

How Did We Get Here? JUDGES 1:1-3:6

Why Judges?

- Scripture bears witness to the person and work of Christ
 - “You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me.” John 5:39
 - “And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.” Luke 24:27

How to approach Judges?

- Scripture is a revelation from God about God
 - “The book of Judges shows us that the Bible is not a book of virtues. It is not full of inspirational, hero stories. The Bible is not about following moral examples. It is about a God of mercy and long suffering who continually works in and through us despite our constant resistances to his purposes. Ultimately there is only one hero in this book, and he’s divine.” -Tim Keller

Where are we?

- Time between Joshua and Samuel (approximately 1350-1050 BC)
- The Land of Canaan
 - Awe-inspiring fortified cities, strong people, and fruitful land (Numbers 13)
 - The Canaanites: art, literature, architecture, trade, political organization and the elaborate and sexualized Canaanite religious system

How did we get here?

- Covenantal Promises
 - Covenant: A binding agreement between two parties with specific obligations (a sovereign and a subordinate)
 - Benevolence/Promises, loyalty, blessings and curses
 - ABRAHAMIC COVENANT: “And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the **land of your sojourning, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession**, and I will be their God.” Genesis 17:7-8
 - MOSAIC COVENANT: “You shall have no other gods before me.” Exodus 20:3
 - Joshua renews the covenant: And the people said to Joshua, “The LORD our God we will serve, and his voice we will obey.” So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and put in place statutes and rules for them at Shechem. And Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God.” Joshua 24:24-26

Clear warnings from the Lord

- Exodus 23:23-33
- Numbers 33:50-56
- Deuteronomy 7:1-5
- Joshua 23:5-13

1. What are the people told to do with the land?
2. What are the people told to do with the inhabitants and gods in the land?
3. What are the people told not to do with the inhabitants of the land?
4. What will happen if they are disobedient?

Joshua	Judges
Landless people	Inherited the land
Conquering the promised land	Losing possession of the land
Obedient, unified people	Disobedient, rebellious people
Renewed covenant	Breaking the covenant
Strong leadership	Leadership crisis
Pure worship	Worship of Baal
"Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua and had known all the work that the LORD did for Israel." Joshua 24:31	"And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals." Judges 2:11

A Basic Road Map of Judges

- Prologue: Dual Introduction (Judges 1-2)
- Narratives of the Judges (Judges 3-16)
 - 12 Judges (6 major and 6 minor)
 - 6 Cycles
 - Othniel, Ehud, Deborah, Gideon, Jephthah, Samson
- Epilogue: Dual Conclusion (Judges 17-21)

PROLOGUE PART 1: FAILURE TO POSSESS THE INHERITANCE

Failure of physical conquest (Judges 1:1-31)

- Judah could not drive out...1:19
- Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites...1:21
- Manasseh did not drive out...1:27
- Ephraim did not drive out...1:29
- Zebulun did not drive out...1:30
- Asher did not drive out...1:31
- Naphtali did not drive out...1:33
- Dan did not drive out...1:34

The Broken Covenant (Judges 2:1-5)

PROLOGUE PART 2: REASONS FOR THE FAILURE

Failure of spiritual conquest

- Failure to teach the next generation
 - “And all that generation also were gathered to their fathers. And there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD or the work that he had done for Israel.” Judges 2:10
 - The Lord’s Instruction:
 - “Assemble the people, men, women, and little ones, and the sojourner within your towns, that they may hear and learn to fear the LORD your God, and be careful to do all the words of this law, and that their children, who have not known it, may hear and learn to fear the LORD your God, as long as you live in the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess.” Deuteronomy 31:12-13
- The tolerance of idolatry
 - “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 2:12
 - Idolatry = whoredom
 - “...for they whored after other gods and bowed down to them.” Judges 2:17
 - Ezekiel 16; 23; Exodus 34:15; Hosea 1-3

THE CYCLE Judges 2:11-23

- Sin
 - Israel does evil and worships Baal (2:11-13)
- Servitude
 - God allows a foreign nation to plunder and oppress Israel (2:14-16)
- Supplication
 - Israel cries out in distress (2:14, 18)
- Salvation
 - The Lord sends a judge to deliver the people (2:16-18)

What the Book of Judges will show us

- The corruption of life and human nature apart from God
 - Idolatry results in progressive compromise and oppression
- The wonder of God's intervention
 - Grace is offered to people who don't deserve or seek after or appreciate it
- Christ has broken the cycle
 - Covenantal obedience

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What idols do we tolerate or take lightly around us? Where do we tend to worship the Lord and the gods of this world?
2. How does the description of idolatry as whoredom change how you view your sin?
3. How do we seek to know and fear the Lord?
4. How can we teach the next generation to know and fear the Lord?
5. We saw the promises throughout Scripture of what eventually happened in Judges. What promises in Scripture do we need to keep at the forefront of our minds as we wait to dwell in the new heavens and new earth?