



The Cycle of Bondage and Deliverance Judges 2

Introduction

Judges chapter two is an example of a relationship that goes in a circle, and never reaches a finish line. Think of it this way. An all powerful King makes an agreement with a young man. The King gives the young man a skate park and the man agrees to take care of it according to the rules the King established. However, the young man ignores the rules. All types of troublemakers come to the park. They spray paint graffiti on the ramps and fights break out between different groups. The park is not being used the way it was intended. The young man joins in with the troublemakers and follows their examples. He mistreats other people and even makes fun of the King for having trusted him to manage the park.

Obviously, a just King cannot allow this to happen. There must be consequences. Being all powerful, the King withdraws his protection that He had placed around the young man (kind of like an invisible force field). A riot (violent fighting) breaks out in the park. Evil men take over the park and make the young man their slave. Finally, the man cries out to the King for help. The King is merciful and even sends a guardian to help the man regain control of the park. For a while, the man keeps the park beautiful. But once the guardian leaves, he loses his motivation and goes back to his old ways. And, the cycle starts over again.

The good news is God (the King) provides a way to break the cycle. At the perfect time (His timing), He sends His Son as the ultimate deliverer/judge. Jesus lives His life and keeps all God's commands perfectly (never fails/sins). He then goes to God and graciously gives His perfection to cover all our past and future failures. On top of that, He gives us a Helper (Holy Spirit), so that even when we make a

mistake and fail, we will never lose hope. This Helper will never leave us.

Everything that you will read about in the book of Judges is proof that you could never have kept the agreement (covenant) with God perfectly. God had to send His only begotten Son, Jesus, to do it for you. *Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages have come* (1 Corinthians 10:11).

Outline of Judges Chapter 2

- I. A Message from the Lord - Judges 2:1-10
- II. A Cycle of Despair and Deliverance - Judges 2:11-19
- III. A Response from God - Judges 2:20-23

I. A Message from the Lord - Judges 2:1-9

Then the Angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim and said, "I led you up from Egypt" God's messenger came from Gilgal (where the ark of the covenant was located) to deliver a message from God. The Angel of the Lord appears many times throughout the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament, and He is mentioned twenty-two times in Judges alone! The Angel of the Lord is an appearance of Jesus to man. Did you know that the word 'angel' and 'messenger' are the same word in Hebrew? It is 'malak' and can be used to mean a prophet, a priest, a supernatural being, or even the **pre-incarnate** Lord Jesus, as in this case. Angels are so common in Scripture that only a few short books do not mention them: Ruth, Nehemiah, Esther, and the letters of James and John.

The Angel's message began with a reminder, *I led you up from Egypt*. Indeed, God had delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, and the people needed to be reminded of God's past blessings. Often times, we can

be encouraged when we remember the good things that God has done for us in the past.

The Angel reminded the people that He was the promise keeper, *"I will never break My covenant with you."* God will not break His word. In fact, *it is impossible for God to lie* (Hebrews 6:18). Scripture says:

- *The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever* (Isaiah 40:8).
- *"Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away"* (Matthew 24:35).
- *Forever, O Lord, your Word is settled in heaven* (Psalm 119:89).

Remember, Jesus' strength came from 1) prayer, 2) trust in God's Word, and 3) the Holy Spirit's guidance. Will you make a commitment to God to believe His word is true? We live in an evil world that wants to trick you into doubting Him and His word. As you get older, it often times becomes more difficult. This is not because the arguments against God are true. It is because you will hear the lies about God more often. Parents are to train their children in the right way (Proverbs 22:6). That includes putting them in the right environments. Once you are older, you will find yourself in and among non-believers more often than when you were a child. You will be challenged to doubt God. Make a commitment to study His word so that you are prepared for those challenges. If you seek the truth, you will find yourself led to His word. He is *the way, the truth, and the life* (John 14:6).

The purpose for the visit from the Angel of the Lord was to discipline the people of Israel for their disobedience. All actions have **consequences**. The Angel of the Lord declared the consequence for the Israelites failure to obey: *Therefore...I will not drive* (the Canaanites) *out before you, but they shall be thorns in your side, and their gods shall be a snare to you.* God would take away His power from them, and they would be surrounded by temptation to idolatry. The people wept and made a sacrifice to God. The place was named Bochim ("weeping") for their tears. But,

the remainder of the chapter will prove their **rebellion** was "too deeply rooted to be wept out" (Matthew Henry's Complete Commentary).

