

Judges 2:16 - 3:6

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[0 : 00] Good evening. It is good to see you this evening and thankful to have the opportunity to be gathered with you. I trust and I pray that you had a good day. I trust that you're ready for the week the Lord has before you.

Take your Bibles and go with me to the book of Judges. We're into the second chapter of the book of Judges into the 16th verse. So we're Judges chapter 2 verse 16. We'll be reading into the third chapter. It gets us down to the sixth verse in the third chapter.

So Judges 2, 16 through chapter 3 verse 6 will be our text this evening. Kind of wrapping up this portion of the book. We'll get to it in just a moment.

So let's open up with a word of prayer. Well we thank you God just for allowing us to gather together again. We thank you for every great opportunity we have to study your word.

And we pray Lord that you would lead us as we open up the pages of scripture. That you would lead us as we seek to come to a greater understanding of ourselves and of who you are.

[1 : 08] Lord that we would gain truth from your word. Lord truth that not just comes to us by way of information. But Lord comes to us by way of motivation to move us, to shape us, and to conform us more to your glory and your image.

Lord we thank you for the grace that is revealed in scripture. We thank you for your love and mercy that is shown. And I pray Lord that our eyes would be open to it. And we ask it all in Jesus name. Amen.

Judges 2 verse 16 through chapter 3 verse 6. We are really finishing up the introduction to the book of Judges.

If we had to really kind of put it together. The main body of the book of Judges doesn't start until the 7th verse of the 3rd chapter. Which is where we begin to get into the cycle of Judges.

And we're introduced to how God raises or who God raises up to deliver his people. And we see this cycle just being repeated, repeated, repeated. Until we finally get to the end of the book.

[2 : 11] And then we kind of have illustrations. So we are brought into the book of Judges with two and a half chapters. Not two and a half. Maybe two and a quarter chapters of introduction.

And then we have really the stories that depict what's happening. And then we close the book of Judges with two examples of illustration. The sin and the rebellion of the tribe of Dan.

And then the ultimate sin and rebellion which comes when they almost wipe out the tribe of Benjamin. Because of really the atrocities that are taking place there. So we are introduced to the problem.

We are shown how God moved within the problem. And then we have the fullness of the problem illustrated for us. And all of this really is just building up to us. The things that are transpiring over about a 400 year span within the nation of Israel.

And how we got to the place of where we did by the time we get into 1 and 2 Samuel. And I know there is a book in between this. The Judges and 1 and 2 Samuel. Namely the book of Ruth.

[3 : 10] Which is something that takes place at this same time during the period of the Judges. And that is good. Because we need to know what goes on in the book of Ruth. By the way we just want to.

I know we are kind of giving this grand picture now. The reason we need to know what goes on in the book of Ruth. Because it shows us there is always a righteous remnant. It is there that we meet Boaz. And this righteous remnant that God is faithful.

It is not that all are desperately wicked. Even though all men are wicked and fall short of the glory of God. But there are still those who he has. He has called himself. God is never.

At any point in history. God is never without his people. He is never without his man or his woman. He is never without his individual. No matter how dark and despairing it may look. No matter how doom and gloom.

All things may appear. And let's be honest. By the time we finish the book of Judges. We are going to go man that is terrible. Right? God's people are just awful. And then we are going to go into the book of Ruth. And we are going to say.

[4 : 05] But there is Boaz. Right? And we will just be reminded of. How God always has his person. And then we need that.

By the way. The more I am in the Old Testament. By way of personal reading. And then the more I am into it. Because I made this commitment so many years ago. I have done it here for six and a half.

But probably three years prior to that. Before I came here. I committed that I was just going to preach through scripture. So now I am about nine years into that commitment.

The more I appreciate the Old Testament. That it is raw. It shows us man's problem. But in the midst of that. It also comes back and shows us the glory of God.

And the loving kindness. As the book of Lamentations. The book of Lamentations. Some of you just finished it today. Right? The book of Lamentations has that wonderful verse. For his loving kindnesses are new every morning.

[5 : 04] I mean think about that. The book of Lamentations where it is weeping and mourning. People sin and all this problem. Yet right there in the third chapter. It speaks of God's love and mercy. And his loving kindnesses are new every morning.

To me that is the wonder. And I know. I mean this is not necessarily preaching so much. That is the wonder of the Old Testament. Is we see man as we are.

And we see man rightfully being judged. Because of the way he is. And really bringing about the full consequences of his sin.

