Right in His Own Eyes

The Spirit of the LORD in Judges — Disciple copy, Pleasant Springs Church, Discipleship School

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

The full study online: ps-church.com/deep-research/judges-13-1-16-31 and the whole book of Judges on the Deep Research shelf

The verdict on the whole book

> **Judges 21:25 (ESV)** — "In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was **right in his own eyes**."

Yet "the Spirit of the LORD" comes upon someone _____ times in Judges.

The question: How does God get his work done through people who keep doing wrong — without turning them into _____ ?

1 · The Spirit comes for God's purpose

> **Judges 3:10 (ESV)** — "The Spirit of the LORD was upon him, and he judged Israel. He went out to war, and the LORD gave Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand."
>
> **Judges 2:18 (ESV)** — "Whenever the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with the judge, and he saved them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge."
>
> **Judges 13:5 (ESV)** — "...he shall begin to save Israel from the hand of the Philistines."

Every time, the Spirit's power is aimed at the _____ .

Judges 14:19: Samson's motive was a _____ . The Spirit's aim was the oppressor.

➤ The Spirit has a purpose, and it is _____ .

2 · Empowered, but still themselves

> **Judges 6:34 (ESV)** — "But the Spirit of the LORD **clothed** Gideon, and he sounded the trumpet…"

Next, Gideon asks for a _____ (6:36–37). At the end of his story:

> **Judges 8:27 (ESV)** — "And all Israel whored after it there, and it became a **snare** to Gideon and to his family."
>
> **Judges 11:29–30 (ESV)** — "Then the Spirit of the LORD was upon Jephthah… And **Jephthah** made a vow to the LORD…"

The Spirit did not make the vow. _____ did.

➤ **The Spirit empowered these men. He did not _____ them.**

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3 · "It was from the LORD"

> **Judges 14:3 (ESV)** — "Get her for me, for she is **right in my eyes**."

In Hebrew, this is the same phrase as the book's _____ verse.

> **Judges 14:4 (ESV)** — "His father and mother did not know that **it was from the LORD**, for he was seeking an opportunity against the Philistines. At that time the Philistines ruled over Israel."

Samson chose for _____ reasons. God worked in the same event for _____ reasons.

How can both be true? God knows not only what we will do, but what we would _____ do in any situation — and he governs by arranging the _____, never by forcing the choice.

> **Genesis 50:20 (ESV)** — "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good…"
>
> **Acts 2:23 (ESV)** — "this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men."
>
> **James 1:13 (ESV)** — "…God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one."

➤ **God is never the author of the _____. He is the author of the story the sin cannot escape.**

4 · Free means answerable

> **Judges 9:56 (ESV)** — "Thus God returned the evil of Abimelech, which he committed against his father in killing his seventy brothers."

Used by God — and _____ by God.

The Spirit "began to stir" Samson (13:25). That word comes from the Hebrew for *a time, a beat*. It comes back twice:

> **Judges 16:20 (ESV)** — "'I will go out **as at other times** and shake myself free.' But he did not know that the LORD had left him."
>
> **Judges 16:28 (ESV)** — "O Lord GOD, please remember me and please strengthen me **only this once**, O God..."

The man who lived by what was right in his eyes lost his _____. But God still _____ his prayer.

Three things to remember

> **Proverbs 16:9 (ESV)** — "The heart of man plans his way, but the LORD establishes his steps."

1. **The Spirit's power is for God's _____** — power is not the same as approval.
2. **God uses even our wrong choices, and they are still _____ choices.**
3. **It is never too late to pray "only this _____."** (Hebrews 11:32)

Closing prayer

> *Father, we confess that we too have done what was right in our own eyes. Thank you that our wrong choices have never once been bigger than your purpose, and that you work through us without ever making us less than free. Keep us from mistaking your power for your approval. Where we have grown used to your gifts, wake us before we forget whose they are. And where we have fallen far, teach us to pray "remember me." In the name of Jesus, Amen.*

Take it further — the full study

	Passage	Where the Spirit appears
1	Judges 3 · /deep-research/judges-3-1-31	Othniel (3:10)
2	Judges 6–8 · /deep-research/judges-6-1-8-35	Gideon "clothed" (6:34), the fleece, the ephod
3	Judges 9 · /deep-research/judges-9-1-57	Abimelech and the evil returned
4	Judges 10–12 · /deep-research/judges-10-1-12-15	Jephthah — the Spirit and the vow
5	Judges 13–16 · /deep-research/judges-13-1-16-31	Samson
6	Judges 19–21 · /deep-research/judges-19-1-21-25	"Right in his own eyes"

ps-church.com/deep-research — the Hebrew, the Greek Old Testament and the ESV side by side.

Discussion

1. Gideon was clothed with the Spirit and still asked for a fleece. What does that tell you about how God treats our doubts?
2. Why do you think the text keeps the Spirit (11:29) and Jephthah's vow (11:30) in two separate verses?
3. Can you look back on a choice you made for the wrong reasons that God still worked into something good? Does that make the choice right?
4. What gifts of God have you grown so used to that you could forget whose they are?

My notes

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