

INTRODUCTION

In his sermon on Sunday, Aaron shared the strange but true story of one of the first Judges for Israel – Ehud (Judges 3:15-30). There are many stories in the Book of Judges that defy imagination, and Ehud’s assassination of King Eglon is one of them. God empowered the Judges for specific circumstances; the Spirit did not indwell on a permanent basis. Having ~2,000 years of history since Pentecost, when the Spirit first indwelt believers, it seems we have started to take for granted the Power of God living in us. Let’s take a look at the Spirit in the times of the Judges and compare it to the Power we have on a daily basis.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Share with your group a time when the Holy Spirit moved in a way that you did not expect.
2. There are twelve Judges listed in the book of Judges – Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah, Gideon, Tola, Jair, Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon and Samson. Listed below are verses that share a common cycle replayed in the book. What are the stages of the cycle?

Stage One - _____
Judges 3:7; 3:12; 4:1; 6:1; 8:33-35; 10:6; 13:1

Stage Two - _____
Judges 3:8; 3:12-14; 4:2-3; 6:1-5; 10:6-9; 13:1

Stage Three - _____
Judges 3:9; 3:15; 4:3; 6:6; 10:10-16

Stage Four - _____
Judges 3:9-10; 3:15; 3:31; 4:4; 6:11-12; 10:1; 13:5

Stage Five - _____
Judges 3:11; 3:30; 5:31; 8:28

3. Read Judges 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:24-25; 14:6,19; and 15:14 and note the common denominator.
4. Before the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost, He only ‘came upon’ people for short periods of time (see the Judges above and David’s request in Psalm 51:11). According to John 14:7, the Spirit now lives in us. What difference should this make in how we live?
5. In light of how God’s Spirit moved and worked in the lives of the Judges, and how He promises to work in the lives of believers, what changes will you make to change your expectations of the Power of God?

APPLICATION

Over the next 30 days, work your way through the list below. Each day, meditate on a passage of Scripture, and ask the Spirit to remind you of ways to implement that day's power in your life.

1. He helps us and prays for us (Romans 8:26)
2. He guides us (John 16:13)
3. He teaches us (John 14:26)
4. He speaks (Revelation 2:7)
5. He reveals (1 Corinthians 2:10)
6. He instructs (Acts 8:29)
7. He testifies of Jesus (John 15:26)
8. He encourages us (Acts 9:31)
9. He calls us (Acts 13:2)
10. He fills us (Acts 4:31)
11. He strengthens us (Ephesians 3:16)
12. He bears witness to the truth (Romans 9:1)
13. He brings joy (1 Thessalonians 1:6)
14. He brings freedom (2 Corinthians 3:17)
15. He transforms us (2 Corinthians 3:18)
16. He lives in us (1 Corinthians 3:16-17)
17. He renews us (Titus 3:5)
18. He produces fruit in us (Galatians 5:22-23)
19. He gives gifts (1 Corinthians 12:4)
20. He leads us (Romans 8:14)
21. He convicts (John 16:8)
22. He sanctifies us (2 Thessalonians 2:13)
23. He empowers us (Acts 1:8)
24. He unites us (Ephesians 4:3-4)
25. He seals us (Ephesians 1:13)
26. He gives us access to the Father (Ephesians 2:18)
27. He enables us to wait (Galatians 5:5)
28. He gives power over fear (2 Timothy 1:7)
29. He brings hope (Romans 15:13)
30. He adopts us into God's family (Romans 8:15-16)

SCRIPTURE

¹⁵Again the Israelites cried out to the Lord, and He gave them a deliverer—Ehud, a left-handed man, the son of Gera the Benjamite. The Israelites sent him with tribute to Eglon king of Moab. ¹⁶Now Ehud had made a double-edged sword about a cubit long, which he strapped to his right thigh under his clothing. ¹⁷He presented the tribute to Eglon king of Moab, who was a very fat man. ¹⁸After Ehud had presented the tribute, he sent on their way those who had carried it. ¹⁹But on reaching the stone images near Gilgal he himself went back to Eglon and said, "Your Majesty, I have a secret message for you." The king said to his attendants, "Leave us!" And they all left. ²⁰Ehud then approached him while he was sitting alone in the upper room of his palace and said, "I have a message from God for you." As the king rose from his seat, ²¹Ehud reached with his left hand, drew the sword from his right thigh and plunged it into the king's belly. ²²Even the handle sank in after the blade, and his bowels discharged. Ehud did not pull the sword out, and the fat closed in over it. ²³Then Ehud went out to the porch; he shut the doors of the upper room behind him and locked them. ²⁴After he had gone, the servants came and found the doors of the upper room locked. They said, "He must be relieving himself in the inner room of the palace." ²⁵They waited to the point of embarrassment, but when he did not open the doors of the room, they took a key and unlocked them. There they saw their lord fallen to the floor, dead. ²⁶While they waited, Ehud got away. He passed by the stone images and escaped to Seirah. ²⁷When he arrived there, he blew a trumpet in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites went down with him from the hills, with him leading them. ²⁸"Follow me," he ordered, "for the Lord has given Moab, your enemy, into your hands." So they followed him down and took possession of the fords of the Jordan that led to Moab; they allowed no one to cross over. ²⁹At that time they struck down about ten thousand Moabites, all vigorous and strong; not one escaped. ³⁰That day Moab was made subject to Israel, and the land had peace for eighty years.

Judges 3:15-30 (NIV)