# JUDGES

#### THE BOOK OF

# JUDGES

The Book of Judges is one of the most poignant and distressing books in the canon. We learn that many of the heroes of the faith called out from this book, are more broken than we thought, and their stories are less admirable than we have given them credit. That may be the point. The only truly faithful one is the LORD Himself.

Falling directly after Joshua's taking of the Promised Land, this book reveals two simultaneous truths. The tribes of Israel are on a downward spiral away from the LORD who saved them, and that same LORD will stop at nothing to shepherd even the most rebellious heart to accomplish His purposes.

He will deliver Israel.

SESSION ONE

### THE CYCLE BEGINS

- Judges 1:1 - 3:6

SESSION TWO

# OTHNIEL, EHUD, & SHAMGAR

Judges 3:7-31

SESSION THREE

## **DEBORAH & BARAK**

-Judges 4 - 5

SESSION FOUR

#### **GIDEON**

Judges 6 - 8

SESSION FIVE

### **ABIMELECH**

Judges 9 - 10:5

SESSION SIX

### **JEPHTHAH**

Judges 10:6 - 12

SESSION SEVEN

### **SAMSON Pt 1**

Judges 13

SESSION EIGHT

### **SAMSON Pt 2**

Judges 14 - 16

SESSION NINE

# **IDOLATRY & CIVIL WAR**

Judges 17-21



"11 AND THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL DID WHAT WAS EVIL
IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD AND SERVED THE BAALS.

12 AND THEY ABANDONED THE LORD, THE GOD OF
THEIR FATHERS, WHO HAD BROUGHT THEM OUT OF
THE LAND OF EGYPT. THEY WENT AFTER OTHER GODS,
FROM AMONG THE GODS OF THE PEOPLES WHO WERE
AROUND THEM, AND BOWED DOWN TO THEM."

JUDGES 2:11-12

## INTRODUCTION

The book starts off very similar to the Book of Joshua. If you compare the first verse of Joshua and Judges, they begin literally with "And so it came about after the death of..." where Joshua states "Moses" and Judges states "Joshua." There is an action that continues to progress, from generation to generation. Where Joshua told of the taking of the Promised Land, Judges tells us what continues to happen in the Promised Land. Much like the story of Adam and Eve, Noah, and the Tower of Babel, the story of Israel takes a turn for the worse.

There are two introductions here. One describing what is happening on the ground with Israel, and the other describing how God responds to those events and what is going to happen because of the failure to follow God's plan.



# QUESTIONS

1. In Judges 1, what seems to be the general pattern of how things are going in the text? Identify specific parts of the story to explain yourself.

2. Read Numbers 33:50-56. What was Israel supposed to do when they entered the Promised Land? What was the consequence if they did not?

3. What tribe is called to action first? Why might this be important? What tribe was invited into the process? Read Joshua 19:1-9.

4. Read Numbers 13:17-33. Who inhabited the land? How might you respond to such news? How did Caleb respond?

5. Read Judges 2:10. Now read Deuteronomy 6:4-7, 20-25. What is the step in our faith that these verses are emphasizing? How important is this within the book of Judges? How important is it now?

6. There is a pattern described in Judges 2:11-19. Describe it as best you can because this is the pattern that proceeds through the remainder of the book.

7. Reading Judges 2:14-15 is scary. What does God's judgment look like? Read the Apostle Paul's words in Romans 1:24-25 which are very similar. How should we respond to passages like these?

8. Nations are left to "test" Israel. What is this test? Has the outcome already happened? What has the test proven?



# BREAKING THE

CYCLE

This book starts out pretty challenging. Israel's failure is laid bare. God had saved them, made them His own, and placed them in a Promised Land. Now they have forgotten Him, sexually binding themselves to those they were supposed to expel, and serving those foreign gods, gods that even desired child sacrifice (which will come up later in the Book). It is ironic

would lead to sacrificing their own. Yet, God in His infinite mercy doesn't call us to sacrifice our children, but sacrifices His one and only Son to bring humanity back to Himself. How is our memory? In one sense, we must remember what God is like and what He has done, but in a generational sense, are we teaching these memories to our children? Are we passing on the faith so that the seeds of this gospel can continue to be announced in the future?

that Israel's failure to teach their children



"9 BUT WHEN THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL CRIED OUT TO

THE LORD, THE LORD RAISED UP A DELIVERER FOR

THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL, WHO SAVED THEM, OTHNIEL

THE SON OF KENAZ, CALEB'S YOUNGER BROTHER.

