

The Church of God
(La Iglesia de Dios)

Books of Joshua and JUDGES DATED – By Don Roth

BOOKS OF JOSHUA and JUDGES DATED

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The key to determining the passage of time for these two Bible books is found in Judges 11:26. “*While Israel dwelt in Heshbon and its villages, in Aroer and its villages, and in all the cities along the banks of the Arnon, for three hundred years, why did you not recover them within that time?*”

Jephthah wrote this second message in the second year of his judgeship to the king of Ammon who was threatening Israel with war. Here the Bible gives us a definite number of years, three hundred, from the conquering of the two kings, Shion and Og by Moses on the east side of the Jordan, the year before Joshua crossed it.

The book of Judges accurately accounts for the time of all the Judges except Joshua and his generation through the second year of Jephthah. They are as follows:

Judges 3:8, served Chushan Rishathsim	8 years
Judges 3:11, rested under Othniel	40 years
Judges 3:14, served Eglon, King of Moab	18 years
Judges 3:30, rested under Ehud	80 years
Judges 5:31, Deborah with Barak judged Israel	40 years
Judges 6:1, under the hand of Midian	7 years
Judges 8:28, land quiet under Gideon	40 years
Judges 9:22, Abimelech reigned	3 years
Judges 10:2, Tola judged Israel	23 years
Judges 10:3, Jair judged Israel	22 years
Judges 11:14, Jephthah’s letter in the second year	2 years
Total	283 years

Why are the twenty years of Judges 4:3 not counted separately from the forty years of Deborah and Barak's judgeship? First: Judges 4:3 uses the term "oppressed," which is number 3905 in Strong's. It does not carry the same complete domination as the word "served" found in Judges 8:3, or the word "hand" found in Judges 6:1. Though Israel suffered oppression, they were still under the judgeship of Deborah during the time of Judges 4:4. *"Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoph, was judging Israel at that time."*

Another reason proving that the oppression was part of the forty years is that when the twenty years are added to the total of 283 years there are a total of 303 years. This makes the 300 years of Jephthah appear to be incorrect. When the Bible is correctly understood it accurately accounts for this passage of time. Therefore, the twenty years of oppression cannot be counted separately from the time of the forty years of Deborah and Barak's judgeship.

When subtracting the 283 years shown in the list of Judges from the 300 years of Jephthah, the remainder is 17 years. These 17 years should be applied to Joshua and the men of his generation, and cannot be totally applied to Joshua's judgeship while he was alive because of what it says in Judges 1:1, which clearly states that he was dead when the remainder of that generation began a second campaign to conquer the land that Joshua had not conquered, but was given to the tribes by lot. *"Now after the death of Joshua it came to pass that the children of Israel asked the Lord, saying, 'Who shall be first to go up for us against the Canaanites to fight against them?'"* Joshua 24:29, 31 says: *"Now it came to pass after these things that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died being one hundred and ten years old. Verse 31 "Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had known all the works of the Lord which He had done for Israel."* It is clear that there are three time periods within the seventeen years.

The first period is the years from when Joshua entered the Promised Land up until his death. The second period is from his death until all of his generation had died. This was followed by the apostasy of the next generation as shown in Judges 2:10. *"When all the generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation arose after them who did not know the Lord nor the work which he had done for Israel."* The word "know" is #3041 in Strong's, and has the meaning of knowledge gained by man through what he experiences. Ignoring the history of the previous generation is a proclivity of those that follow, dooming them to repeat its mistakes: Reference Exodus 32 and Numbers 35.

The third time period, the final one before they went into servitude, is depicted by the statement in Judges 2:11-13, *"Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord and served the Baals; and they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt; and they followed other gods from among the gods of the people who were all around them, and they bowed down to them; and they provoked the Lord to anger. They forsook the Lord and severed Baal and the Ashtoreths."*

In Joshua 13:1 it is seen that he has come to the end of his work in the Promised Land. *"Now Joshua was old, advanced in years. And the Lord said to him: 'You are old, advanced in years, and there remains very much land yet to be possessed.'"*

As stated, there remains much land yet to be conquered. At this time in Joshua's life God gave him one last job; that of dividing the land by lot to the remaining nine and one half tribes. In Joshua 14, beginning in verse 6 Caleb brings to light an exception that Joshua needed to address. Here Caleb reminds Joshua that when they spied out the land under Moses he revealed his age of forty years. Joshua 14:7 confirms this. *"I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the Lord sent me from Kadesh Barnea to spy out the land, and I brought back word to him as it was in my heart."*

In verse 9 Caleb reminds Joshua about a promise of reward for his loyalty to God. *"So Moses swore on that day, saying, 'Surely the land where your foot has trodden shall be your inheritance and your children's forever, because you have wholly followed the Lord my God'"*.

