



## Through the Bible Series: Judges

Book of Judges

### *Items Needed*

- ✓ Bible with marked scripture
- ✓ Crayons/Pencils/Markers
- ✓ Copies of Lesson Illustrations in order of use.
- ✓ Copies of Word Trace
- ✓ Copies of Coloring Sheet
- ✓ Copies of Take Home Overview



## Books of the Bible Series: Judges

### Objective of Lesson

The objective of this lesson, and every lesson in this series is for our children to become familiar with the structure and order of the books of the Bible and point out how each book is written to specifically picture the person and work of Jesus Christ.

### Scripture Reference

*Book of Judges*

### Lesson Instructions

1. For the last few weeks we have been learning the books of the Bible and what they are about. Can any of you name the books we have learned so far? Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, and Joshua. Can you find them in your Bible? Today we are going to learn the seventh book of the Bible. That book is called Judges. Find the very first chapter and verse and point to it for me.
2. If you remember in the previous lessons, our Lord chose the Israelites as His people. He also sent Moses into Egypt to set them free from slavery. God then promised them a wonderful land that would be their own, called Canaan. (Picture of Canaan) This land was the land God had promised them.

In our last lesson we talked about how they took possession of that land. Remember Joshua? He was a great leader and the warrior (Picture of Joshua the great leader) that led them into many wars and battles under the direction of God. They went into the land and conquered it. This book of Judges deals with what happened to the Israelites AFTER they took possession of that land. I wonder how this story ends? Do you think they lived happily ever after? Isn't that how many fairy tales end? We do not live in a fairy tale do we?

3. The book we are going to study today is called Judges. This book gets its name because God raised up many men, called Judges, from among the Israelites in order to get them out of mess after mess they created for themselves. As you read the book of Judges, you may think to yourself "this book does not read like any other book in the Bible". There is not another one like it. It's to say the least "colorful". If you were reading it and did not know you were reading the Bible, it might be made into a pretty good movie. It would keep your interest. In this book, you'll find a man whose name is Ehud, (hold up the picture of Ehud and Eglon) who was the very first Judge in Israel. Ehud received a message from God for a fat king name Eglon. Do you know what the message was? This is a message from GOD...it was an 18 inch dagger in his belly. He said "I have a message from God and he gave it to him". Thus he judged Israel and delivered them from their enemies.
4. Another story in the book is of a woman named Jaale, who drove a long tent stake through a man's temple, pinned his head to the ground, and then cut his head off and said, "Come, look what God did". Another person in the book of Judges is a fellow named Jebda. You would be astonished what God does with this man. You see, Jebda made a vow (promise) to God by saying, "God if you will deliver and defeat this people, when I get home whatever comes out of my door I will sacrifice it to you." After winning the battle and defeating the enemy he went home. Do you know what came out of his house first? It was his only daughter whom he greatly loved. But he promised God and

therefore; he lifted his hand to God and said, "I can't go back upon my vow". He sacrificed his daughter as he promised.

5. These sound like horrible things! Yes, you are correct - but these things you read about are EXACTLY what can be found in our hearts. You must realize that there are always consequence to your actions. We are responsible for what we do. Story after story in the book shows us who we are and our doings of sinning before God.
6. When was the last time you got into trouble? Can you tell me about what happened? This last time that you got in trouble, was it painful? Did you get punished? Did you learn that there are consequences for our wrong doings? What happened? (tell about one of your own experiences where you disobeyed and had to deal with the consequence of your actions). When that was over did you say, "I WILL NEVER DO THAT AGAIN! I am going to follow the rules from now on and never get in trouble again"? But what happens? You went right back a few days later and did it again, didn't you? OUCH! We are so stubborn, aren't we? Why can't we do only good and right things? Why are we constantly fighting between doing what's right and wrong? The Bible calls this "the flesh lusting against the spirit". (Gal 5:17) This warring, this constant battle between what we want to do and what we should do, is what we find in the book of Judges.
7. When the people of Israel went to take possession of the land, the Lord commanded them to go and drive out every inhabitant. They were not to let any of the people stay nor make friends with any of them. Unfortunately as we read this book we find that they did not obey God. (Picture of Battle for Canaan) They went into the land and conquered the people as God commanded, but not entirely. They defeated and destroyed some people but not all as told by God. They let some of them stay. Maybe they thought that they don't seem too bad or we can learn from them by teaching us how to plant crops and work the land. The sad story is that they did not do as they are told. As with all things, when rules are broken - there are

consequences. One time, an angel of the Lord appears among the people in a place called Bochim (which means "valley of weeping"). There they were weeping because the Lord told them exactly how things were going to be once they were in the promised land. Does the spirit tell them that God wants them to be happy and prosperous? Does the angel tell them that God wants them to have whatever they want? No, He tells them that because they disobeyed God by letting the inhabitants of the land stay, He was not going to make them leave either and eventually they would end up being a thorn in their side and trouble to them.

