

## Faithlessness and Faithfulness Judges-Ruth

1. We have had a little break, I hope that it has not thrown you off
  2. Reviewing the story up until this point: creation, selection, preservation, redemption, now they are in the land, will they stay in the land? Judges
  1. Schaeffer: About the demise of the Roman Empire: Rome did not fall because of external forces such as invasion by the barbarians. Rome had no sufficient inward base; the barbarians only completed the breakdown-and Rome gradually became a ruin.
  2. Are we beginning to self-destruct as a nation or a people
  3. This is how it is with any empire: If you are the most powerful something has to happen to weaken you: Most world empires last 200 years: their progression: (1) Bondage to Spiritual faith (2) Spiritual faith to great courage (3) great courage to liberty (4) liberty to abundance (5) abundance to leisure (6) leisure to selfishness (7) Selfishness to complacency (8) complacency to apathy (9) apathy to dependency (10) dependency to weakness (11) weakness back to bondage
  4. Who are the judges: names after the principle characters: literally governors: These judges were the Lord's agents of deliverance. God is the central character and hero
  5. Why study Judges? Judges shows us the result of a godless society. We need to carefully consider the message of Judges as we live in a society that mirrors the Judges in many ways. Judges is a book of compromise and presumption.
  6. As the OT continues to unfold, we find ourselves just moments after the death of Joshua. Are you noticing a trend with these books: Exodus: death of Joseph, Joshua: death of Moses, Judges: death of Joshua, I Kings: death of David: God's work goes on beyond the death of the leaders: one man will not stop God's ship
  7. Remember how the book of Joshua ended: a challenges not to forsake God, finish driving the people out, and the death of Joshua
  8. What was the problem during the time of the Judges? Judges 17:6: no king, right in their own eyes
  9. How much time does Judges cover? About 300 years: 1375-1075 BC. These sections are marked by 300 years of compromise
  10. How is Judges laid out?
    - a. Deterioration: 1:1-3:6
    - b. Disentigration: 3:7-16:31
    - c. Disaster: 17-21
- I. **The Deterioration of the Nations: 1-3:6: The Prologue:** Two Epilogues that show where Israel went wrong
- A. Prologue #1: 1-2:5
    1. The Divine Command is Given: go take the land: 1:1-18 (2-4)
    2. The Divine Command is Ignored: 1:19-36: they make deals with the people and they fail to completely drive them out of the land
      - a. The trains come off of the tracks: 19a: they failed
      - b. The people are disobedient because they forget God: 1:19b: are iron chariots too hard for God?

- c. Look at what follows: 1:21,27,29,30,31,33: they failed to drive out
  - 3. The Divine Judgment is Announced: 2:1-5: Moses told them obeying the covenant the key to their life: they didn't care and the hammer fell
- B. Prologue #2: 2:6-3:6
  - 1. The faithfulness of the previous generation: 2:6-9
  - 2. The faithlessness of the present generation: 2:10-15
    - a. This is partially the responsibility of the previous generation: 2:10
    - b. You think it is bad now let successive generation that does not
    - c. This is a probing question: **Is Jesus more or less attractive to the next generation because of me?**
  - 3. The faithless generation failed the test that God has given them: 2:16-23, see 2:22: the test to see if they would stay faithful
  - 4. The failures in warfare led to idolatry: 3:1-6: they failed the test