But in the midst of that. We are also introduced to the glory. And the splendor of a God who loves. And a God who moves. And a God who is wonderful.

And it culminates. In the gospels. Where God became flesh. And dwelt among us. And here is the hope that we have been looking for. Here is the answer to all of our despair.

[6 : 03] And we even see it in our passage. That we have before us this evening. So we will start in Judges chapter 2. And we are really finishing up the introduction. To the book. As we see in Judges 2 verse 16.

Through chapter 3 verse 6. And I want you to focus on. A neglected deliverance from the cycle of sin. This is just introducing. What we see is this cycle of sin.

Of rebellion. Revolts. Disobedience. Then being held captive. And then despair. And then they cry out. And then deliverance.

And then they do it again. And then they do it again. And then they do it again. Just over and over again. By the way. This is not the story of Israel. This is the story of man. Right?

This is the story of man. And yet we see here. The neglected deliverance from the cycle of sin. Starting in the 16th verse. The second chapter. Then. Now we need to see what then is there for.

[7 : 05] So let's back up to verse 14. The anger of the Lord burned against Israel. And he gave them into the hands of plunderers who plundered them. And he sowed them into the hands of their enemies around them. So they could no longer stand before their enemies.

And wherever they went. The hand of the Lord was against them for evil as the Lord had spoken. And as the Lord had sworn to them. So they were severely distressed. So that. You remember. Because of their lack of relationship with the Lord their God.

This is what they reaped. So then we have in verse 16. Then the Lord raised up judges. Who delivered them from the hands of those who plundered them. Yet they did not listen to their judges. For they played the harlot after other gods. And bowed themselves down to them. They turned aside quickly from the way. In which their fathers had walked and obeyed the commandments of the Lord. They did not do as their fathers.

When the Lord raised up judges for them. The Lord was with the judge. And delivered them from the hand of their enemies. All the days of the judge. For the Lord was moved to pity by their groaning.

[8 : 04] Because of those who oppressed and afflicted them. But it came about when the judge died. That they would turn back. And act more corruptly than their fathers. And following other gods. To serve them and bow down to them.

They did not abandon their practices. Or their stubborn ways. So the anger of the Lord burned against Israel. And he said. Because this nation has transgressed my covenant. Which I commanded their fathers.

And has not listened to my voice. I also will no longer drive out before them. Any of the nations. Which Joshua left when he died. In order to test Israel by them. Whether they will keep the way of the Lord.

To walk in it. As their fathers did or not. So the Lord allowed those nations to remain. Not driving them out quickly. And he did not give them into the hand of Joshua. Now these are the nations. Which the Lord left to test Israel by them. That is all who had not experienced. Any of the wars of Canaan. Only in order that the generations. Of the sons of Israel might be taught war. Those who had not experienced it formally.

[9 : 01] These nations are the five lords of the Philistines. And all the Canaanites. And the Sidonians. And the Hivites. Who lived in Mount Lebanon. From Mount Bel-Hermon. As far as Lebo-Hamath.

They were for testing Israel. To find out if they would obey the commandments of the Lord. Which he had commanded their fathers through Moses. The sons of Israel lived among the Canaanites. The Hittites. The Amorites.

The Perizzites. The Hivites. And the Jebusites. And they took their daughters for themselves as wives. And gave their own daughters to their sons. And served their gods.

Judges 2 verse 16 through 3 verse 6. Really this is introducing for us. Just by way of final introduction. We have two grand introductions in the book of Judges.

One being the first chapter in which we are told. Kind of what they did to get them in this position. And then it goes on into the second chapter. How they compromised. Remember how the first time we looked at the book of Judges.

[9 : 57] We saw the danger of compromising. And how they compromised. And ended up saying well we were introduced to the fact. That it says Judah could not drive out the inhabitants of a certain region.

And then eventually we go into where the rest of the people would not drive them out. It wasn't that they could not do it. It's just they chose not to do it. And we began to look at the danger of compromise.

And how eventually that compromise led to becoming like them. And living according to those around them. They allowed it to remain. And then before too long they became just like it.

And then last time we were together we didn't see the compromise. The people we saw their theological problem. Right? How they failed to have this relationship with the Lord their God. That there arose another generation who did not know the Lord.

Nor the work which he had done among his people. And we saw in it the danger of living on the faith of someone else. We saw the danger of living on the faith of a generation before us. We also saw the responsibility that comes upon us to instruct.

