

Judges Ensue – Lesson 9

Theme of the book: Every man did that which was right in his own eyes. (Jg 17:6; 21:25).

This is the underlying cause of the strange stories in the book of Judges. There was no **king** or **central authority** in Israel – a fact repeated four times in the book:

- **Jg 17:6** In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.
- **Jg 18:1** In those days there was no king in Israel: and in those days the tribe of the Danites sought them an inheritance to dwell in; for unto that day all their inheritance had not fallen unto them among the tribes of Israel.
- **Jg 19:1** And it came to pass in those days, when there was no king in Israel, that there was a certain Levite sojourning on the side of mount Ephraim, who took to him a concubine out of Bethlehemjudah.
- **Jg 21:25** In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

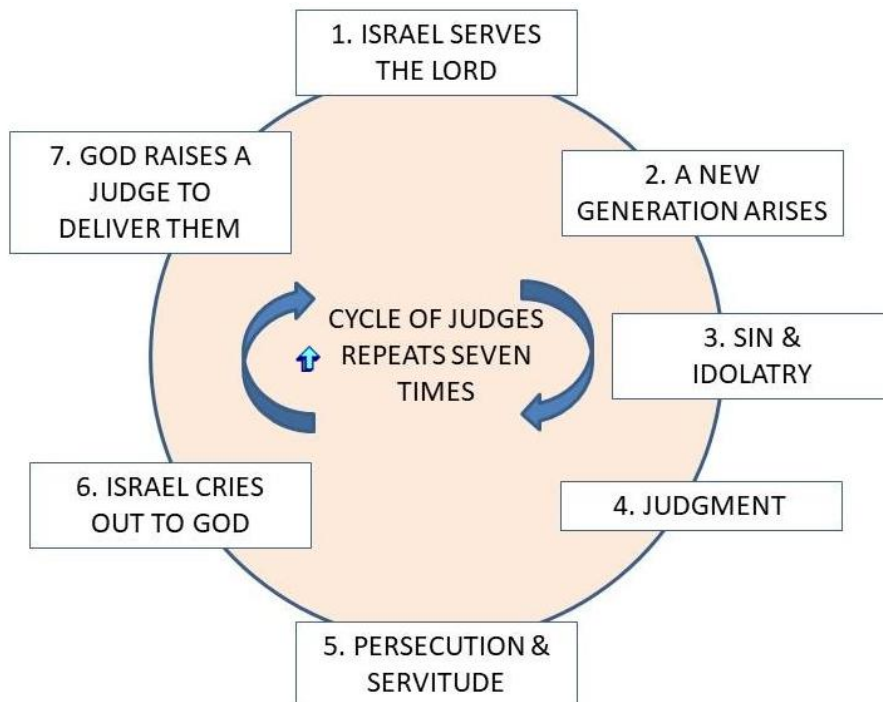
It was like the Wild West. By the time of the last judge, Samuel, the people wanted a king like the nations they were supposed to drive out. God told Samuel, they have not rejected you. They have rejected Me. (**1 Sam. 8:6-7**)

Seven times in Judges chapter 1 we read that Israel did not (or could not) drive out the inhabitants of the land as they were commanded. This resulted in Israel going after strange gods and getting involved in the abominations of the inhabitants of Canaan which God hated.

The LORD passes judgment in **Judges 2:1-3**:

- And an angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swore unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you. And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this? Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you.
- Would the Middle East be different today if Israel had obeyed?
- A similar generational dynamic seems to exist in the modern church.

A basic dynamic called the **CYCLE of Judges** is described in Chapter 2 and repeated throughout the book.



- The people did EVIL and forsook God.
- God in anger delivered them into SERVITUDE.
- When they could not stand any longer and CRIED out to God, he raised up a JUDGE to deliver his people.
- When the judge died, and another generation arose that did not KNOW the works of God.
- The people did EVIL ...

Right out of the chute, we see this pattern in Judges:

- **Joshua 2:6-10** And when Joshua had let the people go, the children of Israel went every man unto his inheritance to possess the land.⁷ **And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua**, who had seen all the great works of the Lord, that he did for Israel.⁸ And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being an hundred and ten years old.⁹ And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnathheres, in the mount of Ephraim, on the north side of the hill Gaash.¹⁰ **And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.**

Moses - Joshua - Elders that outlived Joshua - "another generation...which knew not the Lord"

PRACTICAL APPLICATION:

If we aren't careful - that same pattern will continue - even in the church age:

- **2 Tim. 2:2** And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.
 - Paul - Timothy - Faithful Men - Others also...
 - 4 Generations - Israel ALWAYS had difficulty reaching the 4th generation without falling into apostasy.

