

BOOK OF JUDGES
OBSCURE BUT IMPORTANT JUDGES!-PT 2
JUDGES 10:1-5

Introduction

We are looking at the first five verses in Judges 10 at **TOLA** and **JAIR**. These are two of six **JUDGES** in this Book that are considered **MINOR JUDGES**. Understand that all six of these **MINOR JUDGES** may be **OBSCURE**, **BUT they were, nevertheless, IMPORTANT JUDGES**.

The reason these men are considered **MINOR JUDGES** is because **we know very little about them because they weren't necessarily considered great military leaders** like some of the other well known **JUDGES** we've considered! Yet, they were **men who helped maintain the PEACE** in the nation of **ISRAEL**. While they might not have been mighty in their military exploits, **they were just as important to the nation of ISRAEL as those JUDGES that led the nation to great military victories!**

The main thing I want us to take away from these messages is this: **We don't have to be well known to make a difference for the glory of GOD!** In fact, **GOD delights in using unheralded and unknown servants to help HIS people, to glorify HIS name and to build HIS kingdom!** We need to see that **GOD can and will use us if we will make ourselves available to HIM!**

We saw in our first message about this that...

- I. *TOLA HAD AN INHERITED MESS! (Vs 1)*
The nation of ISRAEL was left in tatters from a brutal civil war during ABIMELECH'S three-year reign.
Also the people of ISRAEL had turned their backs on GOD and resorted back to a form of BAAL worship!
As a result of all these problems, the nation of ISRAEL was in a mess!
We gave two important principles here:
 - A. *We Need To Understand That The LORD Always Has A FAITHFUL, BELIEVING REMNANT!*
 - B. *We Need To Understand That SERVING THE LORD Is Never Easy, But It Is ALWAYS RIGHT!*
Both of these men chose to SERVE THE LORD!

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- II. *BOTH TOLA AND JAIR HAD IMPORTANT MINISTRIES! (vs. 1-5)*
There were no great exploits on a battlefield that we can see, but what they did accomplish deserves our consideration.
What they did should still CHALLENGE us today!

They MINISTERED to the FAITHFUL REMNANT in ISRAEL in a time when that FADING REMNANT needed CONSISTENT LEADERSHIP!

TOLA and **JAIR** did in their day exactly what we are supposed to be doing in our day. They acted like **SALT!** Remember how **JESUS** said that **BELIEVERS** are to be *"the salt of the earth"* in *Matthew 5:13*? **HE** was speaking there about our **INFLUENCE** on those around us!

SALT, as we know, **PURIFIES, ADDS FLAVOR** to bland foods, and **HELPS PRESERVE** meat! In **BIBLE** times, **SALT** was more valuable than money!

The ancient **ROMANS** were known at times to **give a soldier his pay in SALT rather than money**. The word *"SALARY"* comes to us from the **ROMAN** word *"SALARIIUM"*, which speaks of a soldier being paid in **SALT**. That's where we get the phrase *"not worth his salt."*

When **JESUS** called **HIS** people *"the salt of the earth"*, **HE** used it as a metaphor to teach us about the **influence** we are to have in the world! So let's consider the **INFLUENCE** we are to be!

- A. **SALT Speaks Of A PRESERVING INFLUENCE!**
SALT wards off **ROT** and **DECAY!** It is rubbed into meat in an effort to **PRESERVE IT**.
(e.g. Let's think about LOT and his family in SODOM and GOMORRAH in Genesis 18-19. Remember how the LORD told ABRAHAM that if he could find just 10 righteous men he would not destroy those cities! Sadly, Lot and his family had lost their savor and so they weren't much of a PRESERVING INFLUENCE as they should have been! In fact SODOM and GOMORRAH influenced LOT and his family!)

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(e.g. On the other hand consider the life of **JOSEPH!** It was **evident every step of the way that the LORD was with him!** In **Genesis 39-50** we see that the effect of his **RIGHTEOUS INFLUENCE** cannot be denied! It is an **INFLUENCE** that affected both the **RIGHTEOUS** and the **HEATHEN!**)

In our own country today! It has been the **PRESENCE** and the **PRAYERS** of an **INFLUENTIAL REMNANT** of “*salty*” **BELIEVERS** in our nation that has done more to **PRESERVE** our nation up to this point than anything else we could name.

It has been the **RIGHTEOUSNESS** of **GOD’S** children that has made America great! And I believe it is also what has held back this country from heavier judgment than what we’ve seen! (*Proverbs 14:34–“Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.”*)

Sadly, **SALTY BELIEVERS** are in decline and, consequently, so is the amount of **PRESERVING INFLUENCE** and our nation suffers because of that!

- B. SALT Speaks Of A PENETRATING INFLUENCE!**
SALT will **PENETRATE** and **INFILTRATE** whatever it touches. It is an aggressive substance.
(e.g. *The early Church - Acts 8:1, 4; Acts 17:6.*)

The **LORD** wants us to be an **ACTIVE FORCE** affecting the world around us that we come into contact with!

