

I. INTRODUCTION: ISRAEL HAS BROKEN THE COVENANT OF COMPLETE CONQUEST (1:1-3:6)

1. 2nd Generation (Judges 1:1-2:5)

2nd Generation conquers Canaan, Joshua dies (1:1-26)
but fails to conquer all of Canaan (1:27-36L)
① angel rebukes disobedience, lesser covenant (2:1-5)
Judah portrayed more favorably than Ephraim

2. 3rd Generation (2:6-3:6)

2nd Generation generally faithful, Joshua dies (2:6-10)
3rd Generation idolatrous, judges for the Pattern (2:10-19)
② Lord rebukes disobedience, lesser covenant (2:20-3:6)
(1st Generation is those who wandered 40 yrs with Moses)

II. DEVELOPMENT: ISRAEL DELIVERED FROM FOREIGN DESTRUCTION BUT SPIRALS INTO APOSTASY (3:6-16:31L)

The Pattern: Othniel (3:6-11)

wickedness - captivity - cry to the Lord - deliverance - rest for 40 years

3. Ehud (3:12-30)

Pattern: 80 years peace
stabs fat foreign king and the sword won't come out
escapes while guards think the dead king is just sleeping
Ephraim joins in the fight

4. Deborah / Barak / Jael (4:1-5:31L)

Barak slow to trust, will fight only if Deborah goes too
foreign general flees, Jael pounds stake in head while sleep
Israel-allied woman kills foreign general – Israel is strong
chapters 4 and 5 uniquely complement each other

③ Israel cries to the Lord, a prophet tells Israel to trust in the Lord (6:6-10)

5. Gideon (6:11-8:35L)

Pattern: 40 years peace
sends the scared home, then reduces army to only 300
pretends to be a large force at night with lanterns and horns
refuses to be “king,” says neither he nor his sons will rule
is tribe of Manasseh (later, Northern kings also from Joseph)
takes vengeance on foreigners who will not feed his army
tactfully responds to Ephraim when not invited to fight

6. Abimelech / Shechem / Jotham (9:1-57L)

Abimelech is Gideon's son, only one by a concubine
plots with town of Shechem to kill brothers, becomes king
never fights foreigners, only Israelites for power
Israelite woman mortally wounds Israelite king
like Israel, Shechem faithlessly turns upon its deliverer, then
its new ally, and finally is destroyed

slow to trust sign of deliverance – Messianic sheep's fleece
begins with two sacrifices, angel, but ends with golden ephod

Pattern: is not even mentioned, this story is different – is
about Jotham's curse on Shechem / parable of bramble

④ Israel cries to the Lord, who says he will not deliver, they then put away idols and he does deliver (10:6-16)

7. Jephthah (10:17-12:7) – Ammonites per 10:7

son of a harlot, leads an armed band of outcasts
is a series of deals – becomes “head” of the people
defeats foreigners who will not let his army pass
offends Ephraim when not invited to fight – intertribal war
vows to sacrifice what meets him first when returning home
Pattern: deliverance but no rest – sad death of only daughter

8. Samson (13:1-16:31L) – Philistines per 10:7

foreign woman conquers Israelite hero – Israel is now weak
only child's birth announced by angel, twice
> 13 & 16:21-31L / 14 & 16:1-20 / 15 “Knowest thou not..?!”
never fights foreigners to deliver, only to satisfy passions
like Israel, set apart to deliver, but breaks all Nazarite vows
Pattern: no repentance, no deliverance, no rest

III. CONCLUSION: ISRAEL HAS BROKEN ALL COVENANTS AND IS SELF-DESTRUCTING (17:1-21:25LL)

every single one of the 10 commandments is violated in these two stories
wonderment at Israel's self-destruction (21:3) is resolved with more self-destruction

9. Tribe of Dan (17:1-18:31L)

entire tribe (army of 600) leaves inheritance, worships idol
so bad because no king in Israel, twice
Levite travels from Bethlehem to Judah, finale at Shiloh
1100 pieces of silver recalls price for Samson of Dan
individual theft and idolatry repeated by whole tribe of Dan
people want: money, position, land – security not from God
3rd Generation grandson of lawgiver Moses leads apostasy

10. Tribe of Benjamin (19:1-21:25LL)

entire tribe (all but 600 men) destroyed by other tribes
so bad because no king in Israel, twice
Levite travels from Judah to Bethlehem, finale at Shiloh
description of wickedness recalls Sodom
rape and murder of individual at Gibeah repeated against
Benjamin and Jabesh-Gilead (Saul groups) by all Israel
3rd Generation grandson of Aaron lead attack on Benjamin

12 judges: Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah, Gideon, Tola,
Jair, Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Adon, Samson
“all the people” lament together only in 2:4 and 20:26, both
times at Bethlehem (probably same place as Bochim)

Ruth (Ruth 1:1-4:22LL) – 3rd “Bethlehem trilogy”
Individual faithfulness is blessed, even if others are faithless,
even for non-Israelites, even the land as famine ends
in this story Bethlehem is the site of salvation