We can learn lessons from the book of Judges so we don't have to learn them by experience:

- **Romans 15:4** For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through **patience** and **comfort** of the **scriptures** might have **hope**.
- **2Ti 3:16** **All scripture** is given by inspiration of God, and is **profitable** for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:
- **1Co 10:6** Now these things were our **examples**, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.
- **1Co 10:11** Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.
- **Heb 4:11** Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after **the same example** of unbelief.

Judges 2:18-29 And when the Lord raised them up judges, then the Lord was with the judge, and **delivered** them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented the Lord because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them. 19 And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that they returned, and corrupted themselves more than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them; they ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way.

Judges 2:21-23 I also will not henceforth drive out any from before them of the nations which Joshua left when he died: 22 **That through them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of the Lord to walk therein, as their fathers did keep it, or not.** 23 Therefore the Lord left those nations, without driving them out hastily; neither delivered he them into the hand of Joshua.

1st Judge / Deliverer – Othniel (Ch 3:1-12)

- **The Picture:** The first conqueror of Israel was Cushan-Rishathaim who's Hebrew name means '*twice-wicked Cushan*'.
- He was the King of Mesopotamia (= Aram of 2 rivers) ...and Aram means '*exalted*'.

- So there's an interesting picture ... Cushan-rishathaim's double wickedness is in relation to his extreme **pride!**
- This is the first enemy to fully conquer God's people, and it occurred right after they themselves had gotten prideful and had forgotten the Lord God! Israel's first judge was Othniel.
- The name Othniel means the 'Lion of God' or 'Force of God' and he came from a prestigious family, as he was Caleb's nephew. The Bible says that 'the Spirit of the Lord came upon Him' and he went out and defeated doubly-wicked Cushan!
- So carefully note: when Israel forgot their need of God, the Lord did two things to bring them back:
 - **First**, He allowed them to be defeated by someone named for exactly what their own hearts were being drawn to – prideful independence.
 - **Second**, God rose up a deliverer whose Hebrew name would forever remind them of the power of God and their constant need to rely upon Him and His power for success.
- The Psalms are filled with verses that emphasize the need to know, trust in, and proclaim the mighty power of God. (See Psalm 20:6-7, 68:34-35, 71:18, 78:4). So every time a Jew reads this story in their Bible, they read in their language that "The Lion of God defeated the double wicked prideful one"
- What we can learn from this story of Othniel is that we must never get prideful and forget that ALL of our power is from the Lord. Also it shows that if we do forget, God has his ways of bringing our focus back to Him.

2nd Judge / Deliverer – **Ehud (3:12-31)**

- **Quick Overview:** Israel does evil again in the sight of the LORD - God allows King Eglon of Moab to overtake them for 18 years (Notice that he takes the city of Palm trees (Jericho) – see more on Palm trees in the story of Deborah.)
- After 18 years, the LORD hears their cries and sends Ehud who, while delivering a gift (tax money) to evil King Eglon, slays him with a dagger. Israel then attacks and defeats the Moabites in battle, followed by 80 years of peace.
- **The Picture:** The Moabites, were descendants of Moab and Moab was a son of Lot by his eldest daughter, so was a relative of the Israelites. Israel's second conqueror was Eglon whose name is derived from the root word meaning "**calf-like**".
- Interestingly – Israel kept falling into worship of false idols – so this second conqueror was named to remind them of their first false idol, the golden calf that they made in Exodus 32.
- Ehud, means 'I will give praise', or 'I will give thanks' again focusing on God as Israel's (and our) provider.
- King Ehud made himself a dagger – a "Short Sword" with 2 sharp edges
- Our double-edged sword is not man-made but has been given to us from God. (Heb 4:12)
- From this second captivity of Israel in Judges, we see that the enemy is defeated as the double-edged sword is thrust into the enemy. So they point out to us that this was an all or nothing event – the sword went completely inside Eglon, just like a saved person.
- Also "the dirt" came out, picturing the complete conversion of the Word of God on those who take it in. Christ will likewise smite the evil nations with His sword when He returns: Rev 19:11-15: Ehud is a picture of Christ – defeating the Devil and all evil. (Note this: Most single characters that defeat evil in the Old Testament are types of Christ.) Here is some personal application: The dagger – or "small sword" of Ehud can also point to a young Christian who does not yet have a full or strong understanding of his "Sword" but can still have huge success through faith in God and obedience to what he does understand from the Bible.
- This is one of the most important points for a growing Christian – Use what you know, and God will bless what you do, and through it teach you more!

