

Judges Chapter 1

The book of Judges is unusual in that no one knows for sure who penned it.

Some believe that Samuel was the penman.

It really does not matter who since God is the author.

This covers a period of time, between the death of Joshua and the rule of Saul as king.

During this time the 15 judges (chosen of God), were the rulers of the Israelites.

This book centers on the 15 judges and their dealings with the people.

The Israelites fell into idolatry over and over, during this period.

Every time they fell into idolatry, the LORD allowed them to be invaded as a chastisement of them.

These judges were men and women, chosen of God to lead in very difficult times of their history.

The Israelites remained loyal to the LORD in formality, but their hearts were far from Him.

The history of Israel is a history of Israel falling into idolatry, repenting and then God forgiving them.

This happened over and over.

One statement used a great deal in this book is "Crying to God".

They were a rebellious house.

The book of Galatians speaks of the backsliding Christians at Galatia, so I suppose it would be the New Testament book with a similar message.

Most scholars believe the events in this book happened somewhere between 1500 B.C. and 1000 B.C.

Verses 1:1 – 3:6

The Book of Judges begins with a double introduction that reports Israel's failure to remove the Canaanites from the land through warfare (1:1 – 2:5), and Israel's fall into idolatry (2:6 – 3:6).

Those failures are mirrored in the double conclusion at the end of the book (See Judges Chapters 17-21).

1:1 "Now after the death of Joshua it came to pass, that the children of Israel asked the LORD, saying, Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them?"

Judges covers the period between "Joshua" and Samuel, some 300 to 400 years, and introduces a new period of leadership (Joshua 24:29).

Rather than major national figures for long durations, lesser-known "judges" would locally lead Israel for long durations, lesser-known "judges" would locally lead Israel for shorter periods of time.

They did not fulfill a judicial role by setting internal disputes (except for Deborah in 4:5).

Rather, they functioned as deliverers and military leaders who rescued the people of Israel from external enemies.

"After the death of Joshua":

Ca. 1383 B.C. (compare Joshua 14:7-10 with Joshua 24:29).

Descriptions of the book's setting in Judges chapters 1 and 2 vary between times after Joshua's death and flashbacks summarizing conditions while he was alive (as 2:2-6).

Compare Joshua 1:1, "After the death of Moses".

At the end of the book of Joshua, we saw the death of Joshua when he was 110 years old.

"Asked the LORD":

This is speaking of taking counsel from the LORD.

This was a very sensible thing for them to do, and would also be an intelligent thing for us to do as well.

We should never enter into any major decision without first consulting God.

Joshua had been their leader, and now that he is gone they need someone to lead them in battle.

Judges 1:2 "And the LORD said, Judah shall go up: behold, I have delivered the land into his hand."

"Judah shall go up":

This tribe received God's first go-ahead to push for a more thorough conquest of its territory.

The reason probably lay in God's choice that Judah be the leader among the tribes (Gen. 49:8-12; 1 Chron. 5:1-2) and set the example for them in the other territories.

We remember that they had not completely driven out the Canaanites at this time.

Moses (the lawgiver) had been followed by Joshua (the great soldier).

He is now replaced by Judah.

Each time one leader is replaced by another, his way of leading is different because his personality is different.

Remember, it is the LORD who put him in charge.

Judges 1:3 "And Judah said unto Simeon his brother, Come up with me into my lot, that we may fight against the Canaanites; and I likewise will go with thee into thy lot. So Simeon went with him."

From the first days in the land, the relationship of the tribes of "Simeon" and "Judah" were very close (see the note on Joshua 19:9).

It seems that Judah will be fighting for his own inheritance at first.

He asks his brother Simeon to help him, and in turn he will help Simeon in his battles.

This was agreeable with both.

Judges 1:4 "And Judah went up; and the LORD delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand: and they slew of them in Bezek ten thousand men."

The "Perizzites" are part of a list of six groups of early inhabitants of Canaan (compare Exodus 3:8, 17; 23:23; 32:2; Deut. 20:17; Josh. 9:1; 11:3; 12:8).

They are mentioned with the "Canaanites" as early as (Genesis 13:7; compare 3:5).

Bezek was located somewhere near Gezer.

God is with them when they are doing what God told them to do.

It appears there were no losses with Judah.

If there were any at all it was just a few, because they are not mentioned here.

Verses 5-7

As the first Canaanite introduced in Judges, “Adoni-bezek” represents the king of evil that God intended for His people to remove from the Promised Land (1 Sam. 11:8).

