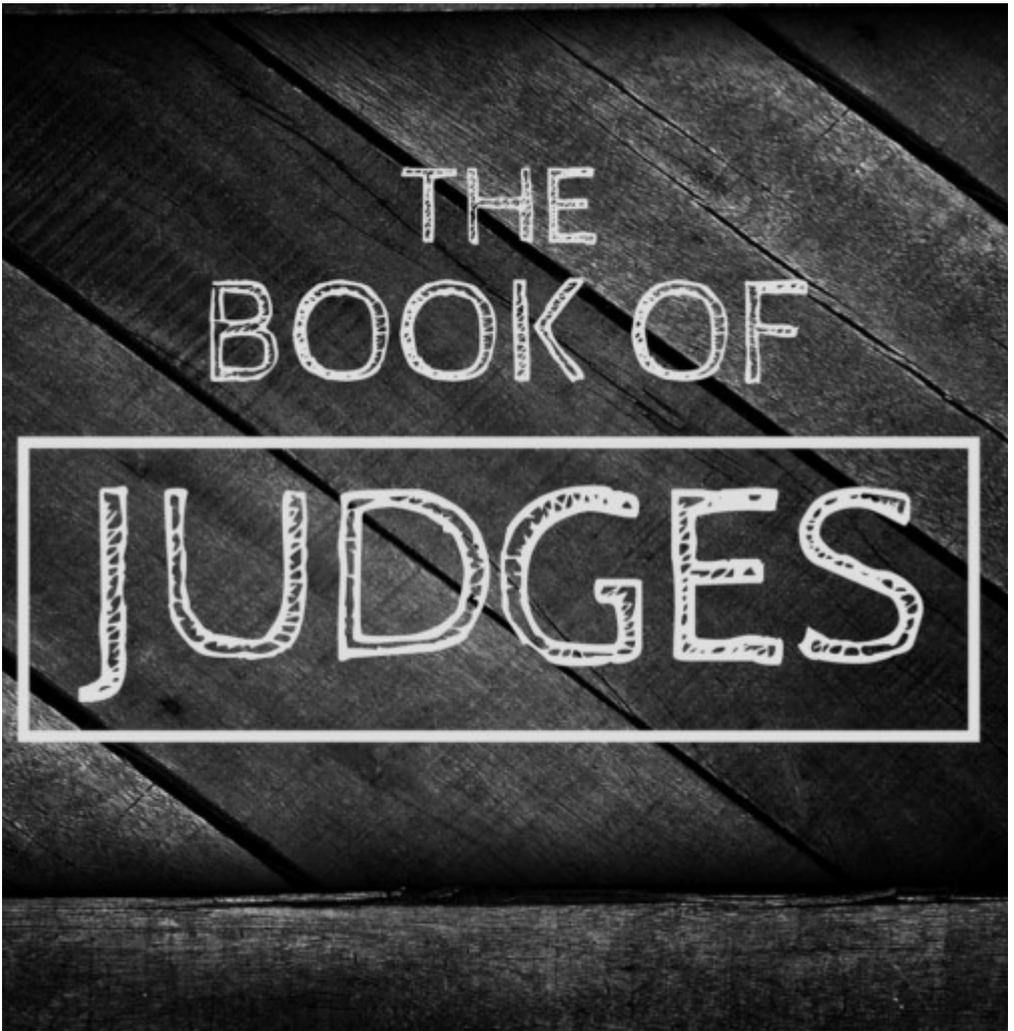


Let's Worship God

24th-29th January 2022
Judges



JUDGES

Monday - Judges 1:1 - Introduction to Judges

We are going to be looking at the book of Judges using notes written for us by Rev. Daniel Hemken, minister of Hebron RP Church in Kansas.

The Book of Judges is the sequel to the Book of Joshua. As Joshua tells us of the many successes in the conquest of Canaan by Israel under the leadership of Joshua son of Nun, Judges relates the history of the next three centuries, as Israel struggled to complete the conquest of the Promised Land. However, while Joshua reveals a trend toward faithfulness, culminating in the renewal of the Covenant between God and Israel at Shechem (Joshua 24), Judges speaks a woeful tale of a nation who repeatedly forsook the LORD their God. God would then remove His special protection from Israel, and numerous calamities would come upon them - especially oppression by enemy nations.

Nevertheless, Judges is not bleak in its outlook. Whenever the people recognized that the disasters they experienced were the consequences of their own sins, they repeatedly turned to the LORD and cried out for deliverance. Each time, God sent them a deliverer, known as a Judge, to defeat their enemies. Thus, while Judges is a book about the sinfulness of mankind, it is also a book about the grace of God, as He displays His mercy and love toward His sinful people over and over again.

Much like Israel in the time of the judges, many historically Christian nations have forgotten the LORD, today. May these nations repent and return to the ultimate Judge and Deliverer, Jesus Christ.

