

Judges 3 – 14 October 2021

“Serving In The Face Of Evil”

Introduction

*Judges covers period from Joshua’s conquest of the land in 1380BC until the monarchy begins in 1050BC with the 1st king Saul

*God has given Israel great prosperity: cities they didn’t build farms they didn’t produce

*But instead of recognizing the grace of God that brought them to this place of prosperity, we see that the theme of the Book of Judges is that “*everyone did that which was right in their own eyes*”.

*As the book opened up, it showed us the cycle of sin that Israel fell into repeatedly

*We gave 5 tips in Chap 1-2 for how to break this cycle of sin by using 5 spiritual disciplines

***Today, let’s look at 4 practical ways we can be used of God to serve Him while surrounded with evil**

You've heard the saying, "What's it take for evil to prosper? It takes good men doing nothing." We'll what's something?

1st practical way to serve God while surrounded by evil is to pray for the Spirit of God to come upon you (Chap 3:1-11)

Read Vs 1-6

1. We closed last week looking at these cities that the 12 tribes failed to take not believing God
2. You can not be empowered with the Spirit of God if you intermarry your daily life with sin

Read Vs 7

1. Baalim – false god of agriculture; Groves – is Ashtaroth, wooden poles of the goddess of sex
2. Served false gods AND forsook the Lord
 - a. You can't do one without the other
 - b. You are currently giving your life to a god
 - i. The master passion of your life is your god
 - ii. Whom are you serving?

Read Vs 8-11

1. Vs 8 – This isn't the king's name, it's his title, it means double wickedness of Cushan
2. Vs 9 – “When they cried out” – THE CYCLE - Evil from Israel, put under Mesopotamia 8 yrs, cry to the Lord, God provides the judge Othniel
 - a. It took them 8 YEARS to cry out to God!
 - b. Spirit of God is all they needed that whole time
3. So Othniel was raised up to be used of God to give the people and land rest for 40 more years
 - a. Notice it was God thru the Judge Othniel that saved Israel and brought rest
 - b. It took a person filled with the Spirit of the Lord, to rightly judge what needed done
4. Think of the waiting
 - a. Sometimes waiting is necessary; like Peter waiting for Pentecost to come
 - b. Sometimes the waiting is b/c of sin in us
 - c. Timing is God's business, but what's needed in the empowering of His Spirit in us

2nd practical way to serve God while surrounded by evil is to know how you're specially designed for the task (Chap 3:12-26)

Read Vs 12-14

1. Moab took Jericho – Very symbolic take since Jericho was the 1st city Israel took coming in
2. “The Lord strengthened Eglon” – this is a meaningful, needed task to get Israel’s attention

Read Vs 15-16

1. Notice again, Israel was in sin for 18 YEARS before crying unto the Lord for deliverance
2. Interesting – For Othniel we’re simply told they won b/c “the Spirit of the Lord” was upon him.
 - a. From now on, we’ll get some details about most of the judges
3. Notice that Ehud was specially designed by God as lefthanded
 - a. God will use you as you are (It’s His created design)

Read Vs 17-26 – The method of Eglon’s judgement

1. Vs 20 – Let’s deal with assassination
 - a. It’s the will of God for Israel to have all of the promised land and Eglon was breaking that
 - b. When you come against the direct will of God, your life is on the line
2. Vs 26 - God arranged for Ehud to escape by making the men think Eglon was in the bathroom
3. B/c Ehud was left-handed, not only did the guards not find the sword, but Eglon didn’t even see the dagger coming
4. God had prepared Ehud for this...since birth
 - a. You are the way you are for a reason
 - b. Think of Queen Esther
 - i. God gifted her from birth w/ natural beauty
 - ii. Beauty to gain favor w/ her king husband
5. You’re no accident
 - a. The way you are is for a reason, use it for God

3rd practical way to serve God while surrounded by evil is to role-model for others how to follow God (Chap 3:27-30)

Read Vs 27-30

1. “Follow me” for I follow the Lord who is doing great things
2. “So Moab as subdued under...Israel” – b/c they followed the Lord thru Ehud
3. Think about how Joshua looked over all Israel assembled together & said “Choose you this day”!
4. Ehud was victorious over Eglon of Moab b/c he served the Lord & taught others to do so thru his example
 - a. Israel will end up being blessed by Ehud’s example for 80 years of peace

4th practical way to serve God while surrounded by evil is to use the tools that you have, don't whine (Chap 3:31)

Read Chap 3:31

1. Shamgar is called a minor judge b/c we simply don't know much about him
2. But what can we learn?
 - a. Use the tools that you do have
 - i. Don't gripe about what you don't have
3. Think of David's sling
 - a. He didn't need the king's armor, that was a hindrance to him
 - b. He just needed what he was comfortable w/
 - c. David couldn't afford a sword & he didn't need it
 - d. David was sophisticated enough to have a chariot & he didn't need it
4. Shamgar is known for using what he had to deliver all Israel, to serve the Lord!

Conclusion

So, don't do nothing, but do something in a very practical way, to turn the tide when evil is all around.

- 1. Pray for the Spirit of God to come upon you**
 - a. Believer has H.S. indwelling us, but when was last time you prayed for a fresh filling of the Spirit?
 - b. W/o God, we can do nothing, abide in Jesus
- 2. Know how you're specially designed for the task**
 - a. A physical feature, a mental acuity, you're no accident but you're intentional
- 3. Role-model for others how to follow God**
 - a. I John 3:16 – “Hereby perceive we....& we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren”
 - b. Love will compel us to help others come
- 4. Use the tools that you have, don't whine**
 - a. Specific tool in your hand means nothing
 - b. Allowing God to use it, is what matters!
 - c. If God can use a donkey to talk to Balaam, he can use what's in your hand for His glory!