



SERIES: MAY- JULY: THE MAIN THING

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Scripture: Judges

TITLE: Judges - Constant Sin and a Constant Deliverer

Have you ever gotten yourself into a situation you couldn't get yourself out of? Back in high school, I drove a beautiful minivan. This van didn't have the greatest turning radius and I don't have the greatest sense of direction, putting those two things together set the stage for a disaster. I found myself very lost out on a country road and decided I needed to turn around. Instead of executing a classic 4-point turn, I tried to whip it around all at once. Slowly my van went off the road into the ditch. I stood there helplessly looking at my stuck vehicle until someone with a big truck came by to pull me out.

The Book of Judges shows us how Israel, God's chosen people continue to turn away from him and get themselves stuck in a never-ending cycle of sin. Judges teaches us that if we choose to worship things other than God, we will be enslaved by them. Yet, God's steadfast love continues to deliver His people from themselves.

Judges is found in the Old Testament immediately following the Book of Joshua. At this point, the nation of Israel has entered the Promised Land and was called to obey God's covenant to be a holy people. This book was written around 1050 - 1000 BC and covers 350 years.

Some of the notable judges God raised up to deliver his people from their oppressors include Deborah, Gideon, and Samson.

We can find Jesus in Judges in chapter 13 before Samson was born. The angel of the Lord appears to Samson's parents and tells them they will have a child will be set apart for God. The angel of the Lord is a title referring to Jesus himself, this is an appearance of Jesus before his incarnation as a human being.

Each story in this book follows the same pattern or cycle of sin. Each story begins with the refrain "and the people again did what was evil in the sight of the Lord." They turn from God and worship other things, God allows them to be conquered by various enemies. Then the people cry out to God for help and he mercifully raises up a judge to deliver them to freedom.

If there's one thing people should take from the story of Judges it is that we are all tempted to fall into the same cycle of sin, and we need a deliverer. This tragic story of Judges concludes with this in Judges 21:25 (NIV) "In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes."

When we reject the kingship of God and turn to our sinful desire, we find ourselves stuck in the same cycle of sin and idolatry. But the story doesn't have to end because of being stuck in sin. Just as constant as the sin cycle, so too is the steadfast love and mercy of God that does not abandon his people.

Just like my minivan stuck in a ditch, it was my fault, I couldn't get myself out no matter how hard I tried. It wasn't until someone had the compassion and the power to pull me out that I was delivered.

In the same way, we must recognize the same sin cycle in Judges has captured us all. We need to cry out to God knowing that he is faithful and that He can and will set us free through the finished work of Christ on the cross, the greatest deliver.