Judges - Commentaries by Paul J. Pascoe

CareLines: Volume 3, Misery (10:16)

OCTOBER 8

And they put away the strange gods from among them, and served the Lord: and His soul was grieved for the misery of Israel.

Judges 10:16

Israel was in a real predicament. They had turned deeply into idolatry and God gave them up to be beaten by their enemies. In final desperation they got rid of their idols and came back to the Lord, crying for His deliverance. And what was God's reaction? He was grieved because of Israel's misery. That's the heart of God. He is with us when we turn to Him. Don't let idols come between you and the Lord, young believer. They'll rob you of your enjoyment of and your fellowship with Christ. You'll be miserable. And God will be grieved over your misery.

CareLines: Volume 3, Vow (11:35)

SEPTEMBER 4

I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back.

Judges 11:35

Jephthah made a vow that afterward he wished that he hadn't. It meant sacrificing his only daughter to the Lord. But Jephthah knew better than to change or go back on his vow. In principle the same is true for us. We should never go back on a promise. The New Testament says to let our "yes" mean "yes" and our "no," "no." When you make a promise, keep it. The secret is to be before the Lord in prayer about the promise and He will give you wisdom in what you say so that you won't regret the promise you made.

CareLines: Volume 3, Password, The (12:6)

NOVEMBER 7

Say now Shibboleth: and he said Sibboleth: for he could not frame to pronounce it right.

Judges 12:6

Here was a classic test to prove the nationality of a person. The Gibeonites, on catching an Ephraimite, asked him to pronounce "Shibboleth." He was unable to and said "Sibboleth" instead. Forty-two thousand Ephraimites died because they couldn't say the password. There is only one password to heaven and if you can't say it correctly, you can't get in. The password? JESUS IS LORD! Do you own Him as such?

CareLines: Volume 3, Wisdom (13:8)

NOVEMBER 20

Teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born.

Judges 13:8

Samson's parents wanted to know how to raise their son. And they made it a matter of prayer before Samson was born. This is a good example for us to follow. Make all the plans in your life a matter of prayer - BEFORE they happen. Ask God for the wisdom to make the right choice and to follow the right path. There is a way that seems right to a man, Proverbs tells us. But the Lord knows the best path for us. Don't be afraid to ask the Lord for His guidance in everything.

CareLines: Volume 3, Secret (14:6)

NOVEMBER 6

He told not his father or his mother what he had done.

Judges 14:6

No, this wasn't that the boy had broken a window, or wrecked the car and didn't tell his folks! Samson here had a secret between himself and the Lord that he told no one - not even his parents. The Lord had given him a special super strength that had not been given to others. And for quite a while Samson kept the secret. But Satan tempted him and he failed. Satan hates the Lord and His people and will do anything to break that special communion that Christians share with their Saviour. Be careful!

CareLines: Volume 3, Giving in (16:16)

JULY 10

[Delilah] pressed [Samson] daily with her words.

Judges 16:16

And Samson finally gave in. He told her the secret to his strength, something he should never have revealed. It was a secret between Samson and God. He gave up his separate walk to share a secret with the world. Subsequently he lost his relationship with the Lord, he lost his freedom, his eyesight, his dignity, and finally his life. Don't flirt with the world, young friend. It will deceive you and you will lose that special relationship with Christ that is so necessary for a happy life.

CareLines: Volume 3, God's Work (16:22)

NOVEMBER 3

Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven.

Judges 16:22

God had a work to do. The Philistines, Israel's enemies, needed to be judged through Samson. But God's work came to a halt when Samson's hair was cut off. However, God will not allow His work to stop, and so Samson's hair grew again, he regained his strength, he pulled out the supporting pillars of the Philistine's mansion and when it fell it killed more people than Samson had killed during his life. God's plans will not be changed because of our failure. His work must go on.

CareLines: Volume 7, Generation (2:10)

There arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which He had done for Israel.

Judges 2:10

The third generation from Joshua was marked by two things. First, they did not know the Lord (were not saved). Second, they didn't even know about the miracles of Egypt and the wilderness journey. Why? Because the second generation had only heard about these things and had no real commitment to the Lord. The generation after Joshua had no personal dedication to the Lord, so the generation after them was never led to the Lord. I wonder how many reading this are from the second or the third generation?

CareLines: Volume 3, Service (6:15-16)

AUGUST 10

I am the least in my father's house. And the Lord said unto [Gideon], Surely I will be with thee.

Judges 6:15,16

Gideon was told by God to go and do a wonderful service in freeing Israel from the bondage of their oppressors. Gideon felt his own weakness and nothingness. But the Lord said, "Surely I will be with thee." That must have been a real encouragement for Gideon. When the Lord gives you a work to do, do it even if you feel helpless, because when it's His work, He'll be in it with you.

CareLines: Volume 3, Lord First, The (8:22-23)

SEPTEMBER 1

Rule thou over us . . . I will not rule over you . . . the Lord shall rule over you.

Judges 8:22,23

Gideon had been chosen by God to fight for Israel and remove their enemies from dominating them. Israel was so glad to be free that they put Gideon on a pedestal and wanted him to rule them. How encouraging to see Gideon's response! No, I will not! He gave the Lord the first place. It was the Lord who had won the battle that day against the Midianites. Gideon recognized his own weakness and God's great power, and so gave the Lord the place that He alone deserved. Let's do the same and put the Lord first in our hearts, our minds, and our lives.

CareLines: Volume 3, Forgotten (8:34)

SEPTEMBER 8

And the children of Israel remembered not the Lord their God, who had delivered them out of the hands of all their enemies.

Judges 8:34

When you read the history of the children of Israel in the Old Testament, it's just amazing how unappreciative they were of the Lord and how soon they became swallowed up by the world and its idolatrous ways. Over and over again they turned their backs on God. At last He sent His Son to them and they nailed Him to a cross to get rid of Him - their most wicked rejection of God's provision. Israel has now been set aside (at least temporarily). Let's learn a lesson from this and not be found guilty of doing the same.

CareLines: Volume 3, Forgotten (8:35)

SEPTEMBER 9

Neither showed they kindness to the house of . . . Gideon, according to all the kindness which he had showed unto Israel.

Judges 8:35

Yesterday we noticed how often and easily the children of Israel forgot God. To go along with that, we see today that they also forgot God's servant who had rescued them (with God's leading) from their enemies. Why is it so? Selfishness! Israel thought too much of themselves, and so God and His servant were forgotten. How important it is for us to keep the Lord constantly before our hearts and to "know them which labor among you." 2 Thessalonians 5:12.

CareLines: Volume 3, Snare, A (8:27)

OCTOBER 9

And Gideon made an ephod there-of . . . which thing became a snare unto Gideon, and to his house.

Judges 8:27

Poor old Gideon! He had become a hero in Israel. He had beaten the Midianites in battle. Then he had taken the earrings and clothing of Israel's enemies and formed them into an ephod - an imitation of the real article of clothing worn only by the high priest. This ephod became a real snare to Gideon, his family, and eventually others. Anything can come between you and the Lord - even your own religiousness. Be careful of an ephod - it might ensnare you.

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