[10 : 56] And to raise up a generation that knows by way of experience the things of the Lord God. And we saw also that every man has to make his own choice. Because while they did not know the Lord. And they did not follow the Lord.

They did follow other gods. With a lower case g. So they were worshiping something. And they had made their choice. And we understood that a lot of these things came upon them. Because of their lack of relational understanding of who God is.

And so we're introduced to those things. Compromising one's life. Living with a lack of relationship with the Lord God. And now here we come to this neglect of the deliverance which God brings.

These things will be fleshed out for us throughout the book of Judges. Especially the passage which we have read this evening. We will see over and over again how the nation rebels. And they pull away from God.

And misery comes upon them. And then God raises up a judge. The first one we will be introduced to in the third chapter. There's Othniel. Othniel we've already been introduced to a couple of times. We've seen him in the book of Joshua.

[11 : 53] We've already met him in the first chapter of the book of Judges. He is Caleb's son-in-law. He is the one that Caleb gives his daughter to. Because he's a valiant man. He's a warrior.

And God will use him to deliver his people. But these are all localized judges. None of them rises up to be a national deliverer.

But rather just a local deliverer. And it seems as if every time God sets his people free. As soon as that judge passes off the scene or dies. Then the people fall away again.

And we'll be introduced to that cycle of sin. And the reality is that things are going in a downward spiral. They're not going upward. I know that we say that over and over again. But it's something which we need to know.

Is that the further they get away from the Joshua's. The further they get away from the Moses's. The further down they go. Through the book of Judges. Each sin gets progressively worse.

[12 : 48] Because when you sin. And God delivers you from it. And you neglect that deliverance. By not doing what we found here. Abandoning that practice. The next time you go back into it.

You go a little deeper. And then God delivers. And if you don't abandon that practice. You go a little deeper. And if you don't abandon that practice. You go a little deeper. Because every time deliverance is neglected.

We always go deeper. And this is not just the problem the nation of Israel had. This is the problem that mankind has. That when God in his grace and mercy.

Seeks to provide a way out. And man neglects that deliverance. Or enjoys that deliverance. When the consequences are removed. And then voluntarily goes back into it. That he always goes further down.

This is the old saying. That sin will take you further. Than you ever intended to go. And take you places you never thought you would be. Because the wages of sin is death. And the end of it is death.

[13 : 47] And it will always take you down, down, down. So we'll see that. This is why by the time that we get to that final judge. The nation of Israel really is in despair. And things are getting really bad.

And we see the final illustration of that. With the really civil war that takes place within the nation itself. And really disturbing passages. But we are introduced to it here.

This neglected deliverance from the cycle of sin. That at any moment. God's people could have repented. That is essentially abandoning their practices. They could have repented.

And followed after the Lord their God. Yet they chose not to. And hopefully we'll see why. And that will be a caution to us. The first thing we notice is the carelessness of man.

It is the carelessness of man. It says that because of their lack of relationship with the Lord their God. Tragedy came upon them. No longer were they living in a place of victory.

[14 : 47] Rather they were living in a place of defeat and captivity. Those whom God had called to be people victorious were now living as people captive. Those who were supposed to reign over the nations were now being reigned over by the nations.

This is the very thing God had promised. God said if you follow me I will make you the head. You will be that which reigns over everything. But if you do not follow me you will be the tail. That is others will reign over you.

We see that in his warnings given to the nation from Moses. And because of their lack of relationship. Not necessarily just because the generation before them did not discipline them.

Though that blood was on their hands. But because of the generation present chose to worship other gods. Though that which could have been known about God was clearly revealed to them.

Remember that. God had made himself known. We see that even in Romans chapter 1. Though they chose to worship other gods. And therefore neglected the relationship with the Lord their God.

[15 : 45] Now they are moved from a different position. No longer in a place of authority. But rather in a place of submission. And this submission brings them captive to those who were supposed to rule over.

And God would see that. And he says he would raise up a judge. It says in verse 16. Then the Lord raised up a judge. We will get to that. Up judges who delivered them from the hands of those who plundered them.

So God here in his grace and his mercy delivers them. From something that is their own fault.

Something that is a result of their own consequences. Something that is directly connected to their choices.

God delivers them. But look at what it says in verse 17. Yet they did not listen to their judge. Yet they did not listen to their judge.