3rd Judge / Deliverer - **Shamgar (only mentioned in 2 verses 3:31 & 5:6):**

- Shamgar = Sword
- 5:6 we learn that he was the son of anath = Son of the Answer
- Slew 600 Philistines with a ox goad (pointed stick)
- Sword = WOG = Pictures Christ, Son of Answer = Son of God, ox goad = pointed stick
- All this pictures Christ His rod the rod of iron in Isa 9:6, Rev 19.

4th Judge – Barak / Deborah (Ch 4-5)

- **Quick Overview:** The Pagan inhabitants are still in Israel and Israel again sins against God by turning to false gods as soon as Ehud was dead.
- Israel was then oppressed for 20 years by King Jabin of Hazor, a Canaanite.
- THE LORD speaks to a WOMAN named Deborah who had become Judge over Israel and gives her commandment that Barak is to deliver Israel from the Canaanites.
- Deborah tells Barak that he must go be the commander of an army of 10,000 to deliver Israel. Gideon had been commanded of God to act: Look at Jud 4:6 But then look - Barak reluctantly agrees...but only if Deborah comes with him. So she warns him that if she goes, the credit will go to a woman and not him. During the attack, the LORD marches in front of Israel's army and causes a huge panic in the enemy troops. 10 Sisera, the Canaanite commander flees, hides in (Ya-ael) tent (a woman's so strictly forbidden to enter), falls asleep and she hammers a nail through his temples. So Jail (a woman) gets the credit, for killing him, and not Barak. In chapter 5, Barak and Deborah sing a huge song of victory.
- **The Picture:** Deborah means "BEE" in Hebrew
- Deborah also dwelt under a palm tree = often a type of a mature Christian – and pictures someone living in a desert place but surviving by having a deep root in Christ, who allows them to not only survive but thrive among adverse conditions. (Mehl's in Egypt)
- Barak means "lightning" or "lightning flashes"
- The picture here is that Deborah (the Bee, & mature believer) had to sting the reluctant and disobedient Barak into being the flash that Israel needed to see God deliver them from oppression.
- This can easily apply to many of us in regard to ministry and particularly witnessing..... Who needs to sting you into action and what GREAT victory could God provide IF you overcome your fear?!
- The whole city of Nineveh was delivered by a reluctant witness named Jonah... may other stories too.
- Sisera is clearly a type of Satan (look at 5:19-20) and his name means Battle Array;
- Again, pictures of the second coming. Because of his reluctance to serve, Barak did not get the full glory – King Sisera was killed by a woman (Ya-ael) with a tent stake through the temples as he slept.
- Like most single deliverers, Barak is also a Type of Christ: Jud 5:12

5th Judge / Deliverer – Gideon (Ch 6-7)

- **Quick Overview:** Israel again turns to idolatry LORD allows the Midianites to oppress Israel for 7 years A Prophet sternly reminds Israel that not obeying God has caused their suffering. An angel of the LORD (pre-incarnate Christ) appears to Gideon under a tree in verse 6:12 Look how he greets him!
- Reluctant Gideon then makes excuses but prepares a meal that the angel burns up as proof of God's will. Gideon joins a list of initially reluctant but later very successful servants of our LORD including: Moses, David, Jonah and Paul, just to name a few. Gideon tears down the altar of Baal, severely angering all the Midianites
- Then in 6:37 he twice uses a fleece to check if it is still God's will that he lead Israel out of captivity. Then in Jud 7:5 God shrinks Gideon's army from 32,000 to 10,000 to 300 – lest they "Vaunt" themselves against the Lord – so pride was still an issue. – God wanted to show that the power to deliver comes from Him alone.
- Look how they selected the army in Jud 7:5: Lapped water with eyes up –eyes up on the enemy – always ready – are we?
- Don't get confused at the name change in Jud 7:1 says: Then Jerubbaal , who is Gideon ----- Jerubbaal is the name given to Gideon by his father when he destroyed the altar of Baal.
- Gideon =" hewer" Jerubbaal ="let Baal contend"
- Midian was the enemy during the 4th captivity and Midian means 'Strife' . Midian points to the strife and trouble that comes to God's people while living in this world. Sometimes the strife is caused by our own stupid sinful nature; sometimes it is the strife and trouble that occurs from simply living in a fallen sinful world. In verse 6:7-10, while under the captivity of Midian for seven

years, Israel finally comes to the point of crying out to the Lord! God then sent an unnamed prophet who proclaimed Israel's sin to them, God began the deliverance. The angel of the Lord (not just an angel but the Lord Himself) comes and picks Gideon to deliver Israel So what does all this point to:

