

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

1) 04 Dec 2016	Joshua 1:1-18
2) 11 Dec	Joshua 2:1 – 6:27
3) 18 Dec	Joshua 7:2 – 12:24
4) 25 Dec	Christmas Message Luke 1:26-38
5) 01 Jan 2017	Joshua 13:1 – 22:34
6) 08 Jan	Joshua 23:1 – 24:33
7) 15 Jan	Sanctity of Life Prov 24:10-12; Mark 10:46-49
8) 22 Jan.....	Judges 1:1 – 5:31
9) 29 Jan	Judges 6:1 – 12:15
10) 05 Feb.....	Judges 13:1 – 16:31
11) 12 Feb.....	Judges 17:1 – 21:25
12) 19 Feb.....	Ruth 1:1 – 2:23
13) 26 Feb.....	Ruth 3:1 – 4:22

INTRODUCTION

- The author of this book was most probably Samuel who would have composed it during Saul's reign (MH Commentary)
- In the years between Joshua and King Saul, God used the Levites to administer local justice along with a God-appointed "Judge" who rallied the troops on a national scale to help fight off oppressors
- These judges consisted of 17 men and 1 woman (Deborah) who provided sporadic rule over a 300 year period (see table at bottom)
- Five of the judges of Israel were deemed worthy to be included in the Hebrews' Hall of Faith – Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah and Samuel (**Hebrews 11:32**)
- God raised up these judges to bring some relief to the Israelites as they experienced judgment for their waywardness
- Unfortunately, Israel's moral state was spiraling downhill and reaching ever new lows of depravity

Passage	Comments
2:1-23 (cont'd)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv11-13. The Israelites did what was evil by worshipping the Baals. Baal (male) & Ashtoreth (female) worship involved sexual practices • The Israelites did the unthinkable – they worshipped the false gods of the people they conquered <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Israel captured Canaan, but Canaan captured Israel's lustful heart – Sex had priority in their lives • The wicked do not consider the consequences of their sinful actions.....Proverbs 5:6 • v15. Israel was being beaten down both by their enemies and by God..... What would fix this problem? • vv16-19. Judges were the answer – if only they listened <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ God chose to rescue His people not because of their righteousness or their prayers, but while they were suffering sinners God showed His love.....Rom 5:8 • vv20-23. God was not going to bless Israel for their despicable behavior – He was going to test them
3:1-6	<p>God Did Not Abandon Israel – But Proved Them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The remaining Canaanites accomplished the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They taught the Israelites the art of war (v2) 2. They were a challenge for Israel to obey God (v4) 3. However, they confirmed Israel's loyalty to serve their lusts by chasing other women and giving their women away (v6) – Sex was more important

Passage	Comments
Judges 1:1-36	<p>Israel went from Conquerors to Cowards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v1. After Joshua died Israel still "inquired of the Lord" • vv8, 21, 19, 27-33. Problems are soon perceived in Israel's inability to fully capture Jerusalem and the presence of Canaanites persistently living in the land • v34. We finally see the tribe of Dan escaping into the hill country to avoid conflict with the Amorites
2:1-23	<p>Cycle of Apostasy – Punishment – Restoration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v10. A generation rose up who did not know the Lord <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ We are always one generation away from apostasy ♦ Does each generation NEED to witness such wonders of God as those done in Egypt?.....2Cor 5:7

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

- Is America going in the same direction as the Israelites of this time period? It sure does look like it with promiscuous and alternative lifestyles being readily accepted – We are chasing after our lusts
- Can we expect similar chastisement from God?
 - ♦ You be the judge – consider wars that now last for decades, increased earthquakes, more devastating weather phenomena
 - ♦ Next on the hit list is shortage of basic necessities (food, water, fuel, shelter) and increase in communicable diseases
- God can work with a monarchy, a democracy, a communist regime, a socialist, even a dictatorship style government, but His ideal future government is a theocracy with Christ as King over all
- Let's continue to pray for our country, our government leaders that God will bless and sustain while He still gives us time to serve Him

