

Judges 2

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Introduction.

A. Victory and defeat in Judges is our topic. (Judges 2:6)

1. Last week we say that Joshua led with the people.
2. Now we see how after his death another generation arose that did not know the Lord.
3. For this reason the Lord turned against them and raised up enemies to defeat them.
4. When they cried out to him the Lord raised up a judge to deliver Israel.
5. God showed himself to be a God of compassion.
6. After Israel received deliverance they would return again to sin.
7. Thus God decided not to drive out the nations anymore but left them to be a means of testing Israel to see how they would obey him.

I. The beginning of Judges is a summary to the rest of the book.

A. When the nation sinned against God the Lord sent oppressors until the people cried out.

1. In response to prayer God would send a judge.
2. As long as the judge lived God would have compassion on the people.
3. This downward slide is the sad reality of Israel's history.
4. From the highpoint of the book of Joshua the slide into defeat in Judges is terrifying.

B. What went wrong?

1. Joshua died, leaving the nation without good leadership.
 - a. The people served God all the days of Joshua. (Judges 2:7-8)
 - b. But Joshua did not leave a new leader to take his place.
2. A new generation grew up that did not know the Lord.
 - a. This generation did not even know what God had done for Israel.
 - b. They were ignorant even of the facts of their redemption from Egypt.
 - c. This reminds us of the importance of knowing the Lord in each generation.

- d. We need to know the facts and the Lord of the facts.
 - e. Much of the apostasy of northern Europe is due to ignorance of the Lord behind the facts of Scripture.
3. Israel did evil in the eyes of God by serving the Baals.
- a. Serving other gods was forbidden in the first commandment.
 - b. When truth is ignored we believe whatever we chose.
 - c. Everyone has a faith in something, responding to three questions.
 - 1. Where have I come from?
 - 2. Why am I here?
 - 3. Where am I going after death?
 - d. When people ignore truth falsehood takes its place.
 - e. The conquest generation was too busy taking the land to teach their children so the children borrowed the religions of the nations around them.
 - f. Paul exhorted the Colossians to grow in Christ, rejecting the empty philosophy of the world. (Colossians)
 - g. When we fail to mature in Christ philosophy takes the place of the Lord.
 - h. What do you think are the basic principles of the world?
 - 1. The things that drive people's behavior.
 - 2. The things that inform their thinking.
 - 3. If we stop filling our minds with the truth of God's word these things will influence us too.
4. The Lord handed them over to their enemies.
- a. God had sworn them that if they forsook him he would forsake them.
 - b. When we give up truth we embrace bondage.
 - c. Jesus told his disciples that continuing in his word will make them disciples indeed.
 - d. I am amazed that Christians can get into such trouble.
 - e. But when we forsake God he forsakes us.

f. I do not want to live my life with the hand of the Lord against me.

C. What do you think was the root problem in the defeat of Israel?

1. The failure of Joshua and his generation to impart the faith in Yahweh to the younger generation is the key failure. (Judges 2:10)
2. After Moses died Joshua was commissioned to take his place.
3. After the death of Joshua the people asked, “Who will fight for us?”
4. Moses took Joshua with him on Sinai and into the Tent of Meeting but Joshua did not seem to disciple another after him.
5. We don’t see good discipleship in the book of Judges but we do see it in Ruth.
6. In 1 Samuel Hannah also discipled her son Samuel.
7. When the people of God leave spiritual heirs the purposes of God continue, but when the people of God fail to leave spiritual heirs the purposes of God slide into defeat.
8. Do you have spiritual heirs?
9. God told Abraham he was his shield and that he would have a great reward. (Genesis 15)
10. Abraham complained, however, that God had given him no heir. Do we plead with God as Abraham did for a spiritual heir?
11. Jesus’ spiritual heirs were not his own children but those that had believed on him. (John 17:7-8)
12. Who were the major spiritual influences in our lives?
13. The baton of spiritual leadership has come to us from others and it is incumbent on us to pass it on to others.
14. Who is your spiritual heir that you are building into?
15. If you don’t have a spiritual heir pray that God will give you one in whom you can build the character of Christ.
16. Be faithful to record what God has taught you.

I began taking one night each week the important things we had learned in our relationship with God. If God has taught you things about prayer or the word write them down. If God has taught you how to grow in relationship with him write it down. Don’t be satisfied until you begin transferring these truths to your spiritual heir.