

**LOCAL EXAMINATION
MANUAL.
NOTES ON JUDGES
(INCLUDING RUTH)**

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Local examination manual. Notes on Judges (Including Ruth) by J. Davies

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J. DAVIES

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(INCLUDING RUTH).

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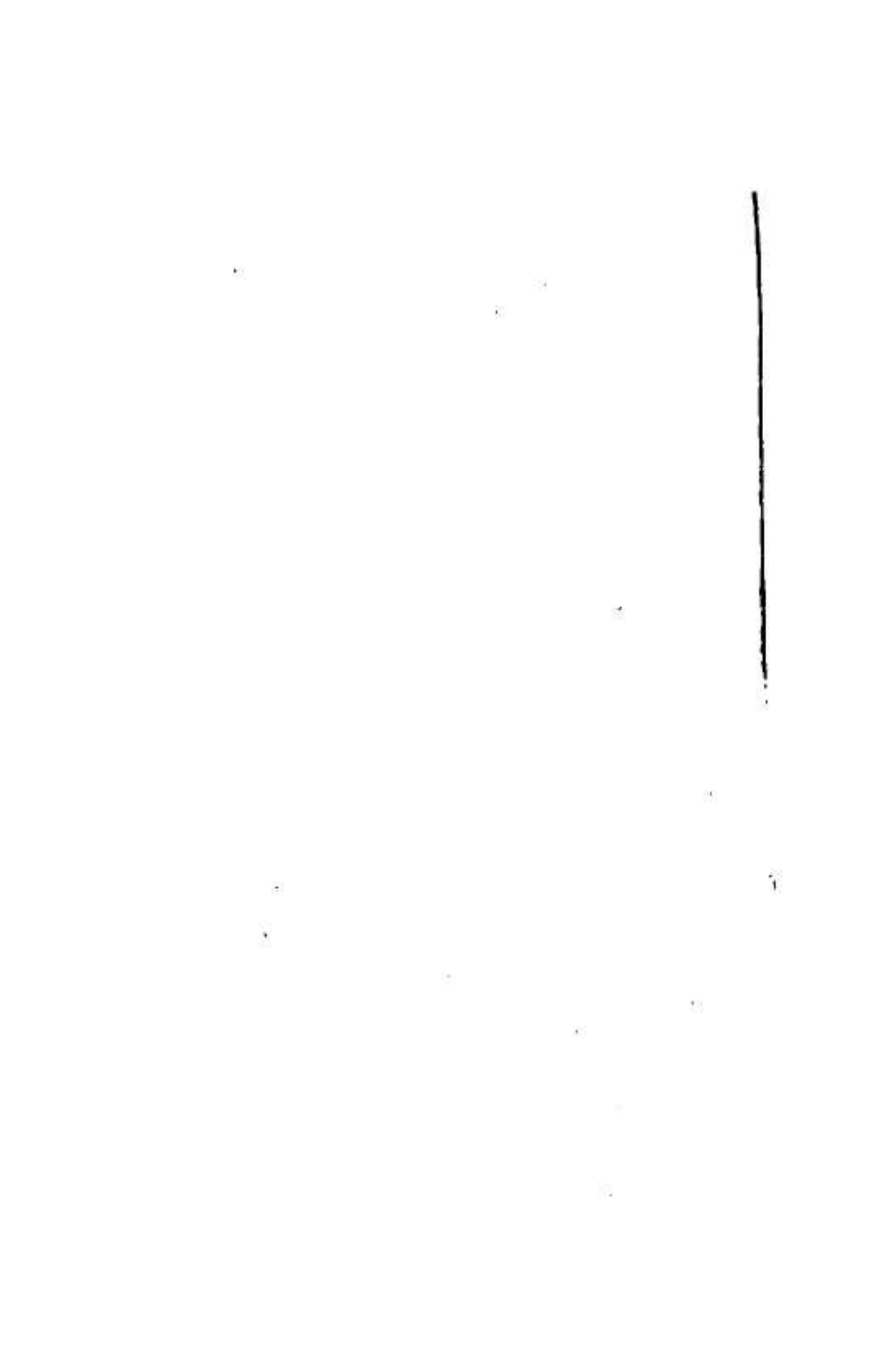
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NOTES ON JUDGES.

THIS book takes its name from the fact that it narrates chiefly the deeds of the *Judges* of Israel.

Samuel is generally allowed to have written it. Of this there is the following evidence:—*It was composed after the establishment of the monarchy*,—for the author repeatedly employs the expression, “*In those days there was no king in Israel*,”—showing that there *was* a king when he wrote. *It was composed before the taking of Jerusalem by David* (in the eighth year of his reign),—for, from c. i. 21, it is clear that when the book was written Jerusalem was still in the hands of the Jebusites. Hence we must assign it to either the reign of Saul, or the first seven years of David’s rule; and we know of no one living during this period, excepting Samuel, likely to have written it.

The *period embraced by Judges* extends from the death of Joshua, B.C. 1428, to the death of Abdon, the thirteenth Judge, A.C. 1112.

The book may be divided into two parts:—

- (1.) An account of conquests after Joshua’s death, and of the gradual lapse of the nation into idolatry,—with the incidents of Micah’s images, of the Danites’ migration, and of the war made by the other tribes on Benjamin.
- (2.) The history of the Judges.

The form of government during this period was, as under Moses and Joshua, a *Theocracy*,—God revealing His will through the High Priest, or to the Judges whom He raised up.

The government, from the settlement of the tribes in their inheritance, until Saul was made king, is called, also, the *Federative Republic*, because each tribe was governed by its princes, and heads of clans and houses, while all were united in their common laws and worship.

PART I

CHAPTERS II. 6-23 ; III. 1-4.

An Introductory Epitome of the Subjects of the Book,—including a Retrospective Mention of the Settlement of the Land, and of Joshua's Death.

C. ii.—v. 9. "*Timnath-heres*,"—is called *Timnath-serah* in Joshua.

"*His inheritance*." At the division of the land amongst the tribes, Joshua had *Timnath-serah*, (with, doubtless, the surrounding district), in his own tribe, Ephraim, given him as his special portion.

v. 10. "*Knew not*,"—i.e., had no regard or affection for. The new generation must have been brought up with some knowledge of the Law, and have learned the "*noble deeds*" that God had done for their ancestors; but this knowledge had no effect on their heart and conduct.

v. 11. "*Baalim*" = *lords*. The plural here indicates that they served various false gods.

v. 13. "*Baal*,"—was the chief male deity of the Phœnicians, and seems to have been the same as *the Sun*.

The name came to be applied, as it is constantly in Scripture, to idols generally.

"*Ashtaroth*,"—the plural of *Ashtoreth*,—here means *female deities in general*.

Ashtoreth, (or *Astarte*), was the chief female Phœnician and Philistine deity, and seems to have been the same as *the Moon*. She corresponded to the Grecian *Venus*.

v. 14. "*Sold*,"—into slavery, as a creditor would a debtor unable to pay.

v. 16. "*Judges*." The Hebrew word, *Shophetim*, is the name applied to the ordinary magistrates. It is naturally given to those specially-appointed rulers of whom this book treats, because the chief employment of Eastern governors is to judge.

The Judges of Israel were extraordinary officers appointed by God, or by the people, to assume the chief authority in great emergencies. After they had com-