

Study 1 Judges 2:6-23

The Book of Judges covers the time in Israel's history between the death of Moses and Joshua and the ministry of Israel's last judge, Samuel. This was a time before Israel was ruled by kings. It was a time when "Israel had no king and everyone did as they saw fit." (Judges 18:1). God had promised Abraham that one day his descendants would possess the land of Canaan. When God delivered Abraham's descendants out of slavery in Egypt He made a covenant with them. God promised to be their God, their king, to protect and bless them and give them the land of Canaan if they promised to obey, follow, and trust Him. Sadly throughout the Old Testament Israel continually failed to keep their side of this covenant. The Book of Judges reveals God's amazing grace; grace to people who don't deserve it. Judges teaches us that God wants every area of our lives, not just part of our lives. We cannot worship Him and the gods in our culture. Judges illustrates a tension that we see throughout the Bible; a tension between grace and law. Judges reveals our need as God's people for continual revival because sadly spiritual decline is often inevitable. As God's people today we are in continual need of being filled afresh with His Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:16-18). The Book of Judges also reminds us of our need for a true Saviour, unlike the flawed saviours/judges we read about in the Book of Judges. Finally Judges reminds us that God is ultimately in control of this fallen world. God is graciously working out His purposes through and often despite fallen people.

Read Judges 2:6-23

1. What cycle do you see described in verses 10-19 that helps illustrate what the people of God did during the time of Israel's Judges?
2. Why do you think the people returned again and again to corrupt ways and evil practices (Judges 2:19)?
3. What can we learn from this passage about the importance of remembering and retelling what God has done in the past? What have you done to pass on the things you have learned about God to those younger than you?
4. Israel experienced oppression from the surrounding nations because they rejected God. Not all of the difficulties that we experience are a direct result of our sin. However, God does allow us to go through difficulties to teach us many things. What might God want individuals, as well as nations, to learn from the difficult times we go through?
5. What does Judges chapter 2 teach us about people? About God?
6. In verse 22 we read that God used those living in Canaan to test Israel. What might God be using now to test you and your faithfulness to Him?

Take time to pray for one another and the struggles they may be going through right now.

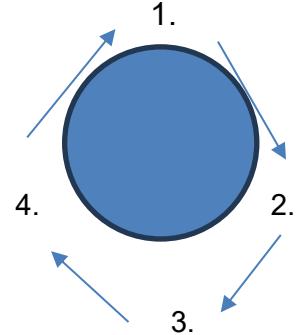
Notes:

The following may help illustrate the cycle we see repeated 6 times in Judges:

1. Rest – oration: Israel follows God. There is a period of rest
2. Sin: The people sin and turn away from God
3. God allows disaster to come upon Israel
4. Repentance: The people cry out to God for deliverance

God raises up a deliverer/judge

Return to a period of following God and rest-oration.



Some of the major themes we see in the book of Judges include:

- God keeps giving His grace to people who do not deserve His grace; who do not seek His grace who do not even appreciate His grace after being saved by it. God continually raises up judges or saviours to rescue His people even though they keep returning to sin.
- God wants to be Lord over every area of our lives. Israel adopted the gods of the Canaanites living in the land. They worshipped God AND they worshipped the Canaanite gods of the cultures around them.
- In the book of Judges we see a tension, a tension that is in the whole of the Bible. The tension is between grace and law, between the unconditional nature of God's covenant with His people and the conditions of some Covenants in the Bible.
- the spiral of people away from God illustrated in Judges reveals our own need for continual spiritual renewal in our lives.
- the book of Judges reminds us we need a true Saviour. All human saviours point to our need for an ultimate "God" Saviour. Human saviours will eventually stumble and fall. We all need saving and God is our ultimate Saviour.
- God is ultimately in charge, He in control of this world. God works out His purposes through and despite sinful people.