

MESSAGE

INCOMPLETE

FLAWED HEROES | JUDGES 1:1-2:5 | JUN 4/5, 2016 | PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

"The angel of the Lord went up from Gilgal to Bokim and said, 'I brought you up out of Egypt and led you into the land I swore to give to your ancestors.'" (Judges 2:1)

Incomplete Entry (Joshua 23:6-8; Judges 1:1-2)

Incomplete Obedience (Judges 1:3-36)

Interlude: What About God and Violence in the Old Testament?

Incomplete Revival (Judges 2:1-5)

STUDY GUIDE

- 1, This weekend we begin a new series entitled "Flawed Heroes" on the Old Testament book of Judges. As we start the series, we will begin by studying Judges 1:1-2:5. Whether you are on your own or with a small group, begin your study in prayer, asking God to speak to you through His word, and then read the passage aloud.
2. *Background:* The book of Judges follows the book of Joshua, recounting the victories and struggles of God's people as they enter the Promised Land in fulfillment of God's promises. The first two chapters present the central problem of the book, which is that the people have not fully obeyed God's instructions about how to live in this new land (see Joshua 23). Because of the tension created by this incomplete obedience, God's people are constantly facing pressure from surrounding people groups. God raises up deliverers ('judges') to set them free. The book is not arranged chronologically but serves as a thematic, historical bridge between the time of Moses and Joshua and the time of the kings, like Saul and David, thus serving as one part of the great history that runs from Deuteronomy through 2 Kings.
3. Each of the twelve tribes of Israel was apportioned areas of land by Joshua (see Joshua 13-21). Judges 1:1-19 chronicles the conquering work of the tribe of Judah, including a special story about Caleb and his family. Would you describe the work of Judah as successful or unsuccessful? Why?
4. Now look at 1:20-36. How would you describe the efforts of the rest of the tribes (Benjamin, Ephraim, Manasseh, Zebulun, Asher, Naphtali, Dan) as they seek to obey God's call to enter the Promised Land?
5. One of the great challenges of the book of Judges is the violence and death involved in the Israelites entering the Promised Land. Many have struggled with how a God who is good could ask the Israelites to drive out the other peoples of the land, even devoting them to destruction. This is a very difficult issue and we should wrestle with it. It is important to remember that God was patient with the Canaanites (Genesis 15:13,16), but as time progressed their abominable practices required judgment (Leviticus 18:25; Deuteronomy 9:4-5; 20:18). Throughout His work with Israel, God is transforming cultural norms within the world and introducing redemptive ethical standards (Genesis 12:1-3; Deuteronomy 7:6-11; Psalm 106:7-8).
6. Reread Judges 2:1-5. What was the work of God for the people according to verse 1? What was the instruction of God according to verse 2? What was the result according to verse 3? How did the people respond in verses 4-5?
7. When have you experienced God's addressing an area of disobedience or wrong in your life? How did you respond to Him in that place?

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