

1. Opening Prayer

2. Intro: The Spirit of the Lord (“Wind of YHWH”) upon the Judges

The phrase “Spirit of the Lord” appears first in the book of Judges.

What does the “Spirit of YHWH” do in the book of Judges?

a. Othniel the perfect judge

“The Spirit of the Lord **came upon** (*haya*) him, so that **he became** Israel's judge and went to war.” (3:10a)

b. Gideon the afraid judge

“But the spirit of the Lord **took possession of** (*labas*) Gideon; and he sounded the trumpet..” (6:34)

Labas: to clothe, or to be clothed

c. Jephthah the opportunistic judge (11:6 and 12)

“Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon (*haya*) Jephthah...And Jephthah made a vow to the LORD..” (11:29-30)

d. Samson the selfish playboy judge

“and the Spirit of the LORD began to stir (*paam: to impel*) him.” (13:25)

“The spirit of the Lord rushed on (*zhaleach: to rush*) him and he tore the lion apart...” (14:6)

“Then the spirit of the Lord rushed on (*zhaleach*) him...He killed thirty men of the town...” (14:19)

“...the spirit of the Lord rushed on (*zhaleach*) him, and the ropes that were on his arms became like flax that has caught fire, and his bonds melted off his hands. Then he found a fresh jawbone of a donkey... with it he killed a thousand men.” (15:14-15)

Questions.

What is the difference among those judges?

How do you understand the Holy Spirit’s coming upon the judges?

3. Read Judges Ch. 8

4. Discussion

- a. How do you see the Ephraim people? (read Judges ch. 12 and 1 Kings 11:26)
- b. Why do you think the people in Succoth and Penuel refused Gideon's request?
- c. How do you understand Gideon's attitudes to the Ephraim and Gad tribes?
- d. Was it necessary to punish the people in Succoth and Penuel?
Why do you think Gideon punished the people?
- e. How do you understand the conversation between Gideon and the kings of the Midianites? (verses 18-21, especially Gideon's words in 19)
- f. Why do you think Gideon took the crescents in verse 21?
- g. How do you understand Gideon's request for booty and making an idol?
- h. Why do you think Gideon had many wives and children?

5. Closing Prayer