

Lessons from the Unfaithful

Jud 2:11-19

INTRODUCTION

- A. Illustration about the sentinel at Pompeii, *Illustration for Biblical Preaching*, p 143.
- B. The Lord needs people like that Roman sentinel, people who do not move.
- C. We can easily leave the Lord.
 - 1. Heb 2:1.
 - a. The danger here is not overt rebellion to God or defiance of God.
 - b. The danger is simply drifting away.
 - 2. 1 Cor 10:12--The danger here is thinking we are doing well & then falling away.
- D. This morning, let's examine the unfaithful Israelites & learn from them.

THE UNFAITHFUL FORSAKE GOD, vv 11-13

- A. The Israelites did evil in the sight of the Lord and served Baals, v 11.
 - 1. "Baals refers to the gods of the Canaanites.
 - a. The Israelites incorporated the worship of their pagan neighbors in with their own worship.
 - b. This made perfect sense to the Israelites.
 - 2. Yet, God saw this behavior as evil--Sometimes what makes perfect sense to us is evil in God's sight.
- B. The Israelites had forsaken the God of their fathers who brought them up out of Egypt, v 12.
 - 1. The Israelites turned away from the God of their fathers.
 - a. They didn't want to be bound by their fathers' traditions--They thought they knew better than their ancestors did.
 - b. We need to be careful when we reject what our ancestors did--We don't need to throw out what they did just to be different.
 - 2. God brought the Israelites up out of Egypt.
 - a. God had blessed his people & done so much for them, yet they still had forsaken him.
 - b. God has blessed us beyond measure. Are we going to forsake him?
- C. The Israelites followed the gods of the people around them, v 12.
 - 1. Because the Israelites refused to tear down the altars of the pagans when they came into Canaan, the Lord did not drive out the Canaanites (Jud 2:3).
 - 2. The Israelites simply did what their religious neighbors were doing.
 - 3. We can't just do what everyone else does--the majority is not going to be saved (Mt 7:21-23).
- D. The Israelites had forsaken God & served Baal and the Ashtoreths, v 13.
 - 1. "Baal" was the main Canaanite male deity, while Ashtoreth was the main Canaanite female deity.
 - 2. These two terms came to be used for a variety of idols--the Israelites were serving many idols.
 - 3. Baal worship was not exclusive.
 - a. Those who worshiped Baal did not believe he was the only god--he was just one of many gods.
 - b. Therefore, the Israelites could have worshiped God & Baal at the same time.
 - c. In worshiping other gods, the Israelites were not putting God first.
- E. When judges came, the people would not listen to the judges. They quickly turned from the way of their fathers, v 17.
 - 1. Falling away is not necessarily a gradual process--We can quickly fall from grace.
 - a. Gal 1:6.
 - b. Since we can quickly fall away, we need to be very careful in our lives.
 - 2. The Israelites did not cease from their stubborn ways, v 19.
 - a. The Israelites knew what they wanted, and they were not about to turn from their ways.
 - b. We can be stubborn with God and always do things our way.

GOD FORSAKES THE UNFAITHFUL, vv 14-16

- A. The anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, v 14.

1. When individuals are unfaithful to him, the Lord becomes angry.
2. God's anger can be fierce.
 - a. When the Israelites complained, God's anger was aroused--fire from the Lord came and consumed some in the outskirts of the camp (Num 11:1).
 - b. Those who worship the beast and his image shall drink the cup of God's wrath--they shall be tormented with fire and brimstone (Rev 14:10).
- B. He delivered them into the hands of plunderers who despoiled them, v 14.
- C. God sold them into the hands of their enemies all around, v 14.
 1. The idea of selling is like one sells a slave--God sold his people as one would sell a slave.
 2. Therefore, the people could not stand before their enemies.
- D. Whenever they went out, the hand of the God was against them for calamity, v 15.
 1. Not only did the Lord refuse to help the Israelites, he actively worked against them.
 2. God had promised the Israelites he would do so--God had told them that if they failed to obey him, they would be defeated by their enemies (Lev 26:17).
- E. The Lord will forsake those who are unfaithful to him.
 1. When Saul became unfaithful, the Lord's Spirit departed from him (1 Sam 16:14).
 2. God gave the Gentiles up to the lust of their flesh (Rom 1:24).
- F. Even when his people were unfaithful, God still cared for them.
 1. He would raise up judges & bless the judge because he was moved to pity.
 2. God cared deeply for his people.
 3. God cares about those who are unfaithful today.
 - a. God is not willing that any should perish (2 Pt 3:9).
 - b. God's patience waited while the ark was being built (1 Pt 3:20).

CONCLUSION

- A. God's patience is waiting for you to do right.
- B. Will you do right this day?