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Grace Bible Church, NY
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The Failure of Human Wisdom
Judges 17-21

Introduction

Next week I will begin our study of the book of 1 Peter which should take us until next Spring to complete. It is a very important book for our own time because Peter was preparing believers for persecution, and that is something that is fast becoming a reality in our own time. While Jesus warned us to expect to be treated badly by the world because of Him, and while that has been quite normal in other parts of the world, especially in those controlled by communists, Islam and Hinduism, it has been very minor here in the United States, but that is changing rapidly. Those of you over 40 can remember when being a Christian was favored in this nation, but everyone recognizes that is no longer true.

Over the past couple of years the sermon series I have been preaching have been for the purpose of preparing the church for persecution. Preaching through 1 & 2 Thessalonians was to point to a model church that thrived and expanded in the midst of persecution because they had a hope in Jesus Christ that transcended the things of this world. Habakkuk showed God's actions in chastening and judging Israel for their sins while also giving them hope in a promised future restoration. The previous series in which I went over many of God's prominent attributes was for the purpose of helping you learn to trust Him in all circumstances. The greater your knowledge and understanding of God gained through both the revelation of Himself in His word and the experience of walking with Him, the greater you will be able to trust Him. God's nature and character proves that He both can and will do all that He proclaims. That brings peace to those that have placed their faith in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and terror to those that have not.

This morning I will be concluding my brief survey of the rise and fall of ancient Israel. The purpose of this series has been to not only show God's choice and unilateral covenant with Israel, but also to use that nation as a specific example of the general principle of Proverbs 14:34 that "*righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people.*" In keeping with His specific promises and warnings to Israel in Deuteronomy 27-28 and other passages, God blessed them when they obeyed Him and cursed them when they did not. That same principle applies to all nations and societies. Those that will honor the Lord and seek to follow Him will be blessed while those that do not will be cursed. The United States is no exception to this general truth.

Our history is one that is full of great blessings from God for we were a people that were heavily influenced by Biblical truth and we followed Christian morality. As our society has increasingly rejected God and His moral standards, we have seen His hand of judgment come upon us. That has primarily been in the form of increased sinfulness and its natural consequences as described in Romans 1. The final step downward in Romans 1 is depraved minds, and that is an accurate description of the social, political and media elites of our clown world society. There have also been both the usual and unusual disasters such as weather events, earthquakes, fires, disease outbreaks, etc. which prodded earlier generations to prayer and repentance. Compare that to the response to Covid 19. The national two weeks to "flatten the curve" did not include national calls to prayer and repentance, and it instead morphed into the arrogant claim that the virus would be stopped resulting in gross violations of basic human rights including the lock-downs and coercion to force being injected with experimental medical products. Two years and three months later, the virus is the proven winner as any competent biologist could have told you from the start.

The point is simple. Nations in which the people pursue righteousness and eschew (shun) evil will be have God's favor. Those that do not will be cursed. Governments that fulfill their purpose described in

Romans 13 as giving praise for good behavior and bringing wrath on those that do evil will be blessed and the people will rejoice. Those that do the opposite, such as our own, will be cursed and the people will groan (Proverbs 29:2).

Review

God chose Abraham out of all people on the earth and made a unilateral covenant with him to bless him with a particular land, a multitude of descendants, and to be a blessing to all the families of the earth which would eventually be fulfilled in the Messiah. That covenant was then passed on to Isaac, not Ishmael, and then to Jacob, not Esau. The children of Jacob, renamed Israel, would form the tribes that would make up the nation of Israel. According to the prophecy given to Abraham in Genesis 15, his descendants would be slaves in a foreign land for a time until the wickedness of the Amorites was complete. When that time had come, Yahweh sent Moses back to Egypt to free the nation that God would now prepare to be a people for His own possession who would be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation that would proclaim Yahweh to the world. That preparation included establishing the Mosaic Covenant at Mt Sinai, then purging that generation because they would not believe or trust God to fulfill His promises (Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers). After forty years of wandering in the wilderness and nearly all of that first generation had died out, Moses recounted their history to the second generation and repeated God's law to them in Deuteronomy. It would be the second generation under Joshua's command that would conquer the promised land and set up the theocracy as recorded in the book of Joshua. They were serious about obedience to God so that it might go well with them and live in God's blessings instead of His curses. The people not only committed themselves to following Joshua, but they would not tolerate anyone that did not do the same vowing to put to death anyone that rebelled against him (Joshua 1:16-18). They would not allow for a repeat of what happened to their parents' generation.

