

Judges Chapter 10 Part 3

Since there were questions on the origin of the Philistines let us revisit passages in the Old Testament that deal with this topic. God's grace is demonstrated there.

Genesis 10:13 Mizraim became the father of Ludim and Anamim and Lehabim and Naphtuhim

Genesis 10:14 and Pathrusim and Casluhim (from which came the Philistines) and Caphtorim.

The same key words are repeated in 1 Chronicles chapter 1.

1 Chronicles 1:11 Mizraim became the father of the people of Lud, Anam, Lehab, Naphtuh,

1 Chronicles 1:12 Pathrus, Casluh, from which the Philistines came, and Caphtor.

Young's Literal Translation:

Genesis 10:14 (YLT) and the Pathrusim, and the Casluhim, (whence have come out Philistim,) and the Caphtorim.

And here is another literal translation from J. Wash Watts, "A distinctive translation of Genesis"

Genesis 10:14 (Watts) the Pathrusim, the Casluhim (from whom the Philistines went out), and the Caphtorim.

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The key words are “from which came.”

Came. The verb means to go out or go in, depending upon which preposition is used. Usually this verb refers to physical movement, travel.

From. The preposition “from” is used.

Which. Sometimes the word is translated “thither.” This is old English and I had to look it up. It means from that place or from that direction.

In my opinion, this genealogy is interrupted to show that God interrupted history to bring the Philistines out of another country that was not their own. Some argue that still the Philistines were sons of Ham. But if we bring in Amos 9:7, I think that can be dispelled.

Amos 9:7 “Are you not as the sons of Ethiopia to Me, O sons of Israel?” declares the Lord. “Have I not brought up Israel from the land of Egypt, And the Philistines from Caphtor and the Arameans from Kir?”

God, in the book of Amos, declares Israel as a paradigm of God bringing a people out of another land. But using parallelism, he says that God did the same kind of thing for the Philistines and for the Arameans (those who live in Aram/Syria). Remember the comments by Jeffrey Niehaus:

“The Lord will now disabuse Israel of any sense of specialness. As his covenant people they were special, but he opens their eyes to the fact that he has brought other people from one land to another, and he has enabled other people to conquer the inhabitants of those new lands and settle in their place. Indeed, he has even fought for those people, just as he fought for Israel in Canaan. The only difference between Israel and the Philistines, Ethiopians, or Arameans is that Israel had entered into covenant relationship with the Lord. Much was expected of them, because the Lord had given them much. But Israel had broken the covenant, and for that reason had become profane in the Lord’s eyes and

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was now considered no better than the accursed descendants of Ham: “Are you not like Cushites to me, O Israelites?””

God’s grace has been hidden in plain sight right before our eyes. Just because Israel is God’s chosen people doesn’t mean He ignores the rest of the world. God is active everywhere and in all time.

Look at the story of Jonah. An entire city was on the verge of going positive toward God. So He sent in Jonah, a hesitant evangelist. Once Jonah realized he could tell the citizens of Nineveh that unless they believed in the God of Israel they were all going to die and go to “Hell,” “I am all in.” From the king on down, they repented and believed. Jonah was displeased. Were not the people of Nineveh wicked people? But faith in the Living God can change that.

Now look at our Amos 9:7 verse. Over and over again in Judges, God reminds the sons of Israel, as He does in Amos 9:7, that He brought them out of Egypt. BUT, He did similar actions for the Philistines and the Arameans, i.e. the people of Aram.

And where did Amon and Moab come from? Lot! And God brought Lot and his two daughters out of Sodom before He destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. So back to our Judges verse:

Judges 10:6 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.

Of the peoples mentioned, God intervened on the part of Aram, Moab, Ammon and Philistia. There may be a story for Sidon but if so I am not familiar with it. But they had all turned against God. Now Israel has

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turned against God. They have even become more corrupt than the nations around them. So why would they think they could escape the wrath of God? Yet over and over again the Jews think exactly that.

Remember a verse from Romans chapter 2. Paul had been setting up the Jews who were thinking they were so much better than the Gentile “goy.” Now he says of them:

Romans 2:1 Therefore you have no excuse, everyone of you who passes judgment, for in that which you judge another, you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things.

There is an application to the United States. Where did many of the original “Americans” come from? From England who was persecuting many. So God brought them out one by one from England, Scotland and Ireland and other places. Because these immigrants trusted God and wanted a place of freedom to worship God and earn an honest living, God responded. We are now in danger of losing that freedom because so many citizens have rejected the True, Living God. We have become a corrupt, evil nation in some respects, just like the sons of Israel in the book of Judges. Yet there are still believers. But are there enough to save the country. Maybe we will be like Abraham and ask, if there are ten believers will you save the city?

