

A Little Background

- The books of Judges and Ruth give an overview of the approximately 400-year period of the Judges.
- All of this time-period was spent under the dispensation of the Law, and Israel is the nation in view.
- The book of Judges has an unknown author, but had to have been written during the reign of King Saul, before the reign of King David, thus the material is written immediately after the time period it describes.
 - Judges 17:6 shows that the Monarchy had been established by the time of the writing of the book.
 - Judges 1:21 shows that at the time of the writing the Jebusites were still living in Jerusalem. Jerusalem was captured by King David early in his reign.
 - The book of Judges is one of the 17 books of history found in the Hebrew Scriptures.
- During the period of the Judges, the Hebrew nation was a theocratic commonwealth of tribes.
 - God was the One ultimately turned to for instruction and defense.
 - Each tribe governed itself locally.
 - The worship of God at the Tabernacle in Shiloh, along with their common bond of ancestry and their obedience to the Torah is the cement that held them together.
- During this time, the nation was plagued with enemies that would wreak havoc when God's hand was removed from the people due to their disobedience.
 - The enemy living in the land – Joshua 3:10
 - The enemy living outside the land – Moabites, Amalekites, Edomites, Midianites, Ammonites and the Philistines.

A Big Problem | Judges 1:1-2:10

- After the death of Joshua, the nation rallied together to complete the conquest of the land, but fell-short of doing what they were supposed to do.
 - The Command: Joshua 17:18
 - The Carry-through: Judges 1:28-33
 - The Catastrophe: Judges 2:7-10

- The problem of Israel centered around her *forgetfulness*. It only takes one generation to forget the lessons of the past.
 - Regular observances of spiritual and civic significance are necessary to a long memory.
 - If your children and grandchildren are not getting the same spiritual meat and experience that you got, they will not be holding to the same spiritual values you have.
- The problem of forgetfulness led to a culture of paganism.
 - Paganism: Judges 2:11-13
 - Persecution: Judges 2:14-15
 - Provision: Judges 2:16
 - Perpetual cycle: Judges 2:17-20

A Dangerous Independence: Judges 21:25

- The Hebrew nation had an ideal political situation, but one that required dependence on God and His Law.
 - Judges 17:6 and 21:25 are identical, and often quoted to point out the sin in the lives of the Hebrew citizens.
 - Almost always, the first part of the verse is forgotten or ignored: **In those days there was no king in Israel.**
 - This is the ideal political situation and was also God's plan for His chosen nation.
 - In 1 Sam 8:10-22, the people demand a king, against the will of Samuel.
 - When these verses are preached, we are told that Israel should have never demanded a King, yet when Israel didn't have a King, we bemoan the fact that "everyone did what was right in his own eyes."
- Judges 21:25 is a celebration of the unequaled freedom of the ancient Hebrew nation. This kind of freedom would work perfectly if man recognized the sovereignty of Almighty God.
- Both the book of Judges and all other books of history show that humanity is an utter failure at living according to God's revealed Word.
- Until the King of kings reigns over all nations, every form of human government is going to end in failure.