## II. The Distention of the Nation: 3:7-16:31

- A. 12 Judges and 7 major cycles
  - 1. Chronological issues: some are local and there is overlap between the times of the Judges because when you add up the years of oppression and peace you have 450 years:
  - 2. Some of these judges were local and tribal rather than national
- B. The Real fast tour
  - 1. Othniel: Judges 3:7-11, 40 years: remember the cycles: **demonstration**
    - a. Sin: idolatry: 3:7
    - b. Servitude: 3:8: Cushan-Rishatim: 8 years
    - c. Supplication: 3:9a
    - d. Salvation: 3:9b-10: Othniel
    - e. Silence: 3:11: 40: **see how the cycles work: 11 more times**
  - 2. Ehud: Judges 3:12-30: 80 years
  - 3. Shamgar: Judges 3:31: ?
  - 4. Deborah/Barak: 40 years: Judges 4-5
  - 5. Gideon: 40 years: 6-8
  - 6. Abimilech: apostate king/ not necessarily a judge: Judges 9: 3 years
    - a. This is Gideon's son
    - b. This is the center of the book
    - c. This is the central question: who is Israel's true king?
    - d. God speaks very clearly on this matter: 9:56-57
    - e. For the people the jury is still out
  - 7. Tola: 10:1-2: 23 years
  - 8. Jair: 10:3: 22 years
  - 9. Jephthah: Judges 10:6-12:7: 6 years
  - 10. Ibzan: Judges 12:9: 7 years
  - 11. Elon: Judges 12:11: 10 years
  - 12. Abdon: Judges 12:14: 8 years
  - 13. Samson: 20 years: Judges 13-16
  - 14. Eli is our last judge: I Samuel 1:9-4:22: 40 years

### III. The Disgrace of the Nation: 17-21: the epilogue: 2 snapshots from the sewer

- A. Epilogue #1: 17-18: Spiritual Corruption: 18-30-31
1. The external threats of the nations were severe, but they were nothing compared to the internal threats of destruction
  2. The individual family unit broke down: 17 (Micah's activity): 17:1-6: **17:3-4**
  3. Spiritual leadership is destroyed in the nation: 17:7-13:17-10-13: a personal Priest on retainer: you give me a house and a salary I will be whatever you want me to be: 17:9-11: **complete corruption**
  4. An entire tribe is corrupted: Spiritual worship of God is destroyed in the nation: 18: 17-20,30-31:
  5. **When people stop believing in the God of the Bible, they don't stop believing, they start believing in everything**
- B. Epilogue #2: Social Corruption: 19-21
1. The participants: the corrupt Levite, 19:1, the corrupt Benjamites: 19:14, the actions of all of Israel: 20:46-47: **the depths: 19:25,29-30**
  2. **19: The Levite and his concubine are looking for sage lodging, they think they have found safety, they haven't: 19:22-30**
  3. **This leads to civil war and near extinction to the tribe of Benjamin:20:46-47, 21:4-7: the final word: 21:25**
  2. This is ruthless: this is the world when everyone does what is right in their own eyes: when God is removed, we become barbaric
  2. Marriage has no value: 19:1-21
  2. Sexuality has no value: 19-22-30
  3. Human life has no value: 20
  4. Morality has no value: 21
    - a. At every major section in the Epilogues we see the real problem for the people: 21:25, 17:6, 18:1, 19:1
    - b. **Chaos and insignificance will result when people do what is right in their own eyes**
    - c. **Judges is so troubling, because this is an accurate picture of the age that we live in.**
    - d. **We need a king, and the good news is that Christ is that King.**
    - e. **When Christ is submitted to our worship is pure and society will be orderly and meaningful.**

### IV. What will God Do? The Story of Ruth

- A. In spite of the chaos, God still had a plan: 1:1
- B. God preserved some faithful people in the backdrop of all the unfaithful people
1. It is interesting that Ruth is Moabite: 1:4
  2. God's plan was never tribal, it has always included all people
  3. The story of Ruth contains 4 scenes
    - a. Personal tragedy brings Naomi and Ruth to Bethlehem: 1:6-22
    - b. Personal responsibility sends Ruth to work in Boaz's field: 2
    - c. Providence brings Ruth and Boaz's paths together: 3: Boaz asks for Ruth's hand in marriage
    - d. Providence gives Naomi a new family: 4: 13-16

- C. God's remedy for the people's problems are all bound up in his king: 4:18-22
  - 1. The problem in judges: the people had no king
  - 2. The solution in the Old Testament: David: a king after God's own heart: 4:22
  - 3. The problem for all humanity: we have committed cosmic treason against the King of the Universe
  - 4. The solution: the king that is Greater than David and the one that is seated on David's throne: Jesus
- D. Take heart: in the social corruption of Judges or the personal tragedy of the book of Ruth, God's purposes are being worked out
- E. King Jesus is on his throne and at his return all this mess will get sorted out