

# Judges & Ruth

God's *Faithfulness* Remains

women's | BIBLE STUDY

*Scripture quotations are taken from The Holy Bible: English Standard Version. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Publishers, 2016.  
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LESSON *Eight*

God vs. Israel

A pause in the narrative of Judges, this section summarizes Israel's situation to date. Yet again, they were following foreign gods. They cried out to God for help, but God, recounting their continual disobedience, said no. While He is slow to anger, He allowed them to experience the consequences of their habitual, poor choices. God loved them too much to let them continue to disobey Him. He will not wait forever for Israel to change.

## PROLOGUE

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This section serves as a prologue for the next couple of chapters of Judges: the story of Jephthah. Remember this as you move forward to the next lesson.<sup>48</sup>

## APOSTASY

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"Israel's apostasy is not intermittent but habitual."<sup>49</sup>

## ISRAEL'S SIN

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The list in Judges 10:6 is the only one like it in Scripture. It highlights the extent of Israel's sin by listing the many gods from many surrounding regions they worshiped other than Yahweh.<sup>50</sup>

**Read Judges 10:6-16 before answering the following questions.**

1. Where do you see God's unfailing love and goodness in this passage? Are they hard to believe or see in this passage? Explain.
2. Where have you seen God's unfailing love and goodness in your life? (See Psalm 34:8 and Romans 8:28.)

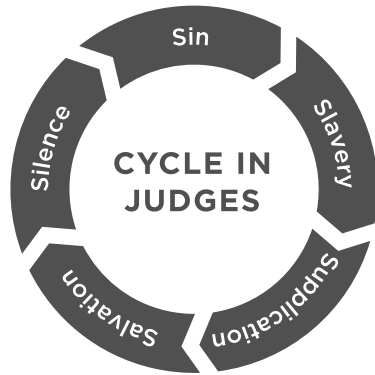
**Read Judges 10:6-9.**

3. Read verse 6 below and underline what stands out to you.

*"The people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and served the Baals and the Ashtaroath, the gods of Syria, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the Ammonites, and the gods of the Philistines. And they forsook the Lord and did not serve Him."*

Why do you think Israel's heart continuously worshiped foreign gods?

4. Using the space around the diagram, write down the details you find about this cycle from verses 6-9.



5. Verse 7 says the “anger of the Lord” was kindled. How would you define the “anger of the Lord”? Describe God’s anger as you have seen it unfold in the book of Judges.

## FORSAKE

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To forsake means to “leave entirely” or “abandon.”<sup>51</sup>

## WORSHIP

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“What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us. Worship is pure or base as the worshiper entertains high or low thoughts of God.”<sup>52</sup>

Be encouraged. Though God hates sin,  
He is patient and His love is long-suffering.  
“The Lord is merciful and gracious,  
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.  
He will not always chide,  
nor will He keep His anger forever.  
He does not deal with us according to our sins,  
nor repay us according to our iniquities.  
For as high as the heavens are above the earth,  
so great is His steadfast love toward those who fear Him;  
as far as the east is from the west,  
so far does He remove our transgressions from us.  
As a father shows compassion to his children,  
so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear Him.  
For He knows our frame;  
He remembers that we are dust.”

– Psalm 103:8-14

## GEOGRAPHY

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The author of Judges assumed its readers had an understanding of Israel's geography. At the end of the book of Joshua, two tribes settled to the east of the Jordan River ("in the land of the Ammonites"), and the other ten tribes (including Judah and Benjamin) settled to the west.

## SAVE

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"Save" in verse 13 means deliverance or rescue from their enemies.

## THEREFORE

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Verse 13 uses the word, "therefore," indicating a "transition from accusation to announcement of the judgment to be carried out."<sup>53</sup>

## TRUE REPENTANCE

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Read Acts 26:20 and 2 Corinthians 7:10 to better understand true repentance.

## CONSEQUENCES

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God chose Israel (Exodus 19:5-6), yet Israel abandoned Him to serve other gods. As a result, God lets Israel experience the consequences of their actions.

6. Read the passages below on God's patience. Do these passages contradict what you learned in question 5? Why or why not? (See Appendix: Patience.)

