

Who Is My King? - Do We Allow God to Use Us in Times of Challenge?

Judges 3:12-31

Where the world considers weak, if we surrender that to the Lord, the Lord will use it to do great and mighty things to glorify himself.

Judges 3:12-31 New International Version (NIV)

Small tribe Benjamin – left-handed – God uses weak people

Cycle -did evil (forsake, sin against God), God discipline, People cry out (repent), God raises deliver and rescue

Origins

Moabites:

- Distant relatives of the Israelites
- Moab (meaning of his father)
- Moab was born from Lot (Abraham's nephew) with one of his daughters (Genesis 19:37)
- After Lot escaped the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Lot's daughters were afraid that no one would carry the family line, so they got Lot drunk with wine and slept with him.

Ammonites:

- Distant relatives of the Israelites
- Ammon (meaning my father's people or son of my relatives)
- Ammon was born from Lot (Abraham's nephew) with one of his daughters after the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19:38).

Amalekites:

- Distant relative of the Israelites
- Amalek (meaning dweller in a valley)
- Amalek was the grandson of Esau (Genesis 36:15-16), great-grandson of Isaac, great-great-grandson of Abraham.

Israelites' Relationships with

Moabites:

- Two nations' relationships fluctuated
- Past Conflicts
 - o Numbers 22-25, Balak, King of Moab sent Balaam to curse the Israelites as they came out of Egypt and on the way to the Promised Land
 - o Eglon, King of Moab attacked Jericho, the first city Israelites conquered in the Promised Land (Joshua 5-6). It is a mark of success.
- God's future grace

- During a famine, Naomi went to Moab with her husband and two sons.
- Naomi's two sons married Moabites women, Ruth and Orpah
- When Naomi heard that God came to help her people by providing food for them, Naomi prepared to go back to her homeland.
- At that point Naomi's two sons also died. Orpah was released, but Ruth clung on to Naomi and went back with her (Ruth 1:1-22)
- Ruth, a Moabite woman married Boaz (Ruth 4:15-17).
- Ruth gave birth to Obed, grandfather of King David.
- Ruth was the great grandmother of King David.

Ammonites:

- The few times the Bible mentioned were with tensions
- Deut. 23:3-6 indicates when the Israelites passed by the land of the Ammonites to the Promised Land, the Ammonites refused to even help with water and bread.

Amalekites:

- Enemies
- Sudden attack the tired and weary Israelites that just came out of Egypt
- Joshua met them in battle while Moses raised his hands on the mountain with Aaron and Hur (Exodus 17:8-16).
- God said, "I will completely blot out the name of Amalek from under heaven." (Exodus 17:14).
- Later, King Saul spare the Agag, King of Amalek in battle and all the best of the sheep and livestock (1 Sam. 15:7-9).
- God rejected Saul as king (1 Sam. 15:11).

Eglon

- Meaning rounded calf or little fat bull.
- Getting rich by raiding Jericho and collecting tributes for 18 years.

City of Palms

- Jericho – 1st city the Israelites conquered in the Promised Land.

Did evil

- Idolatry
- Self-assertion by the people
- Has destructive consequences.
- God is merciful and gracious
- God raises up a deliverer
- Justice grounded in God's grace

Tribe of Benjamin

- Benjamin, youngest of Jacob's twelve sons
- The smallest tribe

- Benjamin (meaning son of my right hand or restricted of his right hand).
- Benjamin has great truths to teach. First, God doesn't see as men see, for God looks on the heart. God saw a warrior inside of Benjamin. Outwardly, others saw him as the youngest son and his tribe as the smallest tribe.
- But God saw more, a man who would do great things for God.
- The second lesson for us lies in the two Sauls who came from the tribe of Benjamin. King Saul, the epitome of the sin nature and its war against God, and Saul/Paul whose nature was changed by God from a murderous Pharisee to the apostle of grace. Paul is the example of what God does for those who come to Christ in faith.

Ehud

- Left-handed
- Inferior, uncleaned, disability
- The so-called inferior defeats an obvious superior.
- The one supposed to be unclean leaves the royal Eglon prostrate in his own dung
- The apparently disabled person proves both mentally and physically more skilled than his opponents.
- Tribute, sacrificial offering, now fat bull.
- Eglon, the one who demanded tribute from Israel, ends up, in essence, being slaughtered as if he was Israel's sacrificial offering to God.

Gilgal

- Joshua told twelve tribes' leader to pick up a stone when they crossed the Jordan river (Joshua 4:1-7)
- When the Israelites went up from the Jordan and camped at Gilgal on the eastern border of Jericho, Joshua set up at Gilgal the twelve stones they had taken out of the Jordan meaning the Lord dry up the Jordan like he did with the Red Sea for the Israelites to cross over.
- Meaning, the hand of the Lord is powerful and so that people might always fear the Lord your God." (Joshua 4:19-24)
- Since Moabites controlled the crossing, it's no longer a place of worship for the One truth God.
- It became a place of Moabites worship of idols (stone images) – sculptured stones
- Elgon expected that Ehud probably crossed Jordan to deliver the tribute
- A judgment from God rather than a favour message from Moabites' god.

God looks at the heart

⁷ But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." 1 Sam. 16:7

God uses what and who God has available and the instruments are seldom exemplary
Tricksters like Jacob, murderers like Moses, David, Paul