

OT-OV

Lesson 75

1. Last week we continued our study of the Book of Judges.

2. When time expired I was about to teach Abimelech's tyranny.

3. Let's review some of that learned and then we will pick up with new material on page two.

3.1 The Book of Judges was written somewhere around 1100 B.C. by an unknown, most of the events recorded in the book occurred between 1400-1100 B.C. It is a story of states/tribal rights under a Theocracy and the success of the system even amidst terrible personal failures on the part of the individual Judges.

3.2 In historical sequence it covers the period of Israel's history between Joshua and Samuel.

3.3 Once more the mighty acts of God were displayed as a number of judges responded to the call of God to lead the Israelites in military exploits to rout the oppressing nations.

3.4 The Book describes a series of religious and political cycles of sin, sorrow and supplications. Some of the Judges were contemporaries serving in different parts of the country. God raised up "Judges" to deliver Israel at various times. Though each judge ruled in his tribe, God in periods of exigency used certain heroes to deliver the nation, sometimes regionally and other times nationally.

4. We began our study of the Book of Judges in outline fashion.

I. Israel's failure to dispossess the Canaanites under Joshua. Jdg 1:1-36

II. The Angel of The Lord rebukes Israel for their failure to annihilate the Canaanites. Jdg 2:1-5

III. Joshua is eulogized and his death recorded in Jdg 2:7-9

IV. Summary of Israel's Disobedience and Defeat - Jdg 2:10-3:6

V. Oppressing Nations and Israelite Judges

A. Mesopotamia-Othniel, Jdg 3:7-11

B. Moab-Ehud, Jdg 3:12-30

C. Philistia-Shamgar, Jdg 3:31

D. Canaan (Hazor)-Deborah and Barak, Jdg 4:1-24

E. Midian-Gideon, Jdg 6:1-7:25

F. Abimelech's tyrannical career, Jdg 9:1-57

1. Abimelech was a son of Gideon (Jdg 8:30-9:54). He was related through his mother to the people of Shechem who worshipped the god Baal-berith, Abimelech received money from the treasury of Baal-berith and with it procured wicked men to help him slay his 70 brothers.

1.1 Abimelech went to Shechem to his mother's brethren. As the son of a concubine, Abimelech was considered a part of the family of his mother.

1.2 Among the early Arabians, a concubine or secondary wife stayed with her own clan and was visited by her `husband' from time to time.

1.3 The children of the union belonged to the wife's clan. Abimelech, the son of a concubine, had close relations with the family of his mother.

1.4 He sought their help in supporting his claims to the throne. Thus the statement "Remember also that I am your bone and your flesh."

1.5 Abimelech implied that all of the sons of Gideon were ambitious to rule. Dissension among them would certainly have harmful consequences for the people subject to them.

1.6 It would be best to dispose of them all, said Abimelech, in favor of his own rule.

1.7 Since his mother was from Shechem, he could claim a blood kinship with the Shechemites.

1.8 Thus he appealed to local pride in the suggestion that he be named ruler.

2. The people at Shechem quickly proclaimed him king, Jotham, the youngest, however, escaped and lived to speak a parable against his presumptuous brother. In this parable he likened Abimelech to a bramble bush lording it over all the trees, and prophesied that the men of Shechem and Abimelech would destroy each other.

2.1 In three years the prophesy was fulfilled when the people of Shechem turned against Abimelech.

3. Another complication is introduced into the narrative with the appearance of Gaal, the son of Ebed, who gained the confidence of most of the men of Shechem. However Zabul, a ruler of Shechem, informed Abimelech of this situation, and Abimelech by means of an ambush drove Gaal and his people away.

4. But Abimelech still had to win the city of Shechem, which took some ingenious military tactics (Jdg 9:43-45). Finally the city was taken and sown with salt, a measure designed to spoil the soil for years to come.

Jdg 9:43 So he took his men, divided them into three companies and set an ambush in the fields. When he saw the people coming out of the city, he rose to attack them.

Jdg 9:44 Abimelech and the companies with him rushed forward to a position at the entrance to the city gate. Then two companies rushed upon those in the fields and struck them down.

Jdg 9:45 All that day Abimelech pressed his attack against the city until he had captured it and killed its people. Then he destroyed the city and scattered salt over it.

