

## Judges – Chosen for a purpose

Questions:

1. Why were Judges chosen by God?
2. What was the selection process?
3. What were the criteria God used?
4. How do we measure up?

### Judges 2:10-23

And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.

<sup>11</sup>And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim:

<sup>12</sup>And they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that *were* round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger.

<sup>13</sup>And they forsook the LORD, and served Baal and Ashtaroth.

<sup>14</sup>And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies.

<sup>15</sup>Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for evil, as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had sworn unto them: and they were greatly distressed.

<sup>16</sup>Nevertheless the LORD raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them.

<sup>17</sup>And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the LORD; *but* they did not so.

<sup>18</sup>And when the LORD raised them up judges, then the LORD was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented the LORD because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them.

<sup>19</sup>And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, *that* they returned, and corrupted *themselves* more than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them; they ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way.

<sup>20</sup>And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel; and he said, Because that this people hath transgressed my covenant which I commanded their fathers, and have not hearkened unto my voice;

<sup>21</sup>I also will not henceforth drive out any from before them of the nations which Joshua left when he died:

<sup>22</sup>That through them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of the LORD to walk therein, as their fathers did keep *it*, or not.

<sup>23</sup>Therefore the LORD left those nations, without driving them out hastily; neither delivered he them into the hand of Joshua.

**So let's take a look at the situation Israel was in and look specifically at a few key words in the Hebrew text and determine what Judges were supposed to do....**

### **Judges 2:16**

Nevertheless the LORD<sup>H3068</sup> raised<sup>H6965</sup> up judges<sup>H8199</sup>, which delivered<sup>H3467</sup> them out of the hand<sup>H3027</sup> of those that spoiled<sup>H8154</sup> them.

**H6965** qûm koom A primitive root; to *rise* (in various applications, literally, figuratively, intensively and causatively):—abide, accomplish, X be clearer, confirm, continue, decree, X be dim, endure, X enemy, enjoin, get up, make good, help, hold, (help to) lift up (again), make, X but newly, **ordain**, perform, pitch, **raise (up)**, **rear (up)**, remain, (a-) rise (up) (again, against), **rouse up**, **set (up)**, **(e-) stablish**, **(make to) stand (up)**, **stir up**, **strengthen**, **succeed**, (as-, make) sure (-ly), (be) up (-hold, -rising).

**H8199** shâphaṭ *shaw-fat'* A primitive root; to *judge*, that is, pronounce *sentence* (for or against); by implication to *vindicate* or *punish*; by extension to **govern**; passively to **litigate** (literally or figuratively):— + avenge, X that condemn, **contend**, **defend**, execute (judgment), (be a) judge (-ment), X needs, **plead**, **reason**, **rule**.

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### **Judges 3:8-11**

<sup>8</sup>Therefore the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Chushanrishathaim king of Mesopotamia: and the children of Israel served Chushanrishathaim eight years.

<sup>9</sup>And when the children of Israel cried unto the LORD, the LORD **raised up a deliverer** to the children of Israel, who delivered them, *even* **Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother**.

<sup>10</sup>And **the Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Israel, and went out to war**: and the LORD delivered Chushanrishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand; and his hand prevailed against Chushanrishathaim.

<sup>11</sup>And the land had rest forty years. And Othniel the son of Kenaz died.

### **Judges 3:31**

And after him was Shamgar the son of Anath, which slew of the Philistines six hundred men with an ox goad: and he also **delivered** Israel.

**So the answer to our first question would seem to be that the Lord raised them up not to judge as in discern or decide but to rule, lead or govern and as such to deliver them from their enemies or oppressors.**

### **Judges 4:1-4**

<sup>1</sup>And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, when Ehud was dead.

<sup>2</sup>And the LORD sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, that reigned in Hazor; the captain of whose host was Sisera, which dwelt in Harosheth of the Gentiles.

<sup>3</sup>And the children of Israel cried unto the LORD: for he had nine hundred chariots of iron; and twenty years he mightily oppressed the children of Israel.