The book of Judges begins by explaining why the theocracy failed. Yahweh was to be their king and each person was to obey His commands. That functioned well during the time of Joshua and the elders that had served with him, but as the generations progressed, it quickly failed (Judges 2:7, 10). This was largely due to the failure to fulfill Deuteronomy 6 in loving God with all their heart, soul and strength and then diligently teaching the succeeding generation to know and obey God's commands and love Him. The result was incomplete obedience to drive out the pagan nations as commanded, then joining in with those nations in the practice of idolatry, then intermarrying with them as "*everyone did what was right in his own eyes.*" Proverbs 12:15 pronounces that is the way fools, and it did not take long for consequences of the foolishness to appear as Yahweh gave them over to their enemies as warned.

The book of Judges traces the cycles of disobedience and idolatry followed by oppression resulting in repentance and then deliverance through the various judges Yahweh raised up. The book is neither an exhaustive nor strict chronological account of what God did. Rather, it traces these cycles geographically demonstrating that this problem was occurring throughout all the tribes and over multiple generations. While the book of Judges was written specifically to show the failure of the theocracy and the need for a king that would keep the people in line, the cycles also serve as a warning to all nations about the dangers of allowing wickedness to become dominant in a land.

Last week we looked at the cycles of judges from the first judge, Othniel, the nephew of Caleb, which occurred within a generation of the conquest of the land in 1406 B.C. to the last judge, Samson, who died about 1055 B.C. Today we will look at the two concluding stories of the book. Both are histories of events that occur fairly early in the period of the judges. The first history is a tale of theft, idolatry and tribal failure. The second history is a tale of gross immorality and injustice leading to civil war. Both of these histories are of such a nature that you recoil when you first read them. I recall being shocked at the depths of sin into which God's chosen people had fallen and having a hard time trying to understand why these stories were included in the book with such detail and how they fit into the book. It is the concluding verse of the book that puts them into perspective. "*In those days there was no king*

in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes” (Judges 21:25). Both of these stories serve to illustrate how wretched it can become when the people were not diligent to know Yahweh and follow Him and instead did what they thought best. The stories illustrate the failure of human wisdom.

Micah and the Danites (Judges 17-18)

The first historical story begins with an introduction to a man named Micah and his mother who lived in the hill country of Ephraim. In verse 2, Micah says to his mother, *“The eleven hundred pieces of silver which were taken from you, about which you uttered a curse in my hearing, behold, the silver is with me; I took it.”* And his mother said, *“Blessed be my son by the Lord.”*³ He then returned the eleven hundred pieces of silver to his mother, and his mother said, *“I wholly dedicate the silver from my hand to the Lord for my son to make a graven image and a molten image; now therefore, I will return them to you.”* The mother then pays a silversmith 200 pieces of silver to fashion the remaining 900 pieces of silver into a graven image which, incredibly, she dedicates to Yahweh. Micah makes a shrine for it and the other household idols along with an ephod and he consecrates one of his sons to be the family priest. In just the first five verses we find out that Micah is a thief, the mother is doting on her son for she had given a curse earlier regarding the stolen silver, but now she blesses her son though he is the thief. Both are self-deceived idolaters who break the second commandment against making graven images and then make the matter worse by dedicating it to Yahweh. Finally, they violate God’s laws concerning priests by setting aside the grandson to be a priest though he is not a Levite. Verse 6 then explains, *“In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”* They were ignorant of even the most basic commands of God, so they think what they are doing is good. Ignorant worship is still false worship, but it gets worse.