5. As was usually the case, many of the lords of Shechem took refuge in their citadel in the temple of the god Berith. The bloody Abimelech set fire to the temple tower and burned them alive.

6. In the process of taking Thebez, a nearby city, the people likewise took refuge in their strong tower, but Abimelech's purpose to burn it was frustrated by a woman who dropped a piece of millstone on his head breaking his skull, and thus ending his wicked career.

G. Tola and Jair, Jdg 10:1-5

Jdg 10:1 After the time of Abimelech a man of Issachar, Tola son of Puah, the son of Dodo, rose to save Israel. He lived in Shamir, in the hill country of Ephraim.

Jdg 10:2 He led Israel twenty-three years; then he died, and was buried in Shamir.

Jair

Jdg 10:3 He was followed by Jair of Gilead, who led Israel twenty-two years.

Jdg 10:4 He had thirty sons, who rode thirty donkeys. They controlled thirty towns in Gilead, which to this day are called Havvoth Jair.

Jdg 10:5 When Jair died, he was buried in Kamon.

H. Jephthah and the Ammonites, Jdg 10:6-12:7

Jephthah

Jdg 10:6 Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD. They served the Baals and the Ashtoreths ... the Israelites forsook the LORD and no longer served him,

Jdg 10:7 he became angry with them. He sold them into the hands of the Philistines and the Ammonites,

Jdg 10:8 ... For eighteen years they oppressed all the Israelites on the east side of the Jordan in Gilead, the land of the Amorites.

Jdg 10:9 The Ammonites also crossed the Jordan to fight against Judah, Benjamin and the house of Ephraim; and Israel was in great distress.

Jdg 10:10 Then the Israelites cried out to the LORD, "We have sinned against you, forsaking our God and serving the Baals."

Jdg 10:11 The LORD replied,

Jdg 10:13 "you have forsaken me and served other gods, so I will no longer save you.

Jdg 10:14 Go and cry out to the gods you have chosen. Let them save you when you are in trouble!"

Jdg 10:15 But the Israelites said to the LORD, "We have sinned. Do with us whatever you think best, but please rescue us now."

Jdg 10:16 Then they got rid of the foreign gods among them and served the LORD. And he could bear Israel's misery no longer.

Jdg 10:17 When the Ammonites were called to arms and camped in Gilead, the Israelites assembled and camped at Mizpah.

Jdg 10:18 The leaders of the people of Gilead said to each other, "Whoever will launch the attack against the Ammonites will be the head of all those living in Gilead."

Jdg 11:1 Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty warrior. His father was Gilead; his mother was a prostitute.

Jdg 11:2 Gilead's wife also bore him sons, and when they were grown up, they drove Jephthah away. "You are not going to get any inheritance in our family," they said, "because you are the son of another woman."

Jdg 11:3 So Jephthah fled from his brothers and settled in the land of Tob, where a group of adventurers gathered around him and followed him ...

Jdg 11:5 the elders of Gilead went to get Jephthah from the land of Tob.

Jdg 11:6 "Come," they said, "be our commander, so we can fight the Ammonites."

Jdg 11:7 Jephthah said to them, "Didn't you hate me and drive me from my father's house? Why do you come to me now, when you're in trouble?"

Jdg 11:8 The elders of Gilead said to him, "Nevertheless, we are turning to you now; come with us to fight the Ammonites, and you will be our head over all who live in Gilead."

Jdg 11:9 Jephthah answered, "Suppose you take me back to fight the Ammonites and the LORD gives them to me-- will I really be your head?"

Jdg 11:10 The elders of Gilead replied, "The LORD is our witness; we will certainly do as you say."

Jdg 11:11 So Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead ... made him ... commander over them ...

Jdg 11:12 Then Jephthah sent messengers to the Ammonite king ... "What do you have against us that you have attacked our country?"

Jdg 11:13 The king of the Ammonites answered, "When Israel came up out of Egypt, they took away my land Now give it back peaceably."

Jdg 11:14 Jephthah sent back messengers ...

Jdg 11:15 ... "This is what Jephthah says: Israel did not take the land ...

Jdg 11:16 But when they came up out of Egypt, Israel went through the desert to the Red Sea and on to Kadesh ...