10 THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD WAS UPON HIM, AND

HE JUDGED ISRAEL. HE WENT OUT TO WAR, AND

THE LORD GAVE CUSHAN-RISHATHAIM KING OF

MESOPOTAMIA INTO HIS HAND."

JUDGES 3:9-10

## INTRODUCTION

Three judge stories proceed in this section of Judges, and compared to the stories that are coming they are short and portray the judges positively. These judges were deliverers, saviors of Israel who were called to action by God Himself to rescue Israel from foreign rulers who have taken over parts of the Promised Land. In one sense, the stories in Judges are small replays of Moses and the Exodus story.



# **QUESTIONS**

1. Who is Othniel? Go back and read Judges 1:11-15. Who is his father? Is he an ethnic Israelite?

2. Read Judges 3:7, 12. They say almost the same thing. This is part of the pattern identified in Judges 2. What is the biggest difference between the two verses?

3. Who sold Israel into the hand of the king of Mesopotamia and who strengthens the king of Moab? How do you understand sovereignty, especially when considering God as Creator?

4. Where is ancient Mesopotamia? What nations were a part of this and how is that important to the story of scripture?

5. Read Genesis 19:30-38. Where did these daughters grow up? What is the history of the Moabites and Ammonites? Who might they be likened to?

6. Who are the Amalekites? Read Genesis 36:9-16, Exodus 17:8-16, and Deuteronomy 25:17-19. What made the them evil to the people of Israel? Who was Amalek related to in this story and what does this tell us about Israel?

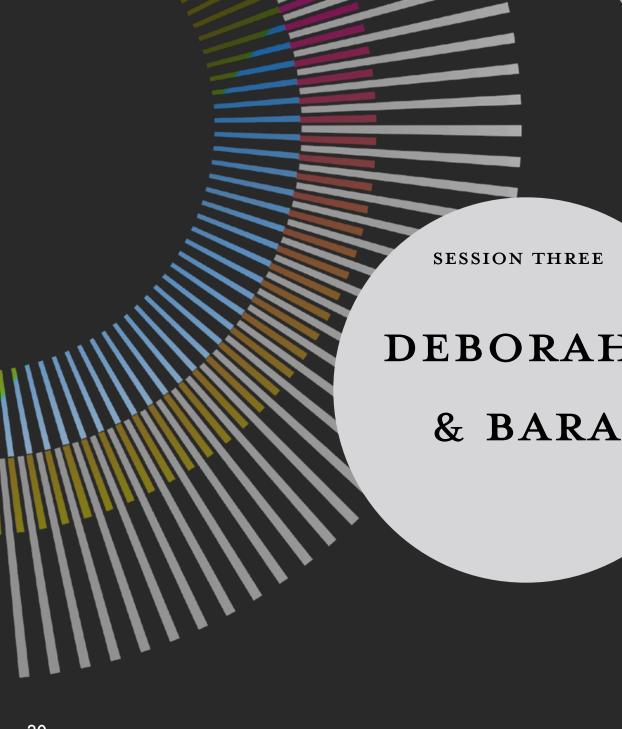
7. In Judges 3:13, it says that the king of Moab took possession of the "city of palms." Read Deuteronomy 34:3. What would be the significance of losing this particular city?

8. Read Joshua 4:19-24 and 5:2-9. What is the significance of Gilgal? Why would there be "graven images" at Gilgal? What is the significance of stopping the Moabites from crossing the Jordan?