Cutting off a person’s “thumbs and great toes” was an act of humiliation that reduced him or her to the status of beggar in that era.

Judges 1:5 "And they found Adoni-bezek in Bezek: and they fought against him, and they slew the Canaanites and the Perizzites."

Who was the king.

The place, and whose name signifies lord of Bezek.

Not that they took him there, for he is afterwards said to make his escape from thence. But here he was when they came against that city, and into which they rushed upon him, and fell upon him as follows.

"And they fought against him":

Entering the city with their forces.

"And they slew the Canaanites and the Perizzites":

That were in it, or about it.

Even to the number of ten thousand, as before related (Judges 1:4).

"Adoni-bezek" means lord of Bezek.

This is just saying that, he was the ruler at the time of the invasion.

The Perizzites were actually living in the land where Judah's inheritance was.

The Canaanites are speaking of all the people collectively that are in Canaan land.

Many of the Canaanites are known by other names as well.

Verses 6-7

“Adoni-bezek’s” actions humiliated his captives and incapacitated them for fighting.

To Adoni-bezek justice is meted out in accordance with the principle of “*lex talionis*”, or proportionate retribution (compare Exodus 21:24-26; Lev. 24:17-20; Deut. 19:19-21).

While the New Testament recognizes that the punishment of the guilty should be proportionate to the crime (compare Matt. 25:46; Luke 12:45-48), nevertheless, the believer's attitude must rise above the strict application of the law, renouncing especially any thought of selfish advantage (Matt. 5:38-42; 1 Pet. 2:13-16, 20).

Judges 1:6 "But Adoni-bezek fled; and they pursued after him, and caught him, and cut off his thumbs and his great toes."

"Cut off his thumbs and his great toes":

Removing the king's thumbs hampered effective use of a weapon; taking off his big toes rendered footing unreliable in battle.

A person cannot balance himself without his big toes.

He cannot do work with his hands very well without his thumbs either.

We could look at this from the spiritual sense, and say that God had Judah to stop his walk and his work because it was perverted.

This would be terribly humiliating to him.

Judges 1:7 "And Adoni-bezek said, Threescore and ten kings, having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered [their meat] under my table: as I have done, so God hath requited me. And they brought him to Jerusalem, and there he died."

The LORD Himself is nowhere said to endorse this tactic, but it was an act of retributive justice for what Adoni-bezek had done to others.

It appears from his confession that he was acknowledging he deserved it.

It appears, sometime in the past that Adoni-bezek had done the very same thing to 70 kings.

God has this done to him because of his actions toward others.

They had eaten food under the table like a dog, and that is exactly what is done to him.

This is one of the highest forms of cruelty.

"Requited", in this Scripture, means to reciprocate.

God brought the same punishment on him that he had brought on others.

He died after he felt the shame of this punishment.

Judges 1:8 "Now the children of Judah had fought against Jerusalem, and had taken it, and smitten it with the edge of the sword, and set the city on fire."

Apparently, the Jebusites moved in from the north shortly after the victory described here.

They remained in control of "Jerusalem" until King David drove them out many years later (2 Dan. 5:6-10).

"Had" shows that this happened in the past.

The fire was for the purging away of the evil that had taken place in the city.

Judges 1:9 "And afterward the children of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites, that dwelt in the mountain, and in the south, and in the valley."

After the taking of Bezek, and the king of it.

Taking him to Jerusalem, where he died.

They;

"Went down":

From Jerusalem, which was on high ground.

"To fight against the Canaanites, that dwelt in the mountain, and in the south, and in the valley":

Into which several parts the lot of the tribe of Judah was divided.

In each of which they had cities, and some, as it seems, yet unsubdued, and in the hands of the Canaanites.

Of these several parts, and the cities in them (see Joshua 15:21).

This is showing the advance of the battle.

They were taking one area at a time.

This area had been occupied by the Philistines.

The Canaanites is a name which covers many of the various tribes, like Israel is speaking of all 12 tribes.

Judges 1:10 "And Judah went against the Canaanites that dwelt in Hebron: (now the name of Hebron before [was] Kirjath-arba:) and they slew Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmi."

(See Joshua 10:36-37).

Hebron is midway between Jerusalem and Beersheba, and twenty miles from either.

The first name of the city, which is one of the most ancient in the world (Num. 13:22), was Mamre (Gen. 13:18), from the name of its chief (Gen. 14:24).

It is now called El-Khulil ("the friend"), from Abraham.

It was a city of refuge (Joshua 21:11-13).

