

Cry Out to the Gods Which You Have Chosen

Judges 10.1–11.11

Don Ruhl • Savage Street, Grants Pass, Oregon • January 26, In the year of our Lord, 2014

Prelude:

I. Can you be of any service to God?

A. Isaiah 51 reminds the righteous from where they came,

1 “Listen to Me, you who follow after righteousness,
You who seek the LORD:
Look to the rock from which you were hewn,
And to the hole of the pit from which you were dug.”
(Isa 51.1)

1. If God can take us from a rock,
2. if He can dig us from a pit,
 - a) He can surely use us.
 - b) Yes, you may have failed in the past,
 - (1) you may have committed unthinkable sins, but
 - (2) if He created the heavens and the earth,
 - (a) He can find a way to use you.
 - (b) Do you want Him to use you?
3. He can take you from the hole of the pit to righteousness!

B. Do you want to be of service to God and His people?

1. Perhaps you wanted to in the past, but
2. the church let you down.
 - a) The church needs you now.
 - b) So it was with Moses, and with one of the judges.

Persuasion:

I. Judges 10.1–2 – The Judges Tola and Jair

1 After Abimelech there arose to save Israel Tola the son of Puah, the son of Dodo, a man of Issachar; and he dwelt in Shamir in the mountains of Ephraim. 2 He judged Israel twenty-three years; and he died and was buried in Shamir. 3 After him arose Jair, a Gileadite; and he judged Israel twenty-two years. 4 Now he had thirty sons who rode on thirty donkeys; they also had thirty towns, which are called “Havoth Jair” {Literally Towns of Jair (compare Num 32.41; Deu 3.14)} to this day, which are in the land of Gilead. 5 And Jair died and was buried in Camon.

A. The Bible says little of these men, yet, they made it into the Bible!

1. However, the Lord knows everything we have done for His sake.
2. Therefore, our names are in the Lamb’s Book of Life.

B. How will future generations remember us?

C. Why did God put that information in about Jair’s sons?

1. Why do we *not* know the stories of deliverance of these men?
2. Perhaps we can talk with these two men in heaven.

“The record omits all details, even the identity of the oppressor. The purpose of the Book of Judges is not to glorify man; it bears witness to the fact that God’s ‘power is made perfect in weakness’ (2 Co 12:9). What the judges accomplished, whether reported at length or in barest outline, served the plan of the Lord of history to bring salvation to all nations” (Roehrs).

D. The Book of Judges shows Israel occupying the land promised to Abraham.

1. The land promise also included a nation promise.
2. The land and the nation would give the world the seed promise.
 - a) Israel’s place in the land had to be maintained to bring in the Savior.
 - b) Mentioning these two judges shows God keeping His promises.

II. Judges 10.6–9 – History repeats itself

6 Then the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served the Baals and the Ashtoreths, the gods of Syria, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the people of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines; and

they forsook the LORD and did not serve Him.

- A. It is amazing what men will worship so long as it is not the God of the Bible.
- B. Israel did evil in the sight of God:
 - 1. They served idols.
 - 2. They forsook the Lord.
 - 3. They did not serve the Lord.
- C. These gods had not delivered their people when God led Israel to fight them.
 - 1. Why then would Israel turn to these gods?
 - 2. Why was Israel fascinated with them?
- D. Israel provoked the Lord,

7 So the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel; and He sold them into the hands of the Philistines and into the hands of the people of Ammon. 8 From that year they harassed and oppressed the children of Israel for eighteen years—all the children of Israel who were on the other side of the Jordan in the land of the Amorites, in Gilead. 9 Moreover the people of Ammon crossed over the Jordan to fight against Judah also, against Benjamin, and against the house of Ephraim, so that Israel was severely distressed.

- 1. The Lord is full of grace, but
 - a) His grace has meaning because
 - b) His anger has meaning.
 - (1) His grace has meaning because
 - (2) it can save us from His wrath.
- 2. God sold Israel into the hands of the people of the land.
 - a) Israel insisted on embracing the gods of these people,
 - b) so He let those people embrace Israel.
 - (1) The embrace was not in love, but
 - (2) in brutality.

3. The problems Israel's enemies created for them:
 - a) Harassment
 - b) Oppression
 - c) War
 - d) Severe distress

III. Judges 10.10 – Israel confesses its sin

10 And the children of Israel cried out to the LORD, saying, "We have sinned against You, because we have both forsaken our God and served the Baals!"

- A. They recognized that they had sinned against God.
 1. They did not blame anyone other than themselves.
 2. They did not explain it away biologically.
 3. They did not call it a disorder.
- B. They made a two-fold confession:
 1. They had forsaken their God.
 2. They served the Baals.
- C. They did not try to sneak back into a relationship with God.
 1. They confessed that they had sinned, and
 2. they named the sins.

