

How a Nation Unravels: The Book of Judges

Lesson 6

Judges 10:6-11:39

February 13, 2022

How to Destroy a Nation

Introduction

God warned the Israelites over and over to worship Him alone, and if they failed to do this by adopting the religious practices of the Canaanites, they would face the same consequences. But that's just what they did. Once again, Israel turned its back on God and worshiped the gods of seven other nations. But, of course, there would have been scores of deities within those nations. As a result, there wasn't room for God.

The struggle that the Israelites faced isn't much different than the struggles we face today. We don't consider ourselves to worship other gods or idols, yet we struggle to serve God alone in all aspects of our lives. It's much easier to bow to possessions, fun, success, money, and so on. But we need to learn from Israel's struggle and continue to fight to keep God the most important aspect of our lives.

Memory verse: "Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord. They served the Baals and the Ashtoreths, and the gods of Aram, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the Ammonites and the gods of the Philistines. And because the Israelites forsook the Lord and no longer served him, he became angry with them."—Judges 10:6-7a

Pray and read Judges 10:6-11:39. What questions or observations do you have about this passage?

What does the passage say?

1. What sin did Israel commit? Who did they serve? (Judges 10:6)
2. What was the punishment Israel received for this sin? (Judges 10:7-9)
3. What confessions did Israel make? What was God's response to their confessions? (Judges 10:10-15)
4. To whom did the elders of Gilead turn for help? What was their offer? (Judges 11:4-6)
5. What was Jephthah's concern, and what assurance did he want? What was the elders' reply? (Judges 11:7-11)
6. What claim did the king of Ammon make against Israel? What was Jephthah's response? (Judges 11:13, 15, 23-27)
7. What vow did Jephthah make? (Judges 11:30-31)

8. Who greeted Jephthah? What was his response? (Judges 11:34, 36)

What does the passage mean?

1. Jephthah recognized that his vow was a mistake but kept it anyway. Why is what we say so important? (Proverbs 10:19, 18:21; Ecclesiastes 5:4-6; Matthew 12:36; Ephesians 4:29; James 5:12)

2. Israel had fallen into the trap of idolatry and worshiped many other gods alongside God. What must we understand about worshiping God above other gods? (Exodus 20:3-6; Judges 10:11-14; Romans 1:25-26; Galatians 5:19-21; Colossians 3:5)

3. Reread Judges 10:11-15. God points out that He has saved them in the past, and they still turned away from Him. Why is it okay for God to punish us for our sins? (Deuteronomy 8:5; 1 Corinthians 11:32; Hebrews 12:5, 11; Revelation 3:19)

4. God heard their cries for help and intervened despite their repeated sin of idolatry. Why can we trust that God will hear our cries for help? (Psalm 145:18; Matthew 21:22; 1 Peter 3:12; 1 John 3:21-22, 5:14-15)

5. Again, we see God's grace (Judges 10:16), and He comes to Israel's rescue once again. How do we know that God's grace extends to us? (Acts 3:19; Romans 3:23-24; Ephesians 2:8; Hebrews 4:16; 1 John 1:9)

Applying the passage

1. James 3:9 says, "With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness." Have you used your words to harm others in God's name? How have you used your words to harm?

2. In what area of your life have you been crying out to God to help you? Be comforted by the truth that God hears you and wants to help you.

3. What idols do you worship before God? Money? Time? Things? Success? Write a prayer asking God to help you shift your focus away from your idols and back to Him.