



Sermon Notes

December 2, 2007

Tim Strickland

Journey Through Judges #20
Looking Back at Judges
Various Passages in Judges

Judges 2:10b-11 *And there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD or the work that he had done for Israel.*

¹¹*And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals.*

Judges 2:16 - 17 ¹⁶*Then the LORD raised up judges, who saved them out of the hand of those who plundered them.* ¹⁷*Yet they did not listen to their judges, for they whored after other gods and bowed down to them. They soon turned aside from the way in which their fathers had walked, who had obeyed the commandments of the LORD, and they did not do so.*

Judges 16:20 - 22 ²⁰*And she said, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" And he awoke from his sleep and said, "I will go out as at other times and shake myself free." But he did not know that the LORD had left him.* ²¹*And the Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes and brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze shackles. And he ground at the mill in the prison.* ²²*But the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaved.*

Judges 21:25 *In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.*

Introduction

Today's Message: Looking Back at Judges

- Lessons learned, now that the train is back at the station

Review 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

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1. Without the Lord, we fall in to idolatrous sin and face terrible consequences.

Judges 2:11, 14 ¹¹*And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals.*

¹⁴*So the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he gave them over to plunderers, who plundered them. And he sold them into the hand of their surrounding enemies, so that they could no longer withstand their enemies.*

a. The people repeatedly did what was *evil in the sight of the Lord*

- 2:11-13, 3:7, 4:1, 6:1, 6:25-32, 8:27, 10:6, 13:1, 18-19

b. Left to ourselves, without a Righteous King to lead us, we will sin and the Lord may hand us over to terrible events as in response to our sin:

- Judges is a graphic portrayal of Rom. 1:18-32, Col. 3:5-8
- Judges 8 – Gideon destroys Penuel & Succoth, brings idolatry
- Judges 9 – Abimelech and Shechem destroy each other
- Judges 11:29-40 – Jephthah sacrifices his daughter
- Judges 16:20-21 – Samson is captured and humiliated
- Judges 17-18 – Micah, a Levite & Danites - idolatry, murder
- Judges 19-21 – Rape, Murder & Civil War

2. God is sovereign. His purposes will be accomplished.

Judges 14:4a *His father and mother did not know that it was from the LORD, for he was seeking an opportunity against the Philistines.*

a. Over and over in Judges, God shows himself to be in sovereign control, despite sin.

• Othniel's story is typical in illustrating God's sovereignty (3:7-11)

- "...**he sold them into the hand of Cushan...**"
- "**The Lord raised up a deliverer...**"
- "**The Spirit of the Lord was upon him...**"
- "**the Lord gave Cushan-rishathaim ... into his hand.**"

• We see God's sovereignty in the stories of the other Judges

b. In our world that seems to be spinning out of control, be it in big international events, or in private turmoil in our own families, we need to know that God is in control and His purposes will be accomplished!

for I am God, and there is no other;

I am God, and there is none like me,

¹⁰*declaring the end from the beginning*

and from ancient times things not yet done,

saying, 'My counsel shall stand,

and I will accomplish all my purpose,' Isaiah 46:9b-10

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3. God is Gracious! Despite our sinful rebellion, He continues to offer us salvation. Despite our weakness, He continues to work in and through us to accomplish His purposes.

- a. Othniel: God gives His Spirit to Othniel to deliver Israel
- b. Ehud: God uses a left-handed Assassin to deliver Israel
- c. Deborah: God raises up a faithful, wise woman to deliver Israel
- d. Gideon: An Insufficient Man Meets the All-Sufficient God
 - Gideon is weak, but God's promises Himself
 - *The Lord is with you*
 - *Do not I send you?*
 - *But I will be with you*
- e. Jephthah: God uses a man who tragically failed to deliver Israel
- f. Samson: God was faithful to Samson, even when he was unfaithful to God for most of his life, using him to begin to deliver Israel

Judges 16:22 *But the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaved.*

4. The Lord Jesus is the Ultimate Judge & True King we need!

- a. What does the term 'judge' mean in the book of Judges?
 - One who saves people from oppression & leads people to walk with God (Judges 2:16-17)
 - This is what Jesus, the Ultimate Judge, does!
 - Jephthah: **Judges 11:27b** *The LORD, the Judge, decide this day...*
- b. Many want a Saviour, but few want a Lord
 - The people are always ready for the deliverer, but they do not want to change their ways to follow the Lord.
 - Jephthah - Judges 10:6-11:11
 - Gideon: **Judges 7:23** ²³*Gideon said to them, "I will not rule over you, and my son will not rule over you; the LORD will rule over you."*

Conclusion

- Judges teaches that we are sinful and destined to fail, without God.
- Judges teaches that God is sovereign and in complete control.
- Judges teaches that we are weak and in need of a righteous King.
- Judges teaches that God is gracious. He offers us Himself, becoming our great salvation from sin and mighty power for holiness and service.
- Judges points us towards Jesus Christ, the Ultimate Judge who accomplishes what no other judge could ever do.

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Our Response

1. Are you doing what seems right to you? Realize that you are a sinner and that going your own way leads to death.

Proverbs 14:12 *There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.*

2. Are you trapped in sin? God can set you free in Jesus Christ.

Romans 8:2 *For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.*

3. Are you feeling weak? God is strong and able to save you, cleanse you and use you in His service.

Matthew 11:28 *Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

1 John 1:9 *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

Philip. 1:6 *And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.*

Questions for Application

1. What part of the book of Judges has impacted you the most?
2. Describe the consequences of sins in people's lives.
3. Are you presently trusting in the Ultimate Judge, or are you trusting in your own strength? Turn from the idol of self reliance to the True God who saves!
4. How has the Lord spoken to you through the book of Judges? Respond in faith, trusting in Christ for His strength to obey Him fully.
5. Pray together for strength from the Lord to make Him the greatest treasure in your life. Praise Him for saving us from our sins and for being faithful to us even though we do not deserve it.

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



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