One thing we need to understand about the judges that God raises up. They are most unlikely of people. I love how Warren Wiersbe points it out. God calls the most unlikely of people.

[16:43] Puts the most unlikely of weapons in their hand. And he does the most unlikely of things. We will meet a judge who uses an ox goad. We are introduced to Gideon who uses jars and trumpets.

We meet Samson who uses the jawbone of a donkey. The most unlikely of weapons and the most unlikely of people. And God does some of the most unlikely of things.

But yet with each of these God is not only setting his people free from their captivity. He is also instructing them as to what they should do. But it tells us yet though God graciously delivered them. Though God removed it from them. Yet they would not listen. They did not listen to the judge. While they were enjoying the freedom that was a result of the judge.

They would not listen to the admonition or the instruction from the judge. And they played the harlot after other gods. And bowed themselves down to them. The very things.

[17:38] Look at this. The very things that put them in the position that they needed to be delivered from. Were the very things that they would go back to. Carelessness.

A lack of understanding that this is what got us here. And yet they would always go back to it.

Someone once said that insanity is doing the same thing over and over again.

And expecting different results. It's also carelessness. Because it is the expectation that we can do it. And he will set us free again. Since they had put themselves in that position once.

And they cried out to God. And God delivered them. Surely they can put themselves in that position again. And God will deliver them once again. And he does it each time graciously. Mercifully. Yet each time they go deeper and deeper and deeper.

Until eventually they get to the place. Where they cry out. As we see in the book of 1 Samuel. We need a king. And God says they're not forsaking you Samuel.

[18:38] They're forsaking me. No longer do they want God to be their king. They no longer want to live under a theocratic rule. No longer does God need to rule over them.

They want someone they can look at. And it says that they turned aside quickly from the way in which their fathers had walked. And obeying the commandments of the Lord. They did not do as their fathers. Again we see the generational issue.

That they turned aside from the generation that went before them. But what amazes me about the book of Judges. Now I know we're covering a lot of time. 400 years. Almost 400 years through the book of Judges.

And some of these things overlap. Right? Because some things are going on in this region. While things are going on in this region. And we're reading it. But I think the author. Whoever it is. Many think that it may have been Samuel. But again being inspired by the Lord.

Because men of God. Pinned the word of God. As they were moved by the spirit of God. And I fully believe that. And I think even in the way we read it. That it was inspired. So that we would understand. But as we read it.

[19:38] It seems like as soon as they're delivering. And as soon as that deliverer dies. They go right back. It says they turn aside quickly. They turn aside quickly. They turn aside quickly. And we're reminded of the carelessness.

Of man. Because the reality is. What we see in the book of Judges. Is man does not necessarily want to be delivered. From what got him in trouble. Man just wants to be delivered. From the trouble.

They want to be set free. From the consequences of sin. Not the cause of sin. And carelessness. In our relationship with the Lord our God.

Is when we're more concerned. About being delivered. From what comes from our sin. As a result. As opposed to being delivered. From our sin. So the grand question is.

If you can sin. And get away with it. Are you okay with it? Well the answer to that. In the book of Judges. Is yes they were. As long as the consequences.

[20:35] Were not too severe. And as long as someone. Would get them out of trouble. They were very content. And very careless. We may say. To go right back. But we must be careful. Because God will not be mocked.

As Paul says. And we cannot use it as a crutch. But what we see. Is that though they neglect this. Though they turn away from it. Eventually man's carelessness. To what God is doing in their life. Leads them almost to a place of no return. Where the entire tribe of Benjamin. Is almost wiped out. Because a careless man. Always goes further. Than he ever intended to do. There was a show. I used to watch. Carrie and I used to watch it. And the kids and I. It was. I can't even remember the name of it. I'll get to it later. But the guy who. It was one of those weather channel shows. The guy who. Over it was Creek. His name was Creek. He would tell you how to survive. If you were caught out in the wilderness. And every account.

[21 : 32] Always started like this. They went on a two hour hike. And all they had with them. Was a bottle of water. And a granola bar. So which tells me. That now when I go on a two hour hike. I take two bottles of water. And two granola bars. Right. Or I take something else. Beside a granola bar. Every one of them. They went on a hike. And they took a bottle of water. And a granola bar. And then they end up. Getting stranded out there. For like four days. Right. And almost dying. Or they're. But every one of them. If you pay attention to it. It's because they're careless. They weren't completely aware. Of their surroundings. Or they chose a path. That they were not familiar with. Or they thought they could do something. That they didn't know for sure. That they could do. And they end up going further. Than they ever intended. Well that's exactly. The picture that we have. In the book of Judges. Which in reality. Is the picture of mankind. In totality. That when God. Sends. Deliverance. And man neglects that. In his carelessness. He always goes further. Than he ever intended to go.