8. How many of you have ever had a splinter? Have you ever been walking through a yard or a field and step on a briar and a small thorn stick you in your foot? It is not a life threatening thing but it is bothersome. Some little thorns just poke a little but other thorns can really hurt! Do we learn from our hurting? Do we learn to keep our eye open, looking for those thorns and then attempt try to avoid them? We do! We start to watch where we step.
9. Can going through something emotionally painful be referred to as a thorn? Yes! What is an example? Suppose that I have a very bad temper. No matter how hard I try to fight against getting mad, sometimes it flares up and I just get so upset and loose my temper. I often pray to God to take it away from me, but is the Lord trying to teach me something? Could it be that this thorn which may cause awful pain in my life be used of God to teach me? Why do we have hard things we have to learn and go through in this life? Could not God keep these thorns away from us? Certainly he could! But why doesn't He? Do you not think that the almighty God is so determined to teach us lessons that He repeatedly gives us thorns, thistles and briars with which He uses to subdue us and to constantly force us (because we would not do it otherwise) to His almighty grace? Such can be used to enable us to acknowledge our utter corruption. Also, could these lead us to acknowledge that our only hope before him is Jesus Christ the Lord? This is what this book teaches.



10. Now, the good news! The angel of the Lord's warning did not end when he told them that God would not be taking away their grief. He goes on and tells them that He is going to send them judges to deliver them. And deliver them they did...time after time, woe after woe, painful lesson after painful lesson. Even though He did not remove their strife nor grief, their thorns - He never left them alone. God made a promise to His people that He would never leave nor forsake them, but do not forget that there are consequences to our actions. Those emotional thorns that prick us should be our constant reminder of our weakness and sinfulness and that we are in need of a mighty savior. One who is mighty and willing to deliver us from our disobedience. God uses these thorns to teach and drive us to Him. He is our judge - our deliverer from our valley of weeping.

## Lesson Activities

- Word Trace
- Coloring Sheet



## Take Home Lesson Overview

### Through the Bible Series: Judges

#### Scripture Reference:

*Book of Judges*

#### Lesson Overview:

The book we learned today is called Judges. This book gets its name because God raised up many men, called Judges, from among the Israelites in order to get them out of mess after mess they created for themselves. As you read the book of Judges, you may think to yourself "this book does not read like any other book in the Bible". There is not another one like it. It's to say the least "colorful". If you were reading it and did not know you were reading the Bible, it might be made into a pretty good movie. It would keep your interest. These sound like horrible things! Yes, you are correct - but these things that you read about are EXACTLY what we find in our hearts. We see that there are always consequences to our actions. We are responsible for what we do as well what we think concerning God and His world. Throughout this book we see event after event where we see our disobedience and the results of such. Now, the good news! The angel of the Lord's warning at the



beginning of this chapter did not end when he told them that God would not be taking away their grief. He goes on and tells them that He is going to send them judges to deliver them. And deliver them they did...time after time, woe after woe, painful lesson after painful lesson. Even though He did not remove their strife nor grief, their thorns - He never left them alone. God made a promise to His people that He would never leave nor forsake them, but do not forget that there are consequences to our actions. Those emotional thorns that prick us should be our constant reminder of our weakness and sinfulness and that we are in need of a mighty savior. One who is mighty and willing to deliver us from our disobedience. God uses these thorns to teach and drive us to Him. He is our judge - our deliverer from our valley of weeping.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Handwriting Practice **Basic Print - Large Letters** - 13/16 inch

To print worksheet widest side horizontal click "File" - "Page Setup" and "Landscape"

