

Judges & Ruth

God's *Faithfulness* Remains

women's | BIBLE STUDY

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LESSON *Two*

Abandoning God

Starting again with Joshua's death, this section is a retelling of last week's passage. Israel's military failures now take a back seat and the author zooms in on their religious failures. Israel knowingly and repeatedly disregarded God and His covenant. The result? Consequences beyond their imaginations. God loved His people and so, for their good, He disciplined them.

PARALLEL ACCOUNT

Judges 2:6-8 begins with a statement of Joshua's death. This automatically signals to readers that this is a parallel account of Judges 1:1-2:5. Keep this in mind as you read.

YAHWEH

Anytime the word "LORD" is capitalized in your Bible, it indicates it is the Hebrew word for "Yahweh." This is the personal name of God revealed to Moses in Exodus 3:14.

INHERITANCE

Judges 2:6 says, "...the people of Israel went each to his inheritance to take possession of the land." In the book of Joshua (right before Judges), God helped Israel conquer Canaan and assigned each tribe a piece of land. Then, in Judges, God instructed the Israelites to drive out everyone in the land so their hearts would not be swayed by foreign gods.

Read Judges 2:6-3:6 before answering the following questions.

1. Write down the similarities you see between this week's passage (Judges 2:6-3:6) and last week's passage (Judges 1:1-2:5). What is distinctly different?
2. God's love for His people is seen in the emotions of this passage. List the emotions you find. Do any of them surprise you? Why or why not?

Read Judges 2:6-10.

3. Israel served God under the leadership of Joshua (verse 7). While serving God includes following His commands, what should ultimately drive obedience? Read Deuteronomy 6:1-9 and Matthew 22:36-40.
4. Those who followed God under Joshua were the ones who "had seen all the great work that the Lord had done in Israel" (verse 7). Fill out the chart on the next page to see the works of God that Israel had witnessed.

SCRIPTURE	WORK OF GOD
Joshua 3:14-17	
Joshua 6:1-7, 20	
Joshua 10:12-14	
Joshua 24:13	

Take a minute and reflect. What great works has God done in your life? In what situations are you most prone to forget God's faithfulness?

- Reread verse 10. Is it your responsibility to pass God's truth on to the next generation or is it their responsibility to develop their own faith? Explain. If possible, use Scripture to support your answer.
- Have you placed your trust in Jesus as your Savior? If you have, how are you passing on your faith to others? If not, what is stopping you from trusting Him?

Read Judges 2:11-19.

- This passage emphasizes Israel's great sin against God. List Israel's sins from verses 11-13. Despite God's anger, how did He intervene? (See Appendix: Wrath of God.)

ISRAEL'S HISTORY

While this generation did not live under Moses' leadership, they would have known the miraculous stories of God's rescue and protection of their forefathers. Read Exodus 7-14 to discover more works of God with which the Israelites would have been familiar.

FORGETTING GOD

The next generation of Israelites did not know God. This is a red flag. It is similar to the Israelites in Egypt, under a new, harsh Pharaoh who did not know Joseph (Exodus 1). Watch for the repeated theme of "forgetting God" throughout Judges.⁹

SALVATION

To better understand what it means to trust Jesus, read Romans 6:23, Romans 10:9-10, and Ephesians 2:8-9. Salvation, in both the Old Testament and now, has always been by grace through faith, not by works. For evidence of this truth, read Romans 4:1-3.

DESTRUCTION

“If verse 10 signals a storm on the horizon, then these verses describe how it swept through Israel with full, destructive force.”¹⁰

BAAL AND ASHTAROTH

Baal was the Canaanite god of storm and fertility. His female counterpart was Ashtaroth. To worship these false gods was direct disobedience to God’s command in Exodus 20:3-6.¹¹

REPETITION

Notice how many times the author repeats Israel’s sin against Yahweh. Any time a Bible author uses repetition, it is a tactic to emphasize a crucial point. Don’t miss this as you keep reading.

ABANDON

To abandon means to leave completely and finally, desert, or to cast away.¹³

JUDGE

A judge was a military and/or political leader that God raised to deliver the nation of Israel from their enemies.

“Sin is the glory of God not honored, the holiness of God not revered, the greatness of God not admired, the power of God not praised, the truth of God not sought, the wisdom of God not esteemed, the beauty of God not treasured, the goodness of God not savored, the faithfulness of God not trusted, the promises of God not believed, the commandments of God not obeyed, the justice of God not respected, the wrath of God not feared, the grace of God not cherished, the presence of God not prized, the person of God not loved.”

— *John Piper*¹²

8. Verse 15 says, “...the hand of the Lord was against them for harm...” How does this make you feel? What questions does it raise in your mind? (See Appendix: Discipline.)

9. Describe the recurring cycle of Israel detailed in verses 11-19.

What does this cycle teach you about humanity? God’s love?

10. Throughout Judges, Israel continued to turn back to idol worship. What sin do you continue to turn back to, no matter how much you hate it? What causes you to run to this sin instead of God? (See Romans 7:15-20).

11. If you are a believer, God has delivered you from slavery to your sin. However, the temptation to sin remains. In what situation do you need to remember you have been delivered? How do these verses encourage you?

Romans 8:1-7

1 Corinthians 10:13

Hebrews 4:15-16

Be encouraged. Even when you fail, God still loves you.
Romans 5:8 says, "But God shows His love for us
in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Read Judges 2:20-3:6.

12. From these verses, what is the purpose of God's discipline for Israel? What does this reveal about His character?
13. Read the definitions of Grace and Justice in the appendix. How do God's perfect grace and justice fit together? Where do you see evidence of both in this week's passage?

DOWNWARD SPIRAL

"The downward spiral expounded in this chapter is Israel's own making. That is, Israel's experience of oppression and testing is the consequence of disobeying God's commands (2:2-3, 20-22)."¹⁴

ZEALOUS GOD

"Because He is zealous to rescue you from you, God's care can be violent. He rips you from what is dangerous to give you what is better."¹⁵

BIG IDEA

What is your biggest takeaway from this week's lesson?

Pause and reflect for a moment about how the last two chapters fit together. Stepping back helps you see the bigger picture. Consider the most important elements of this larger introduction as you move into the more detailed stories of the judges.

SCRIPTURE	SUMMARY OF THE MAIN TRUTH
<i>Judges 1:1-2:5</i>	
<i>Judges 2:6-3:6</i>	

Notes