

## Episode #516 Judges 2 Part 2 – The Cycle of Judges

I. In the book of Judges, we have a brief record of the early history (the first centuries) of the history of the land of Israel. We see the leaders God chose, judges, who ruled under Jehovah, the King. Through the lives and work of these judges, we can learn about God's works and ways.

### II. The Cycle of Judges.

- A. The book of judges goes through a continual cycle that is summarized in these verses.
- B. Verse 11. "The" evil = idolatry. Ba'als = the master gods or idols.
- C. Verse 12. Due to the unwise policy of the faithful generation, their children, as soon as they were gone, turned to the "practical" idols of the nations living among them.
- D. Verse 13. Ashtareth = a male phallic carving, served by sleeping with prostitute priests/priestesses underneath it.
- E. Verse 14. The LORD became angry and delivered them into the hand (power) of their enemies. Now they could no longer defeat them. Note: the enemies were always there
- F. Verse 15. The LORD had sworn = Deuteronomy 28:15, 25.
- G. Verse 16. The LORD mercifully raised up judges to rescue them.
- H. Verse 17. They did not fully listen to their judges, however, continuing to worship these false gods. Very quickly they left the ways of their righteous ancestors.
- I. Verse 18. Yet for pity for their sake because of their suffering, the LORD delivered them from enemy power as long as the judge lived.
- D. Verse 19. When the judge died, the people went right back to serving other gods and stubbornly refusing to go the LORD's way.
- E. Verse 20. The LORD is angry because His covenant is transgressed.
- F. Verse 21. He determines therefore to leave these foreign people and no longer to drive them out as He had before.
- G. Verse 22. He leaves them as influences to test them if the people will remain faithful and will keep His ways.
- H. Verse 23. This is why He left these nations: as a test.

### III. More on the nations left in the land.

- A. Judges 3:1-2. The LORD originally, before their unfaithfulness, left these nations only to teach the sons of His people war who had not learned it yet.
- B. Verse 3. Five Philistine lords (over five cities) in the south, and others in the extreme north, Canaanites = Zealous, Sidonians = Hunting, Hivites = Villagers, Lebanon = Whiteness, Ba'al Hermon = Lord of Destruction, Hamath = Fortress, supposed to be the extreme northern border of the land. These were the ones originally left behind.
- C. Verse 4. The other reason He left them: as a test; to see if they would obey or rebelliously make a league with these nations. Sadly, they failed the test.
- D. Verse 5. Six of the seven nations of Canaan. Hittites = Descendants of Heth (Terror), Amorites = Mountaineers, Perizzites = Belonging to a Village; Jebusites = Descendants of Jebus (Threshing Place).
- E. Verse 6. This was exactly what Jehovah warned in Exodus 34:12-16. They are doing exactly what was predicted they would do in this case.

### IV. The first judge (there are twelve in Judges): Othniel Caleb's nephew.

- A. Verse 7. Israel does the evil (idolatry) in Jehovah's sight. They forget him and serve Baals (master idols) and Asherah idols (sexual perversion).

- B. Verse 8. Jehovah allows them to be conquered by Rishathaim = Twice (or Most) Wicked Chushan (Blackness) King of Aram between the two rivers (Mesopotamia). This land was north-east of Israel. This is an eight-year servitude.
  - C. Verse 9. Othniel (Lion of God), Caleb's younger brother's son, already mentioned in 1:13, is chosen as the first judge (from Judah).
  - D. Verse 10. He battles Twice Wicked Chushan, defeats him, and rules in peace over the land for forty years until he died. Judge = to set things right.
  - E. Verse 11. Forty years of peace ensue, but then Othniel dies.
- V. When the faithful generation who served Jehovah under Joshua died off, their children started worshipping the false gods of these nations. The LORD would then sell them into the hands of their enemies. When He decided to be gracious, He would raise up a judge, who would deliver them all his days. They would fall back into sin when he died, however. This is the sad cycle of Judges. Othniel Caleb's nephew (?) was the first judge, saving them from the king of Mesopotamia.