

Judges, Sermon #11

Judges 3

In this chapter, you will find “five lords of the Philistines” (vs. 3) and the King of Moab called “lord” (vs.25); but more importantly “the Lord,” meaning Jehovah God, is named fifteen times in these thirty verses.

That lets us know who is really in charge—our God is in charge.

Last month, we saw our first judge – Othniel – who was related to Caleb
Othniel demonstrated great faith and defeated Cushan and the land rested 40 years
But Othniel died.

I have entitled tonight’s message “The Internal War”

Judges 3:12

Let us stand for the reading of God’s Holy Word

Judges 3:12-14

Let us pray

You may be seated

The Internal War

After the death of the first judge of Israel, the Israelites began to backslide.

What happens to churches that allow them to backslide? Lose their pastor, poor leadership, make bad decisions, wrong motives for ministry.

The Israelites allowed the permissive, compromising lifestyle of the world to infect them. So, after an extensive period of rest, came failure

Christian people, in every way, face this same problem of longevity of faithfulness

Vs 12a & e

Note that this evil was done “in the sight or before the eyes of the Lord.”

Now, folks, the Bible says that God saw the evil. Nothing is hidden from Him.

He knew exactly what His people were doing: backsliding, turning away from Him to the false pleasures and gods of this world.

Nothing escapes His eyes. He knew exactly what was happening.

And, God knows what we do as well.

Why does a person forget the all-seeing eyes of God?

God sees us and the Holy Spirit within us also is grieved and quenched when we make decisions contrary to God's will.

One would hope that forty years of a Godly influence would make a lasting difference in the spiritual life of the nation, but such wasn't the case.

No sooner was a judge off the scene than the people were back to forsaking the Lord.

Somewhere the system broke down – two external areas that are generally at fault were the priests and the parents.

Today it is the church and the home life.

Not only a parent's faithfulness but also a church's faithfulness

These are two pillars that need to be strong in order for believers to be successful.

But people who are part of a good church and good home can still depart from those teachings because there is an internal desire called the lust of the flesh

So, even with a good home and church and the Holy Spirit living within, an individual can reject mom and dad, the church, and the preacher – push aside the Holy Spirit and walk in the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh which leads to slavery!

Enslaved to alcohol, cigarettes and drugs, / fornication, pornography, gambling, / envy, greed, jealousy / – rather than displaying the fruit of the Spirit

They are filled with the lusts of the flesh

And any believer that lives long this way will be damaged!

If we choose the ways of the world, we will experience the ways of the world

So what did the Lord do in response to this?

Notice in vs. 12

The Lord strengthened Eglon

What do you call this? The discipline of God

Every child of God is a candidate for discipline and God strengthened Israel's enemy

God will strengthen evil people against His own people for the purpose of chastisement and restoration.

Now the person God used was Eglon, the King of Moab, organized a confederacy and set up his headquarters at Jericho.

The location was ideal for directing military operations, and there was an abundance of water there.

So, for eighteen years, Eglon and his allies made life miserable for the Jews.

King Eglon and his friends are a problem from the past

Who are the Moabites, Ammonites, and Amalekites?

To find the answer we first turn to Genesis 12.

We find Abraham and Lot going to Egypt because of a famine in the land of Canaan.

Lot saw the selfishness of Abraham at this time and learned some lessons . . . wrong lessons!

Lot learned to look after himself first.

The deed of greed would meet his need he thought.

Lot was given the choice of land when they returned to Canaan and he chose the plain of Sodom. Gen. 12:10-11

It was a lush and fertile valley but lustful and filthy in wickedness.

Lot makes his home in the headquarters of homosexuals.

This was a great place for rearing a family. Ha! Not so!

Lot's foolishness leads to lust, lasciviousness, lewdness, and licentiousness in the lives of his loved ones.

While in the city of Sodom, an enemy came and captured the city and led the people off as slaves.

Abraham is informed and rescues Lot and the rest of the captives.

What does Lot do? He returns back to sin city.

Lot was not exactly the epitome of intelligence.

He was taken out of Sodom but Sodom was still in Him.

After Lot was removed from Sodom by angels, God destroys the city for its wickedness.

