

Episode #511 Judges 1 Part 1 – The Conquest of Canaan

I. In the book of Judges, we have a brief record of the early history (the first centuries) of the history of the land of Israel. We see the leaders God chose, judges, who ruled under Jehovah, the King. Through the lives and work of these judges, we can learn about God's works and ways.

II. Israel was planning to continue the conquest of Canaan after Joshua's death. Moses had been replaced by Joshua, but no new leader was chosen after him. Therefore, they asked the LORD who should lead them, and He chose the tribe of Judah.

III. The Conquests of Judah, Simeon, and Joseph.

- A. Judges 1:1-2. The 2.5 tribes have gone back east of the Jordan. Now, the conquest continues, as the remaining tribes want to continue to conquer the land. Apparently they are still somewhat in convocation, unlike later.
- B. No new Joshua has been chosen, so now the question is who will lead the continuing campaign? The tribe of Judah is chosen. The tribe from which eventually the Lord Himself was born!
 1. Judah was the man who suggested selling Joseph rather than killing him. Genesis 37:26-27. However, he led his brothers (Genesis 44:16, 18-34) and offered himself for Benjamin, showing his change of heart.
 2. Judah was chosen by his father for the kingly blessing, Genesis 49:8-12.
 3. Judah was the standard bearer of the tribes that traveled east of the Israelite camp, Numbers 2:3-9.
 4. Judah was one of the tribes privileged to give the blessing on mount Gerizim, Deuteronomy 27:12.
 5. Moses' blessing of Judah was short and did not specify the kingdom, Deuteronomy 33:7.
 6. Judah was one of the two leading tribes in Israel from which many of their rulers came (the other was Ephraim, who were often jealous of Judah).
- C. Judges 1:3. Simeon joins with Judah.
 1. Simeon had been one of the two brothers who wiped out the city of Shechem in a violent purge because of the defilement of their sister Dinah. Genesis 34:25, 30-31.
 2. Joseph chose Simeon to be the brother he imprisoned while the others returned home, Genesis 42:24.
 3. Jacob's prophecy over them was a negative one, Genesis 49:5-7. However, this prophecy against Levi was turned to a positive because of their faithfulness, Exodus 32:26-28. Simeon had this fulfilled in that their inheritance was within Judah, Joshua 19:1-9. How did Simeon rebel against Judah when they were surrounded by Judah? They seem to have been practically absorbed by Judah.
 4. Simeon also stood on Mount Gerizim, Deuteronomy 27:12.
 5. Moses did not speak of Simeon in his blessing in Deuteronomy 33.
- D. The Conquest of Canaan.
 1. This matter of Israel wiping out the Canaanites bothers many in our day, who call it "genocide." What can we say about this?

2. We have not met the Canaanites, so how do we know what they were like? If someone talked about wiping out the German Nazis, what would we say about this?
3. Genesis 18:25. God is the Judge of all the earth. Do we acknowledge that the One Who made us has the right to judge us? Does He have the right to execute the wicked?
4. Genesis 15:16. God made His people wait until the iniquity of these people reached the place where they deserved execution.
5. Leviticus 18:24-30. It was because of the abominable actions of the people of the land that the LORD considered them so defiled that they must be wiped out.
6. Joshua 8:24-26. The slaughter of the Canaanites was carried out like an execution. Key here: it was the LORD's judgment, not the Isra'lites' judgment, that these people deserved to be wiped out.

VI. The Israelites were given a command by God: wipe out the Canaanites. Some argue that this command was not fair or just. Yet how do we, who have never met a Canaanite, know this is true? Ultimately we must ask ourselves if we believe in God's right to judge us or not. His right to punish the creatures He made should be a certainty in our minds. Let us learn this from the book of Judges.