Judges

Judges

Judges

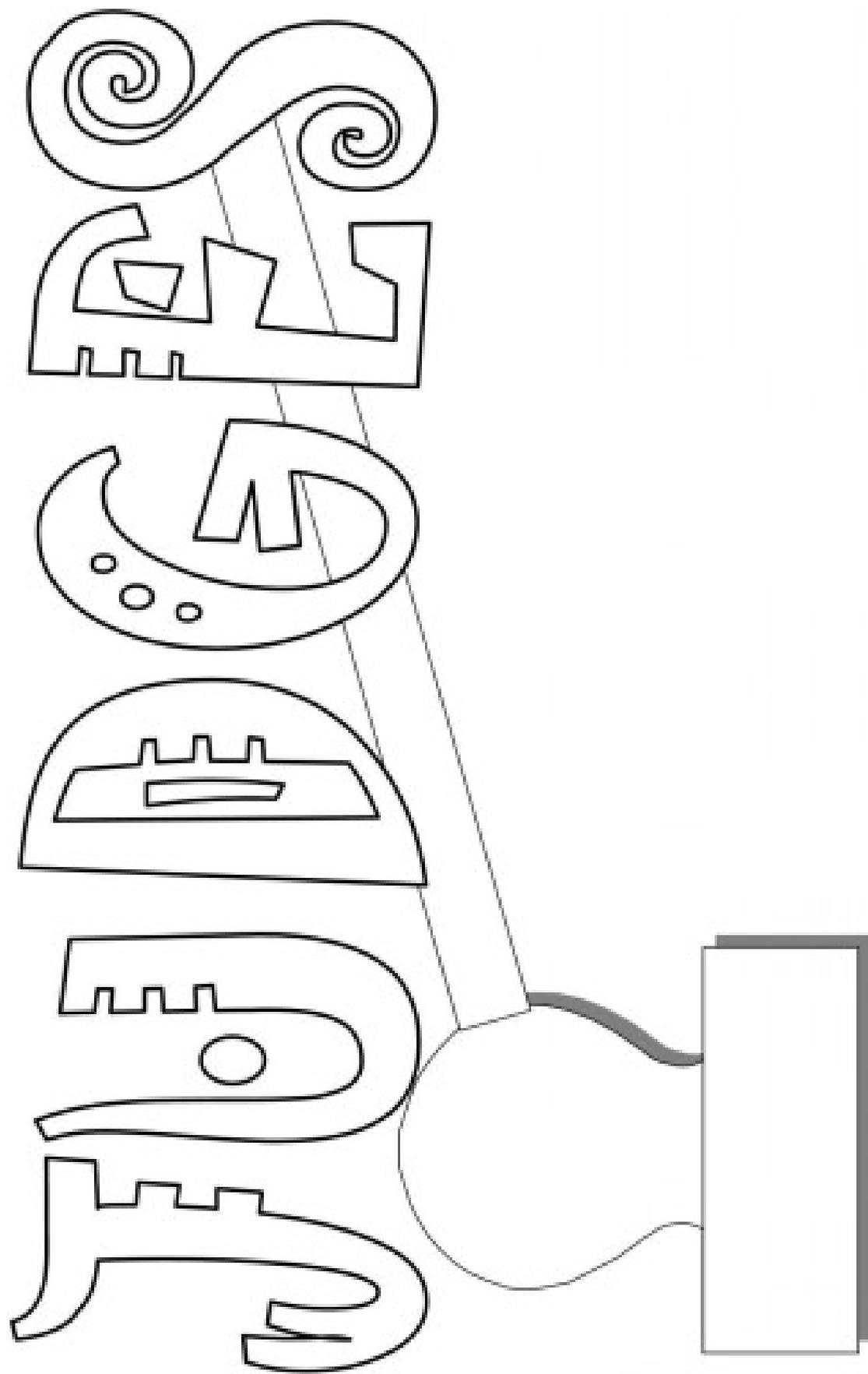
Judges

Judges

Judges

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Land of Canaan





After the death of Moses, Joshua led the Hebrews in their battles for the Promised Land.

Ehud & Eglon



Bochem - Valley of Weeping



Title:                   **JUDGES**  
                                  **ENEMIES WITHIN**  
Text:                 Judges 2:1-23  
Subject:            *Warring with The Flesh*  
Tape #                X-48b  
Readings:        *Bob Pruitt and David Burge*  
Introduction:

The most shocking thing I discovered as a young believer, shortly after God saved me, was the fact that the raging monster of sin in my heart had not been slain, or even tamed.

