

CONQUERING THE LAND OF CANAAN

Introduction:

1. There was no king in Israel...
2. Every man did right in his own eyes...
3. The cycle of the Judges...
4. The first chapter of the book of Judges serves as both a background and a foundation for what follows in the book.
5. It tells of the work of the Israelites to conquer the land of Canaan.

I. The Justice of God (1:1-7)

- A. The first thing one notices in the book of Judges is God's involvement with His people and with the nations of the world.
 1. God was still with them even though Joshua had died.
 2. God was still available to answer their questions and guide them in their work.
 - a. Through His book...
 - b. Through the priests...
 - c. Through the High Priest...
 3. God was still working to help them win their battles.
- B. In allowing the Israelites to conquer the land of Canaan, God was actually carrying out His justice.
 1. When God delivered the Canaanites and Perizzites into the hand of Israel, ten thousand of them were killed.
 2. However, God simply was not being cruel.
 3. Their destruction was actually a punishment for their wickedness (cf. Genesis 15:16).
 4. God had given them hundreds of years to repent, but they refused and rebelled.
- C. To illustrate this principle of justice, the story of Adonibezek is recorded.
 1. As Israel fought against their enemies, they pursued the ruler of Bezek and captured him.
 2. Following this, they cut off his thumbs and big toes.
 - a. This would end his days as a warrior.
 - b. Think of the spiritual condition of a wounded warrior.
 3. Adonibezek recognizes this as a just punishment from God.
 4. He had done the same thing to 70 kings and now he was reaping what he had sown (cf. Galatians 6:7-8).
- D. This lesson is seen throughout the Bible – God is a just God.

II. The Value of Unity (1:3, 17)

- A. The tribe of Simeon helped the tribe of Judah drive out their enemies.
- B. The tribe of Judah helped the tribe of Simeon drive out their enemies.
- C. There are several reasons why these two tribes worked together.
 1. They were located beside one another and had common interest in driving out the nearest enemies.
 2. They were brethren and sought to help one another (Gen. 35:23).
 3. They were a larger force for good when they worked together.
- D. God does not need great numbers to accomplish His work, but brethren who work together in unity are able to share the burden.

Judges 1:1-20

1. Brethren should work in unity within the congregation.
 2. Congregations can work together in unity as well.
- III. The Necessity of Courage (1:8-13, 20)
- A. Judah displayed great courage in their battles against the Canaanites.
 - B. That courage is exemplified in the man named Othniel.
 1. Othniel captured Debir and won Caleb's daughter as a wife.
 2. He also would become the first judge over the Israelites.
 - C. It is further demonstrated in the actions of Caleb.
 1. Caleb was one of the faithful men who first spied out the land of Canaan (Numbers 13 – 14).
 2. Along with Joshua, he declared that Israel could conquer the land.
 3. However, in their searching out the land they came upon the city of Hebron and found it inhabited by giants, the children of Anak [also known as the Anakims] (Numbers 13:22, 28-33).
 4. Thus, ten of the spies and the majority of the nation were discouraged and failed to enter Canaan.
 5. Of that generation, only Joshua and Caleb would dwell in the land.
 6. Furthermore, God promised to give Caleb the land of Hebron (Deuteronomy 1:34-36).
 7. So, when he was 85 years old, Caleb went to battle against the Anakims and conquered Hebron (Joshua 14:6-15).
 - D. The courage of Caleb, Othniel and Judah was built upon their faith in God.
 1. True faith casts out fear and doubt.
 2. True faith is obedient and active.
 3. True faith is brave, bold and courageous.

Conclusion:

1. While setting the stage for what will follow in the book of Judges, this chapter also teaches important lessons about serving God.
2. God is just – therefore, He is no respecter of persons and man will reap what he sows.
3. Unity with brethren is essential to carrying out the work of God.
4. True faith produces workers with courage to confront the enemies of God.