[22 : 29] And before you know it. You're three days in. To a two hour hike. And your water is gone. And you're eating things. You shouldn't be eating. And you're drinking things. You shouldn't be drinking. And you're just praying. That somehow or another. God will ever get you out of there. This is a grand picture. Of man and his sin. When he says. God if you would just remove. This consequence from me. I will never do this again. But as soon as the consequences. Are removed. What do we find. Man doing it again. Oh what wretched men we are. This is a picture of man. And we're reminded of that. This is a picture of man. I see it in my own life. And I see it in every one of our lives. Because this is who we are. We are by nature. Careless. Because the consequences. Mean so much more to us. Than the cause. Thankfully the carelessness of man. Is met with the concern of God.

[23 : 27] Because we find this here. That though man keeps continuing. To get himself in this position. And these are the people of God. That are neglecting God. That should have known. But rather chose not to know. And in their careless nature. And in their really. Half hazard living. They decide to live however they want to. Contrary to what God has clearly revealed to them. So this. Nothing else. Is really a book to God's people. Not necessarily a book to the world. This is not one to broadcast. And say oh this is what's going on. This is the problem of the world. This could really be a picture. Of the problem of God's people. And man living in his careless nature. And continues to do the same thing. And God's so faithful. We're met with the concern of God. And this is that bright spot. That we see in the book of Judges. Right? It says in verse 18. When the Lord raised up judges for them. The Lord was with the judge. And delivered them from the hand of their enemies. All the days of the judge. Look at this. For the Lord was moved to pity by their groaning. Because of those who oppressed and afflicted them.

[24 : 27] This is one of the wonders of salvation. One of the wonders of redemption. And one of the wonders of God. God was moved. By the pain that was inflicted upon his people. Never lose this. That was a direct result of their own doing. That which they willingly chose to do. Moved God to be concerned enough. To respond. And deliver. Now that's important. Because it's not that he was moved to concern. Or moved to have pity.

Or moved to have this desire to deliver them. From something that happened to come upon them. It is one thing when they are captive in Egypt. And they are slaves in Egypt. And they went down with the best of intentions. Right? Joseph went down. He was brought there. Being wrongfully thrown into a pit. Sold to some slave traders. Ended up making his way down in Egypt.

[25 : 27] And Joseph. You remember Dakota many colors. Right? And God raises him up. He becomes this great ruler. Second to Pharaoh in Egypt. And then he calls his family there. Because there's no bread in the land. There's a great famine in the land.

And they come down 70 persons. Seeking land. They're put over here to be tenders of animals. And some of the best land. You remember the story of Joseph and his family. Right? They're over there in Goshen. And then there comes up another Pharaoh.

Who knew not Joseph. And then he enslaves them. So they're held captive against their will. And it wasn't really a direct result of anything they did. It was just God's plan. Right? To forge his people in distress.

And to forge his people. And then God goes in. And he delivers them from a captivity. That they did not choose. That's amazing. Right? They were born into slavery. They didn't do anything to get there.

They were just born into it. And he delivers them. And that's amazing. But what is equally amazing. Is the reality that when they do choose to sin. And they do choose to fall.

[26 : 20] And they do choose to rebel. And they do choose to do the things that bring about these consequences. God is still moved. To deliver. And that's amazing to me.

Now it shouldn't astound us. I know we've said it over and over again. But it's worthy of repeating. When we first began going through the Old Testament.

And I know it stretches memory. Some of you wouldn't have been here. Some of you have heard me say it enough. That maybe you'll go back and study it on your own. Because I don't know. The Lord will have to let me be here a long time.

Before we finish the Bible. And we'll start all over again. Okay? I don't know that I'll ever do that. Who knows? He may. I don't know if the Lord will allow me to live that long. Is what I'm saying. I'm not saying I'm going anywhere. I'm just saying I'm not sure how much longer I'll live.

There are some books that will cause us to slow down a little bit. Hey, when we get to Song of Solomon. We're going to have to tread lightly. You know what I mean? And there are some things that we'll have to kind of. Kind of pump the brakes. And just go a little bit slower on.

