



Judges: Seeing Through God's Eyes, Not Our Own

“In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes”. Judges 17:6, 18:1, 19:1, 21:25. In these passages we see the moral decay that was occurring within Israel. This is the result of a failure to heed the teachings given at Mt Sinai. Israel is perhaps 3-400 years beyond the giving of the law to Moses at the time the history in Judges occurs. They have violated the command given in Ex 20:2 “Thou shall have no other God before me.” By this time in Israel's history, they are in a state of advanced moral decline. Twelve times in the past 300 or so years God had sent them a judge to lead them to victory over their physical and spiritual enemies. “Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.” This is one of the most heart-rending statements in the scripture.

Israel had failed to follow the commands given in **Deut 6:4-9 (ESV)** “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.” Basically, they had failed to teach their children what God had done for them and how he wanted them to live. Now several generations later they are intermarried with the people of the world and **everyone was doing what was right in his own eyes!**

You can readily see that this is not going to go well for Israel. Fast forward a few years and Israel has a series of Kings. Under King

Solomon they become the greatest nation in that part of the world. But they divide into two kingdoms, Israel and Judah. Each eventually goes into many years of foreign captivity. They seem to have followed the pattern in Judges of “everyone doing what is right in his own eyes” instead of following God’s teachings. The Old Testament was written to be our schoolmaster and to teach us today to obey God and the consequences of not obeying God. There are two parallels I want to draw from this. One is for our congregation in Starkville to learn the consequences, if we fail to teach our children the Bible. The second parallel is to America today. Our nation has been very blessed by God and we have a constitution framed by our forefathers that envisions a people who fear God and seek his blessings. Every home in America today can have a Bible where they can read and understand what God wants us to do. However, many in America today have no use for God or the Bible, and many are doing “what seems right in their own eyes”. Today there is “my truth’ and “your truth” and if they are mutually exclusive, don’t worry about it. If it seems right in your own eyes go ahead and do it. Everything will work out fine. **Galatians 6:7-8 (ESV)** “Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.”

- Johnnie N. Jenkins