

FAITH SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

March 14, 2010

Disobedience Equals Defeat

Focal Passage: Judges 2

Cross References: Joshua 24, John 15

Central Idea: A new generation of Israelites came forward and forgot the God of their forefathers. In breaking the covenant they became caught in a cycle of sin.

Lesson Idea: If we are to live in the true blessing of Christ we must follow Godly counsel and remain in right relationship with Christ. When we break God's commands we must be truly repentant and let God point our hearts towards Godly living.

Historical Context: The period of the judges follows the time of Joshua. When Joshua died the land had been divided among the tribes of Israel and they were told plainly that God would give them victory over their enemies. Throughout the last chapters of Joshua and into the first chapter of Judges we read that the tribes of Israel did not completely run the foreign tribes out as they had been commanded. The last part of Judges Chapter 1 gives us an insight into things to come as the Amorites hold control over the tribe of Dan. It is important to remember as we study that now the Israelites are in the Promised Land and the Covenant between God and the people through Moses is to be their standard for living.

Bible in a Year Daily Readings

March 7 –14th, 2010

Mar 7 Josh 8-10
Mar 8 Josh 11-13
Mar 9 Josh 14-17
Mar 10 Josh 18-20
Mar 11 Josh 21-22
Mar 12 Josh 23-24
Mar 13 Judges 1-3
Mar 14 Judges 4-5

Read the Bible Through Highlights of the Week:

March 7th - 14th, 2010

Joshua 10 The day the sun stood still.

Joshua 11-12 The defeat of Canaanite kings.

Joshua 13-21 The land divided among the Israelites.

Joshua 22 The Eastern tribes return across the Jordan.

Joshua 24 "Choose this day who you will serve"

Judges 2:1-5 **A stern warning from God**

¹ *The angel of the LORD went up from Gilgal to Bokim and said, "I brought you up out of Egypt and led you into the land that I swore to give to your forefathers. I said, 'I will never break my covenant with you,*

² *and you shall not make a covenant with the people of this land, but you shall break down their altars.' Yet you have disobeyed me. Why have you done this?*

³ *Now therefore I tell you that I will not drive them out before you; they will be thorns in your sides and their gods will be a snare to you."*

⁴ *When the angel of the LORD had spoken these things to all the Israelites, the people wept aloud,*

⁵ *and they called that place Bokim. There they offered sacrifices to the LORD.*

QUESTIONS

The Israelites had the weaponry, the man power, and the ability to fight the armies of the Canaanites but their spiritual condition was holding them back from victory. The angel of the Lord brought a clear message. Israel, not God, had broken the covenant and He would not bless them as a result.

How did Israelites break the covenant?

Living under the promise of Christ in grace and forgiveness do we have to be concerned with keeping God's laws? Why or Why not?

In v. 4 the people reacted to the message with weeping. Was this true repentance or guilt over getting caught?

Do we ever react emotionally, yet not repentant?

What are some signs of true repentance (v.5)

Judges 2:6-9 **A History Lesson for the people**

⁶ *After Joshua had dismissed the Israelites, they went to take possession of the land, each to his own inheritance.*

⁷ *The people served the LORD throughout the lifetime of Joshua and of the elders who outlived him and who had seen all the great things the LORD had done for Israel.*

⁸ *Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of a hundred and ten.*

⁹ *And they buried him in the land of his inheritance, at Timnath Heres in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash.*

QUESTIONS

During the lifetime of Joshua and the leaders who outlived him, Israel was relatively faithful to the Lord. These men had experienced God's miracles on behalf of Israel.

Wolf, Herbert. "1. The passing of godly leaders (2:6-9)" In *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*: Volume 3. 393. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, © 1992.

Compare this passage to Joshua 24. How did the previous generation honor their commitment?

How did the current generation fulfill Joshua's Divine prediction?

How has God blessed you and your family in the past year or so?

How easy is it to forget those blessings from one situation to another? How do we remember?

Judges 2:10-23 ***The cycle of sin and repentance***

¹⁰ After that whole generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation grew up, who knew neither the LORD nor what he had done for Israel.

¹¹ Then the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD and served the Baal's.

¹² They forsook the LORD, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of Egypt. They followed and worshiped various gods of the peoples around them. They provoked the LORD to anger

¹³ because they forsook him and served Baal and the Ashtoreths.

¹⁴ In his anger against Israel the LORD handed them over to raiders who plundered them. He sold them to their enemies all around, whom they were no longer able to resist.

¹⁵ Whenever Israel went out to fight, the hand of the LORD was against them to defeat them, just as he had sworn to them. They were in great distress.

¹⁶ Then the LORD raised up judges, who saved them out of the hands of these raiders.

¹⁷ Yet they would not listen to their judges but prostituted themselves to other gods and worshiped them. Unlike their fathers, they quickly turned from the way in which their fathers had walked, the way of obedience to the LORD'S commands.

¹⁸ Whenever the LORD raised up a judge for them, he was with the judge and saved them out of the hands of their enemies as long as the judge lived; for the LORD had compassion on them as they groaned under those who oppressed and afflicted them.

¹⁹ But when the judge died, the people returned to ways even more corrupt than those of their fathers, following other gods and serving and worshiping them. They refused to give up their evil practices and stubborn ways.

²⁰ Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel and said, "Because this nation has violated the covenant that I laid down for their forefathers and has not listened to me,

²¹ I will no longer drive out before them any of the nations Joshua left when he died.

²² I will use them to test Israel and see whether they will keep the way of the LORD and walk in it as their forefathers did."

²³ The LORD had allowed those nations to remain; he did not drive them out at once by giving them into the hands of Joshua.

QUESTIONS

This passage outlines a cycle of Israel's behavior that runs throughout the book of Judges.

1. Sin- The *sin* phase is always introduced with the words of v.11: "The Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD." Six times this blunt sentence is found (3:7, 12; 4:1; 6:1; 10:6; 13:1). Israel deserted the very God who had delivered them from Egypt and had saved them from Pharaoh and his host (cf. v.1).
2. Slavery- The Lord became angry at Israel's apostasy and turned the Israelites over to their enemies (v.14), thus initiating the *slavery* phase of the cycle. God "sold them" as one sells a slave (3:8; Deut 32:30). Israel's crops, supposedly guaranteed by the worship of Baal, were carried off year after year.
3. Supplication- In their distress the people cried out to the Lord. Though not mentioned explicitly until v.18, this supplication is assumed as a result of their agony.
4. Salvation- Salvation came through the judges raised up by God (v.16). The salvation was typically evidenced through military victory.

5. Silence- This refers mainly to God's attitude toward the people as He gave them time to discover their need for Him and would always be faithful to hear their groans just as He did in Egypt.

Wolf, Herbert. "2. The pattern of the period of the judges (2:10-23)" In *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*: Volume 3. 394. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, © 1992.

Can you recall this cycle of behavior in your own life?

Wolf, in his commentary, points out that the sins of the Israelites progressively got worse as they continued in this cycle. They became lazy and over time hardened to their sin.

How do we become hardened to sin?

What is the role of true repentance in actual life change?

APPLICATION

The Old Testament can sound like a broken record as we observe this cycle throughout and specifically here in Judges. To break the cycle three things prove to be crucial.

1. The following of Godly leadership
2. The recognition of sin
3. Remain rooted in one's relationship to God. (John 15).