson's Wife an Illustration of Retributive Justice	W. A. Scott, D. D.	Judges 15:1-20
The Rudest Weapon not to be Despised in God's Service	Marcus Dods, D. D.	Judges 15:1-20
Three Hundred Foxes in the Corn	W. A. Scott, D. D.	Judges 15:1-20
Wrong-Doers Naturally Seek to Justify Themselves	Thomas Kirk.	Judges 15:1-20
Foxes Arid Firebrands	A.F. Muir	Judges 15:4, 5
Ingenuity and Originality	W.F. Adeney	Judges 15:4, 5
Those Who have Occasioned Evil Punished for Those Who Caused it	A.F. Muir	Judges 15:6-8

Requiting Evil for Good, and Good for Evil	A.F. Muir	Judges 15:8-16
Imperfect Means Made Effectual by Divine Inspiration	A.F. Muir	Judges 15:14-16
The Self-Refreshment of Divine Service	A.F. Muir	Judges 15:17-19
Distress After Triumph	W.F. Adeney	Judges 15:18, 19

JUDGES 16

ON SITE COMMENTARY

- Judges 16 Verse by Verse Commentary
- Judges 16 Devotionals and Illustrations

H L ROSSIER

- [Judges 16 Defeat and Restoration](#)

LEONARD RAVENHILL

- [Judges 16:6 Where is Your Strength? - Audio Only](#) - 1 Hour 21 minutes long!

JESSE M HENDLEY

- [Judges 16:22: Growing Hair on Bald Heads](#)

TODAY IN THE WORD

- Judges 16:1-31 Devotional
- Judges 16:1-31a Devotional

ALEXANDER MACLAREN

- Judges 16:3 Our Champion
- Judges 16:21-31 Strength Profaned and Lost

C H SPURGEON

- Judges 16:6 - Devotional
- Judges 16:20-21: Samson Conquered
- [Judges 16:22 Shaven and Shorn but Not Beyond Hope](#)

ALAN CARR

- [Judges 16:16-30 The Prison Of His Purifications](#)
- [Judges 16:20-31 The High Cost Of Low Living](#)

F C FENSHAM

- [Judges 16:19 The Shaving of Samson: A Note on Judges 16:19](#)

JAMES HASTINGS

- [Judges 16:20 Unconscious Loss - over 20 pages!](#)

A W TOZER

- Judges 16:20: The Lord Departed

J MIKE MINNIX

- [Judges 16 Dying on the Sunny Side](#)

JESSE HENDLEY

- [Judges 16:22 Growing Hair on Bald Heads](#)

DAVID OWEN

- [Judges 16:28 Strengthen Me](#)

TONY BECKETT WOODROW KROLL

- Judges 16-18 On Our Own

SERMON CENTRAL - most with transcripts, quality can vary, Be a Berean!

- [Judges 16 Sermons - over 100 sermons](#)

SERMONS BY VERSE

God Redeeming the Error of His Servant	A.F. Muir	Judges 16:1-3
A Grist from the Prison Mill of Gaza	. A. Scott, D. D.	Judges 16:1-31
As At Other Times	J. Durran.	Judges 16:1-31
Blessed and Tragic Unconsciousness	A. Maclaren	Judges 16:1-31
How not to Pray	J. Parker, D. D.	Judges 16:1-31
Ignominious Tasks	R. A. Watson, M. A.	Judges 16:1-31
Individulalism in Religion	R. Balgarnie, D. D.	Judges 16:1-31
Lessons from the Life of Samson	Abp. Wm. Alexander.	Judges 16:1-31
Loss of Strength	W. M. Taylor, D. D.	Judges 16:1-31
Lost Grace Unrealised	R. Rogers.	Judges 16:1-31
Man's Cannot and Man's Can: a New Year's Address	Homilist	Judges 16:1-31
Man's Power for God's Work	Homilist	Judges 16:1-31
Moral Strength	Joseph Ritson.	Judges 16:1-31
Our Champion		Judges 16:1-31
Pleasure and Peril in Gaza	R. A. Watson, M. A.	Judges 16:1-31
Samson Conquered	Spurgeon, Charles Haddon	Judges 16:1-31
Samson Shorn of His Strength	The Preacher's Monthly	Judges 16:1-31
Samson, the Jewish Hercules	Homilist	Judges 16:1-31
Shaven and Shorn, But not Beyond Hope	Spurgeon, Charles Haddon	Judges 16:1-31
Strength Lost	H. J. Bevis.	Judges 16:1-31
Strength Lost and Restored	H. J. Bevis.	Judges 16:1-31
The Death of Samson	G. M. Boynton.	Judges 16:1-31

The Evil of Knowing Evil	J. C. Coghlan, D. D.	Judges 16:1-31
The Fall and Rise of a Great Man	Homilist	Judges 16:1-31
The Giant's Locks	T. De Witt Talmage.	Judges 16:1-31
The Gradual and Subtle Advance of Sin	Bp. Boyd Carpenter.	Judges 16:1-31
The Influence of Amusements on Character and Destiny	T. De Witt Talmage.	Judges 16:1-31
The Man Who has Trifled Once Too Often	Dean Vaughan.	Judges 16:1-31
The Secret of Samson's Strength	J. Clifford, D. D.	Judges 16:1-31
The Victim and the Victor	E. P. Hood.	Judges 16:1-31
The Weakness of Strength	G. Elliott.	Judges 16:1-31
The Withdrawal of Divine Influences	J. Williamson.	Judges 16:1-31
Samson's Betrayal and Fall	A.F. Muir	Judges 16:4-21
Samson's Weariness	W.F. Adeney	Judges 16:15-17
And He Wist not that the Lord (Jehovah) Was Departed from Him	A.F. Muir	Judges 16:20
God's Departure from the Soul Unrecognised	W.F. Adeney	Judges 16:20
Samson Conquered	Charles Haddon Spurgeon	Judges 16:20
Strength Profaned and Lost	Alexander Maclaren	Judges 16:21
A Hero's Exodus	A.F. Muir	Judges 16:21-31
Samson's Heroic Death	A.F. Muir	Judges 16:28-30

JUDGES 17

ON SITE COMMENTARY

- [Judges 17 Verse by Verse Commentary](#)
- [Judges 17 Devotionals and Illustrations](#)

H L ROSSIER

- [Judges 17 The Levite of Judah](#)

PHILIP SATTERTHWAITE

- [Judges 17-21 No King In Israel': Narrative Criticism And Judges 17-21](#)

TERRY TRIVETTE

- [Judges 17:1-6: When Motherhood Is Not So Good](#)

PARIS REIDHEAD

- [Judges 17:1-18:6 Ten Shekels and a Shirt \(audio version - 51' - if you have never heard this sermon it is a must listen!\)](#)
- [Transcript of Ten Shekels and a Shirt](#)

DON FORTNER

- [Judges 17-21 When People Do What they Think is Right](#)

Avarice and Superstition	W.F. Adeney	Judges 17:1-4
An Unauthorised Ordination	M. Jones.	Judges 17:1-13
Anarchy	Bp. Andrewes.	Judges 17:1-13
Anarchy	Thos. Cartwright, D. D.	Judges 17:1-13
Micah and the Levite	W. H. Allbright.	Judges 17:1-13
Micah's Mother	W. H. Allbright.	Judges 17:1-13
The Evil of Unbridled Liberty	Thos. Cartwright, D. D.	Judges 17:1-13
The Great Religious Want and Mistake of Humanity	Homilist	Judges 17:1-13
The History of a Man-Made Ministry	A.F. Muir	Judges 17:1-13
The Young Levite; Or, Rich Content	F. Hastings.	Judges 17:1-13

JUDGES 18

ON SITE COMMENTARY

- Judges 18 Verse by Verse Commentary
- Judges 18 Devotionals and Illustrations

H L ROSSIER

- [Judges 18 Dan and the Levite of Judah](#)

STREAMS IN THE DESERT

- Judges 18:9,10: Appropriating Faith

C H SPURGEON

- [Judges 18:7, 27, 28 The Danger of Carnal Security](#)

The History of a Man-Made Ministry: 2. its Abuse	A.F. Muir	Judges 18:1-13
Counsel of God	J. Burns, D. D.	Judges 18:1-31
Indifference to Religion	C. P. Longland.	Judges 18:1-31
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Excellent devotional illustrations from [RBC Ministries](#) Updated December 8, 2015

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CHARLES SIMEON

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NOTE: If you are not familiar with the great saint **Charles Simeon** see Dr John Piper's discussion of Simeon's life - you will want to read Simeon's sermons after meeting him! - [click Brothers We Must Not Mind a Little Suffering \(Mp3 even better\)](#)

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TREASURY OF SCRIPTURE KNOWLEDGE Judges

Excellent Cross References to aid your study of a given passage

John MacArthur: "The one book, apart from the Bible itself, that I value most in my studies."