# BREAKING THE

CYCLE

Baal worship is a central motif in these stories. Any worship apart from worship of the LORD is idolatry. If we were to think of it in human terms, one might call it offensive and painful. The question that begins to arise is whether the judges were guarding the people from idolatry or were they simply responding to whichever nation was currently oppressing them. Sometimes we may respond similarly. Have you ever taken on a challenge that benefited you but also kind of supported your faith perspective? Who were you doing it for? You or God? What seems to be true through all of these stories, the LORD doesn't need human help, but somehow His plan is always looking to include us in the mix.



"14 AND DEBORAH SAID TO BARAK, "UP! FOR THIS IS THE DAY IN WHICH THE LORD HAS GIVEN SISERA INTO YOUR HAND. DOES NOT THE LORD GO OUT BEFORE YOU?" SO BARAK WENT DOWN FROM MOUNT TABOR WITH 10,000 MEN FOLLOWING HIM. 15 AND THE LORD ROUTED SISERA AND ALL HIS CHARIOTS AND ALL HIS ARMY BEFORE BARAK BY THE EDGE OF THE SWORD, AND SISERA GOT DOWN FROM HIS CHARIOT AND FLED AWAY ON FOOT." JUDGES 4:14-15

# INTRODUCTION

It is uncommon in the ancient world to see a woman in leadership, and Deborah the prophetess is an example that stands out. When the men of Israel had not stepped up to the task, a woman was selected as judge. In fact, she is not the only heroine in this story. It would seem the actions of women in this section of Judges is what the author would like us to remember.



# **QUESTIONS**

1. What is ironic about the people to whom the LORD "sold" the people of Israel? Read Genesis 9:20-29.

2. How would you describe Barak? What kind of a leader is he? Do we know where he comes from or his tribe? Explain.

3. Heber the Kenite is brought up in this story twice, but he is not a main player. Why is he important? Is he a bad guy or a good guy? Explain.

4. What do you think of Jael's actions? Read Joshua 2:1-7. How do they compare to Rahab's actions? Now read Judges 5:24.

5. Read Judges 4:23-24. Who is primarily responsible for the defeat of Jabin? Read Judges 5:21-22. How was Sisera's army stopped?

6. What does the song in Judges 5 have to say about other tribes of Israel? What purpose might this have on the rest of Judges?

7. Read 1 Samuel 12:8-11. Why is this text odd? Who's missing? Why do you think so?

8. What are other events in the Bible that have a song written about them?

9. There are two mothers noted in the Song of Deborah and Barak. Who are they?



# BREAKING THE

CYCLE

This story is ultimately playing out a small version of Genesis 3:15. Two seeds are represented. The seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent are at war. Deborah represents the mother of Israel, one could say symbolically the mother of Barak. The mother of Sisera could be seen as the mother of the serpent seed,

Sisera who cruelly subjugated the people of Israel for 20 years. She awaits the sound of the hooves and chariots, but none would come. The other heroine in the story, Jael, who completes the work of Barak and Deborah is literally said to have "crushed" the head of Sisera. Such a small picture can bring us to the foot of the cross where the true dragon slayer would take up arms in a seemingly impossible act. The serpent has been crushed, and it is by the hand of the LORD Himself. A death to conquer death. An enthronement of a King where only slaves and thieves should be beheld.



"11 NOW THE ANGEL OF THE LORD CAME AND SAT UNDER THE TEREBINTH AT OPHRAH, WHICH BELONGED TO JOASH THE ABIEZRITE, WHILE HIS SON GIDEON WAS BEATING OUT WHEAT IN THE WINEPRESS TO HIDE IT FROM THE MIDIANITES. 12

AND THE ANGEL OF THE LORD APPEARED TO HIM AND SAID TO HIM, "THE LORD IS WITH YOU,

JUDGES 6:11-12

O MIGHTY MAN OF VALOR."

# INTRODUCTION

The story of Gideon is a powerful tale of a relatively normal Israelite. Some might even call him timid. The LORD is clearly with Gideon from the beginning, but even when the result looks positive for Israel, the story of Gideon reveals how quickly it can return to disaster, in fact, a disaster that has precedent in the Old Testament already.



