

Judges, Sermon #34

Judges 10

The political soap opera is over/Abimelech—Obama/Clintons

What is going on after Abimelech?

Judges 10 is a story of a nation in decay.

What preserves a nation is God, and God's people are to be the salt of the nation.

As a nation, we have rotteness in our bones—we've got some cancers.

There were three deficiencies in Israel that gave evidence that the nation was decaying
spiritually.

We have the same problems today.

Let us pray.

Evidence that the nation was decaying:

#1 – Israel has lack of gratitude toward the Lord—for in verse 6—

Things settle down—23 years and 22 years—45 years

Business was done, farming took place, life returned to normal

Forget God—blessings do this; peace does that

Deuteronomy 8:10-20

Proverbs 30:8-9, “. . . *give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: Lest I be full, and deny Thee, and say, Who is the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.*”

The leadership of Tola and Jair—vs. 1a, vs. 3

We know little about these two judges, but the fact that they kept Israel’s enemies away for nearly half a century would suggest that they were faithful men

Throughout history, most of the people who have achieved and accomplished the most have come from humble beginnings.

This is true of the deliverer Tola.

He was called by God from humble beginnings, an unknown family (vs. 1)

He was faithful to his call (vs. 1-2)

Nothing at all is known about his father or his grandfather

We are to be faithful to God and to the call He has given us—no matter what or where our call is. We are to be faithful . . .

- at work
- at school
- at play
- at home

- at meetings
- when walking
- when sitting
- when talking
- when thinking
- when suffering
- when sick
- when healthy

Vs. 4

Jair had thirty sons who, along with him, controlled thirty cities.

This clearly indicates that Jair was a polygamist—plurality of wives.

He disobeyed the commandment of God concerning marriage, compromising with the world and taking many wives into his household.

He was controlled by fleshly passion and urges, living a permissive lifestyle in direct disobedience to God's commandments.

As the leaders go, the people go—vs. 6—so what kind of leader should we have?

Nepotism: that is favoritism shown to a relative on the basis of the relationship—vs. 4

Only wealthy people could afford to provide their children with their own personal donkeys

Jair was obviously a man of wealth and prominence to be able to afford thirty donkeys.

I think he spoiled his sons.

Dangerous for the children of people who have finances

Havoth originally applied to Bedouin tent settlements that later became small villages.

His sons reigned over these.

Vs. 2 and vs. 5—they died

The lesson for us is clear: every one of us dies.

No matter how high our position, no matter how much wealth we possess, we die.

The powerful and the rich are the same as the lowly and poor: they die.

No matter who we are or what we have, we come to the end of life.

Looking back over these two judges—45 years of peace

Comfortable living often produces weak character.

Character is built when we make right decisions in life, and those decisions are made on the basis of the things that we value most.

Since Israel didn't value the things of God, they ended up destroying their own national character.

For Israel to go back into sin again was insane—vs. 6.

- There is insanity in *vanity* . . . when self is first and pride rules our heart.
- There is insanity in *vulgarity* and *profanity*. Clean up our mouth!
- There is insanity in *inhumanity* . . . in the slaughter and killing of others.
- There is insanity in *impurity* and *obscenity*. Pornography, nudity, adultery, sexual perversion are destructive physically and spiritually.
- There is insanity in *disunity*. Fussing, fighting, divorce, and division especially in the church is crazy.
- There is insanity in *conformity* to the world. The drinking, drugs, sensual dress, and wild behavior of this world is not for God's people.

Now Israel was worshiping seven different varieties of pagan gods (v. 6).

Israel served Baalim and Ashteroth, the gods of Syria and Zidon.

Chemosh (key masch) was the god of Moab. Children were burned in fire as a sacrifice to him.

The Philistines worshiped Dagon (day gun), the fish god, and Baal-zebub the lord of flies and prince of demons.

These were the gods of the surrounding nations that had been defeated, yet, Israel is worshipping them.

The spiral of rebellion continued deeper and was worse than before.
God's people were worshipping anything that came their way except God.
Rebellion will lead us to do things we never dreamed we would ever do.

Not only did they serve other gods, but they also forsook the Lord and served Him not.
You cannot serve the gods of this worlds and the Lord at the same time (Matthew 6:24).

Vs. 7a

. . . hot. This was a Hebrew figure of speech meaning "One's nose is burning."

No wonder God's anger "was hot against Israel" (v. 7).
What foolishness to worship the gods of your defeated enemies!

Next week—we will see the second evidence of a nation's decay.

Let us stand for closing invitation.

Has the blessedness/prosperity of our Country dulled the zeal of our faith in God?

Have we begun to compromise the world and give in to their pushing and prodding?