Here is the point: God will respond to the smallest amount of faith whether that faith is in a Jew or a Gentile dog like me. Praise be the character of God!

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Now back to our passage in Judges chapter 10.

Judges 10:7 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.

A comment by Trent Butler:

“The Bible consistently pictures God as an emotional person who reacts to the choices his people make. Anger is a faithful response to Israel’s rejection. All efforts to erase divine anger from Scripture fail, because God’s anger continues to reappear in Torah, History, Poetry, Prophets, Apocalyptic, Gospels, Letters, and the Apocalypse. Anger leads God to sell Israel into the hands of the Philistines (Judg 3: 3, 31; 10: 6–7, 11; 13: 1, 5; 14: 3–4; 15: 3, 5–6, 9, 11–12, 14, 20; 16: 5, 8–9, 12, 14, 18, 20–21, 23, 27–28, 30) and the Ammonites (Judg 3: 13; 10: 6–7, 9, 11, 17–18; 11: 4–6, 8–9, 12–15, 27–33, 36; 12: 1–3), each of whom made a cameo appearance in chap. 3 and will take center stage in what follows. Jephthah will deal with the Ammonites, and Samson with the Philistines. The God-as-salesman image comes again from the early framework (Judg 2: 14; 3: 8; 4: 2), having been used only once since (4: 9). Thus 10: 6–7 reinforces the opening framework and shows that its warnings remain in effect for a disobedient Israel.”

Judges 10:8 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.

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Map showing Israel and Surrounding Nations
From ConformingtoJesus.org

Gilead. Per Merrill Unger, “The mountain region east of the Jordan, called “the mount of Gilead (Gen. 31:25), extending from the Sea of

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Galilee to the upper end of the Dead Sea, about sixty miles long and twenty miles wide...”

Afflicted and Crushed. One commentator (Robert Chisholm) says that “The two verbs used to describe the Ammonites’ treatment of Israel sound the same in Hebrew...” He continues, “The repetition of sound and the movement from the basic (qal) verbal stem to the emphatic or repetitive (poel) stem emphasize the severity of Israel’s defeat.”

Crushed. This verb is used only here and in Exodus 15:6

Exodus 15:6 Thy right hand, O Jehovah, Is become honourable in power; Thy right hand, O Jehovah, Doth crush an enemy.

The point here is that the affliction and crushing are intensive. You know that phrase, it can’t get any worse. And then it did. So here it got worse for the sons of Israel. They really really really hurt. That was what God had to do in order to get their attention.

Afflicted. This verb occurs frequently in the basic *qal* stem but only rarely in the *piel* or *poel* (per Chisholm). Again, God reserved some really tough times for the sons of Israel in order to get their attention.

And so God does the same for believers who continue out of fellowship worshiping something other than God. Money. Success. Popularity. And so on.

Judges 10:9 The sons of Ammon crossed the Jordan to fight also against Judah, Benjamin, and the house of Ephraim, so that Israel was greatly distressed.

Sons of Ammon. Remember, Ammon and Moab were sons of Lot, Abraham’s nephew.

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Crossed the Jordan (River). Crossing a river has historically been an important event, whether that was Abraham crossing a river, or Caesar crossing the Rubicon. Or General Patton crossing the Rhine.

From the National Geographic website, “On January 10, 49 B.C.E., General Julius Caesar entered Roman territory by crossing the Rubicon, a stream in what is now Northern Italy. In crossing the Rubicon, Caesar began a civil war that signaled the end of the Roman Republic.”

To fight. This verb is in the reflexive. It emphasizes the interest of the Ammonites to do this. But there is perhaps an implied irony here. God sold the sons of Israel into the hands of the Ammonites. However, this verb “to fight” was used as a promise to the sons of Israel in the Exodus:

Exodus 14:14 The Lord will fight for you while you keep silent.”

But here, God keeps silent while the Ammonites themselves fight against the sons of Israel, unimpeded. Why? Because of lack of faith. We have seen this kind of promise backfiring on the sons of Israel when they abandon God. Lack of faith in the Living God.

Hebrews 3:16 For who provoked Him when they had heard? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt led by Moses?

Hebrews 3:17 And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness?

Hebrews 3:18 And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient?

Hebrews 3:19 So we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief.

Hebrews 4:1 Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it.

Hebrews 4:2 For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.

Faith-Rest. Walking by faith. Doctrine + Faith. You must have both.