IV. Judges 10.11–14 – God tells Israel to cry out to her gods

11 So the LORD said to the children of Israel, "Did I not deliver you from the Egyptians and from the Amorites and from the people of Ammon and from the Philistines? 12 Also the Sidonians and Amalekites and Maonites {Some Septuagint manuscripts read Midianites.} oppressed you; and you cried out to Me, and I delivered you from their hand.

- A. He reminds them of the past when He delivered them.
 1. He had helped them when they were in similar situations before.

2. Why then, did they go back to the gods repeatedly?

- a) Why should He continue to deliver them?
- b) What does grace and mercy mean?

B. Therefore, He told them to continue to do what they insisted on doing.

28 But where are your gods that you have made for yourselves?

Let them arise,
If they can save you in the time of your trouble;
For according to the number of your cities
Are your gods, O Judah.
(Jer 2.28)

1. It did not do any good to tell them not to do it.

2. They had to learn by experience

- a) that they should not forsake God and
- b) serve anything else.

3. In whom and in what do we trust?

- a) Who is our trust when times are good?
- b) Who is our trust when times are rough?

V. Judges 10.15–16a – A full confession

15 And the children of Israel said to the LORD, “We have sinned! Do to us whatever seems best to You; only deliver us this day, we pray.” 16 So they put away the foreign gods from among them and served the LORD.

A. Think on the four things they said to God:

1. They confessed their sin.
2. They placed themselves in God’s discretion to do what was best.
3. They showed their desperation.
4. They begged.

B. They did what God wanted.

1. They put away the foreign gods.
2. They served the Lord.

VI. Judges 10.16b – God could not endure their misery

16b And His soul could no longer endure the misery of Israel.

- A. See the unending love God.
- B. Although Israel showed stubbornness and rebellion,
 1. God kept giving them another chance.
 2. Can we comprehend the grace of God?

VII. Judges 10.17–18 – Israel looked for a leader

17 Then the people of Ammon gathered together and encamped in Gilead. And the children of Israel assembled together and encamped in Mizpah. 18 And the people, the leaders of Gilead, said to one another, "Who is the man who will begin the fight against the people of Ammon? He shall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead."

- A. The time for war drew closer.
- B. Israel gathered together and
 1. encamped in a location, but
 2. they did not even have a military leader.
- C. They promised headship to the one
 1. brave enough and knowledgeable enough
 2. to begin the fight.

VIII. Judges 11.1–3 – Is Jephthah is the one?

1 Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty man of valor, but he was the son of a harlot; and Gilead begot Jephthah.

1. He was like Gideon.

2. In the eyes of his hometown, he had a strike against him.

B. They rejected their future leader,

2 Gilead's wife bore sons; and when his wife's sons grew up, they drove Jephthah out, and said to him, "You shall have no inheritance in our father's house, for you are the son of another woman."

1. The problem here seems to be the inheritance.

a) Luke 12.13 reveals a problem between two brothers over inheritance.

b) How does an inheritance create a problem between children?

(1) It is like winning the lottery.

(2) You win something without an investment.

2. The step or half-sibling can seem like an intruder.

C. Jephthah showed leadership ability,

3 Then Jephthah fled from his brothers and dwelt in the land of Tob; and worthless men banded together with Jephthah and went out raiding with him.

1. Jephthah was no doubt hurt by their rejection.

2. Some people strike back at those who reject them and

a) others flee and

b) stay away.

3. What happens next is typical.

a) Rejection leads to associating with the wrong people.

b) Yet, he developed a name for himself in leadership.

IX. Judges 11.4–6 – Israel finds that they need a leader

4 It came to pass after a time that the people of Ammon made war against Israel. 5 And so it was, when the people of Ammon made war against Israel, that the elders of Gilead went to get Jephthah from the land of Tob. 6 Then they said to Jephthah, "Come and be our commander, that we may fight against the peo-

ple of Ammon.”

- A. God continued to let the enemy oppress and defeat Israel.
- B. Interestingly, God would deliver Israel by means of a judge, but
 - 1. God did not call the judge as He had in previous cases.
 - 2. Israel had to go looking for a judge.

X. Judges 11.7–11 – Jephthah is received back

7 So Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, “Did you not hate me, and expel me from my father’s house? Why have you come to me now when you are in distress?” 8 And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, “That is why we have turned again to you now, that you may go with us and fight against the people of Ammon, and be our head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.” 9 So Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, “If you take me back home to fight against the people of Ammon, and the LORD delivers them to me, shall I be your head?” 10 And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, “The LORD will be a witness between us, if we do not do according to your words.” 11 Then Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head and commander over them; and Jephthah spoke all his words before the LORD in Mizpah.

- A. We understand Jephthah’s questions.
 - 1. They treated him as they had treated God.
 - a) They rejected God and
 - b) they rejected Jephthah
 - (1) when they thought that they did not need either one.
 - (2) They got into trouble, then
 - (a) they turned to God and
 - (b) to a man whom they had kicked out!
- B. Jephthah wanted to know if their acceptance was permanent.