- C. SALT Speaks Of A PURIFYING INFLUENCE!**
SALT has remarkable **PURIFYING** or **cleansing ability!**
(e.g. *2 Kings 2:19-22* - Elisha cleansed the waters at Jericho with **SALT**. In ancient times, newborn babies were washed in **SALT** to cleanse their bodies and to give firmness to their skin, *Ezekiel 16:4.*)

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SALT is used in water purification to **REMOVE HARDNESS** from water. **HARDNESS** is caused by the presence of calcium and magnesium ions in water. When **SALT** is added to **HARD WATER**, it reacts with the calcium and magnesium ions to form insoluble precipitates that can be removed by filtration. This process is called ion exchange

SALT in a wound can cleanse the area!
BELIEVERS can have a **PURIFYING EFFECT** on the world around them. I remember the time when folks would behave differently when someone they knew was a **CHILD OF GOD** walked up. That doesn’t seem to happen as much anymore, but I wonder does it have to do more with their **HARDNESS** or with our lack of **SALTINESS!**

Every meat offering was to be made with SALT!
(*Leviticus 2:13*) So it is with our lives. We are to offer our lives as an offering to the Lord, *Romans 12:1-2*. When we do we are to have and be a **PURIFYING INFLUENCE!**

- D. SALT Speaks Of A PLEASING INFLUENCE!**
It brings out the best in food. **SALT** blends and enhances the flavor of food. In fact, there are some foods that are difficult to eat if there is no **SALT!** (e.g. *Grits...Rice*)

So too, the **BELIEVER** should flavor the world around him. As **SALT**, we are to so live our lives that we bring out the best in those around us.

Colossians 4:6–“Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

Philippians 1:27–“Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;”

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E. SALT Speaks Of A POISONING INFLUENCE!
SALT kills some things! (e.g. Slugs and **SALT** do not mix!
SALT poured on a lawn will kill the grass.)

(e.g. Abimelech, whom we were talking about, in *Judges 9:45*, took a city and sowed the city with **SALT** to prevent the ground from being used to grow crops. He killed the fields with **SALT**.)

By the same token, when true **CHRISTIANITY** is sowed into the lives, homes, and communities of the world, some things will be put to death.

We can make an impact on our world by the very fact that true **CHRISTIANITY** is pure poison to **SIN**. When **JESUS** comes into a life, drinking, cussing, fighting, hating, killing, drugging, loose living, and such wicked things, are all put to death as we yield to the **LORD** in sanctification! (*2 Corinthians 5:17*)

F. SALT Speaks Of A PROMOTING INFLUENCE!
SALT creates a **THIRST** for **WATER**!
As **SALT**, the **BELIEVER** has the wonderful opportunity to **PROMOTE A THIRST FOR JESUS** in the world.

Remember what the **LORD** told us? **HE** said that out of our bellies would flow rivers of living water! (*John 7:37-38*)

When we live as **CHRISTIANS SHOULD LIVE**. When we take the call of **JESUS** seriously and **LIVE RIGHT, LOOK RIGHT, ACT RIGHT, TALK RIGHT, and WORSHIP RIGHT!** Then we have the ability to **CREATE A THIRST FOR JESUS** in the hearts of those around us!

When that happens, we can point men to **JESUS** and **SHARE WITH THEM THE WATER OF LIFE!**

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Sadly, most **BELIEVERS** don't **PROMOTE THIRST**, but rather ridicule! When someone who names the name of **CHRIST** lives a substandard, inconsistent **LIFE** it is not a good thing!

The world sees that and they say, "*Why should I receive Jesus? I live just as good as that crowd down at the Church!*"

We need to so live our lives such that we prove them wrong! Our lives must be above reproach if we are to **CREATE A THIRST** for **GOD** in the world around us!

We must never give anyone cause to say, "*If that is a Christian, then no thank you!*" Instead, our lives ought to motivate people to say, "*That is what I want my life to be.*"

G. SALT Speaks Of A PROVEN INFLUENCE!
SALT CHANGES nearly everything it touches.
(e.g. Food, ice, etc.)

We are called to be **INSTRUMENTS OF CHANGE** in the world around us! When genuine, New Testament Christianity touches this sinful, wicked world, there will be a change of some variety.

We just need to be sure that we are changing the world and not the other way around! There is a modern mentality which says, "*We have to be like the world to win the world.*" We'll see more people saved when we are like **JESUS!**

TOLA and **JAIR** carried out a very important ministry in **ISRAEL**. **GOD** used them to **INFLUENCE** the nation of **ISRAEL** in their time. **GOD** used them to **MAINTAIN PEACE** for **ISRAEL**. **GOD** used them for **HIS GLORY**, and that is the mark of a **SUCCESSFUL MINISTRY!**

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By the same token, if we can simply **GLORIFY GOD** by being **FAITHFUL** in our day and by helping to **INFLUENCE** the next generation for **GOD**, we will have been successful!

Conclusion

Tola and Jair are not well known to us, but they faithfully served for a total of 45 years. We're not given a lot of detail about that they did, but could I tell you it was important for those who lived during that time!

Listen, we don't have to be famous make a difference, we just have to be FAITHFUL to the LORD! Some people think they can't be used of the **LORD** because they're not well known. Just remember that **GOD** has placed each of us exactly where **HE** wants us! **HE doesn't call on us to be famous, HE calls on us to be FAITHFUL! HE wants us to be all we can be for HIM right where we are until HE shows us the next step HE has for us!**

If we will just live for **JESUS FAITHFULLY**, serve **HIS CHURCH**, raise our family to honor **HIM** and **HIS WORD**, help others around us to be their best for the **LORD**, and be a salty witness for the **LORD**, our life for **JESUS** will be extraordinary!

So, let me encourage you to keep living for the **LORD** regardless of what is going on around you.

- Keep living for **HIM** even when times are lean.
- Keep living for **HIM** even when others fall away.
- Keep living for **HIM** even when you are attacked for it.
- Keep living for **HIM** even when it is unpopular.
- Keep living for **HIM** even when others walk away.

Because at the end of a life of faithful, consistent love and service for the **LORD** you will hear these words, "*Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord,*" *Matt. 25:21.*