If the view taken as to the chronology of this chapter is correct, this assault is identical with those touched upon in (Joshua 11:21; 14:6-15; 15:13-14).

The LXX has "Hebron came forth against Judah."

Later references to Hebron (see Neh. 11:25).

"Kirjath-arba.":

That is, "the city of Arba."

The word afterwards became archaic and poetical (Psalm 48:2; Isa. 25:2).

All the cities thus named (Kirjath-huzoth, Kirjath-jearim, etc.) existed before the conquest of Palestine.

We find the root in Iskariot (i.e., man of Kerioth, a town in the south of Judah).

Arba was the father of Anak (Joshua 15:13; 14:15), and Fürst interprets the name "hero of Baal."

Some, however, take Arba for the numeral "four," so that Kirjath-arba would mean Tetrapolis; and connect the name Hebron with the Arabic "Herbart," a confederation, "the cities of Hebron" (2 Sam. 2:3).

"Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmai":

Possibly the names of three clans of the Anakim (Num. 13:22-23).

The Anakim are connected with the Nephilim.

Josephus says that giant bones of the race were shown in his day.

They were doubtless the bones of extinct animals, and being taken for human remains might well lead to the conclusion of Josephus, that these giants "had bodies so large, and countenances so entirely different from other men, that they were surprising to the sight."

Hebron is a well-known area.

It was the burial-place of Abraham and Sarah.

Isaac and Rebekah, and Jacob and Leah were buried there too.

This was also the first place for David to headquarter.

He was here 7 years.

This place was given to Caleb in the beginning.

Joshua 15:13 "And unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a part among the children of Judah, according to the commandment of the LORD to Joshua, [even] the city of Arbah the father of Anak, which [city is] Hebron."

Judges 1:11 "And from thence he went against the inhabitants of Debir: and the name of Debir before [was] Kirjath-sepher:"

"Debir" (see Joshua 15:15; 15:49).

In (Joshua 10:38-39), its conquest is assigned to Joshua.

The name means "the oracle."

It afterwards became a Levitic town.

There seem to have been two other Debirs' (Joshua 15:7; 13:26).

This one is identified by Dr. Rosen with Dewirban, near the spring Ain Nunkûr southwest of Hebron.

"Kirjath-sepher":

The name is curious and interesting.

It means "the city of the book," and is rendered in the LXX by "city of letters."

It was also called Kirjath-sannah (Joshua 15:49), which, according to Bochart, means "city of learning."

Perhaps, we may consider that it was a famous center of Canaanite culture and worship.

All further attempts to explain its three names must be purely conjectural.

We may compare with it the name of the Egyptian Byblos.

Debir was 12 miles southwest of Hebron.

Verses 12-15

This account first appears (in Joshua 15:13-19).

The author of Judges repeats it here to remind readers that God honors such courage, initiative, and determination when His people pursue what He has asked them to do.

“Caleb said”:

This repeats the account of Caleb and his family (see the note on Joshua 15:17-19).

Judges 1:12 "And Caleb said, He that smiteth Kirjath-sepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife."

See Joshua 15:16.

Caleb was a “Kenizzite,” which seems to imply that he was descended from Kenaz, a grandson of Esau (Gen. 36:11).

In (Num. 13:6), he is mentioned as being a prince (nasi, or chief, rosh) of the tribe of Judah.

He was certainly affiliated to that tribe; but if the name “Caleb” means “dog,” it would seem a very unlikely name for a pure Jew.

For I cannot think that the effort to trace a sort of totem system (or naming of tribes from animals) among the ancient Jews (Journal of Philology, June 1880) is successful.

His father’s name, Jephunneh, is of uncertain derivation.

Fürst and Meier derive Caleb from a root meaning “valiant.”

But the peculiarity of the expressions used respecting him (in Joshua 15:13; 14:14), together with certain marked names and features in the genealogies of his family, at least give some probability to the conjecture that he was of foreign origin.

"Will I give Achsah my daughter to wife":

(compare 1 Sam. 17:25; 18:17).

So the Messenian hero Aristomenes gave a peasant woman, who had saved his life, in marriage to his son.

This story shows the strength and importance of this fastness of the south.

Which is also proved by the fact that Caleb has to refer to his unbroken strength before he gains permission to win the region by the sword (Joshua 14:11).

Judges 1:13 "And Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, took it: and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife."

"Othniel" is remembered for two significant events, both military.

Caleb had promised his daughter Achsah as a wife to whoever would smite Debir (Joshua 15:16; Judges 1:12).

Othniel rose to the challenge and captured the city.