The story continues in verses 7-13 telling about a Levite who had been living in Bethlehem of Judea that was traveling through the hill country of Ephraim and came by the house of Micah. Since the Levite was looking for a place to dwell, Micah invites him to *“dwell with me and be a father and a priest to me, and I will give you ten pieces of silver a year, a suit of clothes, and your maintenance”* (vs. 10). The Levite agrees and the young man became like a son to Micah who consecrated him to be his priest. Micah concludes, *“Now I know that Yahweh will prosper me, seeing I have a Levite as priest”* (vs. 13).

Keep in mind that this also means that the Levite, who should know better, agrees to do this though it means participating in idolatry contrary to God’s commands. This is made worse when it is learned from Judges 18:30 that this is Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Moses as indicated by the ancient Hebrew texts. Whether this is the actual grandson of Moses or a later descendent as possible by the Hebrew term “ben” translated here as “son” and indicated by the genealogies in Chronicles, it means that even within the family line of Moses, the problem of syncretism occurred early as elements of the worship of Yahweh were mixed with elements of the worship of the pagan gods of the Canaanites. But all of this gets worse as we get into chapter 18.

The land that was allotted to the tribe of Dan was in the Shephelah and coastal plain west of Benjamin between Ephraim and Judah (Joshua 19:40-48). However, they did not take the land as they were supposed to do and instead the Amorites maintained control of the plain and valleys and forced the Danites into the hills (Judges 1:34). The result was that a portion of the tribe decided to move to a land in the far north (Judges 18:1-13). In the process they had passed by Micah’s home on their first trip north to spy out the land and had met Micah’s priest who had inquired of God for them. After spying out the land and finding it *“a place where there is no lack of anything that is on the earth,”* they returned and gathered six hundred men armed for war to go conquer Laish. As the war party passed by Micah’s house, the five spies that had stayed at Micah’s house on the first trip went in and stole Micah’s graven image, the ephod, the household idols and the molten image and also convinced the Levite to go with them to be the priest of a tribe instead of to just one man (18:14-20). This priest turned out to be an opportunist as well as an idolater and an accomplice to theft.

When Micah found out he objected that they had “*taken away the gods which I made*” and his priest (17:24). They threatened him, and since he was in no position to fight them, he returned. The Danites then did conquer Laish, renamed it Dan, and set up for themselves the graven image, idols and molten image with Jonathan, a descendent of Moses, serving as their priest as did his sons after him (18:14-31). Whether it was ignorance of the law of Yahweh, a flagrant disregard for it or some combination, syncretism developed quickly and not only perverted their worship, but also their morals. Doing what was right in their own eyes included coveting, theft, threats of violence and murder along with the flagrant idolatry.

Syncretism is just as dangerous and prevalent today. While professing Christians are not prone to mixing blatant idolatry with Christian practice as were the ancient Jews, the widespread ignorance of God’s word among self proclaimed Christians mixed with the normal human desire to do what you want makes the vast majority very susceptible to cults, cafeteria Christianity in which you pick what you want and leave the rest, and mixing in secular ideas and practices. Even among evangelicals who are supposed to be more attuned to and committed to the Bible as the word of God, a large portion, and in some cases the vast majority, do incorporate secular ideas into their belief system that are contrary to the Scriptures. This includes things such as evolution, secular psychology, homosexual marriage and now the components of social justice and critical race theory. It is also why there is often a minimal difference in practice between those claiming to be Christians and those that do not even in such moral cultural indicators as pre-marital sex, abortion, unbiblical divorce, drug and alcohol abuse, lying, cheating on taxes, etc.

The prevention and the cure for syncretism is to learn about the creator God who has revealed Himself in the Bible, and come to love Him with all your heart, soul and strength. When you love God, you want to know what He has revealed and then live according to His stated will even when that means you must change your will to match His. You will strive to live according to what is true and right before God regardless of what the rest of society is doing because pleasing Him is far more important than pleasing anyone else in the world.