Judge	Tribe	Enemy	Years of Bondage	Years of Rest	Passage	# Verses
1. Othniel	Judah	Mesopotamia	8	40	Judges 3:7-11	4
2. Ehud	Benjamin	Moabites	18	80	Judges 3:12-30	19
3. Shamgar	Unknown	Philistines	–	–	Judges 3:31	1
4 & 5. Deborah (prophetess) & Barak	Unknown	Canaanites	20	40	Judges 4:1-5:31	51
6. Gideon	Manasseh	Midianites	7	40	Judges 6:1-8:28	100
7. Abimelech (son of Gideon)	Manasseh	Himself	–	3	Judges 9:1-57	57
8. Tola	Issachar	Philistines	–	23	Judges 10:1-2	2
9. Jair	Gileadite	Philistines	–	22	Judges 10:3-5	3
10. Jephthah	Gileadite	Ammonites	18	6	Judges 10:6-12:7	60
11. Ibzon	Bethlemite	Ammonites	–	7	Judges 12:8-10	3
12. Elon	Zebulunite	Ammonites	–	10	Judges 12:11-12	2
13. Abdon	Pirathonite	Ammonites	–	8	Judges 12:13-15	3
14. Samson	Dan	Philistines	40	20	Judges 13:1-16:31	96
15. Eli (High Priest)	Levi	Philistines	–	40	1Samuel 1-4	101
16. Samuel	Levi	Philistines	–	–	1Samuel 7:1-17	17
17 & 18. Joel & Abijah (sons of Samuel)	Levi	Philistines	–	–	1Samuel 8:1-3	3

God Uses Women in Unique and Powerful Ways

- Deborah and Barak restore some order and provide some relief to the oppressed Israelites, but not without controversy

Passage	Comments
Judges 3:1-31	<p>Judges to the Rescue: Othniel – Ehud – Shamgar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv7-9. Israel continued their sexual worship of Baals and Asheroth. God knew what He was going to do, but He waited till they “cried to the Lord” – their heart had to be ready & willing to follow God. God wants to lead willing sheep, not stubborn cows..... Hosea 4:16 • Note on Prayer. God wants to bless us, but there are times He waits till we cry out to Him. So, don't wait too long to seek God's help. Seek Him early and often • v10. The Spirit of the Lord enabled Othniel to judge - None of us can accomplish God's work without Him • v12. Sin Cycle Repeats Itself – Israel slipped back into debauchery, and God sent more oppression to entice Israel to seek Him againWhen will they learn?
Note on Sexual Addiction	<p>Recovery from sexual addiction on a national scale has never happened. God always had to wipe the slate clean</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God used the global flood to wipe out early man for their sexual deviances • God wiped out Sodom & Gomorrah for their sex sins • God used Israel to wipe out the Canaanites for their unrepentant behavior into homosexuality, bestiality • Tribe of Benjamin nearly wiped out for their sex sins • God used heathen nations to nearly wipe out Israel for their sins of homosexuality, bestiality, child sacrifice • Historians believe the Roman empire collapsed from within because it gravitated to a promiscuous society (adultery, incest, pedophilia, homosexuality were OK)
4:1-24	<p>Deborah and Barak to the Rescue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v4. We see Deborah was not only a judge of Israel, she was also a prophetess – and a wife (triple duty) • v5. Her office was under a palm tree, & Israel accepted her dual role (prophetess and judge) since they eagerly went to her for legal & spiritual rulings & insight. Her God-given abilities were evident to the people (she was not a self-proclaimed prophetess or judge) • vv6-7. Her prophetic role revealed God's willingness to defeat Sisera – if Barak was willing to follow directions • v8. But Barak had conditions – Deborah had to go with him or no deal. Was this a lack of faith on his part? If so, how did Barak get mentioned in the Hebrews Hall of Faith (Heb 11:32) and not Deborah? See 5:15
Other Women Prophets	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Miriam, sister of Moses.....Exodus 15:20 2. Huldah during King Josiah's reign2Kings 22:14 3. Noadiah during Neh's temple restoration Neh 6:14 4. AnnaLuke 2:36 5-8. Philip's 4 daughters.....Acts 21:9
Roles of Men and Women in Church and in Society	<p>Secular Leadership. Biblically, God has no problems with women being in government leadership, as shown here in Judges 4, with Deborah being commissioned by God and readily accepted by her compatriots.</p> <p>Note: Deborah did not perform the functions of a priest</p> <p>Spiritual Leadership. Biblically, God has no problems with women having various roles of leadership within the church – with few exceptions (Elders and Deacons)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How about Missionaries or Sunday School teachers? • Overriding Principle – Usurping authority... 1Tim 2:12