# **QUESTIONS**

1. Read Genesis 25:1-6, Numbers 22:1-7, Numbers 25:1-9. Who are the Midianites?

2. How would you describe Gideon at the beginning of the story? Why does the LORD choose him? Identify parts in the story where Gideon is consistent with how he was in the beginning of the story.

3. What does the LORD have Gideon do before battling the Midianites? Why was it important? How might you relate this to the life of a follower of Jesus?

4. The angel of the LORD shows up at a terebinth (oak) tree in Ophrah. Read Genesis 12:5-6, 35:1-4. How do these stories that happen under trees compare with what happens in Judges 6:11-23? How is the end of Gideon's story ironic compared to the Genesis 35 text?

- 5. Consider the lack of supply caused by the Midianites described in Judges 6:3-5, and the offering by Gideon in Judges 6:19, 25-26. What does God ask of him and what does he ask of us?
- 6. Throughout the story of Gideon, describe all of the things the LORD did to help him along the way.
- 7. Why do you think Gideon was so hard on Succoth and Penuel who were fellow Israelites?
- 8. How would you describe Gideon's ability to forgive? What does Jesus say about forgiveness? What is something that you still struggle to forgive?
- 9. Read Exodus 32:1-6. Draw some parallels with the story in Judges 8:22-27.
- 10. What is the difference between the situation in Israel at the beginning and the end of Gideon's story?



# BREAKING THE

CYCLE

The tale of Jerubbaal is cautionary. The LORD stands up for Israel and empowers one of its seemingly weakest warriors, cowering in a winepress to thresh grain. But through the LORD's encouragement, step by step, Gideon becomes the "mighty man of valor" that the angel of the LORD named him from the beginning. Fast forward over a millennia and take one look at the cross of our King and you see God with us. All of our encouragement has been poured out through Him. The problem is that whether serving Baal and Asherah or a golden ephod (which should have been a sign of the worship of the LORD), we must recognize that any misdirected worship and reliance outside of our God is false worship. What are the things that get you moving in the wrong direction? Do you know?



"34 SO ABIMELECH AND ALL THE MEN WHO WERE WITH HIM ROSE UP BY NIGHT AND SET AN AMBUSH AGAINST SHECHEM IN FOUR COMPANIES. 35 AND GAAL THE SON OF EBED WENT OUT AND STOOD IN THE ENTRANCE OF THE GATE OF THE CITY, AND ABIMELECH AND THE PEOPLE WHO WERE WITH HIM ROSE FROM THE AMBUSH. 36 AND WHEN GAAL SAW THE PEOPLE, HE SAID TO ZEBUL, "LOOK, PEOPLE ARE COMING DOWN FROM THE MOUNTAINTOPS!"

JUDGES 9:34-36

### INTRODUCTION

While we might expect another judge, the story continues with the drift that started with the golden ephod. The name Abimelech can be translated "my father is king" which is interesting because his father Gideon, refused kingship. In fact Gideon had said, "I will not rule over you, and my son will not rule over you; the Lord will rule over you." This statement takes on a very ominous tone once we read the story of Abimelech. He is truly a snake, and very much the opposite of what Israel's judge was supposed to be.



### QUESTIONS

 Read Judges 8:29-32 from last week. Read Deuteronomy 17:14-17. How does this setup the story of Abimelech?

2. Given a few clues like Gideon's many wives, the fact that Abimelech was son of a concubine, and the place where money was gathered from could be translated "Baal of the Covenant," do you think Abimelech was fully Israelite? Why would this matter?

3. Who is coming against Israel in this text? Why might this be important?

4. Read Deuteronomy 27:11. Mount Gerizim was the place where blessings would be spoken by six tribes including the tribe of Joseph which split to become Ephraim and Manasseh. Explain the irony here.