Gibeah & the Benjamite Civil War (Judges 19-21)

The second historical account also probably occurred during the early period of the judges since Judges 20:28 mentions that Phinehas, the son of Eleazer, is serving as the High Priest at that time. It is a story of gross immorality, abuse, prevention of justice, civil war, near genocide, and forced marriage.

This story begins with an unnamed Levite that lived in the hill country of Ephraim who has traveled to Bethlehem in Judah to woo back his concubine that had returned home and had been there for four months. A concubine is a woman that lives with a man as a wife, but does not have the legal rights of a wife for herself or her children. The story is touching in one sense for he went to “*speak tenderly to her in order to bring her back*” or as Young’s Literal Translation more accurately states, “*to speak unto her heart, to bring her back*” (vs. 3). This is even more touching since he was doing this despite the fact that she had “*played the harlot against him*” (vs. 2).

The girl’s father was very glad to meet him and detained him for three days “*so they ate and drank and lodged there.*” On the fourth day the man got up early in the morning to leave, but the father-in-law persuaded him to eat, then to drink, then to stay the night again. On the fifth day, it appeared it would be a repeat of the fourth day, but even though it had already become late in the day, the Levite was not willing to spend another night and so left with his concubine. The sun was already getting low when they made it the five miles Jebus, but the Levite did not want to spend the night among the pagans, so they pushed on another three miles north to Gibeah in the territory of Benjamin and arrived just after sunset. He went to the town square, but he received no hospitality from the Benjaminites. An old man who was returning from working his field found them and took them in for the night and provided for them. He was an Ephraimite but was living in Gibeah (19:1-21).

I will read verses 22-26 in full because the context makes it very clear the gross immorality of what happens next. ²² *“While they were celebrating, behold, the men of the city, certain worthless fellows, surrounded the house, pounding the door; and they spoke to the owner of the house, the old man, saying, “Bring out the man who came into your house that we may have relations with him.”* ²³ *Then the man, the owner of the house, went out to them and said to them, “No, my fellows, please do not act so wickedly; since this man has come into my house, do not commit this act of folly.”* ²⁴ *“Here is my virgin daughter and his concubine. Please let me bring them out that you may ravish them and do to them whatever you wish. But do not commit such an act of folly against this man.”* ²⁵ *But the men would not listen to him. So the man seized his concubine and brought her out to them; and they raped her and abused her all night until morning, then let her go at the approach of dawn.* ²⁶ *As the day began to dawn, the woman came and fell down at the doorway of the man’s house where her master was, until full daylight.”*

Apologists for homosexuality want to claim that the sin here is the lack of hospitality. That only shows the perversion of their own hearts in Scripture twisting in the vain attempt to defend the indefensible. The actual phrase used for these men is *“sons of Belial,”* meaning worthless, base, lawless. Belial later became a reference to Satan. These were men that wanted to sodomize the Levite. The old man seeks to protect the Levite, but his own folly shows in offering his virgin daughter and the Levite’s concubine to the men. They should have been just as much under his protection as the Levite. From the text, it appears that he only gave them the concubine whom they gang raped all night. At dawn, she collapses at the doorway of the house.

The text is unclear whether the Levite, her master / husband, knew what had transpired the previous evening, but in the morning he certainly found out when he discovered her at the doorway with her hands on the threshold and unresponsive. She had died. He put her on her donkey and took her home. He then cut her up in the twelve pieces and sent a piece to each territory. The response is recorded in verse 30, *All who saw it said, “Nothing like this has ever happened or been seen from the day when the sons of Israel came up from the land of Egypt to this day. Consider it, take counsel and speak up!”*

Judges 20 records that the tribes mustered from “Dan to Beersheba,” which is a reference from the northern most city in Dan to the southern most city in Judea. This also indicates this is after the Danite migration and so additional evidence that had occurred early. Gilead is also mentioned which is a reference to the tribes on the east side of the Jordan. 400,000 soldiers assemble at Mizpah which is about 5 miles north of Gibeah. The Levite then told them what had happened and what he had done. The army devised a plan to bring about a proper punishment of Gibeah. Messengers were sent throughout Benjamin to *“deliver up the men, the worthless fellows in Gibeah, that we may put them to death and remove this wickedness from Israel.”* That should have quickly put an end to the whole affair, but Benjamin instead mustered its men to defend the evil men among the Gibeonites. They had 26,000 swordsmen and 700 stone slingers. This is an incredible reaction even given the idea that they wanted to defend their kinsmen. The Mosaic law was clear that both sodomy and murder were to be punished by execution of the guilty, yet they were going to war to defend these evil men.