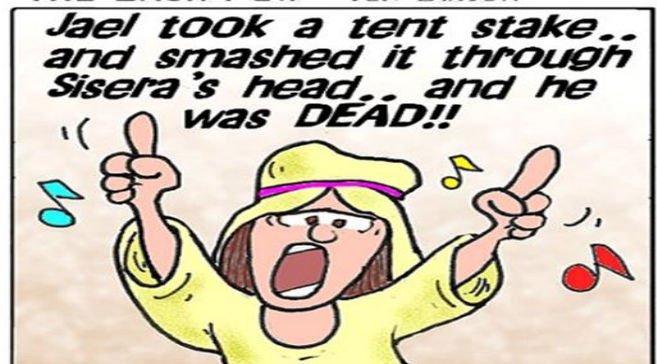
Passage	Comments
	<p>Other Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priscilla & Aquila both taught Apollos...Acts 18:24-26 • Phoebe was acknowledged by Paul for her important role at her home church as a servant/deaconess (διακονος diakonos)Romans 16:1 • Other women Paul highlighted in Romans 16 for their servitude on equal footing with the men: Tryphaena, Tryphosa, Persis, Mary, Rufus' mother, Julia, Nereus' sister, and Junia. Junia had quite the reputation amongst the Apostles <p>Gender Role Exceptions for Women. God has given specific roles for qualified men (not all men) to fill the office of Pastors/Elders and Deacons 1Tim 3; Titus 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is not because women are not able to do a great job (or even a better job) in these roles, but simply because God stated He wants men in these roles. After all, if women were in these roles too, what would men be good for? <p>Gender Role Exceptions for Men. God has given older women the responsibility to teach younger women how they should love their husbands..... Titus 2:4</p> <p>Men might be able to convey general scriptural principles in a co-ed environment, but for a man to come along side in a 1-on-1 mentorship with a woman (other than his wife) would cause too many other problems to even count</p>
Authority of God's Word	<p>Churches today still struggle with gender roles and what constitutes a marriage because of a disregard for God's authoritative Word beginning in Genesis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Episcopal church affirms transgender ordination • Baptist church with lesbian couple as co-pastors • SBC churches with gay/transgender pastors • SBC churches with women pastors
5:1-31	<p>Deborah Can Sing Too</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v7. Deborah credits herself for restoring order and peace in Israel – and rightly so • v15. Barak fought the fight that had to be fought – He trusted in God's command given through Deborah (4:6)

CONCLUSION/APPLICATIONS

- To reverse a society from totally spiraling out of control and reaping God's full wrath takes special men and women totally dedicated to God, and willing to take the heat for doing what's right

NEXT WEEK: **Judges 6-8.** One of the most infamous judges, Gideon, was also one of the most questioning – “Where are God's miracles?”

THE BACK PEW - JEFF LARSON



“OK, one more time from the top now – here we go!”

The Song of Deborah ([Judges 5](#)). Deb graduated from the Moses School of Music with a major in Shock Rock Lyrics