

Judges 10:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the children of Israel said unto the LORD, We have sinned: do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; deliver us only, we pray thee, this day.

Analysis

And the children of Israel said unto the LORD, We have sinned: do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; deliver us only, we pray thee, this day.

This verse contributes to the narrative of Tola, Jair, and renewed oppression. The Book of Judges documents Israel's cyclical pattern of apostasy and deliverance, revealing both human depravity and divine mercy. Each cycle begins with Israel doing evil (usually Baal worship), followed by God's judgment through foreign oppression, Israel's cry for deliverance, God raising up a judge, temporary peace, then renewed apostasy after the judge dies.

Theologically, this pattern demonstrates several crucial truths:

1. Human inability to maintain covenant faithfulness apart from God's transforming grace
2. God's justice in punishing covenant violation through the curses of Deuteronomy 28
3. God's mercy in responding to repentant cries with deliverance
4. The inadequacy of repeated deliverances to produce lasting transformation, pointing to the need for the New Covenant with God's law written on hearts (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

The judges themselves foreshadow Christ—they are divinely appointed deliverers who save Israel from enemies.

Yet their imperfections and temporary victories point to the need for the perfect Judge who would provide permanent deliverance. Jesus fulfills the judges' typology, being the ultimate "sent one" who conquers spiritual enemies definitively through His death and resurrection, providing eternal salvation rather than temporary political relief.

Historical Context

Historical Setting: The Book of Judges spans approximately 350-400 years (c. 1375-1050 BCE) during the Late Bronze Age collapse and early Iron Age. This period saw the disintegration of major empires (Hittites, Mycenaeans) and weakening of Egyptian control over Canaan, creating a power vacuum filled by emerging peoples including Philistines (Sea Peoples), Aramaeans, and regional kingdoms. The decentralized tribal structure left Israel vulnerable to external oppression and internal chaos.

Cultural Context: This passage relates to Tola, Jair, and renewed oppression. Canaanite religion dominated the region, centered on Baal (storm/fertility god), Asherah (mother goddess), and Anat (war goddess). Archaeological discoveries at Ugarit (Ras Shamra) have provided extensive information about Canaanite mythology and religious practices. Baal worship involved ritual prostitution, child sacrifice, and fertility rites tied to agricultural seasons. Israel's persistent attraction to these gods demonstrates the strong cultural pressure to conform to surrounding nations' religious practices.

The material culture of this period shows gradual Israelite settlement in the Canaanite hill country, with simpler pottery and architecture than coastal Canaanite cities. Iron technology was beginning to spread, giving military advantage to peoples who mastered it (note the Philistines' iron monopoly, 1 Samuel 13:19-22). The absence of centralized government during the judges period stands in stark contrast to the bureaucratic city-states of Canaan and the imperial administration of Egypt and Mesopotamia. This political structure reflected Israel's theocratic ideal—God as king—yet the repeated cycles of

apostasy showed this ideal required more than political structures; it demanded heart transformation.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does this passage about Tola, Jair, and renewed oppression reveal God's character in dealing with persistent human rebellion and incomplete obedience?
2. What patterns of spiritual compromise or incomplete obedience in your own life mirror Israel's failures during the judges period?
3. How does understanding the cyclical nature of sin and deliverance in Judges help you appreciate Christ's perfect and final deliverance from sin's power?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר ו	בְּנֵי	יִשְׂרָאֵל ל	אֶל	יְהוָה	חָטָאנוּ
said	And the children	of Israel	H413	unto the LORD	We have sinned
H559	H1121	H3478		H3068	H2398
עָשָׂה	אֶתְּ ה	לְנוּ	כָּכָל	הַטּוֹב	בְּעֵינֶי יְיָ
do	H859	H0	H3605	good	thou unto us whatsoever seemeth
H6213			H2896		H5869
הַצִּילָנוּ	נָא	הֵי יוֹם	הַזֶּה:		
unto thee deliver	H4994	us only we pray thee this day	H2088		
H5337		H3117			

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 3:18 (Good): And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him. And he said, It is the LORD: let him do what seemeth him good.

2 Samuel 15:26 (Good): But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him.

Proverbs 28:13 (Sin): He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.

Joshua 9:25 (Good): And now, behold, we are in thine hand: as it seemeth good and right unto thee to do unto us, do.

2 Samuel 24:14 (References Lord): And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the hand of the LORD; for his mercies are great: and let me not fall into the hand of man.

Jonah 3:9 (Parallel theme): Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?

2 Samuel 10:12 (Good): Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God: and the LORD do that which seemeth him good.