
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2023

The Church According to Judges

History always repeats itself.

God's Purpose for Israel

- The mission and desire of God's heart was to raise up one nation whose testimony would have an impact on all the other nations on the earth – one nation that would reveal the truth of the one and only God to every other nation.

God's Purpose for Us

- Like Israel of the old covenant, the Church of the new covenant is the sole and singular representative of God to the nations— “you are My witness.”

- ▶ Called to be a distinct and set apart people who reflect God's heart of sacrificial love and His holy character;
- ▶ Commissioned and sent to reconcile the world to God through Jesus Christ;
- ▶ Empowered to destroy the works of the enemy and lead people out of darkness into the light of the knowledge of Christ;

- ▶ Commanded to go to every person in every tribe, language, and nation, forming them into obedient followers of Christ;
- ▶ Called to warn the world of the coming Day of the Lord, the end of human history, and the final judgment of all humanity.

- At risk is the testimony of God's glory among the nations, the eternal destiny of human souls, and our own validation of faithfulness to God's purposes.

*Will we fulfill—
or neglect—
the heart of God
who so loved
the world
that He gave
His one and
only Son?*

History Repeats Itself

- The statement “Again the Israelites did evil in the sight of the Lord . . .” occurs seven times in the Book of the Judges – and many more times in the following centuries. With few exceptions, it became the duplicated pattern of generations.

- Israel's history became a recurring cycle of failure and deliverance, idolatry and repentance. **Never**, however, did they return to the mission and purpose for which God had chosen them—a testimony to the nations.

- This cycle would continue for the next 600 years until Jerusalem was destroyed and the worst of the curses predicted by Moses (Deuteronomy 28) were fulfilled.

- Everything that we read about Israel's history represents a greater spiritual reality and should command our attention.

For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. . . . These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come. So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!

1 Corinthians 10.1, 11

The Church According to Judges

- Like Israel, we have forsaken our covenant position as the holy and set-apart people of God; we are no longer passionately devoted to fulfilling the commands of God.

*Yet Israel
did not listen . . .
How quickly
they turned away
from the path
of their ancestors,
who had walked
in obedience
to the LORD's
commands.*

Judges 1.31

- Like Israel, we have relaxed our spiritual posture; we are no longer in “fight mode” for the purposes of God. We have lost interest in fulfilling God’s heart and will.

Instead, the people of Asher moved in among the Canaanites, who controlled the land, for they failed to drive them out.

Judges 1.31

- Consequently, like Israel, we have failed to raise our children to be adept at spiritual warfare and devoted to “conquering” the nations. *The ambition for personal success has replaced the mission to conquer.*

*[God] did this
to teach warfare
to generations
of Israelites
who had
no experience
in battle.*

Judges 3.2

- Like Israel, we have forfeited the power of the Spirit intended to make us a triumphant witness among those who reject Christ.

*Samson:
the story of
casual obedience—
“all” and “exactly”
applied to others
but not to him.
The outcome was
spiritually fatal.*

- Like Israel, we have become devotees of the “Luciferian” doctrine of “individualism”—living according to “I will” plans instead of following the way of Christ who was submitted to the will and purposes of God.

*In those days
Israel
had no king;
all the people
did whatever
seemed right in
their own eyes.*

Judges 21.25

What We Must Do

- Repent. This is **always** the emphatic message of Jesus to us.¹
- Begin doing what you didn't do last week.²
- Commit yourself to the Biblical model of "generational mentoring" to insure the future of the Church and its witness.³
- Disciple your children to be effective in spiritual warfare and committed to taking the gospel to the nations.

¹ Matthew 4.17; 2.5 ² James 1.22-25 ³ 1 Timothy 3.8-13; 2 Timothy 2.2; Titus 2.1-8