

Family Items

A Clipboard of News for God's Family at Jones Road



Sick:

- ◇ Marshall Pepper...Jane Ola Hinkle...Bobby Abernathy...Ruth Peete... Exie Pepper...

Miscellaneous:

◇

Travelers:

◇ ...

Meetings:

- ◇ Bible drill at 4:30 P.M. today.
- ◇ Lowell Sallee at **Pleasant Valley** July 29—August 3.
- ◇ Singing at **Reunion** today at 3:00 P.M.
- ◇ Leon Mauldin at Marcella Falls (Etheridge, TN) August 3-5.
- ◇ **Oakland**—singing Aug. 4 and a meeting with Kenny Mooror Aug. 5-10.
- ◇ The class for young mothers will be August 4. There will be a morning session from 10:00—12:00 and an afternoon session from 1:30—3:30.

We Meet...	Elders
Sunday Morning 9:30 A.M. Sunday Evening 5:00 P.M. Wednesday Evening 7:00 P.M	Mike Huggins Steve Leverette Daryl Turner
Deacons	Evangelist
Marcus Dean Ron Flatt John Harris	John R. Gibson

Jones Road Journal

July 29, 2018



Lessons from the Judges (Part 2)

Wasted Abilities

By John R. Gibson

“As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.” 1 Peter 4:10

While the period of the judges contains some fascinating stories, it was a dark period in the history of Israel and we are considering some lessons we can learn from this tragic time in the history of God's people. In the first article we looked at the importance of not allowing a generation to reach adulthood without knowing the Lord and His great work. We also considered the necessity of a standard of righteousness, along with the will and means to enforce the standard. Now think with me as we consider more lessons from the Judges and focus in on both the danger of and ways in which we either waste or fail to maximize our abilities or talents.



As a child two of my favorite judges were Gideon and Samson and both men certainly did some good things for the Lord and His people Israel. Gideon delivered the people from the Midianites with a great show of faith and surely Samson's exploits did serve to “begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines” (Judges 13:5). However, when one looks at both men there is some sadness at what might have been.

Gideon demonstrated a tremendous faith in the Lord as he led 300 in battle and he is to be commended for his humble refusal to rule over Israel (8:22-23). Yet, he took the gift of golden earrings and made an ephod which became a snare to Israel (8:24-27). We are not given any information about Gideon's intentions for this sleeveless garment, but it either constituted a direct departure from God's law or in some way encouraged it on the part of others. Add to this the fact that this man who refused to

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become king acted like a king as he married many wives and took a concubine (8:29-32). (Interestingly enough, Abimelech, the name given to the concubine's son, meant "my father is king.") With his ephod this man of great faith paved the way for Israel's harlotry with the Baals (8:33) and with his deviation from God's plan for marriage he set the stage for the murder of sixty-nine of his own sons and the complete destruction of Shechem.

Though as a child I only thought of Samson as a man of great strength, he repeatedly displayed a spirit of carnality in his desire for personal vengeance and the attraction to women who could only be described as less than ideal in character. Samson did some great things and helped pave the way for the victory of Samuel, but how much more might have been accomplished if he had focused more on leading the people and less on personal vengeance? And while he killed 3,000 Philistines at his death, what might Samson have achieved for Israel if he had not been imprisoned because of his attraction to Delilah? He judged Israel for twenty years (15:20) and likely did many great things not recorded, but it should be obvious that much more could have done if he had exercised greater control of his passions.

I don't want to suggest that these men were complete failures, but Gideon is a powerful reminder that we must watch our actions and be careful that we are not saying or doing things which pave the way for departures from God's word. He probably didn't intend for the ephod to become an object of worship or enticement to sin, but what was he thinking when he did it? There are preachers (and other disciples of Jesus) who seem to take delight in saying things in a provocative way without any thought to how others may take these things further than they intended. Some will do things or propose changes in the worship that may not be inherently sinful, but have the real potential to open the door to sin. Should I not give careful thought to my "liberties" and make certain they are not exercised in such a way as to make apostasy easier or more likely. And may everyone, but especially those in positions of influence, recognize the importance of sticking to God's pattern for the family. Failures in the home may destroy all the good we have accomplished with the gifts God has given us.

And should Samson not be a reminder that our gifts are for the building up of the body and not merely the advancement of our own personal agendas (Eph. 4:11-16)? People who are like Samson and thinking about their own personal glory or agenda may accomplish some good things in the kingdom, but will never maximize the good that could be done if self were pushed to the back and the needs of others became the chief driving force for them.

Of course when we think of Samson and his weaknesses our first thoughts are probably of the carnality shown in marrying a Philistine, going

to a harlot, and loving a woman as devious as Delilah. Many talented young saints, both male and female, have failed to become all they could have been in the service of the Lord because of a similarly carnal approach to seeking a mate. Marrying someone who is not spiritually-minded or focused on the work of the kingdom may not necessarily cause you to lose your faith, but it will impact you and your influence in the body. Who reading this does not know men who might be elders or preachers, but for the choice of a wife? And by the same token, there are women who would love to be more active in teaching classes, serving others, practicing hospitality, etc., but are held back by a husband with little or no interest in these things. Samson possessed great gifts, but failed to make the most of them because of too much carnality in his view of women—let's not make the same mistake when it comes to our dealings with the opposite sex.

All Scripture quotations are taken from the New King James Version, copyright 1995, Thomas Nelson Publishing, Inc.

Readings for July 29—August 4

Jonah 1-4; Matt. 11 / 2 Kgs. 13-14; 2 Chron. 25; Psa. 53; Matt. 12 / Amos 1-3; Matt. 13 / Amos 4-6; Psa. 55; Matt. 14 / Amos 7-9; Matt. 15

Privileged to Serve

SUNDAY AM

Announcements: Steve Leverette	Song Leader: Mark Hooton
Opening Prayer: Aaron Gabardi	Lord's Supper: Dustin Hall
Serving Lord's Supper: Chad S. Wesley L. Adam T. Coulter B. Wade P. Tracy S. Marcus D. Larry T.	
Sermon: John Gibson	Closing Prayer: John Harris
Count Contribution: Lance Hall	Royce Waddell

SUNDAY PM

Announcements: Nathan Pepper	Song Leader: Ron Flatt
Scripture Reading: David Conn	Opening Prayer: Steve Leverette
Sermon: John Gibson	Lord's Supper: Anthony Thomas
Preston Guthrie	Closing Prayer: Mike Huggins

WEDNESDAY PM

Announcements: John Sugg	Song Leader: Ryne Gay
Invitation: James Hough	Closing Prayer: John M. Huggins
Sound Booth: Nathan P. / Adam T.	Ushers: Tracy S. David H.