Judah, Benjamin and the house of Ephraim. Trent Butler has an interesting comment on why these three tribes are mentioned:

“The editorial note here mentions each of the three tribes more for what is to come than for what has already occurred. But it appears to be no accident that precisely these three tribes are represented in this book dealing so strongly with leadership, for they represent the three sources of monarchs for Israel—the Davidic dynasty in Judah, the short-lived rule of Saul from Benjamin, and the disastrous role of Jeroboam from Ephraim.”

Greatly distressed. There is possibly a play on words here in the Hebrew. There is a verb meaning to shape or form as in a potter making something. It is sometimes used of making idols, you know, the kind that the sons of Israel are worshiping. The verb here could be from that root (per Gesenius) or for another word for distress. Either way, there is potential play on words because of the similarities in the word forms. The sons of Israel are in a very distressful situation because they fashioned like a potter the idols that they worship. The author of the book

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of Judges, whether that was Samuel or someone else, had a lot of humor and great spiritual insight. Combined, you get divine humor.

Judges 10:10 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.”

The sons of Israel cried out. Once again they sinned. Once again they are in divine discipline. Once again they cry out to the Lord. But apparently, they were crying out while holding the idols they had made. Later we will see that they “put them away.”

From Trent Butler:

“For the only time in the book, the people of Israel confess their “sin” (ׁׁׁׁ, Judg 10: 10, 15), defining sin precisely as the narrator described it in v 6—abandoning God, not worshiping or serving him, and worshiping or serving the Baals. Note here again the plural Baals denoting varied worship of Baal at different sanctuaries and possibly under different titles, such as that of Baal Berith in Shechem. Later Jephthah will use the term (ׁׁׁׁ) to talk about missing the mark in international relationships (11: 27), and the term will be used in its technical meaning of missing the mark in archery (20: 16).”

The Hebrew verb has a cognate in Arabic. While in Arabic class, after taking a quiz, if I got something wrong, the teacher would use this word to say I got it wrong! Our lives are tests. When we get something wrong, we have to realize that. In essence, we have to eventually agree with God, it was wrong.

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Judges 10:11 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?”

Judges 10:12 Also when the Sidonians, the Amalekites and the Maonites oppressed you, you cried out to Me, and I delivered you from their hands.

Once again, the failures of the sons of God provide an opportunity for God to demonstrate His grace patience. How many times has God demonstrated His grace patience in your life?

Again, Trent Butler:

“Here, if we follow MT, we have a clear case of the narrator apparently knowing historical information that is no longer preserved for us. Block, referring to E. A. Knauf (ABD, 4: 802), associates the name “with the Meunites, who were at home in the same region as the Midianites and may even have been a confederate or dependent group” (347).”

We have encountered previously that the writers of Scripture knew oral tradition that was not included in the previous Scripture.

Judges 10:13 Yet you have forsaken Me and served other gods; therefore I will no longer deliver you.

I will no longer deliver you. Ooops! Why? Look at verse 16, “...so they put away the foreign gods from among them.” So they cried to the Lord for forgiveness while clinging to their idols!? You can tell God you sinned, all day long. But if there is no change of mind, if you continue to sin, what use is it to “confess” your crimes? It is like going to a bank to

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rob it and saying to God, “I sinned.” But you do the robbery anyway. The sons of Israel have begged for forgiveness but immediately after the deliverer died, they reverted back to the idol worship. They had no real intention of going back to God on a permanent basis.

Judges 10:14 Go and cry out to the gods which you have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your distress.”

So why did the sons of Israel cry out to the Living God. Somehow they realized that He was the only one that could deliver them. So an obvious question is then, why do they keep on returning to their idols and false Gods which in reality is demonism? Lack of faith resulting in slavery to the sin nature.

Judges 10:15 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.”

OK, God. We are really really sorry for what we did.

Whatever seems good to You. OK translation, but it obscures a play on words yet to come. Here is Young’s Literal Translation:

Judges 10:15 And the sons of Israel say unto Jehovah, ‘We have sinned, do Thou to us according to all that is good in Thine eyes; only deliver us, we pray Thee, this day.’

“All that is good in Thine eyes.” Many commentators point to Judges 21:25 as the point or theme of the book of Judges:

Judges 21:25 In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

And even before that is:

Judges 17:6 In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes.

Yet in Judges 10:15, they know that God is in charge and He needs to do what is right in His eyes.

Judges 10:16 So they put away the foreign gods from among them and served the Lord; and He could bear the misery of Israel no longer.

So they put away. The verb in this context means to put away, to put aside to remove. It is causative. Because of the threat of continued suffering they did this. But notice what they did not do: They did not destroy them! If they buried them in the back yard, they still have the option of digging them up and returning to Baal worship. They should have destroyed them. That would have been more convincing. Indeed, as we will see, they will go back to their Baal worship.