Lot and his remaining family take refuge in a cave where Lot's daughters contrive a plan to get their father drunk and have him impregnate them so they could have their own children.

Where do you think they learned about things like this . . . Sodom of course!

These girls spawned two of the fiercest nations in the Bible which descended from their sons the Moabites and the Ammonites.

These nations were blood relatives of God's people.

They were unfortunately godless and consistently trying to dominate Israel.

King Eglon was a descendant of this incestuous plan. He was a Moabite!

If Lot would have yielded his life to the Lord in every thought, word, and deed, this would have never happened and Lot would have never finished his days as a cave-dwelling pauper.

The Amalekites, another enemy, came from Esau who married pagan wives.

Esau fathered a son named Amalek whose descendants became sworn enemies of Israel.

The Amalekites were possibly Israel's most bitter enemy.

All three nations were actually relatives of the Israelites

The Moabites and Ammonites were descendants of Lot, the nephew of Abraham (Gen. 19:30-38); and the Amalekites were the descendants of Esau (Gen. 36:12, 16; Deut. 25:17-19). This sets the stage.

Back to Judges 3

Let me make some applications.

When we yield to temptation, we may lose in a moment what took a lifetime to gain. How quickly we are prone to wander from God.

As we walk day by day throughout life, some of us slip and fall into some sin.

The attractiveness, enticement, and seduction of sin *look good*.

Once we partake of the sin, it *tastes good* and *feels good*.

Thus, we continue to engage in the sin, and often the result is tragic: we become enslaved to the sin.

We know it is wrong, and we want to break its power over us.

Whatever the sin, there is a desire within us to break it.

Even when we know the sin is wrong, so much so that we often confess it and determine to forsake it.

We become sick, disgusted over living an up-and-down, compromising, inconsistent life.

But before long, the seduction of the sin attacks us again, and we slip and fall right back into the indulgence of the sin.

We find that we are once again entrapped in the clutch of its pleasure and cannot break loose.

And the voice of sin speaks up and says, "You cannot break the habit."

It is too strong. Why quit it anyway?

It is not all that bad, not that great a sin. And it is so enjoyable.

Anyway, it is not hurting anyone—just so others don't know about it.

God can't object too much.

He will not cut you off because of the sin. You are eternally secure.

You're not going to lose your salvation over the sin. You know that, don't you?"

The Book of Judges deals only with the cycle of sin in the believer's life, not with the power to break the cycle.

But because of the importance of conquering sin in the believer's life

Let me speak a few minutes to this subject

Once the believer has slipped and fallen into sin – once he is continuing in sin, committing some sin regularly – what can he do?

How can he break the grasp, the power of sin upon his life?

First of all, the believer must heed the teaching of Scripture: he is not to continue in sin.

He must be convinced in his mind that this is sin and it is wrong.

This is the strong teaching of Romans 6:11-13.

Romans 6:11-13

Secondly, the believer must flee and abstain from all sin.

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (I Peter 2:11).

"Abstain from all appearance of evil" (I Thess. 5:22).

He must flee from immorality. *"Flee fornication."* (I Cor. 6:18).

"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication" (1 Thess. 4:3).

Not only is the believer to remove himself from sin or remove the sin from him, he is also to put in truth.

"Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart" (II Tim. 2:22).

Colossians 3 – put off and put on

"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness" (1 Tim. 6:10-11).

Thirdly, the believer must heed the strong warnings of Scripture.

He must obey God's Word and not his own desires.

"For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to

have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them" (II Peter 2:20-21).

The dog has returned to his vomit.

"Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation" (Heb. 2:1-3).

II Timothy 2:4, No man that wareth entangles himself with the affairs of this life.

1. Recognize sin – confess it
2. Must flee and abstain
3. Must obey truth

The Internal War

Let us stand for closing invitation.

Judges chapter three reminds us again of several important lessons.

1. What an unyielded life to the Lord can produce.
2. What the effects of the lust of the flesh can do to a person's life
3. That our sin affects others and can have a far reaching impact on our family and nation. What we do does have an impact on other people.

What doors have we allowed sin to enter in our life?

Are we backsliders tonight?

Are we entrapped, enslaved?

Never been freed from sin?

Only Jesus can break the chains that hold you.