

**Second Baptist Church of Doylestown**  
**Bible Study Notes**  
**3-13-24**

**Judges 10**

**Two Minor Judges Tola & Jair – Verses 1-5**

**<sup>1</sup> After the time of Abimelek, a man of Issachar named Tola son of Puah, the son of Dodo, rose to save Israel. He lived in Shamir, in the hill country of Ephraim. <sup>2</sup>He led Israel twenty-three years; then he died, and was buried in Shamir. <sup>3</sup>He was followed by Jair of Gilead, who led Israel twenty-two years. <sup>4</sup>He had thirty sons, who rode thirty donkeys. They controlled thirty towns in Gilead, which to this day are called Havvoth Jair. <sup>5</sup>When Jair died, he was buried in Kamon.**

**10:1-5** There arose to save Israel Tola: We are not told much about the career of the judge Tola; only that his service as a judge lasted a relatively long time (twenty-three years). After him arose Jair: We also know little about Jair's service as a leader of Israel. We do know that he served for about the same number of years as Tola before him (twenty-two years). Now he had thirty sons who rode on thirty donkeys; they also had thirty towns: This shows that Jair was a polygamous man, and a man of wealth and prestige. His many sons had fancy transportation and their own territory to rule. Jair never took the title of king, but it seems that he acted like one.

**10:1-5** In five verses we read about two men who judged Israel for a total of 45 years, yet all we know about them besides the length of their rules is that Jair had 30 sons who rode around on 30 donkeys. What are you doing for God that is worth noting? When your life is over, will people remember more than just what was in your bank account or the number of years you lived?

**Israel's Seven-Fold Apostasy – Verse 6**

**<sup>6</sup>Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD. They served the Baals and the Ashtoreths, and the gods of Aram, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the Ammonites and the gods of the Philistines. And because the Israelites forsook the LORD and no longer served him,**

**10:6** Then the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD: This phrase is repeated seven times in the Book of Judges. It shows that the evil of Israel was even worse because they did it before the eyes of God. The essence of Israel's sin was that they served other gods. Here, seven different ethnic and national gods are mentioned that Israel went after in idolatry. Israel was attracted to these other gods not because of the beauty of an idol image, but because of what was associated with the pagan deity. Baal, the weather god, was associated with financial success. Ashtoreth, the goddess of fertility, was associated with love, sex, and romance. As for the other gods of the neighboring nations around them, it was a matter of conforming to the popular culture and doing what everyone else did. Israel's worship of neighboring gods reminds us that the people of God are often in danger of worshipping what the world worships.

**10:6** They forsook the LORD and did not serve Him: Perhaps Israel did not consciously forsake God. Yet adding the worship of pagan gods to the worship of the true God was to forsake the LORD. It

seems that Israel was willing to worship just about anything except the true God. When a man stops believing in God, he does not believe in nothing; he believes in anything.

### **Israel's Servitude – Verses 7-10**

**<sup>7</sup>he became angry with them. He sold them into the hands of the Philistines and the Ammonites, <sup>8</sup>who that year shattered and crushed them. For eighteen years they oppressed all the Israelites on the east side of the Jordan in Gilead, the land of the Amorites. <sup>9</sup>The Ammonites also crossed the Jordan to fight against Judah, Benjamin and Ephraim; Israel was in great distress. <sup>10</sup>Then the Israelites cried out to the LORD, “We have sinned against you, forsaking our God and serving the Baals.”**

**10:7-10** God permitted the pagan nations to oppress the Israelites because of their sin (2:1-3). Because God is just, he will punish sin (Leviticus 26). God allows problems and pressures to enter our lives in order to lovingly draw us back into relationship with him. When problems arise, before you ask, “Why me?” ask, “Is God trying to say something to me through this?”

**10:9-10** Once again the Israelites suffered for many years before they gave up their sinful ways and called out to God for help (see 4:1-3; 6:1-6). Notice that when the Israelites were at the end of their rope they did not look to their pagan gods for help, but to the only One who was really able to help. Is God your last resort? So much unnecessary suffering takes place because we don't call on God until we've used up all other resources. Rather than waiting until the situation becomes desperate, turn to God first. He has the necessary resources to meet every kind of problem.

### **Israel Calls To The LORD; God's Response To Israel – Verses 11-14**

**<sup>11</sup>The LORD replied, “When the Egyptians, the Amorites, the Ammonites, the Philistines, <sup>12</sup>the Sidonians, the Amalekites and the Maonites oppressed you and you cried to me for help, did I not save you from their hands? <sup>13</sup>But you have forsaken me and served other gods, so I will no longer save you. <sup>14</sup>Go and cry out to the gods you have chosen. Let them save you when you are in trouble!”**

**10:11-16** These verses show how difficult it can be to follow God over the long haul. The Israelites always seemed to forget God when all was well. But despite being rejected by his own people, God never failed to rescue them when they called out to him in repentance. God never fails to rescue us either. We act just like the Israelites when we put God outside our daily events instead of at the center of them. Just as a loving parent feels rejected when a child rebels, so God feels great rejection when we ignore or neglect him (1 Samuel 8: 4-9; 10:17-19; John 12: 44-50). We should strive to stay close to God rather than see how far we can go before judgment comes.

### **Repentance From Israel, Mercy From God – Verses 15-16**

**<sup>15</sup>But the Israelites said to the LORD, “We have sinned. Do with us whatever you think best, but please rescue us now.” <sup>16</sup>Then they got rid of the foreign gods among them and served the LORD. And he could bear Israel's misery no longer.**

**10:15** Do to us whatever seems best to You: This indicates that Israel came to a place of total surrender to God. The prayer that comes most naturally to us is, “Do to me whatever seems best to me.” The change in heart meant that the season of affliction eventually did affect Israel in a good way. So they put away the foreign gods from among them and served the LORD: Israel finally discovered that the worst of serving God is better than the best of serving idols.

**10:16** His soul could no longer endure the misery of Israel: God looked upon disobedient Israel with compassion, not hatred. It was “difficult” for God to allow Israel to stay in their misery, though it was best for them. Like the perfect loving parent, God hated to see Israel suffer, even when it was good for them. He longed to rescue them but would not do it until it was good for them.

### **Israel Gathers, But Without A Leader – Verses 17-18**

**17** When the Ammonites were called to arms and camped in Gilead, the Israelites assembled and camped at Mizpah. **18** The leaders of the people of Gilead said to each other, “Whoever will take the lead in attacking the Ammonites will be head over all who live in Gilead.”

**10:17-18** The power of the Ammonite nation was at its peak during the period of the judges. The people were descendants of Ammon, conceived when Lot’s younger daughter slept with her drunk father (Genesis 19: 30-38). The land of Ammon was located just east of the Jordan River across from Jerusalem. South of Ammon lay the land of Moab, the nation conceived when Lot’s older daughter slept with her father. Moab and Ammon were usually allies. It was a formidable task to defeat these nations.

**10:18** Who is the man who will begin the fight against the people of Ammon: Israel gathered, but had no leader. God’s pattern for doing great works among His people is to raise up a man. He could do the work all by Himself; He could send angels to do the work for Him; He could use a leaderless mob or a committee. Yet God’s normal means of operating is to raise up a man, and through that man to do a great work. God uses leaders.