

THE STORY

THE BIBLE AS ONE CONTINUING STORY OF GOD AND HIS PEOPLE

CHAPTER 8 – A FEW GOOD MEN... AND WOMEN

DISCUSSION OF GENERAL QUESTIONS

- ❶ What is God saying?
- ❷ For what does this section lead me to give thanks? (See God's grace and promises!)
- ❸ What sins does this section lead me to confess? (See God's expectations for his people)
- ❹ For what does this section lead me to pray? (As you ponder the Word, what needs of heart and life for yourself and others come to mind? Consider every word you read as an invitation to turn it into a prayer you speak back to your Lord!)

DIGGING IN

- 1) “. . . another generation grew up who knew neither the Lord nor what he had done for Israel.” (page 103) A generational fallout from faith such as this doesn't happen overnight. How did this happen? What can we learn from this?

- 2) The Israelites continually fell prey to the temptation of worshiping the false gods of Baal and Asherah. Baal (meaning “lord, master”) and Asherah (also Ashtoreth) were the principal gods of the Canaanite nations. Baal was the male god and Asherah the female goddess. Baal and Asherah were associated with fertility. Baal was also credited with giving rain for the soil, and Asherah was also a goddess of war. Baal worship involved temple prostitution and sometimes even human/child sacrifice. Sexual immorality and intermarriage with Canaanites were stumbling blocks for the Israelites. What modern-day “idols” or temptations compare to these Canaanite gods?

- 3) In a time when so many were spiritually bankrupt God raised up a woman, Deborah, to lead his people. How was Deborah's prophecy spoken to Barak, the military commander, fulfilled: "The honor will not be yours, for the LORD will deliver Sisera into the hands of a woman"? (pg 105)
- 4) Why was the LORD insistent on shrinking the fighting forces of Gideon from over 30,000 to merely 300? What do we learn from this account about the LORD and the way he operates?
- 5) Samson was a man of tremendous physical strength and yet he had spiritual weaknesses. What were those weaknesses? Every person has weaknesses that we struggle with. They may include but are certainly not limited to the following:
- | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|----------------|
| ✓ Greed | ✓ Dishonesty | ✓ Worldliness |
| ✓ Sexual sins | ✓ People-pleasing | ✓ Hatred |
| ✓ Worry/Doubt | ✓ Anger | ✓ Disobedience |
| ✓ Pride | ✓ Substance Abuse | ✓ Jealousy |
| ✓ Despair | ✓ Unforgiving | ✓ Selfishness |

Identify which of these sins that you recognize as your own personal struggles. If a fellow Christian confessed a personal struggle to you, what would you tell him or her?

- 6) In Hebrews 11:32, Samson is listed among the faithful leaders of Israel's history. Is this a misprint? How do we reconcile the facts of Samson's life with his description as a man of faith?

FOR NEXT TIME

Chapter 9: The Faith of a Foreign Woman
Bible Reference: Ruth 1-4