At the urging of Achsah, Caleb gave her and Othniel the "upper and lower springs" as land for their use (Joshua 15:19; Judges 1:15).

They were both willing to trust God and hold their possessions in the land of Canaan even though many other tribes did not trust God (verses 21, 27, 29-31, 33).

Secondly, Othniel became the first judge and deliverer of Israel following Joshua's death (3:7-11).

The "spirit of the LORD" (3:10) came upon him, equipping him for his task, as it would for his successors, Gideon (6:34), Jephthah (11:29), and Samson (14:6).

He defeated the king of Mesopotamia, and a period of "rest" ensued for 40 years (3:11), a characteristic refrain in the Book of Judges.

This is the same Scripture.

Joshua 15:16-17 "And Caleb said, He that smiteth Kirjath-sepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife." "And Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, took it: and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife."

Judges 1:14 "And it came to pass, when she came [to him], that she moved him to ask of her father a field: and she lighted from off [her] ass; and Caleb said unto her, What wilt thou?"

When she first reached his house as a bride.

"She moved him":

He was too modest to ask for himself, and he declined her request.

But she will not enter till she has gained her way.

"A field":

Rather, the field. In the passage in (Joshua 15:18).

There is no definite article, but by the time this book was written the field then obtained by Achsah had become historical.

"Lighted":

Not merely in sign of reverence like Rebecca in (Gen. 24:64), and Abigail in (1 Sam. 25:25), but "leaped off" with eager impetuosity.

"What wilt thou?"

Caleb was unable to understand her conduct in refusing to enter the house of her bridegroom.

Judges 1:15 "And she said unto him, Give me a blessing: for thou hast given me a south land; give me also springs of water. And Caleb gave her the upper springs and the nether springs."

I.e., "a present" (Gen. 33:11).

"A south land":

The word also means "a dry and barren land" (Psalm 126:4).

The LXX reads "hast given me (in marriage), into a south land."

"Springs of water":

In thus asking for the fertile land which lay at the foot of the mountain slope.

She showed herself at once more provident and less bashful than her husband.

"The upper springs and the nether springs":

The word here rendered "springs" is gulloth, i.e., "bubblings."

Probably the district for which she asked was called "the upper Gulloth" and "the lower Gulloth," just as we have "the upper and the nether Beth-horon".

The addition of "the deep green glen" to the arid mountain tract of Debir enormously increased the value of her portion.

It appears to me, that the daughter would have great influence with her father.

This is why she asked for the springs instead of Othniel.

Her request was granted.

Judges 1:16 "And the children of the Kenite, Moses' father in law, went up out of the city of palm trees with the children of Judah into the wilderness of Judah, which [lieth] in the south of Arad; and they went and dwelt among the people."

The term “children of the Kenite, Moses’ father-in-law”, is strange.

Some ancient versions suggest the addition of the name Jethro or Hobab.

The Kenites were noted for their ferocity and yet (usually) for their kindly treatment of the Israelites (compare 4:11; 17-24; 5:24-27 with Exodus 2:16-22; 3:1; Num. 10:29-32).

“The city of palm trees”:

Since Jericho was destroyed in the invasion, this refers to the area around Jericho, an oasis of springs and palms (Deut. 34:3; 2 Chron. 28:15).

See further the note on 6:1.

We remember that Moses had invited him to come to the Promised Land with them.

These people were a branch of the Midianites.

"Dwelt among the people":

This is speaking of them living in the land of Judah.

Judges 1:17 "And Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they slew the Canaanites that inhabited Zephath, and utterly destroyed it. And the name of the city was called Hormah."

Having subdued his Canaanites which were in his own lot, according to his promise, he went with his brother Simeon, or the tribe of Simeon, into their lot to reduce those that were in that.

"And they slew the Canaanites that inhabited Zephath, and utterly destroyed it":

Where and what this city was is not certain.

There was a place of this name in upper Galilee, mentioned in Jewish writings, which cannot be meant here.

And we read of the valley of Zephathah (2 Chron. 14:10); which might have its name from hence, and if so it was near Mareshah.

"And the name of the city was called Hormah":

From the destruction made of it, and of the country about it.

For now what had been vowed by Israel in the wilderness, when near Arad, was fulfilled (Numbers 21:1).

We remember from the beginning of this lesson that this is what they agreed upon.

After Simeon helped Judah, then Judah helped him take his land.

Hormah was the chief town of the Canaanites, south of Palestine.

This was part of the allotment to Judah at first, but later was given to Simeon.

