

BOOK OF JUDGES
OBSCURE BUT IMPORTANT JUDGES!-PT 1
JUDGES 10:1-5

Introduction

When we look at the book of **JUDGES**, some names stand out more than others. **GIDEON, OTHNIEL, EHUD and DEBORAH** all led the people of **ISRAEL** to some outstanding military victories.

But there are others who are considered to be **MINOR JUDGES**. In fact, there are six **MINOR JUDGES** in all. They are **SHAMGAR, (3:31)**; the two men mentioned in our text today, **TOLA (10:1)**, and **JAIR (10:3-5)**. Later there are **IBZAN (12:8-10)**; **ELON (12:11-12)**; and **ABDON (12:13-15)**.

The reason these men are considered **MINOR JUDGES** is because they weren't necessarily considered great military leaders like **GIDEON!** Yet, they were **men who helped maintain the PEACE** in the nation of **ISRAEL**. While they might not have been mighty in their military exploits, **they were just as important to the nation of ISRAEL as those JUDGES that led the nation to great military victories!**

We consider here the lives and ministries of just two of the **MINOR JUDGES** mentioned here in our text—**TOLA** and **JAIR**. While the **BIBLE** has very little to say about these two men, I believe that their lives and their deeds have a lot to teach us.

Here is the main thing I want us to see! **We don't have to be well known to make a difference for the glory of GOD!** In fact, **GOD delights in using unheralded and unknown servants to help HIS people, to glorify HIS name and to build HIS kingdom!** We need to see that **GOD can and will use us if we will make ourselves available to HIM!**

Let's look at these two **Obscure, But Important Men**—These are men who made a difference in their day even though they may be relatively unknown to us! Let's see the principles that are revealed in the lives of these men.

- I. **TOLA HAD AN INHERITED MESS! (Vs 1)**
Verse 1 shows us that **TOLA** came after the disaster named **ABIMELECH** was dead. How would you like to **follow that and be in charge of cleaning up the mess?**

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By the time **ABIMELECH** was dead, the nation of **ISRAEL** was left in tatters from a brutal civil war. That wasn't the only problem the nation faced. The **BIBLE** tells us that as soon as **GIDEON** died, the people of **ISRAEL** turned their backs on **GOD** and resorted back to a form of **BAAL** worship! **(8:33-34)**

As a result of all these problems, the nation of **ISRAEL** was in a mess! That was the condition of the nation as inherited by **TOLA**.

Let's understand two important principles here:

- A. **We Need To Understand That The LORD Always Has A FAITHFUL, BELIEVING REMNANT!**
In **ISRAEL**, **things were bad** and that is a true statement. The nation was at war with itself, and **the majority of the people were worshipping idols.**

In the midst of all that, the LORD still had a FAITHFUL REMNANT! That fact has not changed! Remember the time when the **PROPHET ELIJAH** got depressed and thought that he was the only person in **ISRAEL** that was living for the **LORD** and doing right?

But, he soon found out that the **LORD GOD** still had a **REMNANT** in **ISRAEL!** **ELIJAH** was told that there were still 7,000 that had not bowed to **BAAL!** **(1 Kings 19:18)**

Could I tell you that the LORD still has a REMNANT today! In this day of **increasing immorality and rampant wickedness and fierce violence**, the **LORD** still has some **FAITHFUL** people who **look to HIM, love HIM, serve HIM and truly live for HIM!**

There are still people who **FAITHFULLY PRAY!** There are still people who **BELIEVE** the **BIBLE** is the **INFALLIBLE WORD OF GOD** and **THE FINAL AUTHORITY!** There are still people who **LOVE** the **CHURCH!**

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There are still people who **WITNESS** for the **LORD!**
There are still people who **SING, TESTIFY, and HONOR**
the LORD!

And while this **REMNANT** is **NOT** in the majority in many
CHURCHES today and may even be dwindling in its ranks,
nevertheless **this REMNANT takes a stand for the GLORY**
OF ALMIGHTY GOD!

*We Need To Understand That The LORD Always Has A
FAITHFUL, BELIEVING REMNANT...*

**B. We Need To Understand That SERVING THE LORD Is
Never Easy, But It Is ALWAYS RIGHT!**
It must have been difficult for **TOLA** as he dealt with the
aftermath of **ABIMELECH'S** wicked three-year reign and as
he had to address and deal with the **IDOLATRY** of the nation.

It wasn't easy in his day to do **MINISTRY**, but he
MINISTERED anyway!

Listen, it's never easy to **WALK** in the **OLD PATHS** when
everyone around us is clamoring for something new, but the
OLD PATHS are still the **RIGHT PATHS!** (*Jeremiah 6:16*)

It isn't easy to **LIVE FOR THE LORD** when others around us
are living for the **WORLD**, the **FLESH** and the **DEVIL**, but
LIVING FOR THE LORD IS ALWAYS THE RIGHT
THING TO DO!

It is difficult when others around us are **WALKING IN**
DISOBEDIENCE to the **LORD** and the world is **CALLING**
THEIR EVIL GOOD and **CALLING GOD'S WAY EVIL**,
but we still must do that which is **RIGHT** according to **GOD'S**
WORD! (*Isaiah 5:20*)

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In fact, we can and should **MAKE A CHOICE** to **LIVE FOR**
THE LORD even when everyone else **seems to be going their**
own way and living for themselves!

Our duty is not to look to them, but rather we are to look to the
ONE WHO perfectly ran **HIS OWN** race and will enable us to
run ours as well! (*Hebrews 12:1-3; Phil. 4:13; John 15:4-5*)

Yes, this world and even our own country is in a mess!
So, as the **REMNANT OF THE LORD**, what are we to do?

It's time for the **REMNANT OF THE LORD** to **KNOW**
THE TIMES we live in and that it is **HIGH TIME** for some
things on our part! (*Romans 13:11-14*)

TOLA HAD AN INHERITED MESS!
II. BOTH TOLA AND JAIR HAD IMPORTANT MINISTRIES!
(*vs. 1-5*)

These two men are not said to have led any great military campaigns.
But, what they did accomplish deserves our consideration.
What they did should still **CHALLENGE** us today!

These two men helped **MAINTAIN PEACE** for nearly 50 years in a
nation that had been split apart by civil war, rebellion, and pagan
worship! That in and of itself is no small feat! Theirs was a
MINISTRY OF PEACE in a time of internal turmoil!

These men also helped to **PRESERVE THE HERITAGE** of their
nation! They **MINISTERED** to the **FAITHFUL REMNANT** in
ISRAEL in a time when that **FADING REMNANT** needed
CONSISTENT LEADERSHIP!

TOLA and **JAIR** did in their day exactly what we are supposed to be
doing in our day. They acted like **SALT!** Remember how **JESUS** said
that **BELIEVERS** are to be "*the salt of the earth*" in *Matthew 5:13?*