- Gideon = pictures a **"FEARFUL CHRISTIAN"**
- He asks God over and over – do you really mean it, can you really use me in some big way? We see Gideon's uncertainty and God's patient response in confirming what was being asked of Gideon.
- God wanted all the glory – not man – so he reduced Israel's army to only a few - Gideon and his 300 fighters attack the camp of 135,000 Midianites (seems like impossible odds).
- Smashed their Jars and blew their trumpets:
 - Smashed Jars = us – made of clay by the master potter– when we are broken the light comes out = victory for God.
 - Trumpet = Us + Gospel – open our mouths! – Preach the Gospel
- After the victory Gideon refused Israel's offer to become King but unfortunately anointed himself to be a false priest – he had become prideful and worshiped riches – just like the Laodicean church. 12

6th Judge (Apostate) - Abimelech (CH 9)

- **Quick Overview:** Abimelech, Gideon's son by a concubine (see you can already tell which way this story is going- can't you), gets prideful and wants to rule Shechem. He Buys / bribes an army of followers and then murders all but one of his 70 half brothers.
- Jotham, the only surviving half brother ridicules Abimelech with a parable of trees looking for a king where Abimelech is portrayed as a thorn bush.
- After 3 years of peaceful rule - God stirs up an evil spirit and starts a war. Perfectly picturing the tribulation & Antichrist
- Abimelech and his men slaughter the people of Shechem. Then Abimelech and his men attack a city named Thebez, surround a big tower where the city's residents are hiding.
- There a woman throws a chunk of millstone and hits Abimelech in the head.
 - (Head wound = Christ bruising Satan's head).
- Abimelech begs his armour bearer to kill him so he is not killed by a woman

7th Judge / Deliverer – Tola (Jud 10:1-2)

- **Quick Overview:** His name means "worm"
- Reigned 23 years
- Nothing notable written – simply ruled Israel

8th Judge / Deliverer – Jair (Jud 10:3-5)

- Jair = "he enlightens"
- Rules Israel for 22 years
- Had 30 sons who ride 30 donkeys and owned 30 towns in Gilead (all signs of royalty)

9th Judge / Deliverer – Jephthah (Jud 10:6- 12:8) (grossest story in the Bible)

- **Quick Overview:** Look at 10:6 – how now Israel was chasing ALL the false Gods: Totally infected by false religion
- Jephthah = "he opens"
- He was a son of Gilead and a concubine who appears in Judges 11:1.
- Through the early part of 11 tries to reason with the Ammonites but it ends up in battle He defeated the Ammonites; after the victory because of a vow to God made before the battle, he sacrificed his own daughter as a burnt offering.
- **What this awful story teaches us:** 11:30 – DON'T make VOWS to God! – He will deliver victory without them!
- We don't please God with vows – we please God with OBEDIENCE!
- We do not have to do anything for God to work through us. He has already determined to use us – Matt 28, Acts 1:8 and MANY other verses say so.

- If you make a Bad vow, **CONFESS** it and **FORSAKE** it – It was a sin for Jephthah to offer his daughter!

10th Judge **Ibzan** (Jud 12:8-10)

- Ibzan was from Bethlehem and judged Israel for 7 years
- His name means "their whiteness" or "Purity"
- He had 30 sons and 30 daughters

11th Judge - **Elon** (Jud 12:11-12)

- Name means "mighty "
- a Zebulonite
- Judged Israel 10 years

12th Judge - **Abdon** (12:13-15)

- Name Means "servile"
- He had 40 sons and 30 nephews (busy dude)
- He judged Israel eight years.
- **Note:** All these short descriptions of peoples' lives are important! Imagine when you get to heaven and God lists that "You served Him faithfully for XX number of years". You can still hear "Job well done my good and faithful servant"

13th Judge - **Samson** (Ch 13-16)

