

19 | 06 | 2016

## JUDGES 1-21 = WORD #15 (Sin is progressive - it always “wants more”)

#SCRIPTURE READING: Different selections from Judges 1-21

#**SERMON/INTRODUCTION:** *Real heroes are hard to find these days.* Modern research and the media have made the foibles and weaknesses of our leaders very apparent; we search in vain for men/women to emulate. *The music, movie & sports industries produce a steady stream of “stars” who shoot to the top - and then (as quickly) fade from our view.*

+**TRANSITION:** Judges is *\*a book about heroes - 12 men/women* who delivered Israel from their oppressors. *These judges were not perfect;* in fact - they included an assassin, a sexually promiscuous man, and a person who broke all the laws of hospitality. *But they were submissive to God - and God used them...* But Judges is also *\*a book about sin and its consequences.* Like a minor cut or abrasion that becomes infected *when left untreated - sin grows and soon poisons the whole body, with damaging consequences.* *The pattern of history in the book of Judges mirrors accurately the sort of lives many people live when they do not know God.*

+**EXEGESIS&APPLICATION:** If you add together all the years that the 12 people mentioned in this part of Israel’s history “judged” the nation, they come to *±400 years in total.* And yet, historically/chronologically the book of **Judges only covers a period of 250-300 years.** How do we resolve this apparent problem? B/S, when we read about Gideon & Samson, we tend to think they were delivering the whole nation; but Israel was divided into groups of tribes, spread over a wide area (roughly the size of the Kruger National Park). *Therefore, when we read a judge ruled for a period of 40 years, it may only apply to tribes in the north. While this was happening, it was possible that a judge was saving the situation in the south.* We can distinguish 6 successive periods of oppression and deliverance - and the “careers” of 12 deliverers.

\*The stories of *the individuals* within this book are certainly gripping: -

~ (1) *Othniel* (Caleb’s younger brother) *brought peace to his people for 40 years.*

~ (2) *Ehud*, the left-handed leader, who concealed his 18-inch swordblade by strapping it to his right leg. Since most people were right-handed, it was customary to check the left-leg for weapons. Ehud was thus *able to take his weapon into a meeting with the King of Moab - and plunge it into his belly! (80 years of peace)*

~ (3) *Shamgar* (3:31) who *killed 600 Philistines with an ox-goad (sweepstok). (Unrecorded)*

~ (4) *Deborah & Barak:* Deborah was a *prophetess* (married to a certain Lappidoth). In Hebrew her name meant “*Busy Bee*” & Lappidoth “*Flash*”. *Being a prophetess*, Deborah would sit underneath a palm tree (somewhere between Beth-El & Rama), listening to people’s disputes. *She then would settle the disputes by hearing the answer from the Lord.* On an occasion (led by the Spirit) *she told Barak to lead the people (10 000 men) to Mt Tabor into battle against Sisera* (the commander of King Jabin’s army), and God would deliver him and his men into Barak’s hand. *Barak refused to go into battle without her.* (By the way: In Israel, then and today, senior officers always lead their troops into battle) *God was angry with Barak’s refusal* and told him that the enemy/Sisera would fall to the hand of a woman in order to humiliate him. And so it proved. *(40 years of peace)*

~ (5) *Gideon* (JUDGES 6-8): In wanting “to confirm his calling”, *he put some meat on an altar, and fire that rose out of the rock consumed up the meat.* Then he asked the Lord for another sign - as if the fire from heaven wasn’t enough! *God graciously provided it through a fleece which was dry one day and wet the next...* However, Gideon had to learn that *it is by God’s strength that battles are won.* Preparing him to attack the 135 000 Midianites, *God reduced his army from 32 000 to 300 @ Ein-Harod = the well of Harod. (40 years of peace)*

~ *Abimelech:* Not seen/regarded as a judge.