Note: The best commentary on Scripture is Scripture (Compare Scripture with Scripture) and these cross references compiled by Torrey are the most comprehensive work of this type with over 500,000 entries. However, always check the context (Keep Context King) to make sure that the cross reference is referring to the same subject as the original Scripture. The Puritan writer Thomas Watson said it this way - "The Scripture is to be its own interpreter or rather the Spirit speaking in it; nothing can cut the diamond but the diamond; nothing can interpret Scripture but Scripture." See an example of the value of comparing Scripture with Scripture. See also [Use of Cross-References](#)

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DANIEL D. WHEDON Commentary on Judges

Note: Daniel D. Whedon was a central figure in the struggle between Calvinism and Arminianism. He devoted 25 years to writing the New Testament commentaries. Other authors wrote the Old Testament commentaries with Whedon serving as the editor.

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STEVE ZEISLER AND OTHERS

Peninsula Bible Church

Judges Sermons

A Home Given: The Need for a King	Judges	Grant, Scott
What a Mess!	Judges 21:1-25	Grant, Scott
Right Decision, Wrong Results	Judges 20:18-48	Grant, Scott
Rush to Judgment	Judges 20:1-17	Grant, Scott
Dark Night	Judges 19:1-30	Grant, Scott
What Are You Doing?	Judges 18:1-31	Grant, Scott
Muddy Waters	Judges 17:1-13	Grant, Scott
Bringing Down the House	Judges 16:23-31	Grant, Scott
Restless Heart	Judges 16:1-22	Grant, Scott
The Sacred Path	Judges 15:1-20	Grant, Scott
See, Want, Take	Judges 14:1-20	Grant, Scott
Watch and Worship	Judges 13:1-25	Grant, Scott
Deflecting Pain	Judges 11:29-40, 12:1-15	Grant, Scott
Resolving Conflicts (Or not)	Judges 11:12-28	Grant, Scott
When God Says No	Judges 10:1-18, 11:1-11	Grant, Scott
Shamgar's Stick	Judges 3:31	Grant, Scott
The Sword of God	Judges 3:12-30	Grant, Scott
Remembering the Lord	Judges 3:7-11	Grant, Scott
Wounded Soldiers	Judges 2:6-23, 3:1-6	Grant, Scott
Place of Tears	Judges 1:1-36, 2:1-5	Grant, Scott
All Hell Breaks Loose	Judges 19:1-30, 20:1-48, 21:1-25	Zeisler, Steve
Religion for Rent	Judges 17:1-13, 18:1-31	Zeisler, Steve
Desire, Deception and Revenge	Judges 16:1-31	Zeisler, Steve
An Angry Giant	Judges 15:1-20	Zeisler, Steve
The Hollow Hero	Judges 13:1-25, 14:1-20	Zeisler, Steve
Failed Families, Faith in God	Judges 10:17-18, 11:1-40, 12:1-15	Zeisler, Steve
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From Triumph to Tragedy	Judges 8:1-35, 9:1-57	Zeisler, Steve
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The Lord is with You, O Valiant Warrior	Judges 6:1-40	Zeisler, Steve
When Women Wage War	Judges 4:1-24, 5:1-31	Zeisler, Steve
The Cycle of Sin	Judges 3:7-31	Zeisler, Steve
A New Generation - An Old War	Judges 2:1-23, 3:1-6	Zeisler, Steve
Compromise Has Consequences	Judges 1:1-36	Zeisler, Steve
Sin Is Crouching At The Door	Judges 16:1-31	Ritchie, Ron

Whatever A Man Sows, This He Will Also Reap	Judges 15:1-20	Ritchie, Ron
If We Live The Spirit Let Us Walk By The Spirit	Judges 14:1-20	Ritchie, Ron
Doomed To Success	Judges 7:1-25	Ritchie, Ron
All We Are Meant To Be	Judges 6:1-40	Ritchie, Ron
An Impossible Situation	Judges 4:1-16	Ritchie, Ron
Set Free From Self--Righteousness	Judges 3:7-11	Ritchie, Ron
Whatever Became Of Evil?	Judges 2:6, 2:3	Ritchie, Ron
The World Is Looking Good Again!	Judges 2:1-5	Ritchie, Ron
What's a Women to Do?	Judges 4:1-24, 5:1-31	Roper, Dave
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Judges: The Pattern of Defeat	Judges	Stedman, Ray

HANDFULS OF PURPOSE

JAMES SMITH

JUDGES

"WHY HAVE YOU DONE THIS?" Judges 2:1-5.

The "angel of the Lord" may mean "the angel of His Presence," that angelic form which makes the presence of the Lord, a powerful reality. This the Holy Spirit now does. Wherever He is the presence of God is felt. The journey from Gilgal (rolling away) to Bochim (weepers) may in a moral sense be very short. If we do not walk in the light of His will the distance between our successes and failures will never be very great. We observe here—

I. A Work of Grace. This grace was manifested in—

1. A Merciful Compulsion. "I made you to go up out of Egypt" (v. 1). It is a blessed thing when salvation becomes a pressing necessity. Compelled to forsake our godless ways through the force of constraining grace. It was so with Saul while on the way to Damascus (Acts 9). The compulsion of Almighty love.
2. The Gift of a Rich Possession. "I brought you unto the land" (v. 1). This good land was the land of promise. To Israel it meant freedom, peace, plenty, progress, and power. Typical of the possessions the believer has in Christ Jesus.
3. An Unfailing Assurance. "I will never break My covenant with you" (v. 1). The gifts and callings of God are without repentance. God Himself will not alter the thing that has gone out of His lips (Psalm 89:34). We may fail, yet He abides faithful to His own promise. The bargain will never be broken on God's side. He cannot deny Himself.
4. A Needful Warning. "You shall make no league with the inhabitants; you shall throw down their altars" (v. 2). The inhabitants of the land were bitterly opposed to the purposes of God, therefore the children of God must make no covenant with them. The servants of Christ must in no way identify themselves with that spirit that works in the children of disobedience. Their false gods must be thrown down, and the Lord alone exalted.

II. A Miserable Failure. "But you have not obeyed My voice" (v. 2). The failure came in their case, as it often comes in ours, through unbelief. O fools and slow of heart, to believe all that He has spoken! The voice of God is still in His Word, because His Word is the breathings of the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21). The Scriptures are always living and active (see Hebrews 4:12, R.V.). To turn away from His revealed will is to close our ears to the voice of God. Be not deceived, God knows when His voice is obeyed. He is personally interested in every individual child of His. How often have we complained of our failures? May not the cause be here: "You have not obeyed My voice?"

III. A Searching Question. "Why have you done this?" The "angel of His presence" is jealous for the honor of God. What answer can a disobedient one give to this personal, pointed inquiry? An honest answer would be: "I feared man more than God, and was better pleased with my own thoughts and plans than with His." Paul's "Not I, but Christ," has been changed into "Not Christ, but I." You know that, apart from the presence and power of the Holy Spirit within you, you cannot live or witness for God as you ought; yet you have gone leaning on your own strength and wisdom, and came away defeated. "Why have you done this?" You know that to obey His voice is the secret of heart-restfulness, yet you have not walked in this light. "Why have you done this?"