[27 : 21] But we have seen that the grand problem of man. Every problem that man has. Is introduced in the first 11 chapters of the Bible. Right? Genesis 1 through 11. Every problem that man has.

Starting in Genesis 12. God calls a man named Abram. From the land of the early Chaldeans. So what we have is Genesis 12. To the end of the Bible. Is God's response to man's problem. But the law of first mention.

So if we want to see how God's going to respond to everything. We've got to go all the way back to Genesis. In the beginning. Right? Genesis literally. The word means the beginning. So we need to know what God did first. That law of first mention.

When man first sinned. Never lose this. It was man's choice to sin. Man chose to sin. Eve was deceived.

By the serpent. And she took of the fruit. And then she gave it to Adam. He took it. He made a choice. Adam actually made two choices. Number one. He decided to be silent.

[28 : 15] While a snake was talking to his wife. I don't understand that. I mean you know. If a serpent is talking to my wife. And I decide to be silent. Well that's a bad choice. Number one. I'll get in trouble later.

Because I didn't do anything with it. And number two. You get in trouble. Because it did that. Because when you read it. The wording is that Adam was beside her the entire time. So he's just sitting there going.

Oh. I'm going to let him be the persuader. Instead of me being the leader. So he. Number one. Chose to be passive in his leadership. He was supposed to be the leader. And he allowed that to happen. And then he chose to take it from his wife.

And he made those two choices. And as a result of that. Sin was introduced. We call that the fall. Right. So man's choice now brought about death. Eventual death. They eventually died. And they introduced that.

And that's that tragic consequence of man's choice. But yet what we find. Is that God's response to man's choice. Was to pursue them. He found them.

[29 : 12] In the cool of the day. He went looking for them. And Adam and Eve were hiding themselves. And God was calling out. Adam and Eve weren't calling out. Oh God where are you? God was calling out. Adam where are you? Now this is.

I believe. Of utmost. Absolute importance. For our interpretation. Of the rest of scripture. I'm almost going to go ahead and say.

This is one of those big rock things. I really believe it. Because the way God responds to man's sin. Is God looked for them. They did not look for God.

This is where Paul bases his theology. No man is righteous. No not one. None comes to the father. On his own word. You didn't find him. Because you were going. Oh God where are you? We found him.

Because he called us by name. And said where are you? Through the drawing of the Holy Spirit. Right? We didn't find God. Because he was never lost. He found us.

[30 : 08] Because in our own sin. And our wickedness. We are the ones that were lost. And yet we see that reflected here. In this concern of the father. The concern of God.

That when they choose to do these things. That get them in trouble. God takes the initiative. And raises up a deliverer. Or a judge. Notice that no judge.

In the book of Judges. Comes as a result of a popularity vote. No man says. We need someone to get us out of this trouble. And picks and chooses who it is. No man decides.

Nobody would have looked up and said. You know who will get us out of trouble? Well Gideon will get us out of trouble. That's the guy. We need a Gideon. We need someone who is threshing wheat. In the middle of a wine vat. Hiding from the people.

We need him to go defeat. Because Gideon is so scared. He is in this wine vat. Which is this. Kind of dipping the ground. Trying to thresh wheat. So that the Midianites do not see him. Because he is scared to death. Of the Midianites.

[31 : 03] And if they see him. They are going to come take his wheat. And nobody in their right mind would have said. You know who we need. We need Gideon and 300 men. Nobody. Nobody would have chose Samson.

You know the guy with anger problems. Just ripping down gates. Tying foxes tails together. Setting them on fire. Burning cities and all this. Nobody would have chosen him. Nobody would have chose any of these. Except for maybe Olnail.

We could have looked at that. And said okay. Maybe him. But nobody picked and chose him. What you understand is that. When man got themselves in their trouble. Because of their carelessness. We see that the consequences.

Are a direct result of God bringing it. Because it says the Lord gave them over. The Lord delivered them to. The Lord brought about. So the consequences come as a direct result.

Of God dealing with their sin. But here is the good thing. The deliverance is also. A direct result of God doing something. God raises up the deliverer.

[31 : 59] God raises up the judge. The word judge there. By the way. Same word for deliverer or savior. God does it. This is important. Because man does not.

Appoint his own deliverer. Man does not appoint his own savior. God raises up the savior. John 3.16.

This is a very familiar verse. And very familiar to us. Even when we discuss it. God so loved the world. That he gave his only begotten son. That whosoever believes in him. Will not perish. But have eternal life. And we've looked at that word love.

