Judges

Week 3, 2022

Introduction

Read Judges 6:19-24

Gideon built this altar after seeing a clear sign of God’s presence. What would you do if you saw God so clearly that you had no choice but to believe in God?

The story goes on to tell us that even after this strange encounter with God, Gideon was afraid to follow God’s commands because of what other people might think of him (verse 27). What does this tell you about the leaders God chooses?

Read Judges 21:25

What stands out to you?

What does “all the people did what was right in their own eyes mean to you? Is it necessarily a bad thing? Could you imagine a situation in which it would be seen as possible?

If our church split into twelve groups and basically went their separate ways, how would we go about trying to hear from God?

Where is God in this verse?

If you had one leader giving you one instruction and another telling you something else, how would you decide what to do?

After God’s people left Egypt, they had to figure out a way to organize themselves. So God gave them leaders called judges to help them sort through their problems and make wise decisions. Sometimes, the judges in the Bible were helpful, and other times, they were, well, human.

Which of the following do you think would be most helpful in running a nation? Circle your top choice.

A military leader, a monarch (king/queen), a judge, a president.

Explain your choice. What are the strengths of this kind of leader? What are some weaknesses of this kind of leadership?

Read Judges 21:25

The judges in the Bible weren’t really like the judges we have today. They didn’t run courtrooms or send people to jail. Some were more like governors, others more like generals. Why do God feel the people needed a judge?

Which tool is best?

Read these passages: Judges 16:4-9 (Samson), Judges 4:4-10 (Deborah and Barak).

Which tool do you think Deborah, Samson, and Barak would use? (wrench, hammer, or screwdriver). Why?

Women in Leadership

These days, we are used to seeing women in leadership positions. But during the time of Judges, it was less common. In fact, out of the twelve judges mentioned, Deborah was the only woman. What made her an effective leader?

Barak

Barak played an important part in the narrative of God’s people—but he wasn’t a judge. He was a warrior. What are the traits of a good warrior? What are the traits of a good judge? Why would a warrior like Barak need the help of a judge like Deborah?

The judges were one of the ways God gave the Israelites help. Eventually, God gave them kings instead. Would you rather be led by a king or a judge. Explain and discuss your choice.

God provides us with all kinds of tools for creating a life of faith. What tools have helped you in your life of faith.

Draw or write places where you feel close to God.

Write the names of people who help you stay connected to God.

Write the things you’ve read that make you think about God.

You rule!

Get into groups of 3 or more (or do this at home with family). Together, write three “decrees that the whole group has to obey, like everyone has to speak with a British accent or everyone has to walk backward. Write your decrees on a piece of paper and share them with the larger group.

Spend 5-10 minutes trying to obey all of the decrees your small group came up with. Choose three people to act as judges who will ask people to sit down when they break a decree.

Talk about the challenges of following more than one set of rules.