IV. An Expressive Answer. They answered not by words, but by deeds. Acts speak louder than words—

1. They Wept. "The people lifted up their voice and wept" (v. 4). The message from him who represented the presence of God had gone home to their hearts. "Why have you done this?" smote them with the silence of self-condemnation that could only find expression in tears of repentance. It was a heart question that wrung out this heart-melting response. The crowing of a rooster sent the same burning question into the heart of self-confident Peter, and with the very same result. "He went out and wept bitterly" (Matthew 26:75). "Godly sorrow works repentance to salvation not to be repented of" (2 Corinthians 7:10).

2. They Sacrificed. "And they sacrificed there unto the Lord" (v. 5). Sacrificing unto God is the only possible way of redeeming what we have lost by disobedience. The tears that are not followed with self-denying deeds are not very hot. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit" (Psalm 51:17). The broken spirit allows all that is in it to flow out for God. "I beseech you therefore by the mercies of God to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service" (Romans 12:1).

THE SONG OF DEBORAH. Judges 5.

"Command, Lord, what You will,
My way be dark or bright;
Upon the Rock I'm built,
You shall defend the right;
O look to me, and bring
Me forth conquering to sing."

"The song of Deborah," says Dr. Farrar, "is one of the grandest outbursts of impassioned poetry in the Bible." Like the song of salvation, the deep fullness of its harmony depends on the rich variety of its notes. It is a song of triumph. It is wonderful how nicely we can sing when we have experienced deliverance from all our enemies through faith in Jesus Christ. Those taken up out of the fearful pit of iniquity have a new song put into their mouth (Psalm 40:2, 3). This song of the prophetess resembles our song, in that it has in it a note of—

I. Fellowship. "Then sang Deborah and Barak" (v. 1). The song of salvation is not a solo, for while the saved one sings for joy there is also joy in the presence of the angels of God (Luke 15:10). The song of deliverance at the Red Sea was sung by Moses and the children of Israel (Exod. 15:1). Let us exalt His Name together.

II. Personal Dedication. "The people willingly offered themselves" (v. 2). This is a sure forerunner to victory. When the people of God willingly offer themselves as instruments of righteousness in His hand, to do His will, the shout of triumph will certainly follow. As with the Church, so with the individual; personal consecration to the work of the Lord is the strait gate into the way of success in His service. "They first gave their own selves to the Lord" (2 Corinthians 8:5).

III. Exultant Joy. "Awake, awake, utter a song" (v. 12). The song of the Lord's delivered ones is so high pitched that only the saved can sing it, and they need to be wide awake to give it the needed emphasis. The halfhearted make but a sorry attempt to touch the notes on the leger lines of this heavenly song. The psalmist was clearing his throat for it when he said, "Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early" (Psalm 57:8). You that dwell in the dust of an unclean and praiseless life, awake and sing (Isaiah 26:19).

IV. Mutual Encouragement. "Zebulun and Naphtali were a people that jeopardized their lives in the high places of the field" (v. 18). Reuben could debate on the merits of the war, and create divisions, playing the part of the "higher critic" (v. 16), and perhaps helping Gilead, Dan, and Asher in their guilty selfishness and cowardliness (v. 17). But give honor to whom honor is due. Those who stand firm on the "high places" in this holy warfare against worldliness, and every form of sin that works in opposition to the gracious will of God, let them be mentioned in our prayers and praises to God. All who jeopardize their lives for the cause of Christ, and even their own good name, should have honorable mention before God and man. This is a very effective antidote for jealousy in the Lord's work.

V. Faithful Warning. Meroz and the inhabitants thereof were to be cursed bitterly, "because they came not to the help of the Lord against the mighty" (v. 23). The people of Meroz may not have actually hindered the Lord's warriors, but they did not help; in this lay their guilt. They were cursed because they did nothing. Prayerless Christian, take note. The fig tree was cursed by the merciful Christ because it was fruitless. Doing nothing in the way of helping on the Lord's cause is the sure road to a withered Christian life, and it maybe to a God-dishonoring posterity. Abigail was well taught in theology when she assured David that, "The Lord will certainly make my lord a sure house, because my lord fights the Lord's battles" (1 Samuel 25:28). Look after His business and He will look after yours.

VI. Solemn Reflection. The mother of Sisera looked out at a window, and cried, "Why is his chariot so long in coming?" etc. (vv. 28-

30). Deborah's reference to the mother of Sisera watching and wearying for the return of her murdered son is an intensely womanly touch. Here is pictured the terrible disappointment that must finally come to those who hope for peace and prosperity while fighting against the purposes and people of God (Exod. 15:9). While we celebrate our deliverance from the guilt and power of sin in our song of praise, let us not be unmindful of those who are without God and without hope in the world; those who are feeding on vanity, and are as the chaff to the wheat; those who walk in the light of the sparks of their own kindling, and whose light shall suddenly be quenched. The only hymn that we read of Christ ever singing was sung under the shadow of the Cross (Matthew 26:30).

GIDEON'S CALL. Judges 6:11-24.

Many have lived lives of sorrow and failure because they have mistaken their calling. It is not so with those called of God, as was Gideon. The gifts and callings of God are without repentance. Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and the consequence was what it always will be when we turn away from the Lord our Redeemer—bondage and oppression under the hand of an enemy (vv. 1, 2). But when they were impoverished they "cried unto the Lord" (v. 6), and He saved them out of their distresses by sending them a prophet to warn (v. 8) and a mighty man to save. The cry out of the depths of our impoverished hearts brings an answer out of the depths of His infinite fullness. In seeking to grasp the salient features of this portion let us note—

I. A Sorrowful Plight. "Gideon thrashed his wheat, and hid it from the Midianites" (v. 11). What a picture of a life lived under the fear of man! Separation from the ways of God will certainly pervert the motives of life. How are the mighty fallen that the redeemed of the Lord should tremble at the face of man? Elijah, in another sense, thrashed out his wheat fearlessly in the presence of his enemy, because he stood before the Lord God of Israel (1 Kings 17:1).

II. A Comforting Message. The angel of the Lord appeared, and said unto him, "The Lord is with you, you mighty man of valor" (v. 12). This messenger of the covenant preached unto Gideon the Gospel of the grace of God, "The Lord is with you, you mighty man." It is His will and purpose to bless you and make you a blessing, therefore arise and put on your strength. This angel brought to Gideon what the Holy Spirit brings to us—a remembrance of our privileges as His people. He shall take of Mine, and shall show it unto you.

III. An Anxious Question. And Gideon said, "If the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us?" etc. (v. 13). All this dishonor and misery came because of sin; but, blessed be God, although we may fall through our iniquity, He does not cast off and forever deny His people. His great fatherly heart still loves and yearns for the restoration of His erring ones to His bosom. If the Lord is with us, why is our testimony so fruitless and our prayers so powerless? Just for the very same reason—an evil heart of unbelief (2 Chronicles 15:2).

IV. A Great Commission. The Lord looked upon him, and said, "Go in this your might, and you shall save Israel; have not I sent you?" (v. 14). His might undoubtedly lay in the assurance of Jehovah's presence with him (v. 12). Samson was not a giant; his great strength lay in the power of the Spirit of God with him. He does not send us a warfare on our own charges. Depressed and doubting soul, herein is the secret of might, "Lo, I am with you always, and all power is given unto Me." Go in this your might (Joshua 1:9; Matthew 28:18, 19).

V. A Common Excuse. "Oh my Lord, with which shall I save Israel? my family is poor, and I am the least," etc. (v. 15). It was so also with Moses (Exod. 3:11) and with Saul (1 Samuel 9:21). Poverty and weakness are no arguments against the exceeding riches of His grace and power to usward. Urging our own helplessness in the face of His all-sufficient promise only betrays our lack of faith in His Word. Still, the Lord expects that His abounding grace should never beget in us anything like self-confidence or boasting. The revelation of the glory of His goodness and of the high calling into which we have been brought are sure to make us feel keenly the impotency of all human strength and wisdom (see Luke 5:8, 9). Our conscious weakness is one of the best qualifications for the work of God (1 Corinthians 1:27; 2 Corinthians 12:10).

