Murray Baptist Church – 10/6/20 – Bible Study Outline – Judges

**Introduction:**

The book of Judges covers the timeframe that God revealed himself to the people of Israel through the judges. This was before Israel had kings, before the prophets. This time was between the death of Joshua after the Israelites entered into the promised land. The judges were part of the leadership succession of Israel. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Judges. Judges were ruling in essence until the time of the kings.

Most people think that Israel’s pattern of walking with God, God’s direction, the people getting what was promised, their praise of God, their complacency, their disobedience, God’s judgment and their defeat to other people, started in Kings, but it didn’t.

* The pattern began after Joshua died Judges 1:1-3:6
* No leadership succession (Moses had Joshua
* Joshua didn’t have a successor to follow after him when he died
  + It took a toll on group politically and from a military standpoint
  + More importantly, it took toll spiritually

Background

Chapter 1:19-36 – this passage provides some important insights for us

* The significance of the chariots of iron (Joshua 17:16)
* The failure to obey resulted in the enemies that God said would be driven out, we allowed to stay in the promised land
* The things we refuse to deal with appropriately have a way of coming back to us over and over again
* Application: Just as God allowed obstacles to remain in the way of the Israelites help them exercise faith and obedience. Think about how God has allowed obstacles to remain in our lives – hostile people, difficult situations, baffling problems – to allow you to develop faith and obedience.

Judges 2:10-16 – this passage sheds light onto what happens when the spiritual foundation is not there

Judges 3:1-3 – these verses speak to why the nations that plagued God’s people would continue to plague them.

Judges of Israel could be…

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| …saviors (deliverers) and redeemers (**Gideon**) | …mediators and administrators (**Tola**) |
| …providers of rest and peace (**Ehud ad Jair**) | …rude, petty dictators (**Jephthah**) |
| …famous and powerful (**Samson**) | …hardworking yet unsung (**Elon** and **Abdon**) |
| …leaders of the nation (**Othniel** and **Deborah**) | …local heroes (**Shamgar** and **Ibzan**) |

Profile of the Judges of Israel

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Judge | Years of Judging | Memorable Acts | Reference |
| Othniel | 40 | Captured a powerful Canaanite city | Judges 3:7-11 |
| Ehud | 80 | He killed Eglon and defeated the Moabites | Judges 3:12-30 |
| Shamgar | Not told | He killed 600 Philistines with an oxgoad | Judges 3:31 |
| Deborah (w/ Barak) | 40 | She defeated Sisera and the Canaanites and later sang a victory song with Barak | Judges 4 – 5 |
| Gideon | 40 | He destroyed his family idols, used a fleece to determine God’s will, raised an army of 10,000, and defeated 135,000 Midianites with 300 soldiers | Judges 6 – 8 |
| Tola | 23 | He judged Israel for 23 years | Judges 10:1,2 |
| Jair | 22 | He had 30 sons | Judges 10:3-5 |
| Jephthah | 6 | He made a rash vow, defeated the Ammonites, and later battled jealous Ephraim | Judges 10:6-12:7 |
| Ibzan | 7 | He had 30 sons and 30 daughters | Judges 12:8-10 |
| Elon | 10 | Not detailed | Judges 12:11-12 |
| Abdon | 8 | He had 40 sons and 30 grandsons, each of whom had his own donkey | Judges 12:13-15 |
| Samson | 20 | He was a Nazirite, killed a lion with his bare hands, burned the Philistine wheat fields, killed 1000 Philistines with a donkey’s jawbone, tore off an iron gate, was betrayed by Delilah, and destroyed thousands of Philistines in one last mighty act | Judges 13-16 |

Othniel – First Judge

Judges 3:7-11

* When the people cried out, God sent a deliverer
* Caleb’s nephew
* He became Israel’s judge and went to war
* Resulted in 40 years of peace

Ehud and Shamgar – Second Judge

* Israelites were subject King Eglon for 18 years
* The people cried out, God sent a deliverer
* Left-handed soldier
* Carried out an assassination of Eglon
* Ehud led Israel and the land had 80 years of peace

Shamgar – Third Judge

* Not disclosed how long he served
* Known for killing 600 Philistines with an oxgoad. An oxgoad was a long stick with a small flat piece of iron on one side and a sharp point on the other. The sharp side was used to drive the oxen during times of plowing. The flat end was used to clean the mud off of the plow.