Right? God so loved. That word love. Agape. Or agapeo. That word. That word peculiar to God. That agapeo. That agapeo.

Is never given. As something that man does. In all of scripture. It never says that man agapeo. Or agape anybody. Because it's really peculiar.

[33 : 01] It's just to him. And what it means. Is to love. In spite of. For the intention.

Of doing something. It is love. That takes the initiative. God so loved. When man was unlovable. That he did something. He gave his son.

So when we read this. We see the concern. Of God. The third thing we see. Is not only the carelessness. Of man. And the concern of God. But third.

We see the confrontation. Of the enemy. The confrontation. With the enemy. One of the ways. That we see the concern. Of God. Is even in his redemption. Of their failures.

Because in their failure. They could not. And they would not. Drive out the enemy. And since they did not. Drive out the enemy. For any particular reason. And they left them. There.

[33 : 59] God says. Okay. Now I'm going to. Redeem that mistake. This takes us. To Romans 8. God causes all things. To work to the good. For those who love him. Or are called. According to his purpose. And the nation of Israel.

Is called. According to his purpose. Since they failed. To drive out the enemy. God was going to. Redeem. Even their failure. Because those who were left. God says. I'm going to let them. Stay here.

And I'm going to use them. While they're here. Now. I need you to. Pay attention to this. Because it says. In verse 21. I also will no longer drive. Out before them.

Any of the nations. Which Joshua left. When he died. In order to test Israel. By them. Whether they will keep the way. Of the Lord. To walk in it. As their fathers did. Or not. So the Lord allowed. Those nations to remain.

Not driving them out quickly. And he did not give them. Into the hand of Joshua. Which. The reason I want you to pay attention to that. Is. The reason. The nations. Remained there.

[34 : 52] Was not a result. Of the people's failure. To drive them out. But rather. A direct result. Of God's permission. For them to stay. Okay. God.

Permitted. That which hindered them. To stay. He allowed it. Because. The nation of Israel. Was not strong enough. To dispossess them anyway.

The nation of Israel. In their own strength. Was not mighty enough. God had said. That I will drive out nations. Greater and mightier than you. And I will go before you.

As hornets. And I will. I will slowly drive them out. God had said. That their. Removing them from the land. Was not to be attributed. To the nation's power. But rather to God's power.

Right. So. The reason they would be moved out. Not because the nation. Did what they were supposed to. But because God removed them. So the reason they stay. Was not because. Solely. Because the nation failed. Not because the nation.

[35 : 46] Did not drive them out. They stayed. Because the Bible tells us. God permitted them to stay. So. Now let's. Wrestle with this. On a theological issue.

If God is good. Then why does evil exist? And if God is so loving. Why does he allow the enemy. That's going to cause him. To falter. To stay. To stay.

If God is so grand. And kind. And powerful. And mighty. And majestic. If God is strong enough. And powerful enough. And mighty enough.

And if he could remove evil. And he doesn't remove evil. But he allows evil to stay. Is he still God? The answer to that is yes. Why would a loving God.

Who is in a covenant relationship. With his people. Say okay. I'm going to let the very things. That cause you to stumble. Remain. I'm going to let them.

[36 : 45] Stay there. The legacy standard Bible. Which. Is a really strong translation. Brother Jerry. Is shared with me. And some of you others have had it. And I enjoy reading it. In this last verse.

Of the second chapter. Where it says. And God allowed the nations to remain. It's literal translation is there. He has allowed the nations to rest. Which means he allowed the enemy. To rest among them.

They were at rest. They didn't just remain. They were at home. So he allowed that. Which would cause them. To falter. And stumble. The very thorn in their flesh.

To be at home among them. The enemy wasn't present. Because the people failed. The enemy was present. Because God permitted it. And that's something.

We just have to. By faith accept. And we see why. Because he wanted his people. To have. Confrontation with the enemy.

[37 : 41] He was redeeming it. For this purpose. He says. I'm going to let them stay. To test my people. To see. There was a two-fold purpose here. To test my people. To see if they will remain

faithful to me.

Because what good is faithfulness. When there is no option of unfaithfulness. How genuine is faithfulness and sincerity. When there is no other choice.

How true and how real is devotion. When there is no other option. Why did God even put the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In the midst of the garden.

Have you ever thought about that? Why didn't he just put one tree there. The tree of life. Why did he have to put the other one there? Because how sincere is devotion.

