

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Turn your bibles with me to Judges 10

We are continuing our verse by verse study through the book of Judges

And this evening we are going to be introduced to two new judges and we are going to see the response to the judges by the Children of Israel.

After the chaos of Abimelech – God gave them peace and prosperity and the people rebelled.

So we are going to see how the Lord responds ...

Let's pray...

[Jdg 10:1-18 NKJV] 1 After Abimelech there arose to save Israel **Tola** the son of Puah, the son of Dodo, a man of Issachar; and he dwelt in Shamir in the mountains of Ephraim. 2 He judged Israel twenty-three years; and he died and was buried in Shamir.

As we read the scriptures, I am pretty sure that many of us have certain individuals that we are drawn to –

It could be that we are drawn to these individuals because – maybe we identify with them.

Some people like Peter – the gospels do provide us with examples of Peter taking those steps in faith – he wasn't perfect – he had a habit of sticking his foot in his mouth.

I personally like Joshua – and the reason that I pick Joshua is because there are a lot of parallels between the life of Joshua and the life of a believer.

So, not only do we have examples after example in the book of Joshua, we also have examples of what he did in the book of Exodus – he was fighting the Amalekites, in Numbers– he was one of the 12 spies that went into the Promised Land and along with Caleb, they were the only two that provided a positive report – we also find him in Deuteronomy.

So, the Holy Spirit has given us these individuals as examples

And some of the individuals there is a lot that is written about them and some – not so much.

So, here in Judges 10 – we are introduced to the next judge, "Tola".

Now get this, we spent all last week talking about Abimelech –

57 verse in chapter 9

Abimelech was not a judge

He was the least son of Gideon who promoted himself to be a king by murdering his 69 brothers.

Remember, one got away – Jotham –

His life was filled with murder and destruction

Tola judges Israel for 23 years, he defended God's people – Abimelech attacked God's people, he brought trouble to it.

It doesn't seem right, or fair.

We want to know more about Tola - a real hero, who was raised-up by God.

Here is the thing church – for many of us – we are destined to be Tola's

And in the end, I would rather have a short epitaph as a faithful servant (Tola) that a long explanation of all of my failures. (Abimelech)

Now, I had you make a note of the name Tola

His father's name was Puah – it means splendid

His grandfather's name was Dodo – it means beloved one.

Do you know what Tola means???? – worm

Now, I am not going to do it here tonight – I am going to reserve this study for another day.

But you can do a study in each of the judges and there will be certain aspects of each judge that point to Jesus Christ.

[Act 10:42 NKJV] 42 "And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God [to be] Judge of the living and the dead.

So what aspect of Tola do we see in Jesus – we only have two verses right?

1. He was a man of Issachar that dwelt in Ephraim – Tola didn't live among his people. Instead of living in Issachar – he lived in the mountains of the land that belonged to the people of Ephraim. Just as Jesus left heaven to dwell among people who wouldn't receive Him (John 1:11) **[Jhn 1:11 NKJV] 11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.**
2. His name – worm. Turn with me to Psalm 22.

Now, Psalm 22 is a Psalm of David about the Suffering Messiah

This is the Psalm that speaks about Jesus garments being divided at the foot of the cross, it talks about His bones not being broken, it talks about His hands and feet being pierced.

But I want you to look at verse 6

[Psa 22:6 NKJV] 6 But I [am] a worm (Tola), and no man; A reproach of men, and despised by the people.

Why would Jesus say that he was Tola?

Here is the reason why –

In Jesus' days, when people need red dye, they would grind up these worms and they would use the blood red substance to make the dye.

The word for scarlet is taken from the word for worm.

The worm in order to reproduce, it would climb up a tree and fasten itself to the trunk.

It would then lay the larva and cover the eggs with its body

When the eggs would hatch, the worm wouldn't budge and the larva would begin to eat its body

As the tola/worm gave its life for its young, its blood would leave a scarlet mark on the tree

In the same way, Jesus didn't budge when He was fastened to the cross on Calvary until the work was finished.