After this, Joshua sent the people away to their lands. We know this generation served the Lord all the days of Joshua's life as well as the elders who outlived him (2:7). This was a generation that had seen the great works of the Lord in defeating their enemies and giving them *a land flowing with milk and honey* (Exodus 3:17). But, the following generation *did not know the Lord nor the work which He had done in Israel* (2:10). Can you imagine? God had told the people to teach their children to love Him with all of their heart, soul, and strength. He said *You shall teach* (My words) *diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up* (Deuteronomy 6:7). How could this generation not know the Lord! Had they ignored the words of their parents and thought of them as foolish? Can you picture a young boy rolling his eyes as his mother described God parting the Red Sea when she was a little girl. Somehow, the truth about who God was and what He had done had not made an impact on this generation. Maybe they thought of the true God as one of the many false gods they lived among. Whatever the reason, one thing is certain. The next generation would be the first of many to put God's mercy to the test.

II. A Cycle of Despair and Deliverance - Judges 2:11-19

Have you ever seen a 'trailer' of an upcoming movie? It's a small two to three minute preview of what is coming up. Well, that is what you will see in these last eight verses. Over the next two or three hundred years you will see the same 'trailer' about Israel over and over again. Because we have already learned about the cycle that repeats in Judges, we will review it quickly one last time. This will make it easy for you to recognize the pattern as it occurs each time in Judges. The major events in order of their appearance are:

1. *The children of Israel did evil...and served the Baals- 2:11*

What did it mean to serve Baal? And how did it lead the people away from the true God? The Canaanites worshiped Baals (gods) and Asherahs (goddesses). They believed these false gods and goddesses were responsible for the fertility of the earth. In other words, they believed their crops produced fruit, rains came regularly, and the land did well when the gods were pleased. To please the gods, the Canaanites would behave immorally and indecently.

The Israelites did not resist the Canaanite **culture**. They became more involved with the Canaanite customs and less involved with God. Jesus said that you cannot serve two masters. One will be loved and the other hated (Luke 16:13). Who is the master of your will, you or God?

2. *They provoked the Lord to anger - 2:12*

God is a jealous God. His first commandment is *you shall have no other gods before Me* (Exodus 20:3).

3. *He delivered them into the hand of plunderers - 2:14*

In just three generations, God's people went from slavery (in Egypt), to freedom (wandering in the desert), to slavery under pagan nations. Their defeat shows their lack of trust for God. They were spiritually weak within themselves.

4. *And they were greatly distressed - Judges 2:15*
With God's hand against them, the people were miserable and cried out to God.

5. *The Lord raised up judges who delivered them... - 2:16*

God's mercy is seen in His response to their cry. His answer was to provide "judges" who delivered them. These were heroes and one heroine.

6. *Yet they would not listen to their judges - 2:17*

How sad that they did not learn from their mistake. As soon as the discomfort of their misery was taken away, they slipped into their old ways.

7. When the judge was dead they went back to their old ways and behaved worse than before - Judges 2:19

III. A Response from God - Judges 2:20-23

God's anger was His righteous response to Israel's continued sin and rebellion. God, in His incredible power and holiness, uses evil for good. Do not misunderstand. God does not and cannot do evil. He, however, knows evil men can only do evil. He ordained the actions of the pagan peoples to test Israel's faithfulness. Their failure to learn resulted in repeating the lesson over and over again. Can you think of a sin in your life that you keep repeating? Will you make the changes in your life to stop this cycle of sin? †

Prayer

God in heaven, you are the true God and the only God. Thank you for the understanding with which you have blessed me. May I continue to grow in the knowledge of you all the days of my life.

Memory Verse

Jeremiah 9:24 *But let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord, exercising lovingkindness, judgement and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight," says the Lord.*

Vocabulary

pre-incarnate - the representation of Jesus before He was born on earth in human form

consequences - results or effects produced

rebellion - open fighting against authority

culture - the most popular trends and traditions that make a period of time different from another period of time

plunderer - someone who robs another person openly and with force

QUESTIONS FOR JUDGES/RUTH LESSON 3

All questions are based on the New King James Version of the Bible.

DAY ONE: Read all notes and references.

1. In your own words, list the seven major events that make up the pattern of Israel's behavior in Judges.

| | |
|---------|---------|
| ① _____ | ⑤ _____ |
| ② _____ | ⑥ _____ |
| ③ _____ | ⑦ _____ |
| ④ _____ | |

2. What is the most important lesson you learned from the pattern?

DAY TWO: Read Judges 3:1-7.

