

A GRIM REALITY AND A REASON TO HOPE

Judges 3:20-23

Judges 21

Awareness

Before listening, reflect:

- Why do you think the Holy Spirit included the stories of Israel's judges in the Bible? What do you think is the purpose of the book of Judges?
- Have you ever made a project more difficult than it needed to be? Why? What was the outcome?

Judges paints a bleak and selfish picture of humanity. The stories it contains are uncomfortable at best and gruesome at worst. We celebrate the heroic victories God orchestrates for his people, but we also watch the condition of their faith deteriorate. These stories depict what happens when we turn away from God—they are reminders of our desperate need for God and his salvation plan. Thankfully, God refuses to give up on his people, even when we turn away from him. Judges assures us that God is always at work in us and the world around us...a sure reason to hope.

Listen: [*A Grim Reality and a Reason to Hope*](#)

Reflection

After listening, consider:

- Read Isaiah 29:13, Titus 1:16, and Revelation 3:15-16. How do these verses resonate with host Dave Bast's observation that Israel made it harder for themselves to maintain faith and follow God by *not* rooting out all other religions as God had commanded? What dangers might we (or do we) encounter when we do not entirely root out temptation in our midst?
- Consider Timothy Keller's observation, "All through the book of Judges, and nowhere more so than at its end, Israel's worst enemy was Israel. So often, sadly, the same is true of God's people today...We find it very easy to blame others for the weakness of the church...We wonder why God does not give unity, or send revival. We look everywhere but at ourselves" (*Judges for You*, 194-195). Do you think this is true? If so, where have you seen evidence of this? If not, why not?
- In segment 2, Dave and host Scott Hoezee discuss the end of Judges. They note how God stops speaking and seems to withdraw from the Israelites. And yet, they adamantly affirm that God is still at work. In what way is he still working behind the scenes? How do we know? Why is this knowledge important for you and how does it benefit your faith?
- As an Old Testament book, Judges never specifically talks about Jesus, and yet it vividly depicts our great need for deliverance and points us forward to him. How has studying Judges impacted your understanding of the salvation story?

Related Passages

- Hosea 11:1-11
- Isaiah 29:13
- Titus 1:16
- Revelation 3:15-16
- 1 John 2:15-16

Conclusion

Reflect on this prayer from *Canyon Road: A Book of Prayer* by Kari Kristina Reeves:

The twistedness of my inner life is
beyond searching out.
Not for you, but for me.

The disorder of my desires
is beyond understanding.
Not for you, but for me.

The brokenness of my spirit
is beyond repair.
Not for you, but for me.

You are the one
who restores what is lost.

You are able to do the impossible.

The state of my heart is simply
what it is today.

And so I hand it over to you.

Jesus, heal me (183).

Where in this prayer do you recognize echoes of Judges? How does it reflect the hope we now have in Jesus Christ, because our God is a God who refuses to give up on his people?

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Printed on July 3, 2024