And in the same way that Tola defended God's people, Jesus is the Judge that defends us against the accusations of Satan –

[1Jo 2:1 NKJV] 1 My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

3 After him arose Jair, a Gileadite; and he judged Israel twenty-two years. 4 Now he had thirty sons who rode on thirty donkeys; they also had thirty towns, which

are called "Havoth Jair" to this day, which [are] in the land of Gilead. 5 And Jair died and was buried in Camon.

Next judge – Jair

His name means "he enlightens"

He judges Israel for 22 years – 1 year less than Tola

And one of the things that we see in his life is God's goodness.

Most likely, he was wealthy

He had 30 sons and each of the sons had their own donkey –

You see, usually only rulers had donkeys.

So it could very well be that these 30 sons were 30 rulers of cities in that area.

Notice that none of the thirty sons tried to kill each other like we saw last week with Abimelech.

6 Then the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served the Baals and the Ashtoreths, the gods of Syria, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the people of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines; and they forsook the LORD and did not serve Him.

Under Tola and Jair, Israel experienced 45 years of peace and prosperity.

One would think that the result of this would be that the people of Israel would be eager to seek God, the people would be eager to glory in God, and draw close to God.

But that is not what happened.

The writer of the book of Judges tells us that they found seven different ways to rebel against God.

They started worshipping every other god except the One True God.

If there was a god to be found among the Canaanites, not only did they find him or her, they began to serve them.

And the thing is church – God had warned them about this before He brought them into the Promised Land.

Turn to Deut 8

[Deu 8:10-14 NKJV] 10 "When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you. 11 "Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments, His judgments, and His statutes which I command you today, 12 "lest--[when] you have eaten and are full, and have built beautiful houses and dwell [in them]; 13 "and [when] your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and your gold are multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied; 14 "when your heart is lifted

up, and you forget the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage;

So what happened, because things were going good –

They stopped praying, they stopped seeking the Lord and they began to be intrigued and were seduced by the gods of the Canaanites.

Money and pleasure – those were the gods of the Canaanites and they are the same gods that we can become intrigued with and ultimately seduced with if we stop seeking the Lord.

7 So the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel; and He sold them into the hands of the Philistines and into the hands of the people of Ammon. 8 From that year they harassed and oppressed the children of Israel for eighteen years--all the children of Israel who [were] on the other side of the Jordan in the land of the Amorites, in Gilead.

I had you make a note that the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel –

I think when we read this – we might picture God losing His cool up in heaven.

But that is not what is happening here –

God is not over reacting here –

Remember, He is good, He is perfect and He is holy

God has a perfect hot anger against Israel.

And it motivates Him to act – on their behalf for their own good.

God is not doing this to punish them

He “sold them” into the hands of their enemies.

One way of understanding this is to say that God simply gave them what they wanted. They chose to “serve” foreign gods, so God “sold them” to those gods by allowing their enemies to dominate them and oppress them.

And this oppression lasted for 18 years.

9 Moreover the people of Ammon crossed over the Jordan to fight against Judah also, against Benjamin, and against the house of Ephraim, so that Israel was severely distressed. 10 And the children of Israel cried out to the LORD, saying, "We have sinned against You, because we have both forsaken our God and served the Baals!"

So at first, it was only the people in Gilead that were being oppressed – those that lived on the eastern side of the Jordan

When Judah heard about Gilead’s trouble, they didn’t repent – because the trouble had not troubled them.

God allowed them to be oppressed

When Judah was oppressed, Benjamin didn't repent, God allowed them to be oppressed

When Benjamin was oppressed, Ephraim didn't repent, so God allowed them to be oppressed

That is why it took 18 years -

It took eighteen years for them to cry out to God for help.

For the first time, they used the "S" word –

We have sinned against You

The people are acknowledging that they have fallen away from the Lord.

