

Judges 10

Oppression of Philistines and Ammonites

Now after Abimelech died, Tola the son of Puah, the son of Dodo, a man of Issachar, arose to save Israel; and he lived in Shamir in the hill country of Ephraim. 2 He judged Israel twenty-three years. Then he died and was buried in Shamir.

3 After him, Jair the Gileadite arose and judged Israel twenty-two years. 4 He had thirty sons who rode on thirty donkeys, and they had thirty cities in the land of Gilead that are called Havvoth-jair to this day. 5 And Jair died and was buried in Kamon.

6 Then the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, served the Baals and the Ashtaroth, the gods of Aram, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the sons of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines; thus they forsook the LORD and did not serve Him.

7 The anger of the LORD burned against Israel, and He sold them into the hands of the Philistines and into the hands of the sons of Ammon. 8 They afflicted and crushed the sons of Israel that year; for eighteen years they afflicted all the sons of Israel who were beyond the Jordan in Gilead in the land of the Amorites. 9 The sons of Ammon crossed the Jordan to fight also against Judah, Benjamin, and the house of Ephraim, so that Israel was greatly distressed.

10 Then the sons of Israel cried out to the LORD, saying, "We have sinned against You, for indeed, we have forsaken our God and served the Baals." 11 The LORD said to the sons of Israel, "Did I not deliver you from the Egyptians, the Amorites, the sons of Ammon, and the Philistines?"

12 Also when the Sidonians, the Amalekites and the Maonites oppressed you, you cried out to Me, and I delivered you from their hands. 13 Yet you have forsaken Me and served other gods; therefore I will no longer deliver you. 14 Go and cry out to the gods which you have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your distress."

15 The sons of Israel said to the LORD, "We have sinned, do to us whatever seems good to You; only please deliver us this day." 16 So they put away the foreign gods from among them and served the LORD; and He could bear the misery of Israel no longer.

17 Then the sons of Ammon were summoned and they camped in Gilead. And the sons of Israel gathered together and camped in Mizpah. 18 The people, the leaders of Gilead, said to one another, "Who is the man who will begin to fight against the sons of Ammon? He shall become head over all the inhabitants of Gilead."

We will use five tools on our expedition that are built around five questions

What questions were provoked within you?

Did anything confuse you?

Did anything move you emotionally?

Did God instruct you to do something?

Did you gain any insight into God's character?

Pauls questions and observations

1. A guy called Tola rose as judge over Israel for twenty three years after the death of Abimelech.
2. Then came Jair, he lasted twenty two years, his claim to fame being his thirty sons, who rode on thirty donkeys, who lived in thirty cities.
3. It would seem Israel remained faithful after the period of these two judges.
4. Sadly, after the death of Jerard, Israel strayed from God and did what was evil in His sight.
5. They turn their attention to the worship of the Baals and the Ashtaroths and they forgot the Lord!
6. They chose the gods of the Nations surrounding them over the God of Israel.
7. It was these Nations that should have been destroyed, when Israel went to claim back the land God had promised them.
8. At the time when Joshua invited them to make a choice as to whom they would serve, they declared 'We will serve the Lord along with Joshua'.
9. What does it mean for the anger of the Lord to burn?
10. God allowed Israel to be ruled by the Nations for eighteen years after which they crushed Israel's spirit.
11. These surrounding Nations also went after the other tribes, Judah and Ephraim.
12. During this eighteen years persecution and continuous conflict, Israel is brought to her knees and cries out to God for salvation.
13. Their statement of repentance was 'we have sinned again, have mercy'.
14. Their confession was 'we have forsaken our God, we have served the Baals'.
15. What does repentance mean to you?
16. Why do we need to make our confessions to God when He already knows exactly what we have done?
17. God doesn't make it easy for Israel, He point out, the mercy and compassion He had already shown them.
18. At first God is unwilling and reluctant to act as Israel's saviour this time. Why did He do this?
19. Why does God invite them to go to the gods of the other Nations for their salvation?
20. What does persistent repentance mean?
21. Having acted, by turning from the foreign gods and doing deeds of repentance, God shows them mercy.

22. What are deeds of repentance?
23. Gods' love for Israel causes Him to act on their behalf again.
24. Would He have acted if they had just said 'sorry, save us' or, was it in response to the deeds of repentance they had expressed?
25. All the people gathered for the great battle and they invite someone to step forward and lead them.
26. At this time they are still unsure as to whether God will be with them - as yet he has given them no word.
27. How did God sell them to Ammon?
28. What is the misery of Israel?