Judges 1:18 "Also Judah took Gaza with the coast thereof, and Askelon with the coast thereof, and Ekron with the coast thereof."

Which by lot fell to that tribe (Joshua 15:47); it was not till now subdued.

"And Ashkelon with the coast thereof":

Which, according to our countryman Sandys, was ten miles from Gaza.

"And Ekron with the coast thereof":

This also is the lot that fell to Judah, but was afterwards given to the tribe of Dan (Joshua 15:45).

For whom Judah now fought and took it.

But in a short time all these places were retaken, and possessed by the Philistines, and were three of their five principalities which they ever after retained (see Judges 3:3; and the note on Joshua 13:2-3).

These had all been Philistine cities.

Every time they thought they had them whipped, they would show up again and have to be subdued again.

This was because they did not totally destroy them.

Judges 1:19 "And the LORD was with Judah; and he drove out [the inhabitants of] the mountain; but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron."

“Could not drive out”:

They of Judah could not.

They had been promised by Joshua that they could conquer the lowland (Joshua 17:16, 18), and should have remembered (Joshua 11:4-9).

This is a reoccurring failure among the tribes to rise to full trust and obedience for victory by God’s power.

Compromising for less than what God was able to give (Joshua 1:6-9), began even in Joshua’s day (Judges 2:2-6), and earlier (Num. chapters 13 and 14).

In another sense, God permitted enemies to hold out as a test to display whether His people would obey Him (2:20-23; 3:1, 4).

Another factor involved in keeping the wild animal count from rising too fast (Deut. 7:22).

The Canaanite’s advantage in “chariots of iron” proved to be a strong deterrent to the Israelites’ desire to occupy all of Canaan, particularly the broad “valley” areas (compare Joshua 17:16; Judges 4:3).

A similar advantage in chariots was later held by the Philistines (1 Sam. 13:5), who enjoyed a monopoly in the use of iron (1 Sam. 13:19-22).

The miraculous nature of the Israelite conquest and subsequent victories in Canaan is thus further emphasized.

We will read in another lesson on this that King Jabin had 900 chariots.

This gave them the advantage of fleeing speedily.

In the mountains they had nowhere to run to, and in open battle, they lost to Judah.

The LORD was with Judah, and he was victorious.

Judges 1:20 "And they gave Hebron unto Caleb, as Moses said: and he expelled thence the three sons of Anak."

“Sons of Anak”:

Anak was an early inhabitant of central Canaan near Hebron from whom came an entire group of unusually tall people called the Anakim (Deut. 2:10).

They frightened the 10 spies (Num. 13:33; Deut. 9:2), but were finally driven out of the land by Caleb (Joshua 14:12-15; 15:13-14; 21:11), with the exception of some who resettled with the Philistines (Joshua 11:22).

The “sons of Anak” was used as a term equivalent to “the Anakim” (see note on Joshua 14:14).

Caleb was a faithful spy, along with Joshua in the beginning.

It was correct to give to his descendants the city they wanted.

Hebron was that city.

Caleb expelled the three sons of Anak.

We remember, Caleb was a very brave man, knowing that God was with him.

Caleb was a Kenizzite.

Verses 21-36

In repeatedly failing to “drive out” all the Canaanites from the Promised Land, the Israelites directly disobeyed the LORD’s instructions (Deut. Chapter 7), which were intended to protect His chosen people from corrupting influences.

Where evil is tolerated, it will be accepted and then imitated.

The incompleteness of the conquest is repeatedly emphasized.

While some natural conditions may have made the conquest difficult (compare verse 19; Joshua 17:16), the scriptural record attributes the basic cause to spiritual failure (compare 2:1-5; 11-23; 3:1-7; see the note on Joshua 21:43-45).

Judges 1:21 "And the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day."

That is, that part of it which belonged to them, for it lay between Judah and Benjamin.

And neither of them separately, nor both conjunctly, could drive out the Jebusites from it.

Particularly the strong hold on the top of Mount Sion, which they held to the times of David.

Abarbanal is of opinion, that Jerusalem in those times was not a city enclosed about.

But was a large province, part of which belonged to the tribe of Judah.

And another to the tribe of Benjamin, and another was possessed by the Jebusites.

And so Jarchi says it was a province, the name of which was Jebusi.

"But the Jebusites dwelt with the children of Benjamin unto this day; when this book was written.

Which was done by Samuel, as Kimchi and Ben Gersom. And it is certain from hence it must have been written before the reign of David, who dispossessed the Jebusites (2 Sam. 5:6).

This same statement is said of Judah in (Joshua 15:63).