This is confession –

Confession means to be honest with God.

It means that I don't have any secrets from God.

It means that I don't try and cover anything up, but instead I bring everything out into the light with God.

When I do this, I find cleansing and forgiveness.

[1Jo 1:7 NKJV] 7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

God forgives me because Jesus paid for my sins with His own blood.

Jesus died on a cross for the purpose of paying for my sins.

This is a step in the right direction for the people of Israel, but it is only one step.

11 So the LORD said to the children of Israel, "[Did I] not [deliver you] from the Egyptians and from the Amorites and from the people of Ammon and from the Philistines? 12 "Also the Sidonians and Amalekites and Maonites oppressed you; and you cried out to Me, and I delivered you from their hand. 13 "Yet you have forsaken Me and served other gods. **Therefore I will deliver you no more.**

At first when we read the last portion of verse 13 – it shocks us.

Because it is something so unexpected –

This is not the response we've seen from God in the past & knowing His mercy & grace.

But it was necessary for God to say these words because He wanted His people to learn something.

He wants them to understand that there is a covenant between them.

He is keeping His side of the covenant – while they continue in their spiritual adultery.

God wants them to understand that their sin is hurting Him

And even though they have confessed their sin, He wants them to be completely sick of their sin – because it is only then that they would truly turn to Him.

14 "Go and cry out to the gods which you have chosen; let them deliver you in your time of distress."

God is challenging them.

They were not forced to worship the gods of the Canaanites – they chose to worship them.

So God is telling them, you need to get this sin out of your system.

You need to truly repent

You see, God wasn't interested in regret – He wanted genuine repentance.

Turn with me to Luke 9

[Luk 9:59-62 NKJV] 59 Then He said to another, "Follow Me." But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." 60 Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God." 61 And another also said, "Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go [and] bid them farewell who are

at my house." 62 But Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

God wanted from Israel the same thing He wants from us – a heart that will put its hand to the plow and not look back (Luke 9:62).

We are to keep our eyes on Jesus, and never take our eyes off Him.

He wants us to come to the place where we know that there is nothing worth following except God.

There is a commitment necessary to follow Him

15 And the children of Israel said to the LORD, "We have sinned! Do to us whatever seems best to You; only deliver us this day, we pray." 16 So they put away the foreign gods from among them and served the LORD. And His soul could no longer endure the misery of Israel.

The Children of Israel again – repeated the same confession that they said in verse 10

– **S a n t a C r u z**

But notice, this time - they had a change of attitude, surrendering by saying, "Do to us whatever seems best to You."

And they also had a change of action – they abandoned their foreign gods and served the Lord

Noticed - They don't just want to be rescued from trouble; they want to be forgiven of their sin.

They accept the need for discipline & correction, if it will truly deliver them from the CAUSE of their distress.

I think we find a great application for us all here.

One of the consequences of rebelling against God is that we reap what we sow –

And we can feel sorry for what we have done and even demand that God rescue us from the mess we created due to our rebellion.

When in reality, we should humbly admit our sin and ask for forgiveness.

17 Then the people of Ammon gathered together and encamped in Gilead. And the children of Israel assembled together and encamped in Mizpah. 18 And the people, the leaders of Gilead, said to one another, "Who [is] the man who will begin the fight against the people of Ammon? He shall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead."

Because of what had happened previously –

The Children of Israel knew that God would raise a judge to deliver them.

Nobody had presented themselves as the judge – so they began to search.

They knew they would be delivered - just not by who.

And they were willing to fight.

They said, "who will begin the fight," indicating they would follow the Lord's man into battle - against any and all odds.

These people who had been sinning grossly for the past eighteen years were transformed into a people of faith, ready to act.

God had shown them the depth of their sin. In His initial refusal to deliver them, He had shown them that they deserved only judgment.

His goodness led them to a genuine repentance, and a return to serving Him with their hearts, their minds, their souls, and their strength.

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'

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