

BOOK OF JUDGES
WHAT COMES NEXT?—PART 1
JUDGES 1:1-16

Introduction

In the last chapter of the **BOOK OF JOSHUA** we saw the last chapter in the life of **JOSHUA**, **MOSES SUCCESSOR**, who died at the age of **110!** (*Joshua 24:29*)

JOSHUA proved himself to be a **MAN OF GOD** as well as a very capable leader! He led **ISRAEL** into the **PROMISED LAND** and fought along side them as they began the **CONQUEST** for the land the **LORD** had **PROMISED** them!

Just prior to his death, we saw how **JOSHUA** had warned **ISRAEL** of the **DANGER** of becoming **COMPLACENT** in *Joshua 23*. Then in *Joshua 24* he gathered all the leaders of **ISRAEL** and reminded them of what the **LORD GOD OF ISRAEL** had done for **ISRAEL** from the days of **FATHER ABRAHAM** to the where they were!

JOSHUA then he challenged them to **FORSAKE ALL OTHER GODS, RENEW THEIR COMMITMENT TO THE LORD, FEAR THE LORD, SERVE HIM** alone, and to **STAY THE COURSE** with **HIM!**

The **LORD** had given instruction in **MOSES'** day to this same end to deliver to them! **MOSES** warned them of the dire consequences of forsaking **THE LORD** and being **DISOBEDIENT** to **HIM!** (*Cf. Deuteronomy 8:11–20*)

So, with them being properly admonished and warned, **JOSHUA** died and in the absence of his leadership there seemed to be a question about “**WHAT COMES NEXT?**” That often happens when a leader passes of the scene!

I. WE SEE A PROPER CONFIDENCE—ISRAEL ASKED THE LORD WHAT WAS NEXT! (Vs 1)

Remember now, that **JOSHUA** had divided up the **LAND** among the **TRIBES** but there were still **BATTLES** to be fought and **ENEMIES** that needed to be **DEFEATED** and **DRIVEN OUT OF THE LAND!** So, what would **ISRAEL** do without **JOSHUA?** (Good question!)

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What do the **LORD'S** people do when their leader dies or becomes unable to lead them? Can they continue to do the **LORD'S WILL?** **ISRAEL** knew that **JOSHUA** simply followed the **LORD**, so it was truly the **LORD** who led **ISRAEL!**

Therefore, they rightly inquired of the **LORD** after **JOSHUA'S** death. Sadly, when a **SPIRITUAL LEADER** dies or is no longer able to lead, some people stray from the **LORD** and turn away from **HIM** but **ISRAEL** saw the need to turn to the **LORD** after **JOSHUA'S** death... at least initially!

In our journey through this **BOOK** we will see how very early on they do not **STAY THE COURSE** as **JOSHUA** told them they must do!

But at this point, **ISRAEL** knew that the **LORD'S PROMISES** regarding the **LAND** was to them, not just to **JOSHUA**. So, they asked the **LORD** what to do next! That was a great choice! And the **LORD** told them what to do next!

WE SEE A PROPER CONFIDENCE...

II. WE SEE A PROPER COMMAND—THE LORD'S ANSWER TO ISRAEL! (Vs 2)

Now, we see initially things seem to be going well here—at least on the surface! However we're going to see later that some things changed. The **LORD** didn't change, but the people's obedience did!

We can tell that by comparing the opening verse of this book with the closing verse, which summarizes **ISRAEL'S** first three hundred years in the **LAND**.

Judges 21:25—“In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.”

In *Judges 1:1*, when Israel sought the **LORD'S WILL** and saw **HIM** as being their **KING**, they prospered!

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But shortly afterward we're going to see them become **INDIFFERENT** to the **WORD OF THE LORD** and by the end of the book it is clearly evident that **ISRAEL** sought its own will, not the **LORD'S WILL**, and they suffered for it.

WE SEE A PROPER CONFIDENCE...COMMAND...

III. WE SEE A PROPER COOPERATION/COLLABORATION—JUDAH ASKED SIMEON FOR HELP! (Vs 3)

We need to remember that there is nothing wrong with asking our brethren in the **LORD** for help! It was true then and it is still true in this age in which we live, the **CHURCH AGE!** (*1 Cor. 3:5-10*)

BRETHREN FIGHTING TOGETHER WITH EACH OTHER and **FOR EACH OTHER** against a common enemy instead of fighting each other! There is a great lesson there! A lot more can be accomplished **TOGETHER** than on our own! **COOPERATION** against a common enemy for a common purpose is needed and is also jointly beneficial!!

