



Sermon Notes

June 3, 2007
Tim Strickland

Journey Through Judges #1 *Failure to Keep the Covenant* *Judges 1:1-2:5*

Judges 1:2 ²The LORD said, "Judah shall go up; behold, I have given the land into his hand."

Judges 2:1-3 ¹Now the angel of the LORD went up from Gilgal to Bochim. And he said, "I brought you up from Egypt and brought you into the land that I swore to give to your fathers. I said, 'I will never break my covenant with you, ²and you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall break down their altars.' But you have not obeyed my voice. What is this you have done? ³So now I say, I will not drive them out before you, but they shall become thorns in your sides,⁴ and their gods shall be a snare to you."

Overview of Judges: God's grace amidst Israel's increasing unfaithfulness

- a. Introduction: 1:1-3:6
 - Failure to Keep the Covenant – 1:1-2:5
 - God raises up Judges to deliver Israel – 2:6-3:6
- b. Stories of the Judges: 3:6-16:31
 - Othniel – 3:7-11 • Ehud – 3:12-29
 - Deborah – 4:1-5:31 • Gideon – 6:1-9:57
 - Jephthah – 10:6-12:7 • Samson – 13:1-16:31
 - Note: Six minor judges are also mentioned
 - Shamgar – 3:31, Tola & Jair – 10:1-5, Ibzan, Elon, & Abdon – 12:8-15
- c. Conclusion: 17:1-21:25
 - Idolatry of Micah, the Levite & the Danites – 17:1-18:31
 - Rape and Murder leads to Civil War – 19:1-21:25

Introduction: Why Study Judges?

- a. Because it is part of the Bible - 2 Tim 3:14-17 *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.*
- b. Because it provides **example and instruction** for us - 1 Cor 10 esp note v6&11, referring to Moses but applicable to Judges)

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Failure to Keep the Covenant
Judges 1:1-2:5

1. Remembering the Covenant (Various Passages: Gen. - Josh.)
 - a. Creation→Abraham→Moses→Joshua→Judges
 - b. The Lord delivers Israel from slavery in Egypt to freedom in the Promised Land
 - c. The Lord commands the obliteration of the inhabitants of the Promised Land (as judgment for their sinfulness), and promises to work for Israel, as Israel obeys Him in fulfilling the conquest
 - Exodus 23:20-33, 34:10-16, Lev. 18:24-29, Numbers 33:50-56, Deut. 7:1-5, 17-24, 9:4-6, 18:9-14, Josh. 23:1-16
2. Early Victories, Signs of Disobedience (1:1-25)
 - a. Judah's (mostly) successful military campaigns (1-21)
 - Israel seeks the Lord, Judah called to fight first (1-2)
 - Simeon invited to join the campaign (3)
 - The Lord is with Judah, brutal justice for a king (4-7)
 - Defeat of Jerusalem, Hebron (victory won by Caleb, - see Joshua 15:13-19) & the Anakites (8-10)
 - Othniel (Caleb's brother) captures Debir, marries Achsah (11-15)
 - "*Descendants of the Kenite, Moses' father in law*", settle with people of Negeb wilderness (16)
 - Judah continues the conquest with much success, but "*he could not drive out the inhabitants of the plain because they had chariots of iron*"(17-20) (see Josh. 17:16-18)
 - Benjamin fails to dislodge the Jebusites in Jerusalem (21)
 - b. Joseph's (Ephraim & Manasseh) early mixed success (22-26)
 - Defeat of Bethel (formerly Luz), but Caananite traitor is freed and builds a new Luz

3. Increasing Failure in the Conquest (1:27-36)

- a. The Canaanites are permitted to live with Israel (27-30)
 - **Manasseh did not drive out the inhabitants of...** (various cities)... they put the Canaanites to forced labor, **but did not drive them out completely**
 - **Ephraim did not drive out the Canaanites who lived in Gezer, so the Canaanites lived in Gezer among them.**
 - **Zebulun did not drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, or the inhabitants of Nahalol, so the Canaanites lived among them, but became subject to forced labor.**
- b. The Israelites live among the Canaanites (31-33)
 - **Asher did not drive out the inhabitants of...** (various cities) ...so the Asherites **lived among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land, for they did not drive them out.**
 - **Naphtali did not drive out the inhabitants...so they lived among the Canaanites... Canaanites subject to forced labour**
- c. The Amorites drive Dan out of their inheritance (34-36)
 - **The Amorites pressed the people of Dan back into the hill country...Joseph conquers instead and...subjected Amorites to forced labor**

4. Judgment from the Lord (2:1-5)

- a. The Angel of the Lord pronounces judgment (1-3)
 - Reminder of God's saving work and eternal covenant
 - Reminder of covenant rules for Israel – *no covenants with the inhabitants of this land...you shall break down their altars*
 - See Exodus 34:10-16, esp. 12 & 15
 - **But you have not obeyed my voice. What is this you have done?**
 - *So now I say, I will not drive them out before you, but they shall become thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare to you.*
 - See Numbers 30:55-56, Joshua 23:11-13
- b. Israel weeps and offers sacrifice in repentance (4-5)
 - The damage has already been done

Our Response

1. Be aware: We still fight battles today, but they are spiritual in nature:

Ephesians 6:10-13 ¹⁰Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. ¹²For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

2. Whatever spiritual challenges you face, be it victory over sin or other spiritual battles to be won, move forward in faith and confidence in the Lord, who promises us victory in Him. He has given us His Holy Spirit to provide the power we need. Rest in confident faith in the Lord's faithfulness

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 ²³Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

Questions for Application

1. Describe the general trends in Israel in the book of Judges.
2. Why should we study Judges (or any other lesser known OT books)?
3. Describe the initial victories of Judah. What did they do right?
4. Describe the failures of other tribes. What did they do wrong?
5. What spiritual battles are you facing? Is there something(s) you need to do to obey God but are not doing (perhaps due to lack of courage, lack of faith, etc...)? Encourage one another in your group.
6. Pray together as a group for faith in God's strength to fight the spiritual battles we all face, and for the Spirit's working in our church as we study Judges together.

Questions, Comments? - inthebeginning@look.ca

If you have questions or comments about today's message, please drop me an email to the address above. Thanks,

Tim

