

14 JUDGES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

JUDGES OF ISRAEL

- DEBORAH
- GIDEON
- JEPHTHAH
- SAMSON
- ELI
- SAMUEL
- AND 8 OTHER JUDGES

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JUDGES Q&A

What was the role of a judge?

The main verbs associated with the judges are “to judge” and “to deliver.” The judges in the Bible had to acknowledge (judge) that the people had wandered away from God, and then rescue (deliver) the people from the consequences of their sins.

In what ways did God’s people disobey?

The Bible doesn’t always state exactly how the people strayed in each instance. However, before the first judge, Othniel, we are told that they married into the families of neighboring nations and served their gods (Judges 3:1–6). This practice of intermarrying and worshiping idols was repeated by the people continuously, as we see them serving the Baals, Ashtoreths, Asherahs, gods of Aram, Sidon, Moab, Ammorites, and others.

How were the people oppressed?

Other nations in the land—such as the Philistines, Moabites, and Canaanites—dominated them. They suffered physical, economic, social, and religious oppression. These periods of oppression (one as long as 40 years) had lasting effects on the people.

What does it mean when “the Spirit of the Lord came upon” someone in the Old Testament?

Many of the judges are described as having “the Spirit of the Lord come upon” them. (See, for example, Judges 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 15:14.) In the Old Testament, people were not permanently filled with the Holy Spirit as believers in Jesus are today. Instead, God would allow the Spirit to temporarily enable people to accomplish extraordinary tasks to fulfill God’s purposes.



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