Questions

1. What is a Judge?
2. How is Judges a book about the grace of God?

Prayer Points

1. Pray that your nation will repent of its sins.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

And the Lord was with Judah, and he took possession of the hill country, but he could not drive out the inhabitants of the plain because they had chariots of iron.
Judges 1:19

Praise: Psalm 1 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

JUDGES

Tuesday - Judges 1:1-7 - Victory for Judah and Simeon

When Joshua was still leading Israel, the nation defeated many powerful kings and cities in the land of Canaan. Then they gathered at Gilgal near Jericho, where God told each tribe where it was to settle. Therefore, after Joshua's death, the tribes of Israel went their separate ways, each into its own allotted land, to complete the conquest.

In today's reading, God tells Judah to go fight against the Canaanites. We must remember that it was because of the wickedness of the peoples of the land that God would not allow them to live alongside the Israelites in the land He had promised them (Deuteronomy 18:12).

In Joshua 19:1 and 9 we read that the inheritance of Simeon was in the midst of the inheritance of Judah. Therefore, the people of Judah invite the tribe of Simeon to come with them as they conquer and settle their tribal territories. The first enemies they encounter are Canaanites and Perizzites under the leadership of Adoni-bezek, a wicked and cruel king who had cut off the thumbs and big toes of seventy kings he had defeated in battle. Judah and Simeon defeat Adoni-bezek's army and the wicked king flees. When the Israelites catch up to him, they cut off his thumbs and big toes, just as he had done to so many others. The Bible does not tell us that this was a good thing for them to do to Adoni-bezek, but according to verse 7, it is clear that Adoni-bezek believed he deserved the punishment he had received. More importantly, he acknowledges that God is sovereign over these events, saying "As I have done, so God has repaid me."

God is in control of all events. We can be grateful for this, because it means that He will cause even bad things to work for the good of His people (Romans 8:28) and that nothing can change His good plan for us (Romans 8:31-39).

Questions

1. Why was Israel supposed to drive out the peoples of the land?
2. Who was in control of what happened to Adoni-bezek?

Prayer Points

1. Give thanks that God is in control of all things.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

And the Lord was with Judah, and he took possession of the hill country, but he could not drive out the inhabitants of the plain because they had chariots of iron.
Judges 1:19

Praise: Psalm 2 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

JUDGES

Wednesday - Judges 1:8-15 - Success for Judah

After Adoni-bezek is defeated, his men take him to Jerusalem, where he dies. The army of Judah follows soon after, captures the city and destroys it. However, probably because Jerusalem is on the edge of their territory and, properly speaking, is within the inheritance of Benjamin, Judah does not occupy the city. Instead, they head south into the hill country as far as the Negeb desert. Numbers 13 tells us that in the time of Moses, twelve men, including Joshua and Caleb had been sent into Canaan, to spy out the land and report back. One of the things they discovered was that there were still "sons of Anak," a very tall and strong group of people, living in the land. This included three giants living at Hebron, named Sheshai, Ahiman and Talmi. Because of this, the other ten spies discouraged the people from invading Canaan. Only Joshua and Caleb were confident in the LORD. Because of Joshua and Caleb's faithfulness, only they, of the entire generation whom God had rescued from bondage in Egypt were allowed to enter the Promised Land. As a reward for his service, Caleb, who was of the tribe of Judah, had been promised the city of Kiriath-arba (Hebron) as his inheritance. So Judah attacks Hebron and defeats Sheshai, Ahiman and Talmi, winning the city for Caleb.

As Judah moves against nearby Debir, Caleb encourages valiance by offering his daughter Achsah's hand in marriage to the man who captures the town. Caleb's nephew, Othniel, rises to the challenge and leads the successful assault on Debir. Later, Othniel will be the first of the judges God uses to deliver Israel. Here we see Othniel being prepared for that service as his valiant character is brought into play. As He did with Othniel, God gives us experiences in life that prepare us for His service later. What has God done with you in the past to prepare you for serving Him today?

Questions

1. Why were Caleb and Joshua allowed in the Promised Land?
2. Who were Sheshai, Ahiman and Talmi?
3. Who was Othniel?

Prayer Points

1. Ask God to use your experiences to prepare you to serve Him.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

And the Lord was with Judah, and he took possession of the hill country, but he could not drive out the inhabitants of the plain because they had chariots of iron.

Judges 1:19

Praise: Psalm 3 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

JUDGES

Thursday - Judges 1:16-21 - Allies and Enemies

In Numbers 10:29-32, Moses invites the descendants of his father-in-law to accompany Israel on their journey to the Promised Land. In today's reading, we find that the descendants of Moses' father-in-law, known as Kenites, come from the city of palms (the area around Jericho) and settle with the people of Judah at Arad, some twenty miles south of Hebron. This alliance will be important in chapter 4.

Simeon and Judah continue their cooperation as they conquer the Canaanites at Hormah - a city in Simeon's inheritance. (Hormah means "complete destruction" referring to the fact that Simeon and Judah completely destroyed the inhabitants of the city). Then Judah captures three Philistine cities - Gaza, Ashkelon and Ekron. However, Judah is only able to hold onto its central hill country, because the people in the lowlands had "chariots of iron" (heavy, well-shielded battle chariots).