<sup>4</sup>And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time.

So the answer to question # 2 and 3

1. What was the selection process? God raised them up, and gave them a spirit
2. What were the criteria God used? Strong men only? No strong woman here as well

Judges 6:7-

<sup>7</sup>And it came to pass, when the children of Israel cried unto the LORD because of the Midianites,

<sup>8</sup>That the LORD sent a prophet unto the children of Israel, which said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the house of bondage;

<sup>9</sup>And I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all that oppressed you, and drave them out from before you, and gave you their land;

<sup>10</sup>And I said unto you, I am the LORD your God; fear not the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but ye have not obeyed my voice.

<sup>11</sup>And there came an angel of the LORD, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abiezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites.

<sup>12</sup>And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.

<sup>13</sup>And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? but now the LORD hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.

<sup>14</sup>And the LORD looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?

<sup>15</sup>And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house.

<sup>16</sup>And the LORD said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.

<sup>17</sup>And he said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, then show me a sign that thou talkest with me.

Show me a sign? Really? And you all know the story, he asks for multiple signs!

<sup>36</sup>And Gideon said unto God, If thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said,

<sup>37</sup>Behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor; and if the dew be on the fleece only, and it be dry upon all the earth beside, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by

mine hand, as thou hast said.

<sup>38</sup>And it was so: for he rose up early on the morrow, and thrust the fleece together, and wringed the dew out of the fleece, a bowl full of water.

<sup>39</sup>And Gideon said unto God, Let not thine anger be hot against me, and I will speak but this once: let me prove, I pray thee, but this once with the fleece; let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew.

<sup>40</sup>And God did so that night: for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground.

### **Judges 7:2**

And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people that *are* with thee *are* too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel **vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.**

**And you know the rest of the story how God delivers the Midianites into Gideon's hand with only 300 men and they kill each other in confusion.**

### **Judges 8:22-28**

<sup>22</sup>Then the men of Israel said unto Gideon, Rule thou over us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son's son also: for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian.

<sup>23</sup>And Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the LORD shall rule over you.

<sup>24</sup>And Gideon said unto them, I would desire a request of you, that ye would give me every man the earrings of his prey. (For they had golden earrings, because they *were* Ishmaelites.)

<sup>25</sup>And they answered, We will willingly give *them*. And they spread a garment, and did cast therein every man the earrings of his prey.

<sup>26</sup>And the weight of the golden earrings that he requested was a thousand and seven hundred *shekels* of gold; beside ornaments, and collars, and purple raiment that *was* on the kings of Midian, and beside the chains that *were* about their camels' necks.

<sup>27</sup>And **Gideon made an ephod** thereof, and put it in his city, *even* in Ophrah: **and all Israel went thither a whoring after it: which thing became a snare unto Gideon, and to his house.**

<sup>28</sup>Thus was Midian subdued before the children of Israel, so that they lifted up their heads no more. And the country was in quietness forty years in the days of Gideon.

**So the criteria did not include faithful, nor perfect, not the biggest but the least, not secure in the Lord, but one who doubted and needed proof.**

### **Judges 11:1-3**

Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty man of valour, and he *was* the **son of an harlot**: and Gilead begat Jephthah.

<sup>2</sup>And Gilead's wife bare him sons; and his wife's sons grew up, and they thrust out Jephthah, and said unto him, Thou shalt not inherit in our father's house; for thou *art* the son of a strange woman.

<sup>3</sup>Then Jephthah fled from his brethren, and dwelt in the land of Tob: and there were gathered vain men to Jephthah, and went out with him.

So then Japhthah is asked to lead Israel against Ammorites....

<sup>29</sup>Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah, and he passed over Gilead, and Manasseh, and passed over Mizpeh of Gilead, and from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed over *unto* the children of Ammon.

<sup>30</sup>And Jephthah vowed a vow unto the LORD, and said, If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands,

<sup>31</sup>Then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the LORD'S, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering.