5. What imagery regarding Abimelech might remind us of Genesis 3? Explain.

6. How many times does the LORD appear in Judges 9? What does this tell us about Abimelech?

7. Compare Judges 9:48 with Judges 7:17-18. What is Abimelech doing like his father and how is it different?

8. Describe the similar elements in this story with Deborah and Gideon.

9. Evil self-destructs. Describe how this happens with Abimelech and the elders of Shechem.

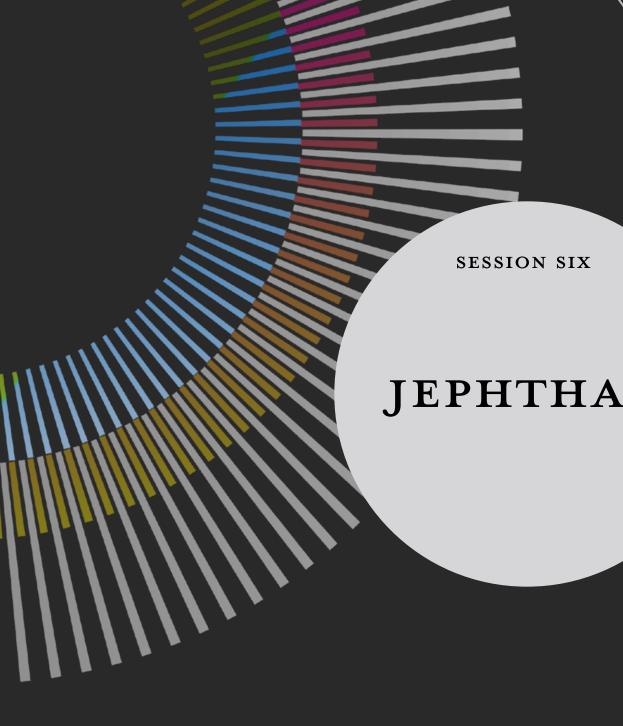


## BREAKING THE

CYCLE

This is the picture of an earthly king. While Gideon would refuse kingship, his golden ephod had created a polarity away from the LORD and back toward the Baals. After all, Baal-berith is where his son, bent on stealing kingship, gets his funding for earthy king mayhem and murder (Judges 9:4). His kingship would be built on the human sacrifice of his own brothers. We see no calling out for the LORD. No Spirit of the LORD coming upon him. It would seem that the LORD sits and observes the idolatry and pride spiraling out of control knowing that His justice will return their evil back on them. Abimelech is not only a failed king, but a false king. The story of scripture tells a different story of what a True King is. That kind of king gives of Himself for the sake of His family. When are you most likely to act like an Abimelech? When do you seek to secure power at the cost

of those around you?



Н

"10 AND THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL CRIED OUT TO THE LORD, SAYING, "WE HAVE SINNED AGAINST YOU, BECAUSE WE HAVE FORSAKEN OUR GOD AND HAVE SERVED THE BAALS." 11 AND THE LORD SAID TO THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL, "DID I NOT SAVE YOU FROM THE EGYPTIANS AND FROM THE AMORITES, FROM THE AMMONITES AND FROM THE PHILISTINES? 12 THE SIDONIANS ALSO, AND THE AMALEKITES AND THE MAONITES OPPRESSED YOU, AND YOU CRIED OUT TO ME, AND I SAVED YOU OUT OF THEIR HAND."

JUDGES 10:10-12

### INTRODUCTION

Imagine the scene. The enemy is posting up across the way. You have gathered your people to fight, but after looking around for a moment, you realize there is no one in the lead. There is no one fit for the task. At this point, a measure of rash immediacy can lead to the thought, "someone is better than no one." This seems to be how this judge is introduced.



### **QUESTIONS**

- 1. Judges 10:13-14 is scary. Only considering the book of Judges so far, how many times have the Israelites gone back to worship of foreign gods? Count the number of gods they have served in Judges 10:6. Why is this important?
- 2. What does God become impatient about? What might this reveal about His character?

3. What are some hints in this session's text that reveal Jephthah trusts the LORD?

4. Jephthah knows his history. In your own words, explain what Jephthah is saying to the king of the Ammonites.

- 5. Compare Abimelech and Jephthah. What are the interesting similarities and differences?
- 6. Find some similarities between Jephthah and King David.