At the same time, the tribe of Benjamin begins taking the territory allotted to it. However, the people of Benjamin are unable to capture Jerusalem, because it has been re-occupied by the Jebusites, who keep the city until King David conquers it.

The Israelites are meeting many obstacles to their conquest of the Land of Promise. Has God been unfaithful to them? No! Keep in mind, verse 19 tells us the LORD was with Judah. God allowed the enemies to remain for at least three reasons: 1. Israel's previous lack of faithfulness (Joshua 1:6-9; Judges 2:1-3); 2. to test Israel's future faithfulness (Judges 2:21-23); and 3. to prevent wild animals from taking over land uninhabited for too long (Deuteronomy 7:22).

Is God unfaithful to you, when He allows obstacles and difficulties in your life? Of course not. He knows what is best for you in the long run.

Questions

1. Who were the Kenites?
2. Why did God allow Israel's enemies to remain in the land?

Prayer Points

1. Praise God that He knows what is best for you.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

And the Lord was with Judah, and he took possession of the hill country, but he could not drive out the inhabitants of the plain because they had chariots of iron.

Judges 1:19

Praise: Psalm 4 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

JUDGES

Friday - Judges 1:22-26 - The House of Joseph

Today's reading is concerned with the house of Joseph. Because of God's special blessing on Joseph (see Genesis 48; 49:22-26) and because the tribe of Levi would not inherit a land of its own (Numbers 18:20; Joshua 13:33), Joseph had been divided into two tribes - Ephraim and Manasseh.

We are told the LORD was with the house of Joseph as they moved to claim their allotted inheritance. This not only reminds us of the tribe of Judah in verse 19, but of the man Joseph in the book of Genesis. Throughout his many adversities, it is said of Joseph time and time again that the LORD was with him. Now, the LORD is with his descendants as they take possession of the land He was giving them.

God's extraordinary blessing on Joseph can especially be seen in one remarkable event. The house of Joseph's allotted land included the city of Luz, which Jacob had called Bethel (which means "house of God") after he dreamed of a ladder between heaven and earth as he slept there. The tribes of Joseph send spies to scout out the land. The spies happen to meet a man who agrees to show them a way around the city's defenses. This is no mere accident. It is God's provision for His people. With the man's help, Joseph captures Bethel easily, preserving the lives of the man and his family. The man then moves outside the Promised Land and founds another city, which he calls "Luz."

God governs all events and causes them to work for His glory and His people's good - this is called Providence. What we often think of as mere coincidences or "accidents" are things He has ordained to come to pass. As with this "accidental" meeting in today's reading, He uses even the smallest occurrences to further His purposes.

Questions

1. Which tribes made up the house of Joseph?
2. How did God bless the tribes of Joseph in today's reading?
3. What is Providence?

Prayer Points

1. Pray that God will help us to trust His Providence.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

And the Lord was with Judah, and he took possession of the hill country, but he could not drive out the inhabitants of the plain because they had chariots of iron.
Judges 1:19

Praise: Psalm 5 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

JUDGES

Saturday - Judges 1:27-36 - Failure to Conquer

Today, we see several examples of tribes who were unable to drive out the enemies in their lands. As we saw before, there were several reasons God allowed the Israelites to fail in conquering the land of Canaan. Here, we see that some Israelites were content with this, putting the Canaanites to forced labor rather than driving them from the land. As we will see in the next chapter, this will have disastrous consequences for the Israelites. What may have seemed a mere matter of convenience - allowing the Canaanites to remain and serve them - was really disobedience to God, who had told them to drive these nations out of the land. This disobedience will bring calamity on Israel.

This last portion of chapter 1 sets the stage for the Book of Judges. The book will be characterized by two constant struggles: one physical and the other spiritual. The physical struggle will be between the Israelites and the peoples who live among and around them. Israel will either be making progress in the conquest of the land, or it will be dominated and oppressed by its neighbors. The spiritual struggle will be between Israel and the LORD. The presence of idolatrous nations among them will present a constant temptation to Israel either to worship false gods or to worship God falsely. Their lack of faithfulness to God will cause Him to chastise them. Blessedly, His chastisement will lead to Israel's repentance, and Israel's repentance will lead to deliverance.

When we find that we have compromised with the world and disobeyed God, we, like Israel, need to repent. When we do, as 1 John 1:9 tells us, God is faithful to keep His promise to forgive us for the sake of Christ Jesus, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Questions

1. Why were some Israelites content to leave Canaanites in the land?
2. In what physical struggle will the Israelites be involved in?
3. In what spiritual struggle will they be involved?

Prayer Points

1. Pray for the preaching and hearing of God's Word tomorrow.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters

Memory Verse

And the Lord was with Judah, and he took possession of the hill country, but he could not drive out the inhabitants of the plain because they had chariots of iron.
Judges 1:19

Praise: Psalm 6 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

The goal of Let's Worship God is to encourage and help you in your worship of God each day.

**God tells us that
Ezra read from
the book of the Law
day after day
and that
the people of God
were filled with joy!**

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