Jerusalem was known at that time as Jebus.

It was during the time of King David that Jerusalem really was taken by the Israelites.

Verses 22-25

Historically, "Beth-el" was where God met with His people (Gen. 13:3-4; 31:13).

While the Israelites were initially faithful to recapture this important city, they spared some of the inhabitants, who established another city where they worshiped Canaanite gods.

Such incomplete or halfhearted obedience opens the door to failure and sin (Joshua 23:13).

Judges 1:22 "And the house of Joseph, they also went up against Beth-el: and the LORD [was] with them."

Which lay upon the borders of the sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh (Joshua 16:1).

And though it seems to have been taken when Ai was (Joshua 8:17); yet it appears that it was now in the possession of the Canaanites.

Wherefore the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, being desirous of enlarging their borders after the example of Judah, went against this place in order to take it.

"And the LORD was with them":

The Word of the LORD, as the Targum, directing, assisting, and succeeding them in their attempt.

Judges 1:23 "And the house of Joseph sent to descry Beth-el. (Now the name of the city before [was] Luz.)"

To reconnoiter (or spy out), the place.

To observe its passes and avenues, which were most accessible, and to examine the walls of it, where they were weakest and least defended.

"Now the name of the city before was Luz":

Which signifies a "nut".

Perhaps it was so called from large numbers of nut trees which grew near it.

The Jews suggest as if it was like a nut, no entrance into it but through a cave or some subterraneous passage (see Gen. 28:19).

The house of Joseph here, is speaking of the tribe of Ephraim, who was a son of Joseph.

"Descry":

Means to search out.

"Beth-el":

Means house of God.

Jacob had named it Beth-el, and it had been changed to Luz.

Now they changed the name back to Beth-el.

Judges 1:24 "And the spies saw a man come forth out of the city, and they said unto him, Show us, we pray thee, the entrance into the city, and we will show thee mercy."

Or "the keepers".

Those that were sent to watch, and observe, and get what intelligence they could of the city, and the way into it.

"And they said unto him, show us, we pray thee, the entrance into the city":

Not the gate or gates of it, which no doubt were visible enough, but some private way into it.

The Jews, as before observed, think the entrance was by the way of a cave, or some hidden passage, of which Jarchi and Kimchi make mention.

"And we will show thee mercy":

Give him a reward for it, or spare him and his family when the city came into their hands.

We could easily see the comparison of this to the incident with Rahab the harlot.

She helped the spies, and in so doing saved her family.

This man will also save his family, if he helps the spies.

Judges 1:25 "And when he showed them the entrance into the city, they smote the city with the edge of the sword; but they let go the man and all his family."

Pointing to it with his fingers, as the same writers observe.

"They smote the city with the edge of the sword":

They gave notice of what intelligence they had got to the body of the army.

Who came up, entered the city, took it, and put the inhabitants of it to the sword.

As they were ordered to do with all the Canaanites.

"But they let go the man and all his family":

Who had returned to it, encouraged by the promise made him, and for the sake of saving of his family.

Which though not expressed, he might have asked the favor of sparing them, which might be promised, as was in the case of Rahab.

Provided he would either renounce Heathenism, and embrace the true religion, or depart to another country, the latter of which he chose.

We see the same thing happened.

He helped them and his family was saved.

Judges 1:26 "And the man went into the land of the Hittites, and built a city, and called the name thereof Luz: which [is] the name thereof unto this day."

With his family.

Kimchi says this was not one of the seven nations of Canaan.

And it is very clear from this narrative that the land this man went to was not in the land of Canaan.

Though it is certain a people of this name formerly dwelt there (Gen. 15:20).

And the land of Canaan is called the land of the Hittites (Joshua 1:4).

These either might flee to another country upon Joshua's entry into the land of Canaan, or a colony of them from thence might settle elsewhere.

To which this man chose to go, who might be originally of them.

"And built a city":

His family was numerous, and he a man of wealth, and was allowed to carry all his substance with him.

"And called the name of it Luz": In memory of the place he left, and had long lived in.

There is a city called Loussa, among the cities which Josephus says were taken by the Jews from the Arabians. And which is very probably the Lysa of Ptolemy, which he places in Arabia Petraea, and might be the same with this Luz.

And if so, this shows the land this man went into was in Edom, which is not unlikely.

There is another Luza, which Jerom says fell to the lot of the sons of Joseph, near Sichem, three miles from Neapolis.

They must have allowed him to take his belongings as well.

He just ran to another area and rebuilt a city called Luz.

The Hittites are descended from Heth.

