

Resurrection Life of Jesus Church

THE DESTINY OF HUMANITY

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PART 14: THE FIRST OF THE JUDGES

THE THIRD GENERATION

With the passing of Joshua, Israel began a time period of some 315 years that became known as the "Time of the Judges." This was not the golden age but a time of brutality, idolatry and war.

The third generation after Joshua had lost the knowledge of God and filled the spiritual void with man-made gods. **Judges 2:10-13**

God removed His protection and the Israelites were no longer victorious, but became slaves to the invaders. **verses 14-15**

God would raise up judges that delivered the Israelites from their enemies, but the people went back to idolatry as soon as the judge died. **verses 16-23**

Furthermore, the people of Israel rebelled against the law of God when they married pagans. **Judges 3:5-7; Deuteronomy 7:1-6**

The result was that God allowed them to become slaves to the marauders. **Judges 3:8**

JUDGE 1: OTHNIEL

After 8 years of slavery, the people of Israel cried out to the Lord. The first judge was Othniel, a great-nephew of Caleb. Othniel was used by God to fight off the oppressors and he ruled Israel for 40 years. **verses 9-11**

JUDGE 2: EHUD

The people went back into idolatry as soon as Othniel died. The generation after Othniel forgot the oppression by the king of Mesopotamia and felt that worshiping demon gods was a better deal than serving the Lord. The protection of God was withdrawn and this time the Ammonites and Amalekites invaded. The people of Israel realized that serving idols was a painful way to live after 8 years of bondage. **verses 12-15**

God picked a man from the tribe of Benjamin, Ehud, the son of Gera. The Israelite leadership decided to assassinate the king of Moab and prepared a gift that was going to be sent to King Eglon. Ehud as an assassin was successful and Eglon died. **verses 16-25**

Ehud became empowered by the Lord and raised up an army. The Moabites were defeated and once again Israel was free once again from slavery. **verses 26-29**

Ehud ruled Israel for 60 years as a judge until his death. **verse 30**

JUDGE 3: SHAMGAR

The Bible does not provide much detail about Shamgar and we do not know how long he ruled Israel. **verse 31**



JUDGE 4: DEBORAH

The generation came to adulthood after the deaths of Ehud and Shamgar failed to remember the oppression of the Ammonites and Amalekites. The evil spirits in the land of Canaan enticed the upcoming generation to return to worshipping the demon gods of Satan. **Judges 4:1**

The judgment of the Lord fell on Israel once again and this time King Jabin of Canaan oppressed the people of Israel. **verse 2**

After 20 years of slavery, the pain was so great for the children of Israel that they decided to seek the Lord. **verse 3**

This time the Lord had prepared a woman named Deborah, married to Lapidoth, to deliver them from oppression. By anointing Deborah with the gift of prophecy, the men of Israel realized that she was the person chosen by God to set them free. **verse 4**

It was Barak, not her husband, that was selected to be the commander of the army by Deborah. **verses 6-7**

Barak mandated that he would only lead the army into combat if Deborah went with them. **verses 8-10**

Heber the Kenite betrayed Barak and his forces to Sisera, the commander of King Jabin's forces. **verses 11-13**

Deborah told Barak the Lord would give them the victory even though the Israelites did not have any chariots. As Barak ordered his men into combat, the Lord fought for them and the enemy was defeated. **verses 14-16**

Ironically, when Sisera fled the battle, he sought shelter with Jael, the wife of Heber, and died when she drove a tent stake through his head. **verses 16-23**

There was peace and prosperity as Deborah judged Israel for the next 40 years. **verses 24, 31**

JUDGE 5: GIDEON

Israel went through four judges during a period of 140 years. It should have become clear to the leadership that their educational system was dysfunctional and deeply flawed because the children were not being educated in the knowledge of God and the history of Israel. They were living proof that those who fail to remember the past are condemned to repeat it.

After the death of Deborah, the same pattern reared its ugly head and the generation in charge of Israel disregarded the history of their ancestors and returned to idolatry and the stupid worship of gods made from stone and wood. **Judges 6:1**

After having suffered at the hands of the Midianites for seven years, the people of Israel decided once again that worshipping pagan gods only led to pain and misery and they sought the Lord again. **verses 2-10**

Gideon, from the tribe of Manasseh, was the man selected by God to judge Israel. **verses 11-12**

Gideon was not a man of faith. When the angel of the Lord exhorted him to become a leader of Israel and fight the Midianites, Gideon scoffed at the idea that he was a mighty man and had value in God's eyes. **verses 12-15**

Gideon asked for a sign, and when the angel of the Lord displayed his supernatural power, Gideon thought he might die since he had seen God. **verses 16-24**

Gideon was asked again to show his faith by taking action. **verses 25-32**

Gideon still wanted a sign from the Lord. **verses 33-40**

A SUPERNATURAL BATTLE

God wanted to make sure the people of Israel knew that a victory over the Midianites was solely the work of the Lord and Gideon was instructed to send home the majority of his soldiers. **Judges 7:1-8**

God had Gideon spy out the camp of the Midianites to strengthen his faith. **verses 9-15**

When Gideon's men revealed their torches and blew the trumpet, God sent confusion upon the Midianites and they began to kill each other. Once the enemy had been decimated, Gideon ordered all the men of Israel to attack the Midianites and completely wipe them out. **verses 16-25**

Gideon wanted the golden earrings from the enemy soldiers and made an ephod, which was a breastplate that the high priest wore on his chest. It became a snare to Gideon and the people, who began to worship this golden object. **Judges 8:22-27**

Gideon lived another 40 years, during which he led the people in worship of the Lord and they prospered and lived a good life. **Judges 8:27-28**

SUMMARY FROM THE 180 YEARS

Man is a sinner and there is no good in humanity. **Jeremiah 17:9-10**

We must put our trust solely in God. **Jeremiah 17:5-8**

A proper biblical education is mandatory for every Christian family. **Deuteronomy 6:1-9**

Remember, it's not so important how you begin your life after salvation, but how you finish it!

Do you have an ear to hear with?