<sup>32</sup>So Jephthah passed over unto the children of Ammon to fight against them; and the LORD delivered them into his hands.

<sup>33</sup>And he smote them from Aroer, even till thou come to Minnith, *even* twenty cities, and unto the plain of the vineyards, with a very great slaughter. Thus the children of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel.

<sup>34</sup>And Jephthah came to Mizpeh unto his house, and, behold, **his daughter came out to meet him** with timbrels and with dances: and she *was his* only child; beside her he had neither son nor daughter.

<sup>35</sup>And it came to pass, when he saw her, that he rent his clothes, and said, Alas, my daughter! thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me: for I have opened my mouth unto the LORD, and I cannot go back.

<sup>36</sup>And she said unto him, My father, *if* thou hast opened thy mouth unto the LORD, do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth; forasmuch as the LORD hath taken vengeance for thee of thine enemies, *even* of the children of Ammon.

<sup>37</sup>And she said unto her father, Let this thing be done for me: let me alone two months, that I may go up and down upon the mountains, and bewail my virginity, I and my fellows.

So a foolish vow costs Japhthah dearly.

### **Judges 13:24**

<sup>24</sup>And the woman bare a son, and called his name **Samson: and the child grew, and the LORD blessed him.**

<sup>25</sup>And the Spirit of the LORD began to move him at times in the camp of Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol.

### **Judges 14:1-3**

<sup>1</sup>And Samson went down to Timnath, and saw a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines.

<sup>2</sup>And he came up, and told his father and his mother, and said, I have seen a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines: now therefore get her for me to wife.

<sup>3</sup>Then his father and his mother said unto him, *Is there* never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines? And Samson said unto his father, Get her for me; for **she pleaseth me well.**

So Samson chosen before conceived isn't perfect as he lusts for a woman, against his father and mother's wishes breaking the 5<sup>th</sup> commandment to honor thy father and mother.

### **Judges 15:15**

And he found a new jawbone of an ass, and put forth his hand, and took it, and slew a thousand men therewith.

### **Judges 16:4-5**

And it came to pass afterward, that he **loved a woman** in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah.

<sup>5</sup>And the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and said unto her, Entice him, and see wherein his great strength *lieth*, and by what *means* we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to afflict him: and we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred *pieces* of silver.

### **Judges 16:28-30**

And Samson called unto the LORD, and said, O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes.

<sup>29</sup>And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left.

<sup>30</sup>And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with *all his* might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that *were* therein. **So the dead which he slew at his death were more than *they* which he slew in his life.**

### **Hebrews 11:32-40**

<sup>32</sup>And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of **Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David** also, and Samuel, and *of* the prophets:

<sup>33</sup>Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

<sup>34</sup>Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

<sup>35</sup>Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

<sup>36</sup>And others had trial of *cruel* mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:

<sup>37</sup>They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;

<sup>38</sup>(Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and *in* mountains, and *in* dens and caves of the earth.

<sup>39</sup>And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

<sup>40</sup>God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

David sinned by lusting for Bathsheba and committing the murder of her husband Uriah and subsequently their first son died.

1. So last question: How do we measure up?

- All have sinned and come short of the glory of God
- **Romans 3:23** For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;  
<sup>24</sup>Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:
- **Eph 2:1-3** And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins;  
<sup>2</sup>Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:  
<sup>3</sup>Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.
- No man is righteous or saved by his own works, but by grace are we saved  
**Eph 2:8-10** For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: <sup>9</sup>Not of works, lest any man should boast.  
<sup>10</sup>For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.
- God chooses the weak to show that through Christ we are strong
- **2 Cor 12:9-10** And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.  
<sup>10</sup>Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.  
**Phil 4:13** I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

We have to stop complaining about our weaknesses, failures, short comings and sins, and start accepting God's grace that He has chosen us for His Purposes, not because we are special, but in spite of our weaknesses.