- 7. Child sacrifice was a norm in Baalism and in the surrounding Canaanite culture. Do you think that Jephthah made the right choice in fulfilling his vow to the LORD? Explain.
- 8. This is the second time the Ephraimites are upset about something. Read Judges 8:1-3 and compare to Judges 12:1-3. What is the outcome of each?

9. Read Joshua 22:24-34. The Jordan is always an important crossing place, a place of remembrance. What does the war with Ephraim reveal?



## BREAKING THE

CYCLE

In one sense, the story of Jephthah finds a parallel to God Himself. Jephthah is rejected by his own people and when they have found no one else to deliver them, they come back to the one they rejected. In another sense, Jephthah finds parallel to all of Israel because he is the son of a harlot, like Israel has become a spiritual harlot. They no longer know the character of their LORD, the One who is impatient over their misery. This becomes absolutely clear when we see Jephthah treating the LORD like one of the other gods who ask for child sacrifice. Do you see the irony? Jephthah gives his one and only daughter, his only legacy, to retain some semblance of power. God the Father purposefully gives His one and only Son, who was rejected by His own people, to deliver them from the clutches of the serpent and his seed. You have been bought (not just brought) back into the family, by grace through faith. Is it possible that you are performing acts to merit

of the family?

God's favor, rather than acting like one



"24 AND THE WOMAN BORE A SON AND CALLED HIS

NAME SAMSON. AND THE YOUNG MAN GREW, AND

THE LORD BLESSED HIM. 25 AND THE SPIRIT OF

THE LORD BEGAN TO STIR HIM IN MAHANEH-DAN,

JUDGES 13:24-25

BETWEEN ZORAH AND ESHTAOL."

### INTRODUCTION

In a sense this origin story of Samson almost reads like a reversal of the Genesis 3 account. The Angel of the LORD appears instead of the serpent, recommissioning the woman by explaining what she must not do and what her child must not do. Where Eve's rebellion brought death, the wife of Manoah's obedience brings life out of barrenness. We never get her name, but she seems to be a very important, yet nameless mother.



### **QUESTIONS**

1. Considering the cycle determined in Judges 2:11-19 in session one, what is missing from the story of Samson? What does this reveal about the situation in Israel?

2. Read Numbers 6:1-21. There is a key word that flows throughout the description of a Nazirite. What is it?

3. What is different about Samson when considering the Numbers 6 text?

4. Long hair is a sign of power and glory for the Nazirite. Read 2 Samuel 14:25-26 as an example. While this character was not a Nazirite, his hair was an emblem of his power and beauty. How does his story end and why?

5. Why do you think the angel of the LORD came (twice) to the unnamed wife of Manoah when Manoah is mentioned 17 times in 13 verses? How is Manoah portrayed? Returning to a couple of weeks back, why did the LORD choose Deborah?

6. Compare Judges 6:17-23 and Judges 13:19. How are the meetings different? What might this indicate?

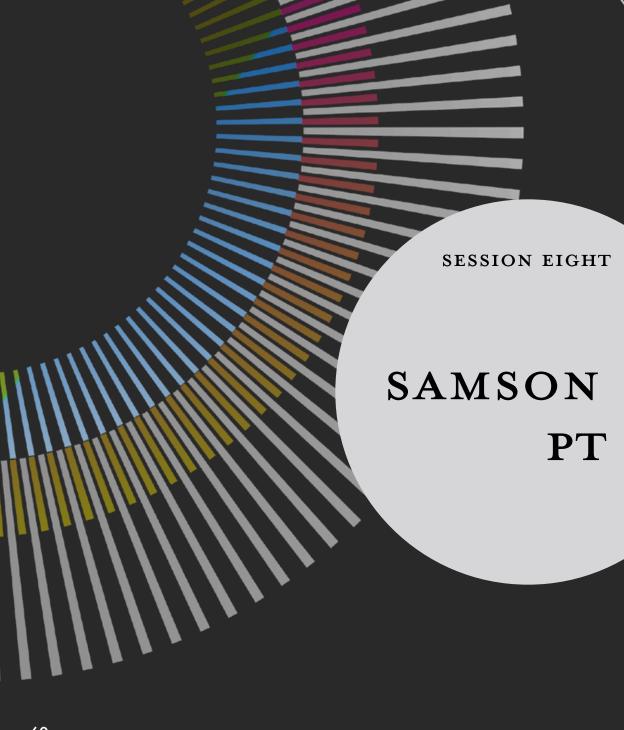
7. Read 1 Samuel 1:1-19. Samuel is a judge of Israel as well. How do the stories compare?