In our own time, we have many that though they are not homosexuals themselves, they will defend what homosexuals do. A current case in point are the declarations that monkeypox is “a global emergency,” and a “U.S. public health emergency” that “can infect anyone.” The truth is that 95% of current diagnosed cases are among homosexual men because of their sexual practices that increase the spread rapidly. At the same time, the same draconian governments that shut down businesses for fear of Covid-19 are hesitant to shut down locations such as bath houses and events in which this particular disease is rapidly spread among sodomites. There is even the effort to change the name of monkeypox to something else because it stigmatizes the homosexuals who get it. This is the same response that occurred with GRIDS (Gay Related Immune Deficiency Syndrom) that was changed to AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrom) which became the first federally protected disease as communicable

disease tracing for it became prohibited. The result was a greater spread of the disease among homosexuals, IV drug abusers and the devastation of the hemophiliac population because the blood supply was contaminated by those with AIDS. The moral commands God has given protects monogamous couples from the risk of a STD (Sexually transmitted disease). Defending immorality and those whose practice it puts them at a higher risk, and it poses danger to the general population as mitigation efforts are hindered or blocked.

Blocking justice is injustice, and the Benjaminite defense of the wicked Gibeonites was a great injustice that led directly to a civil war. In the first battle, the Benjaminites killed 22,000 of the men of Israel. The next day, they killed an additional 18,000. The sons of Israel then went to Bethel, about 7 miles north of Gibeah, and fasted and offered burnt and peace offerings to Yahweh. Phinehas, the High Priest, then inquired of Yahweh and was instructed that they were to resume the battle the next day, only this time, they would set a trap. Part of the army arrayed themselves before the Benjaminites as before and drew them away from the city and about 30 men of Israel were killed in the process. The portion of the army that had been in hiding then struck Gibeah and set it on fire. The Benjaminite army was now surrounded. Verse 35 states, *“Yahweh struck Benjamin before Israel, so that the sons of Israel destroyed 25,100 men of Benjamin that day, all who draw the sword.”* Those who were left fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon and by the end of the action there were only 600 men of Benjamin left. The army of Israel then struck and set on fire all the cities of Benjamin and even the cattle and all that they found (vs. 48).

The result of defending immorality resulted in the near destruction of a tribe in Israel. Over 69,000 soldiers died, and all of the women, children and men of Benjamin that could not fight were struck with the sword and their cities set on fire. Justice would have limited the carnage to the righteous execution of just those Gibeonites that had committed the crimes. Defending immorality and failure to carry out justice always leads to greater tragedy than determining right and wrong by God’s commands and carrying out His stated will.

The near destruction of Benjamin created a new problem. There were only 600 men left of the tribe and there were no wives available for them since the Benjaminite women were dead and all the men of Israel that had gathered at Mizpah had sworn not to give their daughter in marriage to anyone from Benjamin. If a solution could not be found, the tribe of Benjamin would die out.

Their first solution was to find out who among all Israel had not come out to join them at Mizpah. It was discovered that no one from Jabesh-Gilead had come, so they determined to attack it and *“strike the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead with the edge of the sword, with the women and the little ones . . . and utterly destroy every man and every woman who has lain with a man.”* After they had done this, there were 400 young virgins left which they then brought back to their camp at Shiloh. They then sent word to the 600 sons of Benjamin that were still at Rimmon after four months to proclaim peace to them. They returned and the 400 women were given to them, but they were still 200 shy of what was needed.

