THE LIVES OF ISRAEL’S JUDGES

**DATE: 2/17/2013 pm**

**TEXT: Deuteronomy 7; Judges 1**

**SERIES INTRODUCTION**

The period of history addressed in the book of Judges is a period of time defined by lawlessness, rebellion and moral failure among the people of Israel

The whole attitude of Israel during the time of the Judges can be summed up in the words of **Judges 17:6; 21:25**, where the Bible says,

“***In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes***”

That’s a pretty good description of our world as well!

God had redeemed Israel from Egyptian bondage

He led them for 40 years through the wilderness

He brought them safely into the land of Canaan and promised to defeat all their enemies …

If only they would walk with Him in holiness

God commanded them to enter Canaan and to conquer it

**Deuteronomy 7:1-6 …**

The commandments given in those verses are crystal clear

They were to -

**v. 1 -** Possess the land

**v. 2 -** Utterly destroy all the nations of Canaan

**v. 2 -** Make no peace treaties with them

**v. 2 -** Show them no mercy

**v. 3 -** Refuse to intermarry with them

**v. 5 -** Completely destroy every trace of their pagan religions

The reason they were commanded to do this was because Israel was to be different from all the people around them is found in -

**Deuteronomy 7:6 …**

They, among all the people of the earth, had been chosen by God

He had Saved, Blessed, and Promised them victory …

… If they would walk with Him

God demanded total separation among His people

He knew that if Israel allowed them-selves to be entangled with the Canaanites …

They would become spiritually corrupt and fail to walk with God -

**Deuteronomy 7:4a …**

When that happened, God promised that He would visit them suddenly, in His wrath,

**Deuteronomy 7:4b …**

Israel had their instructions, but they failed to carry out the Lord’s command

The record of their failure is chronicled in **Judges 1:19-34**

The tribe of -

- Judah failed – **1:19-20**

- Benjamin failed – **1:21**

- Joseph failed – **1:22-26**

- Manasseh failed – **1:27-28**

- Ephraim failed – **1:29**

- Zebulon failed – **1:30**

- Asher failed – **1:31-32**

- Naphtali failed – **1:33**

- Dan failed – **1:34**

- Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh failed in refusing to enter Canaan, choosing to remain on the other side of Jordan

Israel’s failure to defeat their enemies resulted in them living among their enemies

After a while, they became like their enemies, adopting the wicked ways of the various Canaanite tribes around them

Eventually, Israel began to worship the false gods of the Canaanites

When they followed this downward path, God allowed them to know His displeasure and His judgment

When judgment came, eventually the people would realize that they were to blame

They would repent and seek the Lord

When they did, God forgave them and raised up a deliverer, called a Judge

These men and women helped Israel throw off the yoke of their oppressors

They also helped them to live for God

Israel would follow a Judge until that Judge died, then they would revert to their wicked ways and the cycle would begin again

This continued in Israel for about 400 years, until they got their first king

The book of Judges is profitable for us today

Because in its pages, we see that Israel faced many of the same problems that we face in our world today

They faced physical enemies; so do we

They faced problems from the world, the flesh and the devil; so do we

I want to share with you some Lessons from *The Lives of Israel’s Judges*

As we look at these men and women God used to deliver His people in those days …

I want you to see that He is still looking for men and women He can use today

God is no longer looking for Judges

But He is looking for Leaders

He is looking for men and women He can use to stem the tide of evil that threatens to overtake Bible Believing churches in these dark days

He is looking for people who will rise up, taking their stand with God and the Bible

He is looking for people He can use to change the world for the glory of God

Some of the people He is looking for might just be sitting here tonight!

In that age, God used common, ordinary men and women to accomplish His purpose in Israel

And that is the kind of people He will use today as well