



“Breaking the Cycle with Grace”

Lesson 4: Salvation of a Patient God (Part 3)

January 28

Introduction

Dead “faith” – What does it mean when Judges records that the people didn’t “know” or “remember” God?



“Two Minute” Talks

Chapter 9

1. (8:28-9:21) Listen to the quote on how people have a tendency to accept “Thornbush-leadership.” Consider ways that this could effect us in our congregation(s), but also give a proper balance to your answer.

William L. Shirer saw this in September 1934, at the Nazi Party celebration in Nuremberg. *“The words he uttered, the thoughts he expressed, often seemed to me ridiculous, but that week in Nuremberg I began to comprehend that it did not matter so much what he said but how he said it. Hitler’s communication with his audiences was uncanny. He established a rapport almost immediately and deepened and intensified it as he went on speaking, holding them completely in his spell. In such a state, it seemed to me, they easily believed anything he said, even the most foolish nonsense. Over the years as I listened to scores of Hitler’s major speeches I would pause in my own mind to exclaim: ‘What utter rubbish! What brazen lies!’ Then I would look around at the audience. His German listeners were lapping up every word as the utter truth.”*

2. (9:22-57) Which is worse, trouble that comes into a congregation from the outside (like outside invaders of Israel) or trouble that comes from the inside (like Abimelech)? Explain your answer.

Chapter 10

3. (10:1-18) Give reasons why verse 16 is so comforting to us?

Chapter 11

4. (11:1-40) What did Jephthah “do?” Did he really sacrifice his daughter or did he vow her to a life of virginity? Defend your answer.

Chapter 12 (*Likely for next time!*)

5. (12:1-15) Ephraim wasn't happy with Gilead's victory. Should we be happy when a Christian church of another denomination has great “success” preaching the Word to a great number of people while we at times struggle?

Conclusion and “Homework”

The account of Abimelech shows that danger and destruction can come from without (foreign enemies) as well as within (Israel itself – i.e. Abimelech). Yet Judges shows us the hope that God does not abandon his people to their Abimelechs but keeps his people from destruction. Whether from without or within, whoever touches the flock of the LORD touches the apple of his eye (cf. Zechariah 2:8).

- At home (or in your groups after this study): Is it right for Christians to take comfort in God's judgment? (Reread 9:50-57)
- If God wills it, we will attempt to cover Judges 12-14 next time. Please feel free to read it through before next week. God's blessings on your week!