IV. WE SEE A PROPER CONSEQUENCE—GOD GAVE JUDAH THE VICTORY! (Vs 4-7)

When we first **SEEK THE LORD** and then we **FOLLOW HIS WORD**, then and only then can we be assured of the **VICTORY!**

Even this pagan king could see the truth that **WE REAP WHAT WE SOW!** (Some call it "**KARMA**" while some say "**WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND!**" **GOD** says, "**YOU REAP WHAT YOU SOW!**")

This pagan king didn't kill these other kings. That would have been more merciful. He let them live, but he disfigured them in such a way that he made their lives hard on them.

Without big toes, they could not run or even be very steady on their feet. Without thumbs, they could not use a sword or even pick things up without great effort!

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After he chopped off the thumbs and big toes off the first several kings, he may have thought that he could continue to do so with no consequences. He managed to disfigure 70 other kings before he finally reaped what he had sown.

There comes a time when, if we **SIN IN ARROGANCE WITHOUT REPENTING**, our sin will find us out! (*Numbers 32:23*) No one can **SIN WITH IMPUNITY!**

What we perceive as delay or **GOD** overlooking is really **MERCY** on the part of **GOD** as **HE** waits for us to **REPENT!** (*Romans 2:4* speaks of the riches of **HIS GOODNESS, FORBEARANCE**, and **LONGSUFFERING** are meant to lead us to **REPENTANCE!**)

V. WE SEE A PREVIOUS CONUNDRUM—JUDAH HAD STOPPED SHORT OF FULL OBEDIENCE IN THEIR PREVIOUS BATTLE FOR JERUSALEM. (Vs 8-11)

Joshua 12:8–10 says **JOSHUA** and **ISRAEL** had already conquered **JERUSALEM** at one point earlier.

Joshua 15:63 shows it to have been less than a total **VICTORY**. *Joshua 15:63*—“As for the Jebusites the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out: but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day.”

Verse 9 here in **JUDGES 1** shows that **JUDAH** went on to other battles. So, the **JEBUSITES** that escaped must have come back, because *verse 21* says that **BENJAMIN** did not drive out the **JEBUSITES**, that inhabited **JERUSALEM!**

In fact, **JERUSALEM** was not fully taken until the time of **DAVID!** (*2 Samuel 5:6–9*)

VI. WE SEE A PROPOSAL CONTRACTED—CALEB OFFERED HIS DAUGHTER FOR A VICTORY AGAINST KIRJATHSEPHER! (Vs. 12-15)

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We saw and dealt with this when we were in Joshua 15:16-19. This is a retelling of that incident. So we're not going to cover it again.)

VII. WE SEE A PRIVILEGE CONFERRED—MOSES' FATHER-IN-LAW'S CHILDREN WERE ALLOWED TO SETTLE AMONG THE PEOPLE. (Vs 16)

In *Exodus 18*, **MOSES'** father-in-law, **JETHRO** or **JETHER**, meaning *pre-eminence or excellence* and also named **REUEL** or **RAGUEL**, meaning "*friend of God*"), was an Arab sheik and a priest of **MIDIAN**, met **MOSES** and **ISRAEL** when they were encamped near the mount of **GOD** just prior to **GOD** giving the **LAW** to **MOSES**.

After having a good meeting with **MOSES**, **SCRIPTURE** says he left and went back to his own land.

But in *Numbers 10:29-32*, we find **MOSES** talking to **HOBAB**, who was his brother-in-law, one of the son's of **MOSES'** father-in-law. **MOSES** talked him and his family into making the journey with them to the **PROMISED LAND** to be a help to them in the strange land!

So this is **ISRAEL** following through on **MOSES'** promise to his brother-in-law.

CONCLUSION

That's as far as we're going to go tonight.

LORD WILLING, we'll pick back up in *verse 17* next week when we will begin to see some problems for the children of **ISRAEL** as they fail to fulfill the **LORD'S COMMANDS!**