

The Book of Judges: Jephthah

Sin corrupts how we understand God and His character which can lead to devastating results.

Judges 10:6-12:15

April 28, 2019/ May 8, 2019

TODAY'S TEXT

Text: **Judges 10:6-16**

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, ⁷ he became angry with them. He sold them into the hands of the Philistines and the Ammonites, ⁸ who that year shattered and crushed them. For eighteen years they oppressed all the Israelites on the east side of the Jordan in Gilead, the land of the Amorites. ⁹ The Ammonites also crossed the Jordan to fight against Judah, Benjamin and Ephraim; Israel was in great distress. ¹⁰ Then the Israelites cried out to the Lord, "We have sinned against you, forsaking our God and serving the Baals." ¹¹ The Lord replied, "When the Egyptians, the Amorites, the Ammonites, the Philistines, ¹² the Sidonians, the Amalekites and the Maonites oppressed you and you cried to me for help, did I not save you from their hands? ¹³ But you have forsaken me and served other gods, so I will no longer save you. ¹⁴ Go and cry out to the gods you have chosen. Let them save you when you are in trouble!" ¹⁵ But the Israelites said to the Lord, "We have sinned. Do with us whatever you think best, but please rescue us now." ¹⁶ Then they got rid of the foreign gods among them and served the Lord. And he could bear Israel's misery no longer.

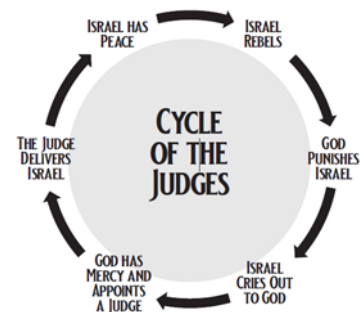
FIRST THOUGHTS

- Have you ever tried a product because it made incredible promises, only to find out it didn't do what it said?
- Have you ever made a rash promise that you later had to deliver on? How did it work out?

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

Following their deliverance by Gideon, the Israelites again returned to doing evil and rejecting the Lord. They quickly begin to follow other gods. We get several short verses mentioning the Judges who delivered them (Judges 10:1-5) and then enter the story of Jephthah. He lived was born in Gilead just north of the Dead Sea. Because he was an illegitimate child, his family drove him away. He fled to the east to the land of Tob and there became a kind of warlord. But when the Ammonites began to oppress the Israelites, they sought out Jephthah to lead them.

Who were the Ammonites? They were related to the Israelites as descendants of Abraham's nephew, Lot. They primarily worshipped Canaanite gods and fought with Israel. They were nomads who lived in the area of the modern day country of Jordan. The capital of Jordan, Amman, is a reflection of the ancient influence of the Ammonite people.



WATCH THE VIDEO

Look for these lessons in today's video:

- Lesson #1: We are more shaped by our culture's view of God than by the Word of God.
- Lesson #2: The human race has always had a hard time believing in God's grace.
- Lesson #3: We need a better judge.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

> Read Judges 10:6-14

- Note the cycle of Judges that Israel is repeating again. Why is it so hard for them to break free of this cycle of being delivered by God only to return to false Gods?
- We can sum up Israel's problem with the word devotion. Their devotion to God was crumbling. We may not be tempted by other pagan gods like Israel, but our devotion to God is constantly under attack. What does true devotion to God look like? How is our devotion attacked from the outside and the inside of our lives?
- Israel's consequence for their lack of devotion to God was oppression by pagan nations. What consequences do we as individuals face for our lack of devotion to God?

> Read Judges 10:15-16

- ° How does this passage express Israel's true repentance? What brought them to that point?
- ° How can we reach a point of true repentance for our sin? What does true repentance look like today?

> Read Judges 11:1-11

- ° Think about the Judges we have looked at so far: Deborah and Gideon. How are they like Jephthah? How are they different?
- ° What do we learn about Jephthah in these verses that show us he has a corrupted view of God?

> Read Judges 11:29-39

- ° What does it mean that "the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah" in v. 29?
- ° Why did Jephthah make this vow? Did God ask him to? What does this vow reveal about Jephthah's understanding of God?
- ° Jephthah is described in the video as having a "hot dog faith". What does that mean?
- ° In what ways has culture and other religions and the world shaped your view of God away from what the Bible teaches?
- ° This is a tough passage to read. What do you think is the lesson we are to take from this difficult story?

SUMMARIZE AND CHALLENGE

Select one of these things to do this week:

PRAY: Take five minutes this week to pray and consider your devotion to God. Ask Him to teach you what it means to have a heart completely devoted to Him.

REFLECT: Make a list or write in a journal some of the things in your life you're tempted to turn to instead of God. Reflect on why that might be the case and talk to God about it. Think about the ways your idea of God has been influenced by culture. How does this line up with what is revealed about God in Scripture?

DISCUSS: Sit down with someone this week and talk about some of the ways we can sometimes misunderstand God's character. Talk about how we can remind each other of God's true nature from Scripture and how we see it play out in our lives.

PREPARING FOR NEXT WEEK

- Remember you can always re-watch or catch up on past videos on www.rightnowmedia.com. If you don't have a log in, visit www.chetscreek.com/rightnow to request your free access. Search for the Judges series (it's on the Chets Creek Channel on the left hand side).

- Next week we begin looking at probably the most famous character in Judges—Samson. To begin the story, read Judges Chapters 13-14 this week. Look especially for verses that reveal Samson's character and devotion to God.

READ THROUGH THE BIBLE

28th – 2 Samuel 3; 1 Chronicles 12; Matthew 15 | **29th** – 2 Samuel 4-5; Psalm 139; Matthew 16 | **30th** – 2 Samuel 6; 1 Chronicles 13; Psalm 68; Matthew 17 | **1st** – 1 Chronicles 14-15; Psalm 132; Matthew 18 | **2nd** – 1 Chronicles 16; Psalm 106; Matthew 19 | **3rd** – 2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17; Psalm 2; Matthew 20 | **4th** – 2 Samuel 8-9; 1 Chronicles 18-19; Matthew 21