Judges 1:27 "Neither did Manasseh drive out [the inhabitants of] Beth-shean and her towns, nor Taanach and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Ibleam and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns: but the Canaanites would dwell in that land."

Manasseh did as many of the others.

He let the Canaanites, whom they had subdued, live in these cities.

They did not utterly destroy them but just removed them from power.

They lived and worked together.

The Canaanites did not have full rights and privileges, as did the descendants of Manasseh however.

Judges 1:28 "And it came to pass, when Israel was strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute, and did not utterly drive them out."

All the tribes of Israel were become numerous, and able to drive the Canaanites out of the land everywhere.

And particularly were able to assist Manasseh in expelling the Canaanites out of the above places, yet they did not.

But all they did was:

"That they put the Canaanites to tribute, and did not utterly drive them out":

Which flowed from covetousness, and a love of ease.

They did not care to be at the trouble of expelling them, as they found it turned more to their account and present advantage to make them tributaries.

And this was true of the Israelites in general, and of the half tribe of Manasseh in particular.

They were forced labor for the Israelites.

Judges 1:29 "Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer; but the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them."

Not so much as made them tributaries, but made a covenant with them, it is probable, contrary to the express will of God.

"But the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them":

The Ephraimites agreeing to it, and here they dwelt to the times of Solomon.

See note on Joshua 16:10; where indeed they are said to be under tribute.

But that seems to respect some later time, and not when they were first admitted to dwell among them, since no mention is made of it here.

Judges 1:30 "Neither did Zebulun drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, nor the inhabitants of Nahalol; but the Canaanites dwelt among them, and became tributaries."

The first of these seems to be the same with Kattah or Kartah, and the latter with Nahalol, both cities given to the Levites (Joshua 19:15).

Which perhaps was the reason of their sloth in driving them out.

Though it aggravated their sin not to take care to rid those cities of the Canaanites, which were given to religious persons.

"But the Canaanites dwelt among them, and became tributaries":

Which is observed so far in their favor, that they exerted themselves to make them tributaries, which was more than was done by some others.

Judges 1:31 "Neither did Asher drive out the inhabitants of Accho, nor the inhabitants of Zidon, nor of Ahlab, nor of Achzib, nor of Helbah, nor of Aphik, nor of Rehob:"

The same with Ptolemais (see note on Acts 21:7).

So called from the first Ptolemy king of Egypt, who enlarged it.

But it has since recovered its ancient name pretty nearly, and is now called Acca or Acra.

"On its north and east sides (Mr. Mandell says), it is encompassed with a spacious and fertile plain.

On the west it is washed by the Mediterranean sea; and on the south by a large bay, extending from the city as far as Mount Carmel.

"Nor the inhabitants of Zidon":

A well-known city in Phoenicia, belonging to this tribe (see Joshua 19:28).

"Nor of Ahlab, nor of Achzib, nor Helbah, nor of Aphik, nor of Rehob":

Two of these places, Ahlab and Helbah, are not mentioned among the cities of the tribe of Asher (Joshua 19:24).

Unless Helbah is the same with Helkath (Judges 1:25).

Of the rest, Achzib (see note on Joshua 19:29).

Aphik, and Rehob (see note on Joshua 19:30).

We find this condition was commonplace among the tribes of Israel.

Whether they allowed this to happen so they would have people to do their hard work, is not known.

They really wanted the wealth these people could make for them.

They were used of the Israelites.

Judges 1:32 But the Asherites dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land: for they did not drive them out.

They were in a worse condition than those before mentioned.

For the Canaanites were possessed of their country, especially of the above cities, and were masters of them.

And the Asherites only dwelt among them upon sufferance.

"For they did not drive them out":

Either they did not attempt it, or they could not do it.

And contented themselves with having leave to dwell among them.

The Israelites had them under their control, but it appears there were more Canaanites (in this particular area) than Israelites.

Judges 1:33 "Neither did Naphtali drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh, nor the inhabitants of Beth-anath; but he dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land: nevertheless the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and of Beth-anath became tributaries unto them."

Of which places (see note on Joshua 19:38).

"But he dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land":

In the same disgraceful manner as Asher did, owing to cowardice or sloth.

"Nevertheless the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and of Beth-anath became tributaries unto them":

These two cities did at length exert themselves, and got the mastery over the Canaanites, as to make them pay tribute to them.

Though they ought to have expelled them, and even destroyed them, according to the command of God.

But extreme greed prevailed over them.

This is the same situation as (in verse 32).