VI. An Assuring Promise. "And the Lord said unto him, Surely I will be with you" (v. 16). God meets his felt need with the promise of His presence. The presence of God means the supplying of all our wants as His servants. There is no other way whereby the Lord can equip us for His work than by the power of His presence, by the Holy Spirit within us. Gideon says, "I am poor, and my father's house are few in number;" but God's answer to his and our poverty and feebleness is, "I will be with you." Greater is He who is with us than all that can be against us. "Himself has said, I will in no wise fail you," so that with courage we say, "The Lord is my helper, I will not fear" (Hebrews 13:5, 6, R.V.).

VII. A Confirming Token. "If now I have found grace in Your sight, then show me a sign, and there rose up fire out of the rock" (vv. 17-21). The God that answers by fire, let him be God (1 Kings 18:24; Acts 2:1-4). Why should a sign be needed after giving His sure word of promise? In infinite grace God adapts His methods to the natural infirmities of man. He adds the seal of the Spirit to the promise of His Word. This holy fire appeared after the offering had been poured out before the Lord. As the fire of the Lord of old had to do with the offerings on the altar (Leviticus 9:24), so the Holy Spirit of burning comes now as God's answer and sign to a life consecrated unto Him. You shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit and with fire. "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?"

(Acts 19:2, R.V.).

VIII. An Adoring Act. "Then Gideon built an altar there unto the Lord, and called it Jehovah-shalom"—Jehovah, send peace (v. 24). Because he had seen the angel of the Lord face to face he feared that he would die. But his fears having been rebuked by His "Peace be unto you" (vv. 22, 23), he built an altar, and called it the "Peace of Jehovah." "My peace I give unto you." The assuring Word of God's promise ought to be enough to lead us into that adoring attitude of sacrificing restfulness (John 14:27). This altar, like the altar of the Cross of Jesus Christ, speaks powerfully of the peace of God. The cry of both was, "Jehovah, send peace." And peace has been made. A peace that passes all understanding. May it garrison our hearts and constrain to adoring worship.

GIDEON AT WORK. Judges 6:25-40.

The apostle Paul has declared that "When I am weak, then am I strong." Judged by the wisdom of the world this is certainly paradoxical. The seeming absurdity is partly explained by his previous utterance. "I will glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (2 Corinthians 12:9, 10). Gideon in himself was weak and uninfluential; but now that the presence and peace of Jehovah was with him, and in him, he becomes what God saw that he ought to be: "A mighty man of valor."

I. Where he Began.

1. At Home. "Take your father's bullock, and throw down the altar of Baal that your father has" (v. 25). The command to "honor your father," etc., has a far-reaching effect, and may be fulfilled by a son in a way that is very painful to the father. Gideon would honor his father, but destroy his father's gods. It takes courage to make a start and take a stand for God and for righteousness among our own kin. "Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you" (Mark 5:19).

2. At Once. "And Gideon took ten men, . . . and did it by night" (v. 27). It would appear that no time was lost. Gideon's ten servants, through his consistent testimony, was fully in sympathy with Jehovah, and ready at once to follow their master in this needed work for God. The call was clear. Why should he put off? Is it not as clear for you? Yet you linger. The Master is come, and calls for you.

II. What He Did. His work was twofold.

1. A Pulling Down. "Throw down the altar of Baal" (v. 25). The altar of Baal represented that which was false, deceptive, and opposed to the will and rule of Jehovah. Every God-usurping thing around us or within us must be overturned and dethroned. "Our weapons are not according to the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down imaginations and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God" (2 Corinthians 10:4, 5, R.V.).

2. A Building Up. "Build an altar unto the Lord your God" (v. 26). It is not enough to undeceive the worshipers of false gods; the true God must be put in their place. It is not enough to take the pleasures of the world from its votaries; we must be able to put something better in their place. The Altar of God, namely, the Cross of Christ, is the divine substitute for the barren and powerless inventions of men. To preach Christ and Him crucified is to build up the Altar of the Lord.

III. What Followed. Such definite action will always be accompanied with very positive results. There came—

1. A Changed Attitude. "The men of the city said, Bring out your son that he may die" (v. 30). Death, in one form or another, is forever the world's penalty for faithfulness to God. The men of the city (who mind earthly things) are always bitterly opposed to those iconoclasts—men of God—who seek first the kingdom of God. But the disciple is not greater than his Master. The first evidence of faithfulness to Christ is the opposition of the ungodly.

2. A Changed Name. "Therefore on that day Gideon was called Jerubbaal" (v. 32). "Let Baal plead," or "Baal's antagonist." It is a blessed stigma to be called "a hater of false gods," an enemy to ignorance and superstition. It is quite becoming for a man to get a new name when he becomes a new creature (Genesis 32:28).

IV. How He was Encouraged by the—

1. Anointing of the Spirit. "The Spirit of the Lord came upon (clothed) Gideon, and he blew a trumpet" (v. 34). Fitness for the service of God can only be found in the Spirit of God. The blowing of the Gospel trumpet by a man clothed with the power of God will surely be effectual in gathering many after him. "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you" (Acts 1:8).

2. Testimony of the Fleece. In answer to the prayer of Gideon the fleece was wet with dew, while the earth around was dry; and, again, the fleece was dry while on the ground there was dew (vv. 36-40). A convincing proof that the providence of God in connection with the needs of His people is not the blind workings of chance. The Spirit of God, like the wind, blows where it wills; and, like the dew, it may fall on the fleece or not on the fleece, according to the cry of the man of God. Every servant of God may have this twofold witness: the Spirit within, and the special token of God's workings without. Prayer and providence go together.

GIDEON'S FOLLOWERS TESTED. Judges 7:1-8.

Gideon had been called of God as a "mighty man of valor." God knows where to find the instrument that is suitable for His work. "Not he who commends Himself is approved, but whom the Lord commends" (2 Corinthians 10:18). When Gideon blew the trumpet a great many gathered after him (v. 34), commending themselves, but whom the Lord had not commended. So the sifting process had to be applied. They had pitched beside the well (v. 1), and between the water and the warfare the would-be followers were tested. But note—

I. A Strange Hindrance. The Lord said, "The people that are with you are too many for Me" (v. 2). This is "to human wisdom, how severe?" An army of 32,000 too many for 120,000! (chapter 8:10). Yes, this is the Almighty's logic, that no flesh should glory in His presence (Deuteronomy 8:12-17). Our own strength and wisdom are always too many for God (1 Corinthians 1:29). It is to the faint that He gives power, and to them that have no might He increases strength (Isaiah 40:29). "When I am weak, then am I strong" (2 Corinthians 12:10). "Not by might, nor by power" (Zechariah 4:6).

II. An Urgent Call. "Whoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early" (v. 3). The presence of the fearful and the self-interested are always a hindrance to the work of God (Deuteronomy 20:8). How slow we are to learn that our Lord can do without those doubting and fearful professed followers! We are ready to be discouraged when they turn out of the ranks of workers for Christ, when in heart they never were really in line with the Spirit of God. They turn out, because in spirit they never had turned in. "For if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us" (1 John 2:19).

III. A Startling Revelation. "And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand" (v. 3). This turn about made a great gap in the ranks. Only ten thousand remained. God's warriors have to be weakened and reduced to bring them up to real efficiency in His presence. When the Church of God and the teaching of Christ are being assailed by an ever-increasing number of enemies it is wonderful how many false professors are found out by their turning away from the faith. Such dissensions cannot hinder the progress of the kingdom of God any more than the blowing away of rotten twigs by the wind can impede the growth of a tree.