3. Give two reasons that God allowed pagan nations to remain in the land.

4. List the names of the pagan peoples whom the Lord allowed to remain in the land and find the territory of each on your map.

5. What were the results of the Israelites intermingling with these people? Underline all the correct answers.

Israel traded with them and became rich.

The Israelites enslaved the pagans.

The Israelites taught
the pagans about God.

The Israelites taught the
pagan people to read and write.

The Israelites took pagan wives.

The Israelites served pagan gods.

DAY THREE: Read Judges 3:7-11.

6. Mark each statement below T (true) or F (false). Correct each false statement and give the verse where you found the correction.

- T or F vs. _____ The Israelites did evil. They forgot God and served pagan gods.
- T or F vs. _____ God was patient and had mercy on the Israelites.
- T or F vs. _____ God sold them into the hand of the king of Mesopotamia.
- T or F vs. _____ Israel served Cushan-Rishathaim for ten years.
- T or F vs. _____ When Israel cried out to the pagan gods, they sent a deliverer.

7. a. Who was Othniel and how did he serve God?

- b. What empowered Othniel to do his work for God?

8. ♥(Heart Question) Have you ever relied upon the Spirit of the Lord (Holy Spirit) to serve God in some way? If so, please share with your group.

DAY FOUR: Read Judges 3:12-25.

9. Fill in the blanks.

Israel again _____ in the sight of the Lord. The Lord strengthened _____ king of _____ against Israel. So Israel served him for _____ years.

10. a. Who was the deliverer God raised up? _____

b. What tribe was he from? _____

c. What made him different from most other people? Do you think this was a disadvantage?

11. a. What did this judge do to deliver Israel?

b. Do you think that he was a wise man and used good judgment? Why or why not?

DAY FIVE: Read Judges 3:26-31.

12. Complete the following statements about Ehud.

- a. He _____ to Seirah in Ephraim.
- b. He _____ in the mountains of Ephraim.
- c. He came down from the mountain with the children of Israel and _____ them.
- d. He said, “ _____
_____.”

13. a. Find the area where the Moabites were located on your map. What are the names of any nearby seas or rivers?

b. What do you learn about the Moabites who were killed?

c. How long did Israel have rest after this? _____

14. a. What was the name of the next judge? _____

b. What did he do? _____

c. Find the area of the Philistines on your map. What are the names of any nearby seas or rivers?

15. Which judge so far has impressed you the most? Why?

VOCABULARY FOR JUDGES/RUTH LESSON 3

***"The more words you know, the more clearly and powerfully you will think...
and the more ideas you will invite into your mind."***

— Wilfred Funk

DAY ONE: Write the definition of each vocabulary word.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

DAY TWO: Write three sentences using three different vocabulary words from this lesson.

1.

2.

3.

DAY THREE: Circle the word's synonym(s). (Synonym is a word/phrase that means the same thing.)

1. **rebellion** obedience tea party mutiny

2. **consequence** effect introduction result

3. **plunder** give ransack loot

DAY FOUR: Match the word to its meaning.

| <u>Word</u> | <u>Definition</u> |
|----------------------|---|
| pre-incarnate | someone who robs another person openly and with force |
| culture | results or effects produced |
| plunderer | open fighting against authority |
| rebellion | the representation of Jesus before He was born on earth in human form |
| consequencees | the most popular trends and traditions that make a period of time different from another period of time |

DAY FIVE: Review previous vocabulary words. Try to work from memory.

Double Puzzle: Unscramble the words. Use the definitions to help you. All words are from *previous* lessons. If there is a number under the box, put that letter in the corresponding box at the bottom of the page to find the hidden message.

| | | |
|--------------|---|---|
| EP MOSROI MC | <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div> 12 4 | weaken reputation or principle by accepting standard lower than desirable |
| NOC FEOD RM | <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div> 9 | to be similar or identical; to act in agreement |
| WOFSADREOH | <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div> 5 7 | to give a hint or suggestion beforehand of someone or something that is to come |
| NERNATGOIE | <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div> 2 | a group of individuals born and living at the same time |
| MOALIRM | <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div> 6 | not concerned with the rules of right conduct or the difference between right and wrong |
| MORLA | <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div> 11 | right behavior; good |
| PNAGA | <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div> 1 | of false gods |
| PIASLENTE | <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div> 8 | modern day Canaan; refers to land between the Mediterranean Sea and Jordan River, sometimes including adjoining areas |
| TALRODEET | <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div> 10 3 | to allow something to be done without making a move to stop it |

1 2 3

4 5 6 7 8

y

9 10 11 12