**Illustrations:**   *High School English Teacher*  
                              *Boy At Springfield*

And the sad fact is, I am every day made increasingly aware of the depths of my depravity. Yet, I know that I have not even begun to discover the hideous enormity of my sinfulness!

### **THE FLESH AND THE SPIRIT**

The fact is, when God saves a sinner, he does not change his old nature. He gives us a new nature by his grace. But he does not change the flesh. Flesh is still flesh. And our flesh (our old, Adamic nature) is our worst enemy. Believers are a people at war, constant, unceasing war with themselves. *“The flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.”*

I know that you who are God’s understand what I am talking about here. We are forgiven of all sin in Christ. We are accepted in him, justified, sanctified, and holy before God by the blood and righteousness of our all-glorious Christ. We can honestly say with John, *“We love him because he first loved us.”* We want, in

all things, to honor our God and Savior. We delight in the law of God in the very core of our beings. Yet, when we would do good, evil is present. John Newton described this experience clearly and beautifully in one of his hymns.

I asked the Lord that I might grow  
In faith, and love, and every grace;  
Might more of his salvation know,  
And seek more earnestly his face.

[ 'Twas he who taught me thus to pray,  
And he, I trust, has answered prayer;  
But it has been in such a way  
As almost drove me to despair.]

I hoped that in some favored hour,  
At once he'd answer my request;  
And, by his love's constraining power,  
Subdue my sins, and give me rest.

Instead of this, he made me feel  
The hidden evils of my heart,  
And let the angry powers of hell  
Assault my soul in every part.

Yea, more, with his own hand he seemed  
Intent to aggravate my woe;  
Crossed all the fair designs I schemed,  
Blasted my gourds, and laid me low.

"Lord, why is this?" I trembled cried;  
"Wilt thou pursue thy worm to death?"  
"'Tis in this way," the Lord replied,  
"I answer prayer for grace and faith."

"These inward trials I employ,  
From self and pride to set thee free;  
And break thy schemes of earthly joy,  
That thou mayst seek thy all in me."

**Proposition:** This warfare between the flesh and the spirit in the experience of God's elect is what the Book of Judges is all about.

### **JOSHUA AND JUDGES**

In the Book of Joshua the land of Canaan and Israel's possession of it is primarily typical of the saints' everlasting rest in heaven. But in the Book of Judges the land of Canaan is set before us as a typical representation of our experience of God's grace in this world. This world is our "*Bochim*," our valley of weeping.

### **VERY DIFFERENT**

As you read the Book of Judges, if you are like me, you cannot avoid thinking, "This Book is not like any other Book in the Bible." You see a man named Ehud, sent of God to deliver a message to a fat King named Eglon, and the message was a long dagger shoved into his belly. A woman named Jael drives a tent stake through the temples of a man named Sisera, and then cuts his head off. Gideon has a army of 32,000 ready to go to war. But God requires him to whittle the army down to 300 men who are scared to death of their own shadows; and you think, "That's not real smart." You are astonished by Jephthah's sacrifice of his daughter, and very disappointed in the weakness of Samson. Then, you find yourself shocked by the Levite cutting his wife's raped body into twelve pieces and sending it to the twelve tribes of Israel.

We read of Israel, God's covenant people, the people he brought out of Egypt by the hand of Moses and to whom he gave the land

of Canaan by covenant promise as their inheritance forever by the hand of Joshua, rebelling against God, sinking into idolatry, overcome by enemy after enemy, becoming more and more degraded. In the first verse of chapter one, they asked the Lord “*Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites, to fight against them?*” But, by the time we get to the end of the Book (20:18), we see them asking the Lord to lead them as they go up to war against their own brethren in the tribe of Benjamin! How can we understand this Book? What happened to these people for whom the Lord God had done so much? The answer to that question is found in the very last verse of the last chapter (21:25).

(Judges 21:25) "In those days *there was* no king in Israel: every man did *that which was* right in his own eyes."

This explanation of Israel’s great failure and God’s providential judgments upon them is given four times in these twenty-one chapters (17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25). Notice that the Lord does not say, "Every man did what was wrong in his own eyes," but “*that which was right in his own eyes.*” They endeavored to live in the land of Canaan and endeavored to serve God being governed by their own wisdom rather than God’s revelation. They refused the counsel of wisdom and followed the counsel of folly. Rather than trusting the Lord, they leaned unto their own understanding.