IV. A Second Test. "And the Lord said unto Gideon, The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for you there" (v. 4). When the appeal was made to their own will many turned away back, but now the purging of those that are left is to be according to the will of God. Much that we would pass for wheat His fan will prove to be only chaff (Isaiah 1:25). The greater the victory to be achieved in the Name of Jesus Christ the hotter the furnace of trial through which we must pass. It was so with Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Daniel, Peter, and Paul. Where are they who have been much used of God who have not had His sifting, purging fire turned upon them? It is one thing for us to search ourselves; this will doubtless turn many cowardly things away out of our life, but when God Himself comes by His searching Spirit to try us, then we are brought down to utter hopelessness in our own strength, that no flesh may glory in His presence, and that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us (2 Corinthians 4:7). "Search me, O God, and try me."

V. A Consecrated Band. "And the Lord said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you" (vv. 5-7). A straw may indicate which way the wind blows. Those who lapped the water with the hand had evidently a keener sense of and were more alive to the importance and urgency of the occasion. Those who "bowed down upon their knees" were specially eager after their own selfish gratification. We are not fit for the work of God while our own personal comfort is our chief concern. No doubt they were all alike thirsty, and the water would be equally precious to both parties as the good and needful gift of God. But we don't live to eat and drink; we eat and drink that we may live to the glory of our God. As the servants of Christ let us lap thankfully of the wells that God in His providence may open before us by the way; but you shall not bow down to them as a mere hireling, else in the sight of God you shall become unfit to join the victors in the battle of the Lord. "This one thing I do" is the language of those who have yielded themselves entirely to the doing of the will of God, who partake of the pleasures of this world, as a dog laps the waters in passing, but whose heart is set on the will and work of the Lord. Consecrated souls lap the waters of earth with their eyes on the Cross of Christ.

GIDEON'S ENCOURAGEMENT. Judges 7:9-15.

"Observe the rising lily's snowy grace,
Observe the various vegetable race;
They neither toil nor spin, but careless grow,
Yet see how warm they blush, how bright they glow!

What regal vestments can with them compare,
What king so shining, or what queen so fair?
Will He not care for you, you faithless, say?
Is He unwise? Or are you less than they?"—Thomson.

Be not discouraged because of the way. He who has begun the good work in you and through you will keep performing it until the day of perfection. If Gideon's heart was lifted up with pride when 32,000 gathered around him it would surely sink when he saw the

powerful looking army melt away until only a handful of three hundred were left, but this was a "Handful on Purpose." God's handful of separated ones, "ready to do whatever the King would appoint." The divine method is quality, not quantity. He desires not appearance, but truth in the inward parts. "The Spirit of the Lord came upon David, ... but departed from Saul" (1 Samuel 16:1-7).

Gideon was mightily encouraged by the—

I. Promise of God. "Arise, get you down unto the host, for I have delivered it unto your hand" (v. 9). The battle was already fought and the victory gained in the purpose of God. Now Gideon is called upon to arise and enter into that purpose and claim the offered deliverance. Does not the promises of God in Christ mean as much as this to us? Is it not the purpose of God that we should be saved from all our sins and delivered from all our enemies? Then arise, and in His Name claim the victory. He is faithful that has promised (Luke 1:74, 75).

II. Presence of God. The Lord had said unto him, "Surely I will be with you" (vv. 6-10). His promise of victory always brings with it the assurance of His presence (v. 9). "Lo, I am with you always." Does this promise only hold good when we are conscious of His nearness? Are our moral sensibilities to be the criterion of the truthfulness of His Word? Are we only thankful for His powerful presence with us when we feel it? It is surely an encouragement that we can continually reckon on our Lord being with us by His Spirit when we know that we are doing that which is pleasing in His sight.

III. Providence of God. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28). When our affections are set on Himself, and while we are walking according to our high calling, every circumstance in life is planned for our good by the wonder-working hand of God. This is part of the great Redemption which we have in Christ Jesus. See how He wrought for the comfort of His servant Gideon. There were three different streams of influence which culminated at one divinely-appointed moment. There was—

1. A Dream. "Behold, I dreamed a dream, and, lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian," etc. (v. 13). Dreams are common, but Jehovah was the Author and Giver of this one. Despair not at the lack of means for getting within touch of those who are the enemies of God and of His Christ while the ear of God is open to your cry. He may be causing others to see the little barley cakes overturning their tents and creating dismay even while we are lamenting their utter indifference to the will of God.

2. The Interpretation of the Dream. "And his fellow answered, This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon," etc. (v. 14). When the trembling dreamer told his dream the mighty power of God seemed to take hold of the hearer that he could see nothing else but his own and his fellow's doom in this simple vision. Ah, when God is speaking the simple message comes with a self-condemning revelation. Yes, the cake of barley, the bread of the Lord's host, becomes the sword of the Lord in the camp of His enemies. Gideon's little consecrated band is in the hand of the Lord, and He prepares for them the victory.

3. The Hearing of it by Gideon. "And it was so when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof that he worshiped" (v. 15). The whole scene was a divinely-planned coincidence, and another proof of that unerring providence that constrains the faithful servant of God again and again to bow in silent worship. This is the finger of God. It is God's manner to choose the things that are weak and despised to confound the things which are mighty (1 Corinthians 1:27, 28). Although the Lord is often pleased to give us providential evidences of the truth of His Word, let us ever remember that His promises are enough without them; what Gideon heard in the tent did not make the Word of God more sure. "All the Promises of God in Him are yes, and in Him Amen" (2 Corinthians 1:20).

GIDEON'S VICTORY. Judges 7:16-25.

"'Tis always morning somewhere in the world,
Throned evil yet shall from its height be hurled;
The nail-pierced hand holds still the seven stars,
Truth stronger, nobler grows by its scars."—Grosart.

The weapons of our warfare are not carnal. Like Gideon, every divinely-called one has a work to do that would be otherwise perfectly impossible but for the grace of God. Every regenerated life is a miracle, a new center of operation for the spiritual forces of Heaven, and of course there must be a special manifestation of supernatural and unworldly influences. If a Christian is not in the eyes of the world an anomaly he is nothing. The Spirit of God always makes a tremendous distinction between men. "You are a peculiar people." The energy of the natural man, and that of the Holy Spirit in the believer, are as different as darkness is from light; as far apart in character as Judas was from John. Notice the—

I. Strange Preparation. "He put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers" (v. 16). Trumpets, lamps, and pitchers. Those who have faith in God can afford to use weak things. There was a great difference between the weapon of Goliath and that of David (1 Samuel 17:40-45). Pitchers with nothing in them but lamps may suggest hearts cleansed and filled with the light of the knowledge of God (2 Corinthians 4:6, 7). This knowledge to be sounded out with trumpet lips (Romans 10:14).

When God makes His choice of weapons they are always weak and base in the sight of the wisdom of this world (1 Corinthians 1:27, 28). Fools for Christ.

II. Present Example. Gideon said, "Look on me, and do likewise; as I do, so shall you do" (v. 17). Each one must look unto him who is God's messenger, and who goes before them. Gideon himself, in his ways and actions, was an example to each consecrated follower. Christ has left us an example, that we should follow His steps. Look unto Him, and not unto one another. Whatever He says unto you, do it. He pleased not Himself. Look on Him, and do likewise. The Captain of our salvation, like Gideon, desires His followers always to keep within sight of Him.

III. Uniting Battle Cry. "And they cried, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon" (v. 20). There was only one sword among them, but it was enough., for it was the Sword of the Lord, and the hand of Gideon was grasping it. The one glittering blade of divine truth is mightier than all the weapons of darkness The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God. This Word is the sword of the Lord, and of His Christ. It is the alone weapon for the whole camp of His followers. It will be a blessed and victorious day for the Church when this is its unmistakable cry, "The Word of the Lord and of His Church."