- V 13:3 The Lord comes personally to a barren woman to announce that she would have a baby. Angel of the Lord = pre incarnate Christ!
- One of only a very few people in the whole Bible had their births announced by God – **SAMSON**, **JOHN** the **BAPTIST**, & **CHRIST**.
- God's communication was through the woman, the man had no personal relationship – picture of a lost husband.
- V13:25 tells us that Samson was born and the "Spirit of God began to move him"
- 14:1 Samson's **CARNALITY** is the one of the first things we learn about him – SAW a Philistine girl
- 14:2 Demanded her as wife – lust of flesh – despite it being forbidden for him as a Jew to marry a non-Jew
- 14:6 Spirit of God was still mightily on him – kills a lion with bare hands– Lion a type of Satan
- 14:8 SAW bee hive in the lion's carcass – could not say no again
- 14:12 Pride overtakes him – tries to show off and outsmart 30 philistines 14:19 Spirit of God was still on him – kills 30 men to get clothes to pay his debt.
- Ch 15 Samson slays 1000 Philistines with Jaw bone of an ass – takes credit for it – I have slain a thousand....still prideful – although a few verses later he gives God credit too.
- Ch 16 Story of Delilah – Samson thought himself invincible and allowed temptation and pride to defeat him. After endless nagging he told his wife that his power was in his hair. She cut it and then Philistines then blinded him and mocked him at a circus.
- In the end, in Judges 16:28 Samson Finally Prays to God for strength – crashes the pillars and brings down the house killing thousands of evil people.
- Carefully note that Israel's last judge dies a blind captive of self satisfaction = just like a carnal Christian

CONCLUSION:

- From the promised victory of Joshua, the Jews spiralled down in sin away from God, His Word, and His Ways
- Because of that, God was forced to deliver Judgment upon generation after generation of the Jews.
- The Jews entered the promised land as **CONQUERORS**, but end in Judges as immoral **CAPTIVES**.

Review Questions on the Judges:

1. The Angel of the Lord asked Israel why have they not _____ regarding the inhabitants of the land?
2. Bochim means _____ because that's what they did there.
3. The people served the Lord while Joshua and the elders were alive but then a new _____, which knew not the Lord or his works.
4. They provoked the Lord and served _____ and _____.
5. God delivered them into the hands of _____ so they could not stand
6. They cried unto God and he raised up a _____.
7. The people served the Lord all the days of the _____.
8. When the judge died the _____ started all over again
9. There were _____ cycles of judges.
10. _____ was called "blessed above women" for driving a spike through Sisera's temples while he slept.
11. Gideon tested the Lord with a _____. One time it was wet and the ground was dry and then he asked that it be dry and the ground be wet.
12. Jephthah made a rash _____ to offer whatever came through the door to meet him.
13. The period of Judges could be summarized as a time when every man _____ was _____ in _____.
14. The men of Gibeah were like the men of _____. They wrought folly in Israel. The Levite _____ his concubine into _____ and sent her to the 12 tribes of Israel.
15. Because of what happened in Gibeah the other tribes of Israel destroyed all but _____ of the men of Benjamin who fled to safety.
16. To preserve the tribe of Benjamin, all the people of _____ were killed except 400 virgins who were then given to the men of Benjamin. The rest were "caught" from the daughters of _____ when they danced at a feast.

1. Did not drive out the inhabitants Ch 1

- They did evil
- Forsook God
- Provoked God
- God delivers them to spoilers
- The could not stand
- Cry out to God
- God raises up a judge
- Judge delivers all his days
- Another generations arises that knew not the works of God

2. Cycle of Judges 7 times - Ch 2

Othniel 3:9

Ehud 3:15

Shamgar's oxgoad 3:31

Left handed dagger

Slew 600

Deborah & Barak 4-5

Jael's nail

Gideon 6:37

Fleece

300 men

Pitchers, trumpets & lamps

Abimelech 9:1

Tola 10:1

Jair 10:3

Jephthah 11:11

The vow

Ibzan 12:8

Elon 12:11

Abdon 12:13

16:30 Samson

Strong but weak

17-18 Micah's priest

19:29 Concubine divided

Eli 1Sa 4:18

Samuel 1Sa 7:15

3. A series of short stories

Judges Ensure - "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes"

7. take a quiz

6. For our learning and admonition - Judges 19:30 consider of it, take advice, and speak your minds

Rom 15:4

2Ti 3:16

1Co 10:6,11

Heb 4:11

5. Hall of faith Heb 11.32. Why?

Gideon

Samson

Barak

Jephthae

4. There was no king in Israel

Did what was right in their own eyes

17:6

18:1

19:1

21:25

Give us a king like the nations 1Sa 8:5.

A prophecy in De 17:14