In the next two verses Caleb gives his age at that time and explains his fitness to go to war as it was still necessary to conquer the land of his inheritance. Joshua 14:10-11. *"And now, behold, the Lord has kept me alive, as He said these forty-five years, ever since the Lord spoke this word to Moses while Israel wandered in the wilderness; and now, here I am this day, eighty-five years old. As yet I am as strong this day as on the day that Moses sent me; just as my strength was then, so now is my strength for war, both for going out and for coming in."*

The forty years of wandering included the year of the Exodus found in Numbers 14:33. *"And your sons shall be shepherds in the wilderness forty years, and bear the brunt of your infidelity, until your carcasses are consumed in the wilderness."* The shepherding began in the year of the exodus, and Caleb spent 39 of his 85 years wandering in the wilderness. His time spent in the Promised Land was 85 minus the 39 years of wandering equaling 46 years. Taking his age of 40 years when he went to spy out the land leaves him 6 years in the Promised Land.

Using this passage of time the birth years of Joshua and Caleb can now be determined, and how many years that Joshua spent conquering the land up to this point. The key to this is the record found in Joshua 14 which is taking place in the last year of Joshua's life, and is made clear by the statement made in Judges 1:1-2. *Now after the death of Joshua it came to pass that the children of Israel asked the Lord, saying, 'who shall be first to go up for us against the Canaanites to fight against them? And the Lord said, 'Judah shall go up. Indeed I have delivered the land into his hand.'*" Remember that the fighting forces from the two and one half tribes on the east side of the Jordan had returned home as shown in Joshua 12:4.

Verses 3 through 11 in Judges 1 describe the land that they conquered under Caleb and is explained in verse 12. *"Then Caleb said, 'Whoever attacks Kirjath Sepher and takes it, to him I will give my daughter Achsah as wife.'"* This shows Caleb to be the leader of the conquering army, a leading elder of those who remained after Joshua's death.

With this information the birth and death years of Joshua can be determined. He died at 110 years of age. In the last year of his life he divided the land by lot, as the Lord had instructed for the children of Israel in Joshua 14:5-6. *"As the Lord commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did; and they divided the land."* It was at this time that Caleb presented his claim to the land of Judah. Verse 6 *"Then the children of Judah came to Joshua in Gilgal. And Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him:*

'You know the word which the Lord said to Moses the man of God concerning you and me in Kadesh Barnea''.

The year of the Exodus was 1528 BC, 2519 AM. It was the next year that Moses sent out the spies, 1527 BC, 2520 AM. Caleb was 40 years old as Joshua 14:7, states. *"I was 40 years old when Moses the servant of the Lord sent me from Kadesh Barnea to spy out the land, and I brought back word to him as it was in my heart."* This took place in the concluding year of Joshua's life when he was 110 years old. Caleb was 85 when he made this statement in verse 10 of Joshua 14.

The details of the years that Caleb and Joshua lived are as follows: Caleb was 40 in 1527 BC, the year of the spies, and he was 79 the year he entered the Promised Land on the east side of the Jordan in 1488 BC. 1527 BC plus the 40 years gives his birth year of 1567 BC. When Joshua was 110 Caleb was 85, a difference of 25 years. Joshua was 25 when Caleb was born, making Joshua's birth year 1592 BC. Joshua died in 1481 BC, (1592, his birth year, minus 111, his death year.)

For Joshua to be 110 years old at his death he would have died in his 111th year. Joshua had been in the Promised Land six years when he died on the west side of the Jordan.

The following is a computation of the years from when Israel entered the Promised Land on the east side of the Jordan in 1488 BC until the time of Jephthah's proclamation of 300 years which is found in Judges 11:26.

Joshua and his contemporary's judgeships ended in	1472 BC	2575 AM
Chushan Rishathasim's first year	1471 BC	2576 AM
Chushan Rishathasim's reign ended ended in 8 years	1464 BC	2583 AM
Israel's first year of rest under Othniel	1463 BC	2584 AM
Rested 40 years under Othniel	1424 BC	2623 AM
Eglon, King of Moab first year of his reign	1423 BC	2624 AM
Eglon, King of Moab reign ended in 18 years	1406 BC	2641 AM
Ehud's first year of judgeship	1405 BC	2642 AM
Under Ehud's judgeship 80 years	1326 BC	2721 AM
Deborah and Barak's first year of judgeship	1325 BC	2722 AM
Deborah and Barak's judgeship 40 years	1286 BC	2761 AM
First year under Midian's hand	1285 BC	2762 AM
Under Midian's hand 7 years	1279 BC	2768 AM
Gideon's first year of judgeship	1278 BC	2769 AM