Jdg 11:24 Will you not take what your god Chemosh gives you? Likewise, whatever the LORD our God has given us, we will possess ...

Jdg 11:27 I have not wronged you, but you are doing me wrong by waging war against me. Let the LORD, the Judge, decide the dispute this day ..."

Jdg 11:28 The king of Ammon, however κ , paid no attention to the message ...

Jdg 11:29 Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah. He crossed Gilead and ... advanced against the Ammonites.

Jdg 11:30 And Jephthah made a vow to the LORD: "If you give the Ammonites into my hands,

Jdg 11:31 whatever comes out of the door of my house to meet me when I return in triumph ... I will sacrifice it as a burnt offering."

Jdg 11:32 Then Jephthah went over to fight the Ammonites, and the LORD gave them into his hands ...

Jdg 11:34 When Jephthah returned to his home in Mizpah, who should come out to meet him but his daughter, dancing to the sound of tambourines! She was an only child. ...

Jdg 11:35 When he saw her, he tore his clothes and cried ...

Jdg 11:36 "My father," she replied, "you have given your word to the LORD. Do to me just as you promised, now that the LORD has avenged you of your enemies, the Ammonites.

Jdg 11:37 But grant me this one request," she said \acute{y} . "Give me two months to roam the hills and weep with my friends, because I will never marry."

Jdg 11:38 "You may go," he said. And he let her go for two months. She and the girls went into the hills and wept because she would never marry.

Jdg 11:39 After the two months, she returned to her father and he did to her as he had vowed ...

1. Jephthah was a man who had rejected Israel and its laws. He was a renegade who lived amidst pagans where human sacrifice was acceptable.

2. Perhaps Jephthah expected a servant to appear first. The remembrance of his vow and the sight of his daughter changed the joy of the victor to the sorrow of a father about to lose his only child.

3. Human sacrifices were forbidden in Israel, but Jephthah had lived on the fringes of society, where heathen ideas prevailed. What many expositors have considered striking was Jephthah's taking the vow "so seriously."

4. Jephthah's daughter submitted to the demands of the vow without flinching. She requested a two-month period during which she might bewail (her) virginity with her companions. She seems to be the heroine.

5. Although some commentators suggest that her perpetual virginity would have been a fulfillment of the vow, the text seems to leave no doubt that Jephthah's daughter died at the hands of her father.

6. Jephthah was disciplined and his daughter crossed over into eternity, hopefully in the bosom of Abraham.

I. Jephthah at Ephraim, Jdg 12:1-7

Jdg 12:1 The men of Ephraim called out their forces, crossed over to Zaphon and said to Jephthah, "Why did you go to fight the Ammonites without calling us to go with you? We're going to burn down your house over your head."

Jdg 12:2 Jephthah answered, "I and my people were engaged in a great struggle with the Ammonites, and although I called, you didn't save me out of their hands."

Jdg 12:3 When I saw that you wouldn't help, I took my life in my hands and crossed over to fight the Ammonites, and the LORD gave me the victory over them. Now why have you come up today to fight me?"

Jdg 12:4 Jephthah then called together the men of Gilead and fought against Ephraim. The Gileadites struck them down because the Ephraimites had said, "You Gileadites are renegades from Ephraim and Manasseh ..."

Jdg 12:7 Jephthah led Israel six years. Then Jephthah the Gileadite died, and was buried in a town in Gilead.

J. Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon, Jdg 12:8-15

Jdg 12:8 After him, Ibzan of Bethlehem led Israel.

Jdg 12:9 He had thirty sons and thirty daughters. He gave his daughters away in marriage to those outside his clan, and for his sons he brought in thirty young women as wives from outside his clan. Ibzan led Israel seven years.

Jdg 12:10 Then Ibzan died, and was buried in Bethlehem.

Jdg 12:11 After him, Elon the Zebulunite led Israel ten years.

Jdg 12:12 Then Elon died, and was buried in Aijalon in the land of Zebulun.

Jdg 12:13 After him, Abdon son of Hillel, from Pirathon, led Israel.

Jdg 12:14 He had forty sons and thirty grandsons, who rode on seventy donkeys. He led Israel eight years.

Jdg 12:15 Then Abdon son of Hillel died, and was buried at Pirathon in Ephraim, in the hill country of the Amalekites.

End Lesson