

Lesson 9 – Judges 1

Text: Judges 1

Key Passages:

- Judges 1:7 – Adoni-Bezek recognized that God repaid him in an appropriate way for his actions.
- Judges 1:25-26 – The Canaanite from Bethel rebuilt the city because Israel had spared him.
- Judges 1:27-36 – The Israelites were basically unable to finish the job that God had given them.

Main Storyline:

After Joshua's death, the people began to drive out the remainder of the Canaanites in the land. The Israelites asked God who should be the first one to attack the Canaanites, and God responded by telling them the tribe of Judah should be the first. Judah asked Simeon (recall that they live very closely to each other) to help clear out the Canaanites in its territory, and it would, in turn, do likewise. Simeon agreed, and the two tribes went into the territory of Judah and attacked a man named Adoni-Bezek. They defeated him and his army, killing 10,000 men. They also captured Adoni-Bezek and cut off his thumbs and big toes (preventing him from running or carrying a sword), just as he had done to 70 other kings. He recognized that God had repaid him for what he had done in the past. The Israelites also fought against and captured Jerusalem, and they brought Adoni-Bezek there as a prisoner until he died.

Judah continued its campaign against the Canaanites, going down to fight against the Canaanites that lived in Hebron, which was Caleb's inheritance. They were victorious there, killing three sons of Anak in the process (giants). Caleb offered to give his daughter in marriage to the one who attacked another city in his inheritance, Kirjath Sepher, or Debir. His nephew, Othniel, took it, and thus he earned Caleb's daughter, Achsah, for his wife. Achsah then asked Caleb for additional land (springs), which he also granted.

Judah, likewise, returned the favor, helping Simeon to drive out and kill many Canaanites from its land. Judah also attacked three Philistine cities and defeated them, Gaza, Ashkelon, and Ekron. God was with Judah, and they were able to drive out the Canaanites who lived in the mountainous regions. However, they were unable to drive out those who lived on the plains, because they had iron chariots. The tribe of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites from Jerusalem either, so the Jebusites continued to live there with the Israelites.

The house of Joseph wanted to take a city, Bethel (formerly called Luz), which was well-guarded. Their spies saw a man leaving the city, though, and asked him to show them the entrance to the city in exchange for mercy. The man agreed, and the tribes of Joseph attacked the city and took it, sparing no one but the man and his family. However the man and his family went to the land of the Hittites and built a city there, naming it Luz.

The other tribes of Israel did not fare better than these, unfortunately. The tribe of Manasseh did not drive out the Canaanites from its region because the Canaanites were determined to stay in the land. The tribes of Ephraim, Zebulun, and Asher also were unable to drive out the Canaanites from their land. Naphtali did not drive out the Canaanites from their land either, and they were forced to dwell with the Canaanites (though they did put them under tribute). The tribe of Dan was forced out of the valley in their land by the Amorites, and they had to live in the mountains. Eventually, the Amorites were put under tribute by the house of Joseph.

Lessons/Applications:

- 1.) God punishes people according to their actions (the punishment fits the crime).
- 2.) We will fail in our battles with sin if we do not continue to rely fully on the Lord.
- 3.) If we do not try to fully drive out sin from our lives (allow no sin to stay), it will return to us.