(Proverbs 3:5-6) "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. (6) In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

## CHAPTERS 1 AND 2

As long as Joshua lived, the nation of Israel served the Lord. They continued to do so until another generation arose after them “*which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.*” If you will carefully read the first two chapters of

Judges, you will see that these two chapters explain the rest of the Book.

In **chapter one** we see that though the Lord specifically commanded the children of Israel to drive out all the inhabitants of the land of Canaan, they chose on several occasions not to do so completely. Instead, they subdued them and made a league with them. In **chapter two** the Lord explains why he left Israel's enemies in the land.

**(Judges 2:1-5)** "And an angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I sware unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you. (2) And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this? (3) Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be *as thorns* in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you. (4) And it came to pass, when the angel of the LORD spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice, and wept. (5) And they called the name of that place Bochim: and they sacrificed there unto the LORD."

**(Judges 2:6-10)** "And when Joshua had let the people go, the children of Israel went every man unto his inheritance to possess the land. (7) And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD, that he did for Israel. (8) And Joshua, the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, *being* an hundred and ten years old. (9) And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnathheres, in the mount of Ephraim, on the north side of the hill Gaash. (10) And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose

another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel."

**(Judges 2:11-23)** "And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim: (12) And they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that *were* round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger. (13) And they forsook the LORD, and served Baal and Ashtaroth. (14) And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies. (15) Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for evil, as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had sworn unto them: and they were greatly distressed. (16) Nevertheless the LORD raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them. (17) And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the LORD; *but* they did not so. (18) And when the LORD raised them up judges, then the LORD was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented the LORD because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them. (19) And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, *that* they returned, and corrupted *themselves* more than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them; they ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way. (20) And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel; and he said, Because that this people hath transgressed my covenant which I commanded their fathers, and have not hearkened unto my voice; (21) I also will not henceforth drive out any from before them of the nations

which Joshua left when he died: (22) That through them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of the LORD to walk therein, as their fathers did keep *it*, or not. (23) Therefore the LORD left those nations, without driving them out hastily; neither delivered he them into the hand of Joshua."

**Joshua** is primarily a declaration of the ultimate triumph of grace. But **Judges** is a book about failure, defeat and shame – The failure, defeat and shame we experience in this world because of our own sin, rebellion and unbelief.

### **THE TIME**

These twenty-one chapters cover a period of 229-230 years. But it is a mistake to look at the Book of Judges the complete record of that period of Israel's history known as the time of the Judges. The last judge in Israel was not Samson, but Samuel. And though the Book of Judges ends with Israel in a sad, sad condition, brought into utter shame and degradation by her own sin, it ought to always be read in close connection with both Joshua and Ruth. The story of Ruth and Boaz takes place during this time. And, as you know, the Book of Ruth is all about Christ our Kinsman Redeemer.

- The Book of **Joshua** shows us what God is going to do with us. He is going to bring us into the land of glorious rest, the heavenly Canaan.
- The Book of **Judges** shows us in our present condition, warring with enemies within, constantly needing grace.
- The Book of **Ruth** shows us our great Judge (Deliverer), the Lord Jesus Christ (portrayed in Boaz), who has redeemed our inheritance for us, prevailed over all our enemies, and will at last drive them all out of the land and give us glorious rest in the Land of Promise.

## THE MESSAGE

What is the message of this Book? Why was it written? Why does the Lord here give us the sordid details of Israel's constant failure, defeat, and sin? These things were written for our learning (Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:10-11).

(Romans 15:4) "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."

(1 Corinthians 10:11) Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."

**As I read the things recorded in these twenty-one chapters**, the circumstances, the failures, the stubbornness, the rebellion, the sin, the battles, the sorrows, and the shamefulfulness of Israel in these chapters, it appears as though I am reading a detailed biography of my own experience.

**It is as obvious as the nose on your face** that the nation of Israel, though delivered from Egypt and living in the possession of Canaan, could not have survived one day in that land except for this fact – God kept them. **There you have the message of the Book of Judges.** – Though the Lord God has saved us by his almighty grace, you and I are so weak, so sinful, so unbelieving, so stubbornly rebellious that we would not last a second, if left to ourselves. We continue in grace only because our great, gracious, glorious God keeps us in grace.