IV. Peculiar Warfare. "They blew the trumpets, and break the pitchers, and held the lamps, and cried," etc. (vv. 19, 20). Every man, as God's chosen one, had a trumpet, a pitcher, and a lamp, but every one's faith was in the "Sword of the Lord." Each soldier sounded his trumpet as an individual testimony for God, then the pitchers were dashed together and broken into countless fragments; a broken and a contrite heart is needed if the lamp of heavenly truth is to shine forth in the eyes of the ungodly. Then came the united cry, and the great battle was quickly won. Lips telling out the Gospel with clear trumpet tones, and the light of the knowledge of God shining out of broken hearts, and Christ, the Word of God uplifted. These are the crying needs of today, and these are God's means of overcoming the forces of evil. Put on the whole armor of God.

V. Complete Victory. "They stood every man in his place round about the camp, and all the host ran, and cried, and fled" (v. 21). Let us inquire as to the source and secret of such a triumph. They were—

1. United. They were as one man with one sword. When the singers were as one then the house was filled with glory (2 Chronicles 5:13). Not only union, but unison is needed (John 17:21).

2. Obedient. "They followed Gideon's example." The wise man is not he who says the will of God, but he who does it (Matthew 7:21; see Psalm 81:13, 14).

3. Faithful. "They stood every man in his place" (v. 21). Only those who truly trust can stand steady (2 Chronicles 20:17). When we take our right place God will take His.

4. Triumphant. God gave them the victory (Zechariah 4:6). When I sent you, lacked you anything? They answered, Nothing (Luke 22:35; 2 Corinthians 9:8). Then the men of Israel said unto Gideon, "Rule you over us, for you have delivered us" (chapter 8:22).

So may we crown our Deliverer, Lord of all.

GAAL; or, GODLESS EFFORT. Judges 9:26-49.

Scriptural names are always eloquent of character. "Gaal, the son of Ebed," means the "loathing son of a slave," strongly suggestive of pride and poverty. A man who could not see any one wiser or better than himself. Through his "loathing" eyes he saw others as through a colored glass. True, Abimelech was a murderer (v. 5), but it is not God's way to overcome evil with evil, but to overcome evil with good (Romans 12:21). Every servant of Christ may find some wholesome food for thought here. Observe his—

I. Hopeful Start. He was—

1. Trusted. "The men of Shechem put their confidence in him" (v. 26). The men of Shechem were as blind to true moral greatness as Gaal himself. But doubtless his self-confidence would be Considerably augmented by this expression of their faith. Whatever helps to puff us up helps us to our ruin as workers for Jesus Christ.

2. Feasted. "They did eat and drink, and cursed Abimelech" (v. 27). Carnal delights make a poor preparation for the service of God. Gideon's men were tested and sifted before the conflict, but Gaal's followers were rested and feasted. Instead of praying they cursed. The gladness of the Lord in the heart is greater than that begotten by corn and wine (Psalm 4:7). Material good does not always mean spiritual prosperity.

II. Courageous Stand. He was—

1. Defiant. "And Gaal said, Who is Abimelech, and who is Shechem that we should serve him?" (v. 28). This sounds like the clarion note of a God-raised reformer, but it was nothing but the vain wind of a self-conceited bigot. It is easy even for the Christian worker to talk defiantly of the forces opposed to the progress of the soul, and of the kingdom of God among men, but everything depends

on the ground of our boasting (1 Samuel 14:6).

2. Self-Confident. "Would to God that this people were under my hand, then would I remove Abimelech" (v. 29). O these mighty my's and I's, the progeny of pride and self-confidence. How would it look to put this language in a more logical form? Would to God that I were God. We naturally shrink from this, but self-confidence is a denial of God, and the forerunner of destruction (2 Samuel 15:4). "Pride goes before a fall."

III. Utter Defeat. "Abimelech chased him, and he fled; and Zebul thrust out Gaal and his brethren" (vv. 40, 41). That his work was an ignominious failure need not be wondered at when we consider the God-dishonoring motives that constrained him. Be sure your secret sin will find you out in public defeat. It was not the cause espoused by Gaal and his compatriots that was bad, quite the reverse, but that he undertook it in his own name, without the call of God. Jephthah and Gideon accomplished great deliverances because God was with them. The secret of Gaal's failure is still the secret of the failure of many of the Lord's professed servants. There was—

1. No Acknowledgment of God. If we would have His blessing on our work it must be done in His Name. The self-satisfied soul of Gaal had no room for God. It was so different with Moses, David, and Gideon. Some are afraid honestly to acknowledge God lest He should put His foot in all their plans and purposes, so instead of getting their Christless purposes crushed in infancy they get them trodden under foot of God in the full strength of their maturity.

2. No Revelation from God. It is not easy continually to recognize God in our work if we have not had from God a revelation of that work. Gaal had no message from the Lord burning in his heart. Like Absalom, he was self-ordained, and God-deposed. Where there is no vision there is no "Here I am, send me." Where there is no voice from Heaven there is no "What will you have me to do?"

3. No Inspiration by God. The Spirit of the Lord clothed both Gideon and Jephthah (Judges 6:34; 11:29), but Gaal's inspiration came from the wine cup (v. 27). The one is from above, the other is from beneath; the one is of life, the other of death. "You shall receive the power of the Holy Spirit coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto Me" (Acts 1:8). Of how much of our service for the Lord may it be said: There is no revelation, no inspiration? Of so much may it be said: There is no victory.

JEPHTHAH; or, CALLED TO SERVE. Judges 11.

"God never meant that man should scale the Heaven
By, strides of human wisdom. In His works,
Though wondrous, He commands us in His Word
To seek Him rather where His mercy shines."—Cowper.

The names of Gideon and Jephthah have honorable mention by the great apostle in his select roll of the faithful who had "subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, and obtained promises" (Hebrews 11). The story of Jephthah is the story of every converted sinner—a lifting up "from the dunghill, and a setting among princes" (Psalm 113:7). Observe some things concerning him. He—

I. Was Born in Sin. "He was the son of an harlot" (v. 1). "A mighty man of valor," but a child of iniquity. Naaman was a mighty man in valor, but he was a leper (2 Kings 5:1). By birth he was disqualified from entering into the congregation of the Lord (Deuteronomy 23:2). "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?"

II. Was Disinherited. "They thrust out Jephthah, and said unto him, You shall not inherit in our father's house" (v. 2). His right to inherit by succession was destroyed through his father's sin (Deuteronomy 21:16). By one man's disobedience many have been made sinners. "The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians 6:9). Adam's sin drove him out of his inheritance in the garden of Eden, and all his posterity have been born outside. If we would have an inheritance among them that are sanctified it must be by faith in Jesus Christ (Acts 26:18).

III. Became a Companion of the Vain. "Then Jephthah fled, and there were gathered vain men to him" (v. 3). Like a sheep gone astray, he turned to his own way. It would appear that he now became a brigand, or freebooter, an antitype of Rob Roy of modern history. Such were some of us. When deprived of hope we plunged into the abyss of a reckless, selfish life. Seeking to drown remorse with the excitement of sinful pleasures. A man is known by the company he keeps. "Bird of a feather flock together." "And being let go, they went to their own company" (Acts 4:23).

IV. Received an Important Invitation. "The elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah, Come and be our captain" (vv. 5,6). These elders no doubt saw in this daring son of the wilds gifts and qualifications that, if rightly directed, might be of immense value to the cause of God and of His people—what the early disciples would certainly see in the gifted, but Christ-hating Saul, and who would doubtless make many an appeal to Heaven for his conversion. The call came to Jephthah as the call of the Gospel came to us, "while we were yet sinners." Like the Gospel call, it was an invitation to join the ranks of the Lord's people, from whom sin had separated him, and to

fight the Lord's battles. Will you come? "Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37).

V. Covenanted with the Lord. "And Jephthah uttered all his words before the Lord in Mizpah" (v. 11). This unexpected but gracious call that came to him seems to have had the effect of making him feel his need of being reconciled to God, and of serving in His Name and strength. If the Gospel of Christ has not had such a transforming influence on our lives we have never yet known it. No matter how unique and outstanding our gifts and abilities may be before we turn to the Lord, if we would be used in His service, these must be wholly yielded to Him, or they can only prove barriers to the progress of His kingdom. It is not the strong heart, but the broken heart that God will not despise. "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise" (Psalm 51:17).

