

**THE CAMBRIDGE BIBLE
FOR SCHOOLS
AND COLLEGES:
THE BOOK OF JUDGES**

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The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges: The Book of Judges by J. J. S. Perowne & J. J. Lias

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GENERAL EDITOR :—J. J. S. PEROWNE, D.D.

THE BOOK OF JUDGES

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PREFACE
BY THE GENERAL EDITOR.

THE General Editor of *The Cambridge Bible for Schools* thinks it right to say that he does not hold himself responsible either for the interpretation of particular passages which the Editors of the several Books have adopted, or for any opinion on points of doctrine that they may have expressed. In the New Testament more especially questions arise of the deepest theological import, on which the ablest and most conscientious interpreters have differed and always will differ. His aim has been in all such cases to leave each Contributor to the unfettered exercise of his own judgment, only taking care that mere controversy should as far as possible be avoided. He has contented himself chiefly with a careful revision of the notes, with pointing out omissions, with

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suggesting occasionally a reconsideration of some question, or a fuller treatment of difficult passages, and the like.

Beyond this he has not attempted to interfere, feeling it better that each Commentary should have its own individual character, and being convinced that freshness and variety of treatment are more than a compensation for any lack of uniformity in the Series.

INTRODUCTION.

CHAPTER I.

CONTENTS, AUTHORSHIP AND DATE, GENUINENESS, CANONICITY, OF THE BOOK OF JUDGES.

1. *Contents.* The book of Judges consists of three parts. The *first* part (ch. i. 1, iii. 7) forms an Introduction, obviously designed to connect the book with the previous narrative in Joshua¹. We have first a description of the condition of the Israelites immediately after Joshua's death, and their relations with the Phœnician peoples whom Joshua had left only half subdued (ch. i. 1—ii. 10). Then (ch. ii. 11—iii. 7) the writer proceeds to give a brief summary of his history chiefly from a moral and religious point of view, pointing out the cause of national misfortunes, namely the disobedience of the people to the national law, and their apostasy from the national religion. The *second* part (ch. iii. 8—xvi. 31) contains the history of the Judges. In the *third* part (ch. xvii. to end) the historian adds two episodes of a more private and personal character, obviously intended to illustrate the disordered condition of the morals of the people, and to point to the value in the author's mind of the more regular system of government under which he lived. These episodes² belong to a period of the history almost immediately subsequent to the death of Joshua, and are quite sufficient to account for the after history of the people.

¹ See note on ch. i. 1.

² See notes, especially on ch. xx. 28. Also below, p. 11.