Since the remaining men had sworn to not give their daughters in marriage to any man of Benjamin, their second solution had to find a way for the remaining men of Benjamin to get a wife without the approval of her father. The plan was developed for them to lie in wait near Shiloh, and then when the daughters of the city went out to celebrate a feast of Yahweh held there at a certain time, the men were to go catch a wife and return to Benjamin. The men of Israel would then intervene with the men of Shiloh when they complained. That is what then happened and the men of Benjamin returned to rebuild their cities with wives that were either captured in war or kidnaping. All of this was contrary to the Mosaic law. Not only was the destruction of Jabesh-Gilead unjust, but so was the capture of both them and the women at Shiloh. It constituted kidnaping, a crime punishable by death according to Exodus 21:6 and Deuteronomy 24:7.

The last verse of Judges is the commentary on why the idolatry, theft, unbelief, gross immorality, civil war, murder and kidnaping described in the last two historical stories had occurred. It also

explained the reason for the cycle of the judges. Judges 21:25, *“In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”* And as I pointed out in the beginning of this sermon from Proverbs 12:15, when you do what is right in your own eyes instead of seeking to know and do what God has commanded, you are following the way of fools and will reap the consequences that belong to fools.

Conclusions

No nation is exempt from God’s truths. As our society rapidly runs down the path of utter foolishness, we can expect even greater levels of gross immorality that comes with having depraved minds. The ability to have intelligent and logical conversations with people will continue to diminish. We can expect an increasing level of persecution against all who strive to live godly in Christ Jesus (2 Timothy 3:12). And while that is not something any of us wants to have happen, neither is it anything for which we need to be afraid.

It could be bad during the period of the judges, but there was hope as the oppression led to repentance and seeking God once again. The same is true in our own time and in all times. We must boldly proclaim the truth and tell the world of the hope that is found in the good news of Jesus Christ. Hope for both eternity and the present time of being able to live a better life that has eternal value. The period of the judges could be bad, but it was also during that period that the book of Ruth takes place. God always has his remnant of people that are faithful to him and that live godly lives. Commit yourself to that no matter what circumstances you may find yourself in, and you will always be a blessing to others. Diligently teach your children so they will be like the generation under Joshua that knew Yahweh and followed Him, and not succeeding generations that forgot Yahweh and did what was right in their own eyes.

Sermon Notes - July 31, 2022
The Failure of Human Wisdom - Judges 17-21

Introduction

1 & 2 Thessalonians point to a _____ church that thrived in the midst of persecution
Habakkuk shows God's actions in chastening Israel but also giving _____ in a promised restoration
Knowing God according to His word & walking with Him increase _____ and brings peace
Israel's history illustrates God's blessings upon the _____ and curses on the unfaithful
American history shows God's blessings on a nation & society that _____ & honored Him
Recent history shows a nation descending into greater _____ and God's judgment
Pursuing righteousness reaps God's favor while the opposite reaps God's _____

Review

God chose a _____ for Himself - Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and his descendants (Genesis)
God _____ a people for Himself with the Mosaic Covenant & purging the unfaithful (Exodus - Numbers)
The second generation was _____ and so conquered the land and set up the theocracy
The theocracy failed for the children were not diligently taught & they fell into _____ and syncretism
The cycle of the judges: _____ - idolatry - oppression - repentance - God's pity - deliverance by a judge
The shocking concluding historical stories _____ a people that did "*what was right in their own eyes*"

Micah and the Danites (Judges 17-18)

Micah is a _____, and he and his mother are syncretic idolaters
A Levite agrees to become the priest for Micah's family - and he joins in with their syncretic _____
This Levite, Jonathan, is a descendant of _____ and this occurs within two generations following Joshua
Dan did not _____ Yahweh and drive out the Amorites, and instead looked for an easier land to conquer
The Danite war party _____ Micah's graven image, idols & ephod - & convinced Jonathan to be their priest
The Danites conquered Laish, and with Jonathan & his descendants as their priest, followed syncretic _____
Syncretism _____ false religious & secular ideas & practices with those of Christianity
The prevention & cure for syncretism is to know & love _____ and walk with Him

