

GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST

Sermon by Ray Reynolds

YOU BE THE JUDGE: A SERIES ON THE BOOK OF JUDGES

Lesson One - The Downward Spiral

Judges 1:1-2:10

Introduction: I want to remind you from our last study that the first part of Judges reflects the period of time among the Israelites around 1380 BC. The first two chapters of the book of Judges really help us to find the basis for the trials that come in the following chapters. The people of God were on the edge of great blessings but they sold and forfeited God's favor. To understand the first chapter you really need to begin in Judges 2:6-9.

Discussion:

I. A Great Commander (2:6-9)

- A. Joshua & the elders did great things (2:6-7)
- B. Joshua & the elders left a legacy (2:8-9)
- C. Unfortunately, their descendants did not carry on their example.
 - 1. This is what happens when we fail to teach our children.
 - 2. This is what happens when we tolerate sin.
 - 3. This is what happens when we allow evil to influence us.
 - 4. This is what happens when we do not take personal responsibility.
- D. The book of Joshua reveals that he did great living up to Moses' example.
 - 1. He was convicted that God's way was the best way. - Faithful
 - 2. He was convinced that God was always with them. - Knowledge/Wisdom
 - 3. He was confident that God would fight their battles. - Warrior

II. A Great Conquest (1:1-20)

- A. Context: After the Death of Joshua (1:1-3, 2:6-9)
 - 1. The era (1:1a)
 - 2. Their eagerness (1:1b-3)
 - 3. Their ease of forgetfulness (2:6-9)
- B. Contenders: Judah with Simeon (1:4-20)
 - 1. Uplands and Adoni-Bezek (1:4-7)
 - 2. Lowlands and Jerusalem (1:8-10, 21)
 - 3. Debir and Caleb's daughter (1:11-15)
 - 4. Kenite allies (1:16)
 - 5. Zepath (nee Hormah, 1:17-18)
 - 6. Summary (1:19-20)

III. A Great Compromise (1:21-36, 2:10)

- A. The Failure to Conquer by Benjamin (1:21)
- B. The Failure to Conquer by Joseph (1:22-29)
- C. The Failure to Conquer by Zebulun (1:30)
- D. The Failure to Conquer by Asher (1:31-32)
- E. The Failure to Conquer by Naphtali (1:33)
- F. The Failure to Conquer by Dan (1:34-36)
- G. Summary (1:2:10)

IV. A Great Conviction (2:1-5)

- A. The Messenger: The Angel of the Lord (2:1a)
- B. His Message (2:1b-3)
 - 1. God's faithfulness (2:1b)
 - a. Deliverance
 - b. Faithfulness
 - 2. Their Responsibility (2:2)
 - a. No co-habitation
 - b. No idolatry
 - 3. The consequences (2:3)
- C. The Sorrow (2:4-5)
- D. At this point they had every chance to make things right.
- E. The placement of this event at this strategic place in scripture is a revelation of things that are eminent among God's people in this story.
- F. They are given a good rebuke but refused to heed the commands of God.

Conclusion: As we conclude our study we can clearly see that Judges 2:10 is not only a commentary on downward spiral of the Israelites, it is also an introduction to a new chapter in the history of God's people. The moral of the story might be to follow God with your whole heart because incomplete obedience is disobedience to God. Had the people done what God promised He would have stayed beside His people and fought their battles for them. The downward spiral comes so fast that the people just got used to the ride. It would take a generation to recover and get their footing again. What happens next? We will see