- ~ (6) **Tola**: He receives the brief comment that he led Israel for 23 years.
- ~ (7) After him, **Jair** led Israel for 22 years. Had 30 sons who, we are told (10:3-4), rode 30 donkeys & controlled 30 towns (in the Gilead area). A little interesting detail, but nothing more!
- ~ (8) **Jephtath (head of Gilead)**: He made the rash vow that he would sacrifice to the Lord whatever came to meet him when he returned from battle - and ended up having to sacrifice his only daughter. (6 years of peace)
- ~ (9) **Ibzan (from Bethlehem)**: Had 30 sons & 30 daughters. All married outside the Judah clan. (7 years of peace)
- ~ (10) **Elon** led Israel for 10 years.
- ~ (11) **Abdon**: Had 40 sons & 30 grandsons, each of whom had his own donkey. (8 years peace)
- ~ (12) **Samson**: He was a Nazirite, killed a lion with his bare hands, burned the Philistine wheat fields (tying torches to the tails of a 150 pair of jackal=300), killed a 1000 Philistines with a donkey's jawbone, tore off the iron gate of a city, was betrayed by Delilah - and killed thousands of Philistines in one last mighty act. (20 years of peace)

***\*How did these less than perfect people manage to achieve so much?*** It was not through their own power. Their "secret" was that *the Holy Spirit came on them - they were all "charismatic" leaders.* (Greek: *charismata*=gifts) Judges gives us vivid examples of divine strength working through weak people. NB: The Holy Spirit came *on only a few in the OT*. Here, during this period, only 12 out of a possible 2 million experienced this anointing. We note too that *the Holy Spirit came on them temporarily - not permanently*. For example - the text states that *the HS left Samson (13:25 / 14:6,19 / 16:20b)*. *In the OT it was an anointing Spirit that touched them for a time/while, rather than an indwelling Spirit Who stayed with them.*

***\*Possible that Samson was a "picture of the coming Messiah/Jesus Christ"?*** Type&Shadow:-

- ~ (1) *Their births were foretold by an angel*: S = JUDGES 13:2-3 / JC = LUKE 1:26-31.
- ~ (2) *The angel told the mother first - only then the father*: S = 13:11 / JC = LUKE 1:26.
- ~ (3) *Both were sent to deliver their people*: S = 15:20 / JC = ROM 11:25-26.
- ~ (4) *Both were Nazarite/Nazarine*: S = 13:5 / JC = LUKE 1:26.
- ~ (5) *Both spoke in riddles, parables and secrets*: S = 14:12 / JC = MATT 13:34-35.
- ~ (6) *Both chose (the) gentiles*: S = 14:1-4 / JC (rejected by his own bride) = ACTS 13:44-48.
- ~ (7) *Samson grew 7 locks* = 16:13 / JC *had the "7 spirits of the Lord on Him"* = ISIAH 11:2 & REV 1:1-8, 5:6.
- ~ (8) *Both were betrayed by a friend*: S (Delilah) = chapter 16 / JC (Judas) = JOHN 13:21-30
- ~ (9) *The betrayers were offered silver*: S = 16:5 / JC = MATT 26:14-16.
- ~ (10) *Samson was blinded by his enemies* = 16:5-15 / JC *was blindfolded before his crucifixion* = LUKE 22:64.
- ~ (11) *Both were mocked by their enemies*: S = 16:27 / JC = MATT 27:31.
- ~ (12) *Cries for remembrance*: *Samson cried out to God to remember him* = 16:28 / *The thief on the cross cried out to Jesus to remember him* = LUKE 23:42.
- ~ (13) *Their hands "took out the enemy"*: *Samson's hand were placed on the pillars to the left/right of him*=16:29 / *JC's hands were individually nailed to the left/right* = MATT 27:26.
- ~ (14) *Their deaths defeated their enemies*: S = 16:30 / JC = 1 COR 15:26-27.
- ~ (15) *Significance of the Holy Spirit x numbers*: S x ±3000 killed = 16:27 / JC's promised Comforter being poured out x ±3000 saved = ACTS 2:41.

B/S in CJ: To me the above mentioned is the "next" proof that the Bible is indéed the inspired Word of God. *The fulfillment of all the types&shadows, cycles & prophecies confirm this. I mean: It is in no human way possible that a Biblical story/incident - that occurred 100's of years ago - could be repeated with/in such meticulous detail, unless the Lord inspired the events and the "writing down" of it!*

+**CONCLUSION**: Our true "Hero" enables us to overcome sin. Amen.(...\Preke\Woord\Judges1-21#15)