

Sunday Night Message

June 10, 2018

Judges 2 – *The Cycle of Judges*

Series – *Judges*

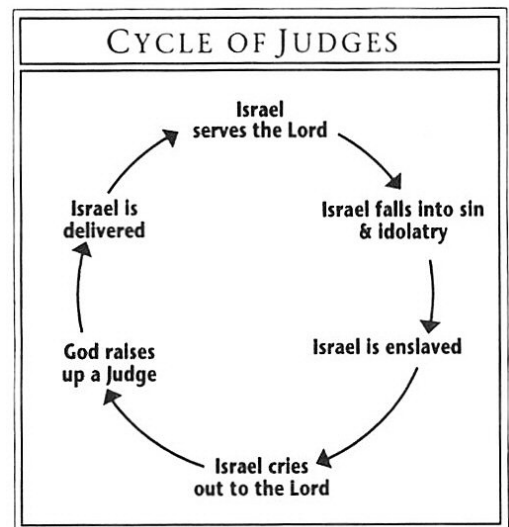
Text – Judges 2

Introduction

Last week we began our series of messages in the Book of Judges. We believe that this Book may have been written by Samuel, and we know that it must have been written after the time that Saul was coronated as the King of Israel, and before the time that David drove the Jebusites out from Jerusalem. The period of time covered in this historical Book is from the time of Joshua until the time of Samuel (1 Samuel). At this point in Israel's history, the nation was governed by regional judges; thirteen of which are mentioned in the Book of Judges. The final two recorded judges were Eli (1 Samuel 4:18) and Samuel. (1 Samuel 7:15)

As was stated in the first message, throughout the Book of Judges we see a repeated cycle:

1. Israel in a right relationship with God receiving God's blessing of provision and protection.
2. Israel moves away from God and begins to worship idols and fall into sin.
3. God drops the hedge of protection that was placed around them, and Israel's enemies begin to conquer them.
4. Israel cries out to the Lord.
5. The Lord raises up a judge.
6. Israel is delivered.



In chapter two, we find an overview of this pattern or cycle in the Book of Judges, that begins with the death of Joshua.

I The Chastisement of the Lord at Bochim (vs. 1 – 6)

This event seems to have happened when Joshua was still alive, and possibly before the Tabernacle was moved from Gilgal to Shiloh. Gilgal was where Israel first camped when they crossed the Jordan and entered into the Land of Israel. (Joshua 5:10). Later, the Tabernacle was moved to Shiloh:

"And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there. And the land was subdued before them." (Joshua 18:1)

The Angel of the Lord is believed by many to be a theophany (an appearance of God), or perhaps, a Christophany (a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ). At the very least, this Angel is a spokesman for God – God is speaking through him. We saw “the Captain of the Lord’s host” in our study of Joshua (Joshua 5:13 – 15), and in that passage we talked about some of the other pre-incarnate appearances of Christ. We also studied “the Angel of the Lord” recently in our series of messages from Zechariah. The Angel of the Lord appears throughout the Old Testament and even in the New Testament.

Notes concerning the Angel of the Lord from Bible Doctrines Notes:

Many would claim that the Angel of the Lord in the Old Testament is a pre-incarnate appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is known as a Christophany or a Theophany:

- 1.) Appearance to Hagar: Proclamation (Genesis 16:7-14)
- 2.) Appearance to Abraham: Proclamation (Genesis 18:1; 22:11-13)
- 3.) Appearance to Jacob: Proclamation (Genesis 28:13; 32:24-32; 48:16)
- 4.) Appearance to Moses: Proclamation (Exodus 3:2-6; 23:20; 33:18-23)
- 5.) Appearance as Pillar of Cloud/ Fire: Protection (Exodus 14:19-21)
- 6.) Appearance to Joshua: Proclamation (Joshua 5:13-15)
- 7.) Appearance to Balaam: Punishment (Numbers 22:22-35)
- 8.) Appearance to Gideon: Proclamation (Judges 6:11-24)
- 9.) Appearance to Manoah: Proclamation (Judges 13:2-23)
- 10.) Appearance to David: Punishment (I Chronicles 21:15-18)
- 11.) Appearance to Elijah: Proclamation (I Kings 19:5-8)
- 12.) Appearance to the Assyrian Army: Power (II Kings 19:35)
- 13.) Appearance to Isaiah: Proclamation (Isaiah 6:1-13)
- 14.) Appearance to the Three Hebrew Children: Protection (Daniel 3:25)
- 15.) Appearance to Daniel: Protection (Daniel 6:22; 7:9-14)
- 16.) Appearance to Zechariah: Protection (Zechariah 1:8-13; 2:8-11; 3:10)

