

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

- 1) 03-Jun..... Joshua 1:1-18
- 2) 10-Jun..... Joshua 2:1 – 6:27
- 3) 17-Jun..... Joshua 7:2 – 12:24
- 4) 24-Jun..... Joshua 13:1 – 22:34
- 5) 01-Jul..... Joshua 23:1 – 24:33
- 6) 08-Jul..... Judges 1:1 – 3:6
- 7) 15-Jul..... Judges 3:7 – 5:31
- 8) 22-Jul..... Judges 6:1 – 8:21
- 9) 29-Jul..... **Judges 8:22 – 12:15**
- 10) 05-Aug..... Judges 13:1 – 16:31
- 11) 12-Aug..... Judges 17:1 – 21:25
- 12) 19-Aug..... Ruth 1:1 – 2:23
- 13) 26-Aug..... Ruth 3:1 – 4:22

INTRODUCTION

- Today, we wrap up Gideon's story, then we look at some less notable judges (Tola, Jair, Ibzon, Elon, Abdon), and also some notorious judges (Abimelech – 1<sup>st</sup> king within Israel, Jephthah - possibly committed human sacrifice)

Passage	Comments
Judges 8:22-35	<p><b>Gideon's Good &amp; Bad Decisions Became His Legacy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vv22-23. Gideon rejects becoming a dynasty..... GOOD</li> <li>• vv24-27. However, Gideon makes a golden ephod from jewelry, and it becomes an idol ..... BAD decision                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Aaron made a golden calf from jewelry .....Ex 32:24</li> <li>♦ Moses' serpent also became an idol .....2Ki 18:4</li> <li>♦ What expensive artifacts are worshipped today? Cars? Boats? Hobbies? _____</li> </ul> </li> <li>• vv30-31. Gideon had many wives and one concubine, and fathered 70 sons and one illegitimate heir (talk about succumbing to one's sexual appetite)</li> <li>• We can assume God blessed Gideon with much wealth and he used it to support his "many wives" and 70 sons</li> <li>• God has blessed Americans beyond what we deserve, &amp; being so blessed we should live for God &amp; not for self</li> <li>• After all that Gideon did (good &amp; bad) he is portrayed in Hebrews 11:32 as a man of faith we should emulate</li> </ul>
9:1-57	<p><b>Abimelech, Illegitimate Son Of Gideon, Becomes King</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A whole chapter is dedicated to his ruthlessness, including killing his 70 half-brothers (v5)</li> <li>• v23. God intervenes by "sending an evil spirit" to disrupt the harmony between Abimelech and Shechem</li> <li>• v45. Abimelech killed every person in Shechem, including burning down a tower w/ 1000 men &amp; women in it</li> <li>• v53. Abimelech tried to repeat his success in the next town, but a woman dropped a rock on his head</li> <li>• v56. God brought vengeance &amp; justice upon Abimelech for killing Gideon's sons – but it took 3 years (v22)</li> </ul>
A Word on Vengeance	<p><b>Romans 12:19</b> Never take your own revenge, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance Is Mine, I Will Repay," says the Lord</p> <p><b>BUT WHY DOES GOD'S JUSTICE TAKE SO LONG?</b></p> <p><b>2Peter 3:9</b> The Lord is ... patient with everyone, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance (God is patient, and we should be too)</p>
10:-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vv1-5. Tola and Jair are quickly mentioned as judges who brought peace to the land over a 45 year period</li> <li>• v6. Israel again slips back into idolatry and even added to their sins by worshipping more and more gods</li> <li>• vv13-16. God says "NO MORE WILL I DELIVER YOU", &amp; like a loving parent He relents after they repent with fervency – for they put away their idols &amp; served God</li> </ul>

Passage	Comments
11:1-40	<p><b>Jephthah, Son Of A Harlot, Came To The Rescue and Makes a Needless Vow to Sacrifice Something</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Illegitimacy was viewed with disdain back then &amp; now</li> <li>• vv3-11. Jephthah puts his "Bad-Boy" reputation to good use by leveraging his "worthless fellows" who followed him to fight for Israel and rescue them from Ammonites</li> <li>• v29-40. The Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah to do battle and succeed. Jephthah did not need to make the vow he did to sacrifice the 1st thing out of his house, be it an animal (sheep) or servant                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ <b>Note:</b> It wasn't uncommon to have animals in the lower portion of a house to protect them from thieves or bad weather. Jesus might have been born in such a house with a built in stable. See lesson for <a href="#">Mat1-2</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Did Jephthah actually sacrifice his daughter?                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Some very reputable commentaries state he did (Jewish Talmud, Josephus, Barnes, JFB, MHC)</li> <li>♦ Some commentaries believed Jephthah made his daughter remain single (Clark)</li> <li>♦ Other commentaries remained silent on the matter (Calvin, Gill, Poole, Trapp)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• This is a tough one – especially since Jephthah is listed as a faithful agent in Hebrews 11:32, and God put His Spirit upon him (v29) to secure peace for Israel – BUT, other godly men, such as David &amp; Solomon, also committed serious flaws of murder, adultery &amp;/or idolatry</li> <li>• In either case, the Bible is clear that God is totally against human sacrifice – save for His own Son, or to show no greater love than to die for a friend .... Jn 15:13</li> </ul>
A Word on Illegitimacy	<p>It wasn't too long ago, even in America, a child born out of wedlock was ostracized at school and at work</p> <p>An Apocrypha passage: "<i>Her [illegitimate] children will not take root ...or bear fruit.</i> (Sirach 23:22-25 NRSV)</p> <p>BUT the Bible says illegitimacy is only bad when a child lives like an illegitimate (undisciplined) child &amp; not like an adopted child with a loving father (God).. Heb 12:7-8</p> <p>Recall that Jesus was illegitimate since Joseph was not his father – so illegitimacy need not be spiritually fatal</p>
12:1-15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vv1-7. Internal squabble ensues with the Ephraimites taking offense against Jephthah – and 42,000 die.</li> <li>• <b>Principle.</b> Never pick a fight with someone who has the Spirit of God upon him</li> <li>• vv8-15. Three minor judges, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon, judge Israel for a total of 25 years</li> </ul>

CONCLUSION/APPLICATIONS

- Not all judges were godly judges, just like not all Israelite kings were godly kings, and not all Levitical priests were godly priests
- God can even use the wicked to accomplish good – in this case to deliver Israel from oppressive regimes using a wicked Judge or 2
- ...& watch out for rash vows. God prefers obedience, not sacrifices

NEXT WEEK: **Judges 13-16.** Samson – the Judge who made decisions based on his emotions