Under Gideon's judgeship 40 years	1239 BC	2808 AM
Abimelech's first year reined	1238 BC	2809 AM
Under Abimelech's reign 3 years	1236 BC	2811 AM
First year of judgeship for Tola	1235 BC	2812 AM
Under Tola's judgeship 23 years	1213 BC	2834 AM
Jair's first year of judgeship	1212 BC	2835 AM
Under Jair's judgeship 22 years	1191 BC	2856 AM

1190 BC, 2857 AM was the beginning year of Jephthah's judgeship.

Just as Moses addressed Israel at the end of his life Joshua did the same. Both of these men were servants of the Eternal God, and both at the end of their lives determined to inspire Israel to follow God's way of life. In Joshua, chapter 24 he reviews Israel's history. Beginning with Abraham, their father, he reminds them of how God plagued Egypt to bring them out, and then destroyed the Egyptian army, the most powerful in the world at that time.

In verse 15 Joshua challenges Israel to serve God. *"And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord chose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the river, (the ancestors before Abraham,) or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house we will serve the Lord."*

In verse 16 they give their answer. *"So the people answered and said: 'Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods. And in verse 24, "And the people said to Joshua 'The Lord our God we will serve and His voice we will obey."*

Verse 31 is a footnote to their credit. *"Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had known all the works of the Lord which He had done for Israel."* This is the same today for those who believe the bible record and count it as truth. "We will serve the Lord our God!"

It took twelve years for the rest of Joshua's generation to die out, and for the new generation to accept the worshipping practices of the people of the land that they failed to expel as God had commanded them to do. Judges 3:7 confirms this. *So the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord. They forgot the Lord their God, and served the Baals and Asherahs."*

The Israelites acceptance of Baal and Asherah's worship was voluntary, not forced on them by their pagan neighbors. The Israelites lived with the pagans as neighbors and saw them as people like themselves, and not doers of evil to be driven from their land.

In addition the Israelites liked the tribute the pagan neighbors were paying to them as shown in Judges 1:28. *"And it came to pass, when Israel was strong, that they put the Canaanites under tribute, but did*

not completely drive them out.” To the Israelites the Canaanites seemed free, with no restrictions on their conduct. They had a “swinging” lifestyle that the Israelites came to admire, with male and female prostitutes, and seeing that apparently there was no penalty to be paid for becoming involved with a neighbor’s spouse.

These pagan gods did not demand loyalty within the family. And with this lifestyle came many unforeseen consequences such as Venereal diseases including gonorrhea (herpes,) syphilis and aids. There is no question why God warned them in Numbers 33:55 to abstain from this type of conduct. *“But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall be that those whom you let remain shall be irritants in your eyes and thorns in your sides, and they shall harass you in the land where you dwell.*

First comes physical disabilities, the pain and suffering from physical diseases, and are then followed by harassment, putting Israel under servitude. It should be noted that one of the disabilities of these diseases results in blindness of the offspring, along with the agony inflicted on their own bodies from this lifestyle, which is a result of breaking God’s laws.

Man has had more than 6,000 years to determine how to live peacefully and productively with his fellow man. In these 6,000 years man has repeatedly failed in his effort to do this. Why? By examining just one of the problems man has faced and tried to solve is sexually transmitted diseases. This is a perfect illustration of how man’s approach to the problem has not solved it, and never will with their approach.

Man sees the pain and suffering caused by these diseases and eventually his investigation uncovers the fact that microbes are attacking the body. He then surmises that this is the cause of the pain and disabilities that follow and devises a two pronged solution. First he puts a barrier in place to prevent infection. Then he develops drugs to kill the microbes. Obviously neither of these two remedies has worked since the entire world is now experiencing an explosion of these debilitating diseases.

Man’s approach of treating the effect instead of the cause has always been his way of solving a problem. Has the problem of sexually transmitted disease been solved? No! Why not? As already pointed out man has spent all of his energy and money in dealing with the effect, and not dealing with the root cause of the problem, which is the way man faces every serious situation he must deal with.

Here lies the crux of every problem. Christ gives the answer to the venereal disease problem in Matt. 19:4-6. *“And He answered and said to them, ‘Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning made them male and female, (the designer has built man with parameters, when ignored spell disaster) and said ‘For this reason man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh?’ So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, **let not man separate.**”*

Just like the generation of Israelites who followed Joshua paid the penalty for ignoring God’s law, today we are paying a fierce price for doing the exact same thing.