



Judges: Looking for the Lion of Judah

Lesson 11: March 24th and 25th

Read Judges 19-21

Sermon Reflection Question: What captured your attention from Sunday's sermon?

Read Judges 19-21

This section of Scripture is arguably the darkest in the Bible, serving as a "rock bottom" for Israel. In the context of the whole of Scripture, these chapters are not merely historical accounts of depravity but a desperate "cry" for the coming King, Jesus Christ.

Observation & Interpretation:

1. As you read through Judges 19-21 write down instances in each chapter of:
 - People doing what is right in their own eyes.
 - The effects of people living according to their own rules rather than following God.

Judges 19: A Levite and his Concubine

Judges 20: Israel's War with the Tribe of Benjamin

Judges 21: "In those days there was no king in Israel."

Judges Reflection & Application:

If nothing else, Judges shows us that though we are the problem, we cannot be our own solution. We need to search for a king, just as Israel did. But by the end of the book, we have come to wonder whether and how a mere human king can be enough. The subsequent Old Testament history confirms that even the best kings, such as David, are not enough.

Judges is humbling, because it shows us we need a deliverer who:

- *comes without being called for, since humans are not really seeking God.*
- *chooses his people, because we would never choose him.*
- *achieves our rescue entirely himself, since we are incapable of contributing to it.*
- *can “purge” us of the evil in our hearts, not just in our societal structures.*
- *does not die, leaving us to our own flaws and failings once more.*

We need a king, but a greater king with a greater deliverance than any human can be or perform.

2. Read and Reflect Psalm 96. What descriptions of the Lord stir your heart with hope?

In Psalm 96, the word “judge” is used in its original sense of “rule with justice”—as the leaders of Judges should have, but (overall) failed to. The psalmist sees that it will require God himself to come and be our judge.

All of us search for a king—someone or something to rule us, someone or something to rescue us and bless us. There is only one man who provides what we are looking for—who came uninvited, called his people, died alone to rescue us, changes our hearts by his Spirit, and who rules beyond death for ever. Judges leaves us aching for a king; it leaves us appreciating the King, our Lord Jesus.

Reflection & Application:

3. In what areas of your life are you tempted to "do what is right in your own eyes" rather than submitting to the person of Christ? Who can you share this with today? (In groups, turn to your neighbor and share with each other).

4. The Levite's concubine was discarded and abused by those meant to protect her. Contrast this with how Jesus, our Servant King, treats the broken and the marginalized. How can our church better reflect Jesus' heart for the vulnerable?

5. Knowing that Jesus is the one who brings order out of chaos, what is one specific way you can represent His rule of peace and grace in a workplace or family environment that currently feels chaotic?

6. When we face injustice, we often want to take matters into our own hands like the tribes in Chapter 21. How does knowing Jesus is the Perfect Judge allow us to seek peace, surrender vengeance, and trust God with the outcome?

7. How does the book of Judges move you to appreciate and praise the Lord Jesus Christ as king who is victorious over death?

Fasting Reflection:

RELAX: Take a moment to relax. Close your eyes and breathe deeply - inhaling slowly, then exhaling slowly. Repeat this several times as you imagine yourself coming into God's presence. As you finish and get ready to read, pray something simple like "Lord, speak to me through the words of your gospel. Amen."

READ. Read this story about Jesus two times. Read slowly, pausing at the line breaks:

Luke 24:1-7

On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.

While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them.

In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!

Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee:

'The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.'"

REFLECT. After the reading, take some time to reflect in silence on one or more of the following questions:

- What word or words in this passage caught your attention?
- What in this passage comforted you?
- What in this passage challenged you?
- What is God inviting you into?

RESPOND. Read the scripture passage one more time. Bring to the Lord the praise, petition, questions, or thanksgiving that the Word inspires in you.

REST. Soak in the moment, rest in it, don't rush through it. Do you sense anything that Jesus is inviting you to know, see, believe, or do? Pray: Thank you God for meeting with me in this time. Give me courage and faith to follow you this day.