VI. Was Endued with Power. "Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah" (v. 29). The Spirit of the Lord did not come upon him until he had yielded himself to the Lord, and made full confession, by "uttering all his words before the Lord," (v. 11). It is not to the naturally courageous, but to the consecrated that the gift of the power of the Holy Spirit is given (Acts 1:8). He who has the gift of the Spirit has a great gift, no matter what other gifts he has not. No matter what our needs are—wisdom, strength, holiness, etc.—God's one and all-sufficient provision is imparted by the gift of the Spirit. By Him Christ is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption (1 Corinthians 1:30).

VII. Gained the Victory. "And the Lord delivered them into his hands" (v. 32). He is fit now to have them delivered into his hands, as he himself is now in the hands of God, that no flesh should glory in His presence. Jephthah is another illustration of God using things which are despised (v. 2). There is room enough in the grace of God for the most wayward and helpless. There is also sufficiency here for the hitherto barren and unfruitful. We are not saved by our works, neither are we used in the service of God because of our superior gifts or past eventful experience. It is all of grace, and His grace is sufficient for all. Without the living energy of the Holy Spirit within we shall achieve nothing. "Be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18). He has said "My Grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9).

SAMSON'S BIRTH. Judges 13:1-25.

"Choose You for me, Lord. O have not me to choose!
I know not what to ask or to refuse;
You know poverty, You know wealth,
Languor of sickness, confidence of health;
Choose for me, Lord, I know not what is best,
You are too just to wrong—on You I rest."

When we trust the Lord to choose our daily inheritance for us (Psalm 47:4) we shall surely have a goodly portion. The gifts of God are all God-like, worthy of Himself. The Lord appeared unto the wife of Manoah, and promised her a son (v. 3). She simply believed the message, and expected that since He had promised He was also able to perform. On the ground of His Word we may confidently expect what humanly speaking is perfectly impossible (Mark 10:27). The birth of Samson suggests to us an illustration of the new birth of a soul.

I. He was the Gift of God (v. 3). What they could not do through the weakness of the flesh, God in grace accomplished. Of the new nature it is said, "Born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:13). Every regenerated soul is the gift of God to a dark and desolate world, another light in its darkness, another witness for God.

II. He was Born Free from Hereditary Defect. The mother was solemnly warned to "drink not wine nor strong drink, and to eat not any unclean thing" (v. 4). The physical body, as the temple of this God-given spirit, must be pure and worthy of it. Those who would travail in birth for souls must take heed to their manner of life, and touch not the unclean. This is the human side; there is another: "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The soul that is born from above, born of God, cannot possess any hereditary blemish. Such is made a partaker of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4). "Whatever is born of God does not commit sin; for his seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (1 John 3:9).

III. His Birth was Connected with Sacrifice and Wonder-working. "The offering was put upon a rock, and the angel did wondrously, and ascended in the flame of the altar" (vv. 19, 20). Observe these three things: (1) The offering; (2) the wonder-working; (3) the ascension by way of the altar flame. How suggestive all this is of the death, and resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ our Lord, by the virtue of which every child of God is born. His offering upon the Cross, the wonder working of His resurrection power and glory, His ascension into Heaven, with the marks of the Cross in His hands and feet, just as it were "in the flame of the altar." "Manoah and his wife looked on, and fell on their faces to the ground" (v. 20). So well may we at this great sight (Ezekiel 1:28).

IV. He was Separated unto God. "The child shall be a Nazarite unto God" (v. 5). His separation was not by vow, but by birth (Numbers 6:5). If we have been "born of God," created anew in Christ Jesus, surely that is enough in itself to teach us that we should be separated in our lives from a world of sin and iniquity. Separation has two aspects. 1. We are separated by the will of God, according to His purpose with us (Leviticus 20:24). 2. We are to be separated by our own definite act, a deliberate and continual

choice of God's will concerning us (2 Corinthians 6:17). When the precious is separated from the vile, then the testimony will be as the mouth of God (Jeremiah 15:19). It was after Abraham was separated from worldly Lot that God came with His promise (Genesis 13; 14).

V. He was Blessed by the Lord. "And the child grew, and the Lord blessed him" (v. 24). His name was called Samson—sunny. Like the sun. The separated life is a blessed life, made sunny with the brightness of His presence. Is all this not needed by us if we are to grow like as our Savior did, "in favor with God and man?" (Luke 2:52). Many of Samson's acts and sayings reveal an almost playfulness of spirit that seems to indicate a bright sunny disposition. A sunny life is a powerful life. "The joy of the Lord is your strength." The separated life is to be a sunny life. Such was the life of our blessed Lord and Savior—separated, shiny. Though His face was marred, the light of His life was unsullied. The blessing of the Lord it makes rich. It made Samson rich in cheerfulness and strength, and according to Hebrews 11:32 he was made strong through faith. "According to your faith be it unto you."

VI. He was Moved by the Spirit. "The Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times" (v. 25). These periodical agitations of heart by the Spirit of God were premonitory indications of the purposes of God with him, and an inward witness of his separation unto the Lord. It is of the utmost importance that those who have separated themselves unto God should recognize the agitations of the Holy Spirit in the heart. What may appear to be but a passing thought or feeling may be nurtured into a mighty and far-reaching purpose. The glories of midday splendor are ushered in by what seems to be but struggling rays of light. As soon as Jesus separated Himself unto the will of God as His Servant He was led by the Spirit (Matthew 4:1). They live a spiritually monotonous life indeed who know nothing of the moving of the waters of the soul, early, by the brooding Spirit of God. The victorious Christian can say with Paul "I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13).

SAMSON'S LIFE AND DEATH. Judges 14-16.

"What Heaven bestows, with thankful eyes receive;
First ask your heart, and then through faith believe;
Slowly we wander o'er a toilsome way,
Shadows of life, and pilgrims of a day.
Who restless on this world receives a fall,
Look up on high, and trust your God for all."—Chaucer.

The fuller the cup the more easily is it to spill the contents. The higher the spiritual privilege the more need for lowliness of walk before God. The stronger we are the greater the temptation to trust in our strength. The more frequently the Spirit of God moves us the more powerfully will the world and the flesh oppose us. The life of Samson alternates with light and shade. A Nazarite who seemed to be partially unconscious of the sacredness of his life, a fatal flaw in his character as a servant in the work of God. "Know you not that Christ dwells in you?" Let us look at his—

I. Amazing Exploits. "He rent a young lion like a kid" (chapter 14:6). "With the jawbone of an donkey he slew a thousand men" (chapter 15:15). "He carried away the gates of the city of Gaza" (chapter 16:3). In Samson that promise was literally fulfilled: "One man of you shall chase a thousand" (Joshua 23:10). It is as easy for God to work with one man as with three hundred (Judges 7:7). Samson had no followers; he asked for none. He alone was commissioned and empowered; he alone must do it. In olden times God usually began with one man. Jesus began with two (John 1:37). We will never do exploits for God if we wait on others to help us. One man in the power of the Spirit is always equal to the occasion. "Greater is He who is in you than he that is in the world." The weapons used by Samson were worthy of the mighty Spirit of the Lord. "Foolish and base things" (1 Corinthians 1:27-29).

II. Superhuman Strength. "Delilah said to Samson, Tell me, I pray you, wherein your great strength lies" (chapter 16:6); Samson was not a giant; his great strength did not, therefore, lie in an arm of flesh. No human muscle can be developed into spiritual power. The secret of his great strength lay in the presence of the Almighty Spirit of God with him, as one consecrated to the will of God. "You shall receive the power of the Holy Spirit coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto Me" (Acts 1:8). This is still the secret of the great strength of any servant of Jesus Christ, and it may be yours. This great strength cannot be purchased by intellectual wisdom or social position. It is the gift of God (Acts 8:18-20), and should be to our souls what our physical strength is to our bodies, only in a superhuman degree, the mighty power of God.

