Sunday School Lesson

Background Scripture: Judges 1 through 2. Devotional Reading: Joshua 24:19-

We often have a hard time deciding what we really want from God. On the one hand, like the Israelites of old, we pray fervently that God will "raise up among us leaders as of old." We ask the Lord to send us godly men who will lead us as Moses and Joshua led the people of Israel. Yet, nothing so disturbs us as a leader who does not say and do what we want him or her to say and do. Yet They Did Not Listen

That's one of the themes evident in the Book of Judges: the people want a leader sent from God. but frequently they refuse to follow that leadership when it is given. As the writer of Judges tells us, "Then the Lord raised up judges, who saved them out of the power of those who plundered them. And yet they did not listen to their judges" (2:16, 17-italics mine).

We need to remember who these "judges" were. Essentially they were not judges in the judiciary sense, but military heroes who, in recognition of their deeds in time of national crisis, were entrusted with governmental powers during their own lifetime. Because they appeared to be gifted by God to save the people of Israel from enemies, this special endowment was honored. And it seemed to work reasonably well. When the people followed their leadership, things went pretty well with the Hebrews.

Unfortunately, there were many times when people didn't follow their leadership. Sometimes they followed the judges until they died and then "did what was evil in the sight of the Lord." but other times they did so even while the judge was alive

So long as their judges saved them in times of crisis and so long as their government did not interfere with the desires of the people. everything was all right. But when the Israelites decided that they wanted to worship the Baals of their neighbors and were opposed by their judges, that is when the people decided they did not want their judges and their judgements.

Their Stubborn Ways

Is that not true of us as well? We pray God to send us leaders to save us in times of national peril, but when things have returned to what we call "normal," we want to do things our way. The writer of Judges says, "whenever the judge died, they turned back and behaved worse than their fathers. going after other gods. serving them and bowing down to them: they did not drop any of their practices or their stubborn ways' (2:19)

People want God to save them. but not govern them. They want their leaders to speak for God but do what they want them to do. The reason: they do not want to "drop any of their practices or their stubborn ways

There is nothing wrong in asking God to raise up leaders for us, so long as we remember that we may get what we ask for.

IRS Looking For Two Raeford Men For Refunds



.7 1

Terri Frances Ferrell and Eugene P. Leonard Jr. of Raeford are among over 1,100 North Carolina taxpayers who have a windfall awaiting them in the form of a Federal tax refund, the Internal Revenue Service says.

Checks totalling more than \$362,000 are waiting for 1,139 taxpayers, according to Glenn Jones, Public Affairs Officer.

These are mostly checks from this year's filing period," Jones remarked.

Jones said that a refund check can be reclaimed by filing Form 3911 with the IRS, 3131 Democrat Road, Memphis, TN 37501.

A new refund check can be reissued to the new address with 6 to 8 weeks.

When filing the form, Jones says, the taxpayer should provide the name and address as it appears on the tax return, any changes to the name and address since filing the return, Social Security Number, the type of return filed (1040, 1040A), and the mount of refund claimed.

Taxpayers who know they have an unclaimed refund check, or anyone knowing the whereabouts of a person on the refund listing should contact Norma Chilton toll-free at 1-800-822-8800 any celiday between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.