

## A Dark Time in History

### (Judges 21:25)

The topic of the judges is not one that you hear discussed much among religious people today. But it was a critical period in Israel's history. It was a very dark time in Israel's history, one that would define them for several hundred years.

Like the rest of the Bible, the book of Judges is also the inspired word of God (2 Timothy 3:16). It also contains many valuable lessons that can help us as Christians today (Romans 15:4).

#### I. The Background:

- A. When Judges opens up, Israel has completed its **40** years of wandering in the wilderness. An entire faithless generation has died. The great leader and lawgiver Moses has died.
- B. Joshua has led a seven year **conquest** on taking Canaan.
- C. The tribes have **divided** up the land (Joshua 13-22).
- D. Joshua has told Israel to **wipe out** the remaining Canaanites (Joshua 23-24).
- E. **Judah** took the initiative to do what Joshua said (Judges 1:1-10).
- F. The tribes did not follow Judah's example (Judges 1:27-36).
- G. As a result, God got **angry** and promised not to help Israel **drive** the Canaanites in the future (Judges 2:1-5).

#### II. The 350 Year Cycle:

- A. **Relapse** (Judges 2:11-12)
- B. **Retribution** (Judges 2:13-15)
- C. **Repentance** (Judges 3:9).
- D. **Rescue** (Judges 2:16-18)
- E. **Rest** (Judges 3:11, 30; 5:31; 8:28)

#### III. The Judges:

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| A. Judges were deliverers of God's people from their oppressors. |                                |
| B. Othniel (Judges 3:7-11)                                       | I. Jephthah (Judges 10:5-12:7) |
| C. Ehud (Judges 3:12-30)   | J. Ibzan (Judges 12:8-10)      |
| D. Shamgar (Judges 3:31)   | K. Elon (Judges 12:11-12)      |
| E. Deborah (Judges 4-5)  | L. Abdon (Judges 12:13-15)     |
| F. Gideon (Judges 6-8)   | L. Samson (Judges 13-16)       |
| G. Tola (Judges 10:1-2)  | M. Eli (1 Samuel 4:18)         |
| H. Jair (Judges 10:3-4)  | N. Samuel (1 Samuel 7:15)      |

#### IV. The Lessons:

- A. **Sin** is serious business to God! (See Judges 3:7, 12; 4:1; 6:1; 10:6; 13:1).
- B. God is **merciful** and **forgiving** (Judges 3:9, 15; 10:10; 13:5; Jonah 4:1-2; Ephesians 2:4-5).
- C. If we are not careful, it is easy to **forget** about God (Judges 2:19).

**Conclusion:** Life would have been so much better for Israel if they had just **listened** to God. Will we **learn** from their **learn** ?