8. Read Luke 1:5-17. How is this story of another Nazirite from birth similar and different?

## BREAKING THE CYCLE

For the first time, we do not see Israel crying out to the LORD for deliverance. They simply do evil. Have they become comfortable living under the control of the Philistines? Have they become so accustomed to worshipping foreign gods that they have a "new normal"? When we lose track of our deliverer, we can allow "new normals" to creep in and take control. The LORD's Spirit stirs within Samson so there is a glimmer of hope that God will intervene anyway. Since Samson translates "like the sun," he may be the first sign of the hope that Deborah sang in Judges 5:31, "So may all your enemies perish, O Lord! But your friends be like the sun as he rises in his might." Ultimately, that sun has risen in the work of Jesus Christ. What are some things that have become normal for you that your King would want to save you from? Where is your time spent? How much

is in prayer and scripture?



"28 THEN SAMSON CALLED TO THE LORD AND SAID, "O LORD GOD, PLEASE REMEMBER ME AND PLEASE STRENGTHEN ME ONLY THIS ONCE, O GOD, THAT I MAY BE AVENGED ON THE PHILISTINES FOR MY TWO EYES." 29 AND SAMSON GRASPED THE TWO MIDDLE PILLARS ON WHICH THE HOUSE RESTED, AND HE LEANED HIS WEIGHT AGAINST THEM, HIS RIGHT HAND ON THE ONE AND HIS LEFT HAND ON THE OTHER. 30 AND SAMSON SAID, "LET ME DIE WITH THE PHILISTINES." THEN HE BOWED WITH ALL HIS

STRENGTH, AND THE HOUSE FELL UPON THE LORDS

AND UPON ALL THE PEOPLE WHO WERE IN IT. SO THE

DEAD WHOM HE KILLED AT HIS DEATH WERE MORE

THAN THOSE WHOM HE HAD KILLED DURING HIS LIFE."

JUDGES 16:28-30

### INTRODUCTION

Samson lived under the rule of the Philistines, so why not take a Philistine wife? Despite the pressure from his parents about such an idea, he says that "she is right in my eyes," twice in fact. It is pretty clear from the scripture directly after that the LORD is behind this move. While we have no indication that Samson knows this, his taking a foreign bride who serves different gods is the plan to "seek an opportunity against the Philistines." Shocked and wondering, we must read on.



### **QUESTIONS**

1. Read Genesis 10:6-14. Who are the Philistines? Who are they descended from? What might this reveal about their current rule over Israel?

2. The "separateness" of the Nazirite seems to be in tension with Samson's actions. What are the things he has done that would seem to break his lifelong Nazirite vow?

3. Describe the use of fire in this session's text. What does fire symbolize? Whose fire is stronger?

4. What is the irony of the tribe of Judah coming against Samson? Explain.

5. Read Exodus 2:11-14 and Exodus 17:1-7. What are the parallels between Samson and Moses? What might the author be alluding to by drawing this comparison?

6. Compare and contrast the stories of Samson and his wife in Judges 14 and Samson and Delilah in Judges 16. Has there been a change? Explain. What is the story between the two that includes a woman?

7. In what ways does Samson represent Israel?

8. What is Samson's prayer for vengeance at the end of Judges 16:30?

9. After looking at the story of Samson, what do you think of him? How does the God of the Bible play into your thinking?

