

Judges 1:1 - 2:5

First Prologue:

Background:

Failure To Drive Out the Nations

I. The Incomplete Conquest

A. **When:** After Joshua died (~1390 B.C.)

B. **Why:** God had promised and allotted land to each tribe. (Jos 13-21)

C. **How:** Judah (meaning “praise”) was to lead the way as prophesied by Jacob (Gen 49:8-12), and God would be with them (Jos 23:5).

D. Details

1. Judah, Simeon (See Gen 49:7; Jos 19:1,9), and Benjamin
 - i. **Success:** Against Canaanites and Perizzites¹ at Bezek² (1:1-7)
 - ii. **Partial (See 1:21) Success:** Against Jebusites³ at Jerusalem⁴ (1:8)
 - iii. **Success:** Led by Caleb against the Anakim⁵ at Hebron⁶ (1:9-10,20; Jos 15:13-14)
 - iv. **Success:** Led by Othniel⁷ against Debir⁸ (1:11-15; Jos 15:15-19)
 - v. **Success:** Against Canaanites in Zephath (1:17)
 - vi. **Partial Success:** Against Philistines at Gaza, Ashkelon, and Ekron (1:18-19)
 - vii. **Failure:** Against Jebusites at Jerusalem (1:21)
2. Joseph and the Other Tribes
 - i. **Debatable Success:** Against Bethel (1:22-26)
 - ii. **Failure:** Against Canaanites at Beth-Shean, Taanach, Dor, Ibleam, and Megiddo (1:27-28)
 - iii. **Failure:** Against Canaanites at Gezer (1:29)
 - iv. **Failure:** Against Canaanites at Kitron and Nahalol (1:30)

¹ Canaanites and Perizzites: descendants of Ham (Gen 10:6); Perizzites may refer specifically to rural dwellers as opposed to city-dwellers

² Bezek: location unknown

³ Jebusites: descendants of Canaan

⁴ Jerusalem: on the border between Benjamin and Judah but allotted to Benjamin (Jos 18:28)

⁵ Anakim: Arba was the greatest of the Anakim (Jos 14:15) and the father of Anak (Jos 15:13); the Anakim were Nephilim, giants (Num 13:33; Gen 6:4); Caleb defeated the three sons of Anak, Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai

⁶ Hebron: the City of Arba; Hebron was awarded to Caleb by Moses (Jos 14:9)

⁷ Othniel: nephew of Caleb; first major judge; mentioned later in the book

⁸ Debir: southwest of Hebron; the City of Sepher

- v. **Failure:** Against Canaanites at Acco, Sidon, Ahlab, Achzib, Helbah, Aphik, and Rehob (1:31-32)
- vi. **Failure:** Against Canaanites at Beth-Shemesh¹ and Beth-Anath² (1:33)
- vii. **Failure:** Against Amorites³ at Mount Heres, Aijalon, Shaalbim, and the southern border (1:34-36)

II. The Rebuke: The Messenger of YHWH appeared near Gilgal⁴ at Bochim⁵. (2:1-5)

III. Application & Discussion

- A. Do we place praise first in our spiritual combat?**
- B. Why did Judah suddenly fail (1:19)? Were iron chariots an excuse? (See Jos 17:14-18)**
- C. Should the man from Bethel have been spared? Consider Rahab (Jos 6:25), but also consider Matt 12:43-45; Luk 11:24-26.**
- D. Was subjecting the Canaanites to forced labor (e.g. 1:28) any better than having them living among them (e.g. 1:29)?**
- E. Do we subject things in our lives to “forced labor” when we should rather “drive them out”?**
- F. Was the Israelites’ weeping at Bochim a sign of true repentance? Do we repent or only regret in our lives?**

¹ Beth-Shemesh: House of the Sun(god)

² Beth-Anath: House of Anath, the sister of Baal

³ Amorites: “Westerners” (relative to the Babylonians); descendants of Canaan; primarily hill-country-dwellers; already had lost one battle to Joshua (Jos 10:5-11)

⁴ Gilgal: first place Israel settled in Canaan under Joshua

⁵ Bochim: “Weepings”