When man does not have the opportunity to decide. Against devotion. See when there is no test.

[38 : 39] There is no judge. Of one's commitment. We say Lord. I wish you would remove all these hindrances. And these stumblings from my life.

I wish that I could live in a land of paradise. And perfection. And I wish that all these things were removed. And God says some of these things remain. So that I may know who you are. Because how do we really know who we are.

Apart from these testings of our enemy. How do we know the character of our own heart. How do we know the desire of our own soul. How do we know the weaknesses of our own flesh.

When there is nothing that would ever reveal that to us. Because in a perfect world of utopia. Where everything goes right. Is anyone really ever devoted.

When he has no other option. Some of these things remain to test his people. So that I may know. The second purpose in his redemption.

[39 : 37] Is to train his people. He says so that those who had not known the wars in Canaan. I mean over 400 year period. Right. Would know war. Now this does not mean that God.

Wants his people just to go out fighting battles all the time. We are not. We are on the other side of the cross. Right. We are not in this time. Now we understand it. When we read Old Testament.

There are literal warfare. And battles going on all the time.

And God says. I want to allow these people to stay. So that those who had not known war. Will learn war. They will know how to fight. And really the reason for them to stay there. Is to train them.

So that they would realize. They are not living in a land of ease and comfort. They are living in a land of preparation. That the battle could rage at any given moment.

That they always have to be ready. They always have to be attentive. To what's going on. They need to pay attention to their choices. And their surroundings. They are not living in a land of ease and comfort.

[40 : 32] And some of the things that God allows. In our lives. Are to train us as well. Some test us. Some train us. To remind us that on this side of eternity. We are not living in a land of ease and comfort.

We are called to fight. The spiritual battles. Against darkness. We are called to wrestle. We are called to destroy the strongholds of Satan.

We are called to be warriors. Not in the literal sense. Where we are taking a sword out. And you know. Doing all those things. But in the spiritual sense. Where we are to wrestle. Against the spiritual principalities of the air.

And the forces of darkness. We are to be living in a land of training. Where it would remind us. That we have to always be alert. We have to always be ready. We have to always be prepared.

And we have to be willing to fight. For the sake of others. Not in the physical sense alone. But in the spiritual realm. See God allowed them to be there.

[41 : 32] So that there would have to be a confrontation. There would have to be a confrontation. When we put ourselves in the cocoon. And we are never forced to confront the enemy.

And then all of a sudden. The enemy comes upon us. And all of his full force. And all of his strength. And all of his might. And we are ill prepared to fight the battle. Then we are sure to fail.

In the moment of greatest need. We don't need. Weaker. Easier people of God. We need stronger. More prepared.

Well trained. Warriors. Because friend. I want to just be honest with you. There is a greater spiritual battle. That needs to be fought. In our day and time. Now.

Than has ever needed to be fought. And unfortunately. What's going on. Is we have the watering down. Of the gospel. We have the watering down. Of scripture. We have the watering down.

[42 : 28] Of the call. And the commitment. To the savior. We have the watering down. And we are convincing ourselves. That what day and time. Has given us. Is easy believism. And we live in a

place. Where everything is accessible.

To us. And we are no longer. Preparing ourselves. To fight the battle. On behalf of others. We don't see the wall. Shaking in a place. When God's people pray.

As we do in the book of Acts. We don't see the spiritual battles. That are being fought. By believers around the world. Who know the reality. Of the presence of an enemy.

And God has trained them. By the presence of the enemy. That is constantly around them. And he has trained them. To the reality. That they are fighting a battle. And they have learned how to fight. And they don't fight with fists.

And guns. And knives. And swords. But they fight in prayer. This is why. The persecuted church. Is always the strongest church. But we also need to understand.

[43 : 24] That we live in a land. With an equally. If not greater. Present enemy. Than many of those. Around the world. Because Satan doesn't always. Barge in.

On the. Full frontal attack. Sometimes. He just gets close enough. To make us comfortable with him. And we're kind of. Lured into this reality.

That oh. We don't have to fight him. We just live among him. No. God says. The reason. He leaves the enemy there. So that we would have to confront him. We would know who we are.

We would know who he is. And we would be ready to fight. On the day. When it's called for us to do so. Let's pray. Well we thank you for this night. We thank you for your word.

And we pray that you continue to lead us. As your people for your glory. And we ask it in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. Amen.