III. Sore Temptation. "She pressed him daily with her words, and urged him, so that his soul was vexed unto death" (chapter 16:16). You will notice that the whole force of this temptress' energy is brought to bear upon that one thing that distinguished Samson from other men, "Wherein your great strength lies" (v. 15). In falling in love with Delilah he deliberately steps into the fires of trial. This was clearly an unequal yoke; from the very first she sought his ruin as a Nazarite (vv. 5, 6), and proved herself an enemy to the divine purpose in the life of Samson. It is a melancholy sight to see one trifling so with the secret of his power for God. Unholy alliances are deadly enemies to spiritual power. Whatever would mar our relationship with God must be looked upon as the poison of a serpent. Our strongest point for God will be the point most incessantly assaulted by the devil and the Spirit-resisting world. "Call upon Me in the day of trouble" (Psalm 50:15).

IV. Complete Failure. "She made him sleep upon her knees; and he awoke, and said, I will go out, as at other times, and shake myself. But he knew not that the Lord was departed from him" (chapter 16:19, 20). While he slept his locks were cut off, and his strength went from him. He shakes himself as at other times, but it is only himself he shakes. The mighty enemy-shaking power of the presence of the Lord was gone. He is now but a withered branch, fit to be cast into the fire at the hands of men (John 15:6). When the Spirit of God is grieved our defense as servants is gone (Numbers 14:9). When the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, at that moment he began to fall (1 Samuel 18:12). His strength lay not in his locks, but that head that had never felt the touch of a razor was a witness of his consecration to the will of God. In losing his hair he lost his testimony for God. The power of the Spirit of God alone can make us true witnesses for Christ. Without this we may shake ourselves in feverish effort, but this will only reveal our utter weakness. For a servant of Christ to be as weak as other men is doing dishonor to the Spirit of God. Samson is not the only servant of God who has lost his power through worldliness and self-indulgence (v. 19). Much of the powerless preaching of today may be traced to the same cause. No one can possibly fail in the work of the Lord who lives and acts in the power of the Holy Spirit (Philippians 2:13).

V. Terrible Bondage. "The Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison-house" (chapter 16:21). He was betrayed by the woman whom he loved, and on whose knees he slept the fatal sleep. The pleasures of sin always deliver over its votaries to spiritual blindness and bondage. Poor Samson. How are the mighty fallen! Let us take warning, and beware of worldly pleasures that ensnare the soul to the grieving of the Holy Spirit. Is there none among us whose service for God and His Christ is performed under the same conditions as Samson worked in the prison-house of Gaza? Blind and fettered servants, to whom the house of prayer becomes as a prison, a place to be got out of as soon as possible. We have neither eyes to see nor liberty to serve, unless we are filled with the Holy Spirit. Apart from this the Lord's work will become a drudgery and a slavery. Prison grinders instead of triumphant warriors.

VI. Final Victory. "And Samson called unto the Lord," etc. (chapter 16:28-30). Out of the depths of his sorrow and helplessness he cried unto the Lord. This is the only time we read of him acknowledging the Lord. His urgent and pitiful request is granted. "His hair began to grow again" (v. 22); his separation unto God began to appear once more. If we have lost our power for God there is only one way whereby it can be restored—confession and fresh consecration. Samson's dying cry was for one more manifestation of the old power, that he might die as a victor; and like Jesus Christ, our unfailing Conqueror, by the grace of God he overcame more by his death than his life. Our own restoration to God must precede the ingathering of souls (Psalm 51:12, 13).

THE YOUNG PROBATIONER. Judges 17-18.

"The highest honors that the world can boast
Are subjects far too low for my desire;
Its brightest gleams of glory are, at most,
But dying sparkles of Your living fire;
Without You, Lord, things be not what they be,
Nor have their being when compared with Thee."
—Quarles.

"In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (chapter 17:6). Our own eyes are about the poorest guides under Heaven. "He who trusts in his own heart is a fool." These chapters tell a sorrowful tale of social, religious, and moral corruption. What foolish and sinful creatures we are when the guiding hand of God is not with us! Such were some of us, but you are washed. The old self-life, even religious life, is just the doing of that which is right in our own eyes. When Saul said, "What will You have me to do?" he had given up walking in the light of his own eyes. The nameless young man brought before us here is worthy of close study on account of—

I. Character. "A young man who was a Levite" (chapter 17:7). According to Numbers 8 the Levites were called of God, separated and sanctified for the work of the Lord. Their work was to look after the different parts of the Tabernacle when the pillar of cloud moved, and to rebuild this House of God. They were God's separated ones for His own service (Numbers 4:15-33).

II. Purpose. "He said, I go to sojourn where I may find a place" (chapter 17:9). He is on the outlook for a call; he has no desire to spend the time in idleness. He is an industrious and perhaps conscientious young man; hoping that if he could only find a place he might be helpful in some way. It is a sure sign that the House of God is in ruins when the professed servants of God are seeking work at the hands of men. It was otherwise in the days of Moses and Joshua; it was otherwise also in the days of Christ and His apostles. It is the Lord of the harvest who is to send out laborers. Pray you Him (Matthew 9:38). How often young men are pleaded with to go. Why not pray the Lord the Spirit to send them? (Acts 13:2).

III. First Call. "Micah said unto him, Dwell with me, and be unto me a priest, and I will give you ten shekels of silver by the year, and a suit of apparel, and your victuals. So he went in" (chapter 17:10). Tired of his itinerancy, he accepted the first offer. It was not a

large place, only a small congregation (one family), and a small salary. The living was worth about 1 a year with board and lodgings. He had been doing nothing for a while, "so he went in." Although the loaves were small and the fishes few, there would be connected with the charge some personal dignity and profit. Had he not been a traitor to God he could not have ministered in such a house, for it was full of idols (v. 5), and Micah himself was a superstitious idolater. But doubtless the "ten shekels," etc., shut the mouth of the Levite. He is more concerned about his own personal advantage than the cause of God. A mere hireling (chapter 18:4).

IV. Ordination. "And Micah consecrated the Levite" (chapter 17:11-13). The root idea of consecration seems to be to "fill the hands," so that the worship or service may be abundantly acceptable in the sight of God (1 Chronicles 29:5, marg.). This was the chief aspect in the consecration of Aaron and his sons. Then how could Micah, a worshiper of idols, fill the hands of the Levite with that which is pleasing unto God? No more can you, except you are filled with the Holy Spirit. But the young minister seemed perfectly satisfied with this hollow and empty consecration. What is the value of such empty hands laid on the empty head of him who has an empty heart? "Without Me you can do nothing."

V. Translation. Then the Danites said unto him, "Hold your peace, and go with us; it is better for you to be a priest to a tribe than to one man. And the priest's heart was glad, and he went" (chapter 18:19, 20). This was a call to a larger sphere of labor on the condition that he should "hold his peace" and not expose their criminal craftiness. He accepted the call, virtually promising to keep his mouth shut on the sin of stealing. A man-made minister is only a minister after man (see Galatians 1:10-12). If a man has no revelation from God he has no commission from Him. We must see Jesus if we are to be witnesses for Him. The fear of man brings a snare. An enlarged sphere of usefulness did not improve in any way the faithless Levite; it only served to show more fully his godless and time-serving spirit. Higher positions and larger congregations are not enough to make a successful ministry. A self-seeking servant of Christ will always be powerless in the presence of ungodliness and open iniquity.

VI. Successors. "The children of Dan set up the graven image; and Jonathan and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan" (chapter 18:30, 31). The unprincipled young Levite suddenly drops out of sight as a lifeless, worthless thing. He has wrought no reform among the idolatrous Danites; he has left no faithful example behind him. He came as an unclean bird, devoured so much flesh, and flew off we know not where. But Micah's graven image still stands in their midst and usurps the place of the God of Israel. His successor was no better than himself. In this instance it was "like people, like priest." The utter worthlessness of an unspiritual ministry is here revealed, the need of being baptized in the Holy Spirit is strongly implied (John 15:16, 26, 27).