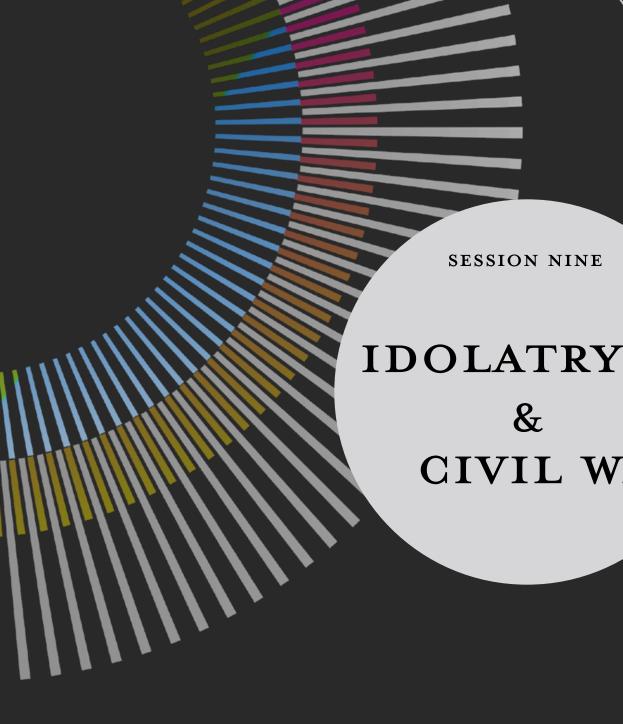


### BREAKING THE

CYCLE

Samson was the LORD's appointed judge even when Israel had not cried out for deliverance. The question we ask is, "did God want Samson to do all the things that he did?" If we look at the Law of Moses, some of his actions are clearly unlawful. One example is the prostitute in Judges 16. Was his marriage to the Philistine wrong? Probably. He was warring with the Philistines, so was it wrong for him to use a dead donkey's jawbone with is certainly unclean?

Hmm, maybe. There are two points that are clear. Samson was operating based upon his own desires as far as the text tells us, and God was operating based upon His desires to accomplish His plan—showing Israel He will save them even when they are broken and lost. We need this message as well. The Apostle Paul writes it this way, "God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Have you seen someone who says they are "close to God" in some way, but are not acting like it? Would it be wrong to walk with them and remind them of the truth of the gospel?



"25 IN THOSE DAYS THERE WAS NO KING IN ISRAEL.

EVERYONE DID WHAT WAS RIGHT IN HIS OWN EYES."

**JUDGES 21:25** 

### INTRODUCTION

This last section is truly hard to swallow. The people of God are completely off the rails. A celebrated graven image. A priest for hire. Horrifying sexual assault. Dismemberment. War and strife between tribes. The Book of Judges has purposely been careening toward this conclusion. If you were to put Israel and the people of Canaan in the same room, you would have no way to differentiate them anymore. Failing to follow the LORD's instruction has lead them to become just like their enemies.



### QUESTIONS

1. There is a phrase that is repeated four times in this final section. Locate the phrase and what might be important about when it is said.

2. Read Numbers 1:47-54. What was a the purpose of the Levites?

3. What are the clues that reveal what is wrong in Judges 17?

4. Judges 18:2, 7-10 is an echo of an event in Numbers 13:16-20. Compare the events. Why is it ironic?

5. Read Genesis 19:1-11 and compare to Judges 19:16-26. What is this saying about the Israelites (at least the Benjaminites)?

6. In Judges 6:16 Gideon is told that the LORD will be with him and he will strike the Midianites "as one man." Compare this to Judges 20:1, 8, 11. What has brought the tribes together now?

7. Read Hebrews 11:32-40 and note the judges that are included. What would you say faithfulness is and where does it come from?

8. How has reading through this book changed how you see these heroes of the faith?



### BREAKING

THE

CYCLE

In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes. You may recall Samson saying part of this very phrase about the Philistine woman he had to have as his bride. In the beginning of Judges the LORD said, "I will not drive them out before you, but they shall become thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare to you." The Israelites chose to worship foreign gods with the nations rather than bless them.

They rejected the royal priestly role. They chose pride. They chose Baal. Thankfully, the LORD chases after Baal

worshippers. He delivers His people. The book of Hebrews puts it this way: "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood." Hebrews 12:1-4

# **NOTES**

# **NOTES**



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