

How a Nation Unravels: The Book of Judges

Lesson 1

Judges 1:1-2:5

January 9, 2022

How a Nation Unravels

Introduction

From the beginning of humanity, disobedience to God, followed by repentance, and then God's forgiveness has been a recurring theme. The book of Judges shows us the downward spiral of a nation that repeatedly turned toward the Canaanites' gods and away from God. Led by some flawed heroes, the nation would recognize its sin and turn back to God. However, the disobedience would reoccur, and Israel would move further and further away from God until it violated its covenant with Him in practically every way possible. In short, the book of Judges is about the unraveling of a nation.

Memory verse: "Yet you have disobeyed me. Why have you done this? And I have also said, 'I will not drive them out before you; they will become traps for you, and their gods will become snares to you.'"—Judges 2:2b-3

Pray and read Judges 1:1-2:5. What questions or observations do you have about this passage?

What does the passage say?

1. After Joshua died, what did the Israelites ask the Lord? What was His answer? (Judges 1:1-3)

2. What happened when the first tribe attacked? (Judges 1:4-6)
3. What was Adoni-Bezek's response to being captured by the Israelites? (Judges 1:7)
4. What did Othniel and Aksah ask for and receive from Caleb? (Judges 1:13-15)
5. What is significant about the attacks Israel launched? (Judges 1:4, 19, 22)
6. What happened to the Canaanites? (Judges 1:28-33)
7. What happened to the Amorites? (Judges 1:35)
8. What did the Lord say at Bokim? (Judges 2:1-3)
9. What was the Israelites' response? (Judges 2:4-5)

What does the passage mean?

1. The Israelites start on the right foot by seeking God's guidance. Why should we seek God's guidance? (Proverbs 3:5-6; Isaiah 58:11; Matthew 7:7-8; John 16:13; James 1:5-6)

2. Reread Judges 1:19. The Israelites struggled with trusting that God would fulfill His promises. Why should we trust God's promises? (Jeremiah 29:11; Isaiah 26:3-4; Romans 8:28; Philippians 4:19; Hebrews 11:6)

3. The Israelites couldn't drive out the Canaanites without God's help and instead made excuses for allowing the Canaanites to remain. Why should we rely on God's help? (Deuteronomy 31:6; Isaiah 41:13; Philippians 4:6; 1 Peter 5:6-7)

4. The Israelites compromised and left the Canaanites to live among them. Eventually, they became a trap to them. How do we prevent sin from becoming a trap to us? (Matthew 18:8-9; Romans 6:6-7, 11, 8:12-13; Colossians 3:5)

5. Judges 1 begins to show us the descent of Israel into sin and away from God. What hope can we gain by studying the sins of the nation of Israel? (Psalm 18:2; Hosea 14:1-2, 4; Acts 2:38; Romans 11:26; Hebrews 13:8)

Applying the passage

1. What excuses are you making for keeping some areas of your life from God's control?

2. What sins are keeping you trapped?

3. Do you take hope in the forgiveness and faithfulness of Jesus? Write a prayer asking for God to restore or renew your hope in His promises.