

Sunday AM
2021 Judges #7
“Essentials of the Biblical Gospel”
Judges 4:1-24
May 30, 2021

Intro:

It’s the kind of thing you dream of. The opportunity to step in, at a critical moment, and lead the charge bringing a surprising, overwhelming victory against a far superior foe. You’ve even got the name for it - “Lightning.” Yet, throughout, you play second fiddle to a woman. In fact the decisive blow is struck by yet another woman and you are a day late and a dollar short! It’s yet another quirky, twisting, turning tale from the book of Judges. We are in that time, some have called, the Dark Ages of Israel. The young nation is taking its first, struggling steps as a people, having been delivered from 400 years of bondage down in Egypt. After a 40 year detour, brought about by rebellion, they are now taking possession of the land of Promise. Joshua struck the blow that broken the back of Canaanite dominance. It is now time for the people to settle the land. It is described as a time when there was no king in Israel and everyone did what was right in his own eyes. A pattern is repeated over and over. First, there is apostasy - a turning away from Yahweh, their covenant God, and going after the gods of the surrounding peoples. God then brings judgment through an oppressor. That oppression leads to the people crying out to God for help. He responds by raising up a judge, a savior who delivers them. They enjoy a time of peace only to repeat the cycle. This cycle is actually a spiral leading to ever greater depravity and rebellion. Throughout we keep wondering, “Is that they *can*’t learn or that they *won*’t learn?” We also wonder, “Why does God keep bailing them out?” At its essences, the book of Judges is about sin, judgement and salvation. It is, in other words, a gospel story. Our text this morning is found in Judges chapter 4.

Text: Judges 4:1-24

It’s important as we move through this text to keep our focus on the point of the story. To remember the grand story that runs throughout. There are things that happen that catch our attention, that draw our focus away from the movement of the text. It is not that those issues or the questions raised do not matter but it is critical to note, they are not the point of the text. The biblical writer is not addressing the ethical issues raised. Further, just because an incident is recording in Scripture does not mean it is endorsed by God. In this chapter, I’m thinking particularly about the actions of Jael. What of her deception and what of the murder of a king? We are not told that she was commanded by God to do this. We are not told that this is the means by which God would deliver Israel. We are told this is what happened. Within the providence of God this is how this story unfolds. This is what God used to accomplish His purpose. This is His working all things for the good of those who love Him and are called

according to His purpose. As we read the text, Jael chose to do what she did and she chose the manner in which she would do it. Yet, it fulfilled God's purpose and because it was told ahead of time that Sisera would be delivered into the hands of a woman, it bears witness to the sovereignty of God.

The point of the story is God's saving of His people- yet again!

Thesis: *The surprising, suspenseful story of Barak's judgeship affirms the essentials of the biblical gospel.*

Three things are clearly affirmed in our text.

- I. The biblical record consistently affirms man's insatiable appetite for sin and his bent toward rebellion against God. (4:1-3)*
- II. The biblical record affirms, just as consistently, our God's determined faithfulness to His covenant promise and the unfathomable means of accomplishing His purpose. (4:4-22)*
- III. The biblical record consistently affirms, it is God who saves. (4:23-24)*

Conclusion:

This is a gospel book filled with the glory and wonder of the gospel.

The gospel is clear - all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. We are sinners drawn by our own nature to sin. We have an insatiable appetite for sin. Our only hope is that God is faithful to His promise and has determined to save a people for His glory. If God does not save, there is no hope for any of us. And by "save" I mean to save and to keep us.

*Prone to wander, Lord I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart Lord, take and seal it,
Seal it for Thy courts above.*