## THE CYCLE OF OUR LIVES

The Book of Judges displays the constant cycle of our lives in this world as men and women saved by the grace of God.

## REST

The Book begins with Israel in the land of rest. They have, at last, come into the possession of the land by the hand of Joshua. For forty years they had no rest. Then, Joshua gave them rest!

That is where you and I began this thing we call salvation. The Lord Jesus Christ, our great Joshua, brought us into the blessed possession of grace, salvation, and eternal life, and gave us rest (Matt. 11:28-30).

(Matthew 11:28-30) "Come unto me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (29) Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. (30) For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light."

There is no rest like the rest of faith in Christ. This is our sabbath. We rest in Christ.

- His Righteousness.
- His Redemption.
- His Rule.

## REBELLION

No sooner did Israel take possession of the land than they rebelled against the Lord. God told them to drive out the inhabitants of the land; but they chose to do what was right in their own eyes, and drove out most of the inhabitants.

- **Some they could not drive out because they were just too strong** (1:18-19).

(Judges 1:18-19) "Also Judah took Gaza with the coast thereof, and Askelon with the coast thereof, and Ekron with the coast thereof. (19) And the LORD was with Judah; and he drave out *the inhabitants of* the mountain; but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron."

- **Others they chose not to drive out because they thought they could handle them without trouble** (1:20-36).

(v. 21) Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites.

(v. 25) The house of Joseph spared one man and his family in Beth-el.

(v. 27) Manasseh did not drive out the inhabitants of Bethshean, Taanach, Dor, Ibleam, or Megiddo.

(v. 30) Zebulun did not drive out the inhabitants of Kitron or Nahalol.

(v. 31) Asher spared Accho, Zidon, Ahlab, Achzib, Helbah, Aphik, and Rehob.

(v. 33) Naphtali spared Bethshemesh and Bethanath

And (v. 34) Dan was subdued by the Amorites.

When Israel came to some of these places, instead of going to war against them, they went in and investigated the towns. When the place did not seem particularly dangerous and the people seemed to be people they could get along with, or use to their advantage, they spared them and built a town beside them. They allowed them, their gods, and their “useful” possessions and talents to stay in the land. Oh, they kept an eye on them; but they did not drive them out of the land. They did what was right in their own eyes.

**Have you done that?** When God saved you, you quit drinking, smoking, dancing, wearing boots to bed, howling at the moon, , eating liver on Friday, and all those other things “bad” people do. Those other things, like gossip, malice, anger, wrath and

covetousness, we do not bother with too much. We vainly imagine that we are so much better than we use to be that we do not need to worry about those things weaker people have to be concerned with. We think, “These are just small, trivial matters. Surely, the Lord is not going to make an issue out of these.” We leave those inward things no one else sees (at least not all the time) alone. We even protect them. – “After all, I am of German stock. All Germans are a little stubborn.” or “I am only human.” Or “My whole family is like this. This is just the way I am; and you just have to accept me the way I am.”

That is what Israel did. They had been farmers and herdsmen for four hundred years in Egypt. There they were accustomed to raising their crops in well irrigated, lush fields. Things were different in Canaan. The land was terribly dry. They did not know how to use such land. Their first crops were puny excuses for crops. But the Canaanites had great harvests. So the Jews asked them, “What is your secret?” “It is very simple. We worship the gods of fertility, and they bless our crops. If you want to make it here, you will have to adjust to our ways.” So the Israelites gave in. Who can argue with obvious success?

Of course, the Canaanites also told them how to plant their crops, when to plant them, where to plant them, how to fertilize the ground and how to get the moisture needed to the fields. The next spring, sure enough, after they had bowed down to the gods of the Canaanites, they found the crops were wonderful. So Israel abandoned the worship of Jehovah. Oh, they never said so. They did not cease to include God’s name and ordinances in their religion. They just incorporated the worship of Baal, Ashtaroah and the gods of the land into the worship of Jehovah. But God says, “*They forsook the LORD God of their fathers and followed other gods.*”

These fertility gods were just that, sex gods, and worshipping them involved not only bowing down before dumb idols that could not speak, see, act or think, but also vile immorality. Israel's religion had become nothing but the practice of whoredom (literally and spiritually) in the name of God!

### **RETRIBUTION**

Israel's rebellion brought divine retribution. You see, as it was with David, the Lord God ever shows his displeasure with sin, especially with his own people.