Gibeah & the Benjamite Civil War (Judges 19-21)

This occurs _____ in the period of the judges for Phinehas, grandson of Aaron, is High Priest
A Levite travels from Ephraim to _____ to speak tenderly to his concubine in order to bring her back
He is welcomed by his father in law - and detained there _____ days eating, drinking & making merry
He leaves late on the fifth day and arrives in _____ in Benjamin just after sundown
An _____ from Ephraim that lives there takes them in for the night
Judges 19:22-26
Sons of _____ want to sodomize the Levite, but the old man gives them the concubine whom they gang rape
In the morning, the Levite finds his concubine _____ at the door.
He takes her body home, cuts it into _____, and sends them to each territory of Israel

The sons of Israel muster from around that nation gathering at Mizpah with an army of _____
Messengers are sent throughout Benjamin asking them to _____ the guilty
Benjamin instead musters an army of 26,000 swordsmen and 700 stone slingers to _____ the Gibeonites
Defending immorality and protecting the guilty is _____ and leads to greater tragedy
In two days of war, _____ sons of Israel are killed by the Benjaminites (10% of the army)
After fasting and making sacrifices, Yahweh tells them to fight again the next day and they would _____
An ambush is set up & by the time it is over, all of Benjamin is _____ except 600 men
Only _____ men of Benjamin were left & the Israelites vowed not to give them their daughters in marriage
Jabesh-Gilead was attacked and _____ for not joining them & to take 400 young virgins for Benjamin
200 more young virgins were _____ from Shiloh to give to the men of Benjamin
This story is filled with _____ of the Mosaic law from beginning to end
The concluding stories illustrate the _____ of sin that result when people do what is right in their own eyes

Conclusions

No nation is exempt from God's truths - righteousness exalts, _____ is a reproach bringing God's judgment
The period of the judges could be bad, the story of Ruth shows there is always a _____ of godly people
Commit yourself to seek & follow God and you will be a _____ to others.
Diligently _____ your children so that they will be like the generation that conquered the Joshua

KIDS KORNER

Parents, you are responsible to apply God's Word to your children's lives. Here is some help.

Young Children - draw a picture about something you hear during the sermon. Explain your picture(s) to your parents at lunch. **Older Children** - Do one or more of the following: 1) Write down all the verses mentioned in the sermon and look them up later. 2) Count how many times a reference is made to "doing what is right in your own eyes." Talk with your parents about why it is so important to know God and do what He wants instead of what you want.

THINK ABOUT IT!

Questions to consider in discussing the sermon with others. What do you think would happen if every person did what is right in their own eyes? What have you learned in the studies of 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, Habakkuk, and the Attributes of God? Has your faith in God increased? If so, why? If not, why not? What are the three essential elements of the covenant God made with Abraham? Why did God choose Abraham? Isaac? Jacob? How did God prepare the Israelites to be a people for Himself and a holy nation? Why was the generation that made the exodus from Egypt condemned to die in the wilderness over 40 years? How did Moses prepare the second generation? How did the second generation demonstrate their faith in Yahweh? What is the purpose of the book of Judges? Why did the theocracy fail? What is the cycle of the judges? Briefly recount the story of Micah & the Danites? What aspects of the Mosaic Law are revealed as being broken by the story? Why is it thought this occurred early in the time of the judges? Why did the Danites move north to Laish? What is syncretism and how does this story demonstrate it? Briefly recount the story of Gibeah and the Benjamite Civil War? How many violations of the Mosaic Law are revealed in the story? What did the Gibeonite "sons of Belial" want to do to the Levite? What did they do to his concubine? Why were the other tribes appalled at what happened? Why would Benjamin try to protect the Gibeonites? Why was that wrong? What was the eventual outcome? What problems did that create? Why was the manner in which they got wives for the remaining Benjaminites wrong? How is syncretism a problem in modern Christianity? What consequences have to be observed from people "doing what is right in their own eyes"? What is the solution?