The problem with this theory is The Angel of the Lord also appears in the New Testament:

"But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." (Matthew 1:20)

"And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him." (Matthew 2:13)

"And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid." (Luke 2:9)

See Also Acts 5:19; 8:26; 12:7; 12:23

There are two more appearances of this angel in Judges (6:11 – 18 in connection with Gideon; 13:3 – 23 in connection with Samson)

This Angel in our text moves from Gilgal (possibly when the Ark was encamped there) to Bochim, which means weeping. The actual location of Bochim is unknown, though some believe it was near Bethel.

The Angel reminds them of God's explicit warning regarding expelling all of the Canaanites. (See Exodus 23:20 – 30 and Numbers 35:50 – 56)

At this time, the people expressed their remorse over their failure. They wept. Weeping is a good start, but it must lead to a permanent repentance.

In Paul's Letter to the Corinthians, he expresses the fact that the Corinthians were sorry for their sins, and that their sorrow lead to repentance:

"Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter." (2 Corinthians 7:9-11)

II The Conclusion of Joshua's Ministry (vs. 7 – 10)

Here, we have a review of Joshua's death, which we had already covered in the concluding chapters of Joshua, as well as in the first chapter of Judges. The point is that the death of Joshua and the other leaders of that generation lead to the abandonment of God in the succeeding generation.

Practical Point – What are you and I doing to make sure the next generation serves God?

III The Cycle of the Period of the Judges (vs. 11 – 20)

In these ten verse, we will see a basic overview of the continual cycle in the Book of Judges. The people get right with God, they prosper, they get lazy and fall away from God, God chastises, the people cry out to God, and God sends them a judge.

IV The Consequences Reaffirmed (vs. 2:20 – 23)

Because they failed to drive all of the people out when they could have, and because they had even failed to remain separated from their heathen practices and idolatry in the past, God now says that the people of Israel were just going to have to deal with living alongside of these heathen, godless people. It was a consequence of their failure to completely obey God.

We have to live in this godless world, and there will be problems while we are here:

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)

Jesus said that though we live in this world, we are not to be of this world:

"I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that

thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."
(John 17:14-16)

The great Hall of Faith from the Book of Hebrews says about Abraham:

"By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. ... These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city." (Hebrews 11:9-10, 13-16)

Warren Wiersbe states:

In this day of "pluralism," when society contains people of opposing beliefs and lifestyles, it's easy to get confused and start thinking that *tolerance* is the same as *approval*. It isn't. In a democracy, the law gives people the freedom to worship as they please; and I must exercise patience and tolerance with those who believe and practice things that I feel God has condemned in His Word. The church today doesn't wield the sword (Rom. 13) and therefore it has no authority to eliminate people who disagree with the Christian faith. But we do have the obligation before God to maintain a separate walk so we won't become defiled by those who disagree with us (2 Cor. 6:14-7:1). We must seek by prayer, witness, and loving persuasion to win those to Christ who as yet haven't trusted Him.

The Jews eventually became so accustomed to the sinful ways of their pagan neighbors that those ways didn't seem sinful any more. The Jews then became interested in how their neighbors worshiped, until finally Israel started to live like their enemies and imitate their ways. For believers today, the first step away from the Lord is "friendship with the world" (James 4:4), which then leads to our being spotted by the world (1:27). The next step is to "love the world" (1 John 2:15) and gradually become "conformed to this world" (Rom. 12:2). This can lead to being "condemned with the world" (1 Cor. 11:32), the kind of judgment that came to Lot (Gen. 19), Samson (Jdg. 16), and Saul (1 Sam. 15, 31)¹

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you," (2 Corinthians 6:17)

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Romans 12:1-2)

"Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain." (Philippians 2:14-16)

¹ Wiersbe, W. W. (1994). *Be Available* (p. 16). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.