There were more Canaanites than there were Israelites, but the Israelites were in control.

Judges 1:34 "And the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the mountain: for they would not suffer them to come down to the valley:"

“Amorites forced ... Dan”:

Like all other tribes, Dan had a territory given them, but they failed to claim the power of God to conquer that territory.

Later they capitulated even more by accepting defeat and migrating to another territory in the north, becoming idolatrous (Judges Chapter 18).

It appears that the children of Dan were not able to subdue the people in the valley, and lived in the mountains themselves.

Judges 1:35 "But the Amorites would dwell in mount Heres in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim: yet the hand of the house of Joseph prevailed, so that they became tributaries."

And they would not suffer the Danites to dwell in the valley, a fruitful and delightful part of their country.

Terrifying them with their iron chariots, which in the vale they could make use of to great advantage.

So neither would they let them dwell alone in the mountainous part of their tribe, but would dwell with them, particularly in three places mentioned.

Where Mount Heres was is not certain.

It signifies the "sun".

It probably had its name from the worship of the sun on it.

Or from the sun standing still near it; for Aijalon, where that miracle was wrought, is next mentioned.

Perhaps it might be near to Timnath-heres, which was in Mount Ephraim (Judges 2:9).

Since Ephraim assisted in making these places tributaries.

Of the two cities, Aijalon and Shaalbim (see Joshua 19:42).

"Yet the hand of the house of Joseph prevailed, so that they became tributaries":

Or "the hand of it became heavy"; by which it does not clearly appear whether the hand of Joseph was made heavy, and to hang down, by the Amorites.

But the Septuagint puts it out of doubt, reading the words, "and the hand of the house of Joseph was heavy upon the Amorites".

The Ephraimites being near to the tribe of Dan, and observing how they were pressed by the Amorites, took up arms in their favor, and obliged the Canaanites of the above places to become tributaries to the Danites.

In this case, the Amorites were driven to the mountains and subdued by the house of Joseph.

They were under the control of the house of Joseph.

Judges 1:36 "And the coast of the Amorites [was] from the going up to Akrabbim, from the rock, and upward."

Of which See note on (Num. 34:4), and note on (Joshua 15:3).

"From the rock, and upward":

Even from the city Petra in Idumea, and beyond that.

And there was a country near Idumea, called Acrabatane, from this mountain Akrabbim.

"Then Judas fought against the children of Esau in Idumea at Arabattine, because they besieged Gael.

And he gave them a great overthrow, and abated their courage, and took their spoils."

Such was the extent of these people that their coast reached from the places mentioned, to the mountains where the above cities of Dan were.

They were the most powerful people among the Canaanites, and lay on both sides of Jordan.

And were very troublesome to Israel, yet were at length destroyed (Amos 2:9).

This was the mount of scorpions that we read about in another book.

It was named that, because of the abundance of scorpions there.

This is believed to be in the area of Petra.

It was located south of the Dead sea.

This was in the mountain area.

Judges Chapter 1 Questions

1. Who penned Judges?
2. Why is it not important who penned it?
3. What period of time does it cover?
4. How many judges were there?
5. Who chose the judges?
6. How did the Israelites remain loyal to the LORD?
7. What is this book a history of?
8. What book in the New Testament parallels it?
9. What time period do most scholars believe this book covers?
10. How old was Joshua, when he died?
11. What does "" mean?
12. We should never enter into any major decision without first _____ God.
13. Who shall go up?
14. Moses was known as the _____.
15. Joshua was known as the _____.
16. Who did Judah ask to help him?
17. Who did God deliver into their hands?
18. How many were slain in Bezek?
19. What does "Adoni-bezek" mean?
20. What did they do to Adoni-bezek?
21. What reason did Adoni-bezek give for this happening to him?
22. What does "requited", in verse 7, mean?
23. What had they done to the city of Jerusalem?
24. What had been the name of Hebron?
25. Who was buried here at Hebron?

26. What had Caleb promised to the man that took Kirjath-sepher?
27. Who took it?
28. What did Caleb's daughter ask for?
29. Who were the Kenites?
30. Name 3 Philistine cities in verse 18?
31. Why was Judah not able to drive out those in the valley?
32. They gave Hebron to _____.
33. Who dwelt with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem?
34. What does "Beth-el" mean?
35. What did the spies ask the man in verse 24?
36. Who could we compare that to?
37. What happened to the man and his family?
38. Those, who remained in the land with them of the Canaanites, became their _____.
39. Who forced the tribe of Dan into the mountains?
40. Verse 36 is speaking of an area near _____.