

Judges



Study Outline

Main Point: As the people enjoy the land that God had delivered them to possess, the spiritual fervor & obedience the Israelites had initially displayed in the book of Joshua begins to morph into spiritual compromise & disobedience. The book of Judges not only documents this tragic turn of events, but it further explains a cycle of behavior that existed for years among the people of God. Because of their disobedience, God would use the pagan nations that surrounded the Israelites to enforce God's judgment.

By experiencing the consequences & conviction of their disobedience, many of these generations would repent and pray for God's deliverance. In response, God would raise up a "Judge" who would lead the people out from under their bondage and into a restored relationship with God. If the people resisted this conviction, wickedness & anarchy would follow. The book of Judges covers the period of Israel's sad history following the death of Joshua by providing several examples of this tragic cycle of behavior.

Outline of Judges

1-2 *Israel Turns from God*

3-16 *God Deals with Israel*

Seven Cycles: Era of Judges

3:1-11 Othniel: Mesopotamia

3:12-31 Ehud & Shamgar: Moabites

4-5 Deborah & Barak: Canaan

6:1-8:32 Gideon: Midian

8:33-10:5 Abimelech, Tola & Jair: Civil War

10:6-12:15 Jephthah & Crew: Philistines

13-16 Samson: Philistines

17-21 *Examples of Israel Depravity*

17-18 Religious Apostasy

19 Moral Depravity

20-21 Political Anarchy

Cycle of Behavior Displayed in Judges

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| 1. <i>Holy Living.....</i> | Godly Obedience |
| 2. <i>Sinful Compromise.....</i> | Disobedience & Worldly Conformity |
| 3. <i>Conscious Rebellion.....</i> | Wickedness & Moral Depravity |
| 4. <i>Divine Consequences.....</i> | Punishment & Judgment |
| 5. <i>Natural Conviction.....</i> | Reality of Sin & its Effects |
| 6. <i>Honest Repentance.....</i> | Turning away from Sin |
| 7. <i>Godly Restoration.....</i> | Gracious Victory over Sin |
| 8. <i>Holy Living.....</i> | Godly Obedience |

Important Passage.....

"Wherever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for calamity, as the LORD has said.... Nevertheless, the LORD raised up judges who delivered them out of the hand of those who plundered them." - Judges 2:11-23



Day 1: Unfaithfulness.....

Judges 2: 11-23 // THINKING POINTS: (1). What was it that led the Israelites to worship the pagan god's of the nations that surrounded them? (2). How would you describe God's attitude and feelings towards the unfaithfulness of His people? (3). What lessons can you learn concerning sin and the consequences God allows?

Day 2: Fat Man.....

Judges 3: 12-30 // THINKING POINTS: (1). In this story what was the weapon Ehud chose to use to gain victory for the Israelites? (2). How can we use the Word of God (aka the Bible) to gain victory over the struggles we face? (3). What is it about God's Word that makes it such a worthy weapon in the face of our opposition?

Day 3: Prophetesses.....

Judges 4: 1-24 // THINKING POINTS: (1). We're told that Deborah was a prophetess during this time period of Israel's history, what does this mean? (2). What does a passage like this reveal to you concerning God's role for a women? (3). What lessons can you learn through the interactions of Deborah and the coward Barak?

Day 4: The Fleece.....

Judges 6: 36-40 // THINKING POINTS: (1). Why did Gideon put God to the test by throwing out the fleece? (2). Would you consider this story to be a model of faith or unbelief? (3). Testing God in order to decipher His will is not the appropriate way to hear from God.... so how are we supposed to decipher His will if it isn't a test?

Day 5: Army of Idiots.....

Judges 7: 1-25 // THINKING POINTS: (1). Why would God whittle the troop levels down to a number insufficient for battle? (2). What do you learn about the men that stayed that reveals an interesting reality about God? (3). God doesn't need the brightest, smartest or strongest to do incredible things.... do you find this to be encouraging?

Day 6: Samson & Delilah.....

Judges 16: 1-22 // THINKING POINTS: (1). Samson's ultimate fall started when he made what decision? (2). If you look back over the last few chapters Samson's strength wasn't in and of himself, but was rather rooted in his holiness before God.... why would Samson tell Delilah his secret? (3). What lessons do you learn concerning pride?

DEVOTIONS

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