(Judges 2:12-15) "And they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that *were* round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger. (13) And they forsook the LORD, and served Baal and Ashtaroth. (14) And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies. (15) Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for evil, as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had sworn unto them: and they were greatly distressed."

Sin always brings retribution. I do not mean that God punishes his own for sin in a way of exacting justice and satisfaction. Thank God, he does not! He punished our sins in Christ and found satisfaction for our sins in the sacrifice of his Son (Rom. 8:1). But the Lord God does chasten his children, correcting sin in us, because he loves us (Heb. 12:5-16).

(Hebrews 12:5-16) "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not

thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: (6) For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. (7) If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? (8) But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. (9) Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? (10) For they verily for a few days chastened *us* after their own pleasure; but he for *our* profit, that *we* might be partakers of his holiness. (11) Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. (12) Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; (13) And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. (14) Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: (15) Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble *you*, and thereby many be defiled; (16) Lest there *be* any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright."

### RESTORATION

God's chastening is followed by and results in restoration. Blessed be his name, our great God is ever gracious to his people!

(Judges 2:16-18) "Nevertheless the LORD raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them. (17) And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers

walked in, obeying the commandments of the LORD; *but* they did not so. (18) And when the LORD raised them up judges, then the LORD was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented the LORD because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them."

**These judges** (twelve are named in these chapters) were typical of our Lord Jesus Christ, men raised up by God to deliver (save) his people from their enemies. All were saviors. All acted as kings. One (Samuel) was a prophet. And one (Eli) was a priest. The Lord Jesus Christ is our unfailing, ever faithful Savior, our Prophet, our Priest, and our King! He will (Blessed be his name forever!), He will deliver and save us from all our enemies!

The Lord God will not leave us to ourselves, and he will not leave us alone. He will not leave us; and he will not let us leave him. His covenant he will not break Jer. 32:40; Ps. 89:28-37).

(Jeremiah 32:40) "And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me."

(Psalms 89:28-37) "My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. (29) His seed also will I make *to endure* for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. (30) If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; (31) If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; (32) Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. (33) Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. (34) My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. (35) Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. (36) His seed shall

endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. (37) It shall be established for ever as the moon, and *as* a faithful witness in heaven. Selah."

(2 Timothy 2:13) "If we believe not, *yet* he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself."

(2 Timothy 2:19) "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

(1 John 3:20) "For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things."

### REBELLION

Now, look at Judges 2:19. The very next thing we see is more rebellion.

(Judges 2:19) "And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, *that* they returned, and corrupted *themselves* more than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them; they ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way."

When we get to the end of the Book, that is just where we find Israel. They just got worse, and worse, and worse throughout the Book of Judges. They sunk lower and lower and lower. Flesh is always just flesh, rotting, rotting, rotting flesh!

I blush with shame and weep bitterly to confess it, but confess it I must, my name is Israel. This is my life's story (Rom. 7:14-23). But, blessed be God, the story is not over yet. My Boaz has promised that he will do all that my soul requires.

REASON

Why did the Lord do this? Why does he leave us here, in this valley of weeping with all these inward enemies? To prove us and to teach us (Jud. 2:21-23).

(Judges 2:21-23) "I also will not henceforth drive out any from before them of the nations which Joshua left when he died: (22) That through them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of the LORD to walk therein, as their fathers did keep *it*, or not. (23) Therefore the LORD left those nations, without driving them out hastily; neither delivered he them into the hand of Joshua."

"These inward trials I employ,  
From self and pride to set thee free;  
And break thy schemes of earthly joy,  
That thou mayst seek thy all in me."

Let us learn the lessons taught in this Book and confirmed by our experience.

- Salvation is God's work alone.
- Flesh is always flesh.
- Our only hope of salvation is Christ.
- Ever look away to Christ.

(1 John 1:7-10) "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. (8) If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. (9) If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (10) If we say

that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

(1 John 2:1-2) "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: (2) And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world."

- Be kind, forgiving, and patient with one another!

(Galatians 6:1-2) "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. (2) Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

- Our great God and Savior will not hastily drive out these enemies; but he will drive them out altogether! When our Savior brings us into the land of rest, there will be no more sin!

Amen!

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<sup>1</sup> Danville (Tuesday 03/11/03)—Todds Road Grace Church, Lexington, KY (Wednesday 03/12/03)