*Judges 2:16-18*

*Psalms 103:8-14 (See page 77)*

*2 Peter 3:8-9*

7. In one sentence, what is the main idea of verses 6-9?

### Read Judges 10:10-16.

8. Look at the dialogue between God and Israel in verses 10-13:

*What was Israel's confession?*

*What was God's response?*

*How does this make you feel?*

9. God sees our motives and our hearts. He desires more for us than just religious activity. How does this relate to Israel's actions in verses 10-14? (For additional help, see 2 Chronicles 16:9 and Psalm 17:3.)

10. Based on God's response to Israel's confession of sin, it is evident that their repentance was not genuine. How did the Israelites exhibit guilt over sin but not genuine repentance? In what ways can you identify with Israel? (See Appendix: Repentance.)

“God relentlessly offers His grace to people who do not deserve it, or seek it, or even appreciate it after they have been saved by it.”

– *Tim Keller*<sup>54</sup>

11. Israel was stuck in habitual sin (sin that you continue to come back to time and time again). Note how the book of Romans speaks to a believer’s battle with sin:

*Romans 6:1-4*

*Romans 7:15-20*

*Romans 8:1-2, 12-17*

From these verses, how does being a follower of Jesus impact your struggle with sin?

12. How does this section wrap up in verses 10-16? Do you think Israel’s behavior will last? Why or why not?
13. As you reach the end of this passage, where is hope? Where do you turn for help during seemingly hopeless situations? What Scripture comforts you in moments like this?

**REFLECT:**

*Judges 10:6–16 is a summary of Israel’s relationship with God thus far in the book of Judges. Take a few minutes to do a summary assessment of your own life since the beginning of this study:*

**What sin is God helping you overcome?**

**What prayer is God answering?**

**What wisdom or guidance has God given you?**

**Where do you still have room to grow in your devotion to Jesus?**

**Where are you currently experiencing God’s faithfulness?**

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*Read the story on the next page of God’s faithfulness as seen in the life of a Watermark member.*

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# The Cycle

JOY KUPP

*As we follow in that path of the flesh, what once seemed like light becomes darker still. Left to ourselves, “there is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death” (Proverbs 14:12).*

The first time I went to treatment for alcoholism, one of the sessions was about “how to prevent relapse.” I was stunned. Relapse? But I was getting help. I had seen the problem and wanted to change. I was repentant and in the process of being rescued from the sin that so easily entangled me. I was certain relapse would not be part of my story. I wasn’t going to repeat that cycle.

Did you notice what I said above? The “first” time I went to treatment. The truth is I *did* relapse. I repeated that painful cycle over and over for years, trying to break the pattern, crying out for God’s help, becoming healthy and even restored in relationships. Then, over time I would become complacent and before I knew it, the pattern started all over again. In fact, I went to treatment five times.

Sound familiar? Yes, it’s just like the people of Israel in the book of Judges: falling into sin and becoming powerless over their enemies, crying out to God who delivered them and then walking in obedience. Yet, again and again they drifted, became unfaithful and repeated the cycle. And each time, their “relapse” got worse and so did their consequences.

My cycles got worse too. Instead of alcohol merely numbing me, dependency developed. In my deceit, I deeply wounded family and friends. My marriage suffered and nearly ended. Without God’s rescue this cycle would have kept right on. “For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God’s law; indeed, it cannot.” (Romans 8:7) As we follow in that path of the flesh, what once seemed like light becomes darker still. Left to ourselves, “there is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death” (Proverbs 14:12).

God intervened! He rescued me when I surrendered to the truth that sin (which has severe consequences) was ruining me. Day by day I developed a new pattern. A cycle of *daily* surrender. I saw the cycle of the past replaced by the cycle of dependence on Him. As I surrendered my regrets of the past and fears of the future, my heart changed, and a new pattern was formed. My marriage is solid today as we joyfully celebrate our 40th anniversary, a milestone no one thought we could reach.

No matter how deep the rut of your cycle may be, it can be replaced by a new one of freedom. Your past or even your present may be dark, but it is not too late to turn from the oppressive recurring sin that has its tenacious grip on you. There is hope. God’s grace is greater than your sin. Run to Him today.





BIG IDEA

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

Notes