

# Judges 2:6-15

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[ 0 : 00 ] Take your Bibles, go into the book of Judges, book of Judges, second chapter, not very many verses this evening, Judges chapter 2, our text is going to be verses 6 through 15, Judges chapter 2, verses 6 through 15.

If you remember Sunday night when we gathered together, we introduced the book of Judges and we really just introduced it through the first chapter into the fifth verse of the second chapter.

The book of Judges is unique. There are two introductions, if you will. There's that first section, Judges 1, 1 through 2, 5, and then there is a second introduction in 2, 6 on into the third chapter. We won't take time to get all of that because it breaks apart pretty neatly there. There's a two-part introduction. And when we introduced the book of Judges, we started how it states out, you know, after Joshua died, and then as they make their way through the first chapter, Joshua is back on the scene, and then we come back into the second chapter, and again, now we have the record of his death.

But we understand, too, that what the book of Judges is doing is not necessarily concerning itself so much with the chronological order as the reason and the cause for how the nation got to where they did.

[ 1 : 15 ] We know the book of Judges covers a span of approximately 400 years. In that 400 years, it is a time when they come into the Promised Land, living within their inheritance, and it is a time that precedes the coming of King Saul and eventually the Davidic kingdom.

Many people believe that Samuel is the author because he alludes to the fact in those days there is no king in Israel. So it seems as if the author is writing when there is a king. And also the book of Judges records for us that Jerusalem was still under the control of the Jebusites when it was written.

And we know that David, when he became king, took control of the city of Jerusalem and made it kind of his hometown. So that kind of gives us our setting, right? So whoever the author is, if it's Samuel or if it's any other, is looking back being led of God.

Now, we don't want to take God's leading or the Spirit of God's leading and writing the Word of God out of this, but we also want to understand the reality of who he's using. All of Scripture is written in a historical setting, right?

There is an intended audience. There's a context. There's things that are going on around it. And there's a reason for its writing. And it does this well as students and people desiring to understand the Word to find out when.

[ 2 : 28 ] So we know that the author is looking back and showing how we got here. It is a downward spiral through the book of Judges. And as we introduced it, we saw the degrading nature of really just compromise, how the nation compromised one compromise after another compromise after another compromise until eventually you get to the end of the book of Judges.

And it's horrible. I mean, just to say the least, there are things going on at the end of the book of Judges which we wish were not there. They're very difficult to read and it's hard and it's kind of hard to wrap our mind around.

You say, well, how did they get there? Give man 400 years to live however he wants and that's what you get. When you allow man to live 400 years denying God, compromising in their walk with God, doing what they want to do, living.

In those days, there was no king in Israel and every man did what was right in his own eyes. Give man long enough and this is what you get. Now, as we read the book of Judges, we know it's not telling us history, it's also telling us what's going on presently because it, like many books of the Bible, speak to our current day, I think more than just about any other book of the Old Testament.

Because we are not progressing, we're not going upward, we are going down and we're going down very, very quickly. We have went from a realm in which wrong was wrong and right was right to now that we don't know which is which.

[ 3 : 54 ] And as a nation and as a world and as a mankind, we're really degrading and going in a very, very downward spiral. And the reality is, is we too will end up like this if we continue to do what is right in our own eyes.

So, we have kind of this second introduction. The first introduction shows us where they're at, you know, what they did to get there.

They did not drive out the inhabitants of the land. We saw that. You don't deal with the enemy soon enough, soon enough the enemy is going to deal with you, right? We don't master sin, sin will end up mastering us.

We compromise in this area before too long. That area in which we compromise will take control over us. This is the things they did and didn't do, right? The things they refused to do, the way they lived, the way they act.

The second introduction doesn't concern itself so much as to what they did, but I want you to see in Judges 2, verses 6 through 15, the theological calls. I know that seems kind of deep, but the theological calls for failure.

[ 5 : 00 ] Their relational work with God, right? How, what was going on between them and God, which led to this. We know what actions led to this, but what theological reasoning do we have for this, right?

Their understanding of God and how they got there. So, we see it, Judges 2, starting in verse 6. Now, when Joshua had dismissed the sons of Israel, dismissed the people, the sons of Israel went each to his inheritance to possess the land.

The people served the Lord all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who survived Joshua, who had seen all the great work of the Lord which he had done for Israel. Then Joshua, the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died at the age of 110, and they buried him in the territory of his inheritance in Timnath-Heres, in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gash.

All that generation also were gathered to their fathers. And there arose another generation after them who did not know the Lord, nor yet the work which he had done for Israel.

Then the sons of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord and served the Baals. And they forsook the Lord, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt and followed other gods from among the gods of the peoples who were around them and bowed themselves down to them.

[ 6 : 15 ] Thus they provoked the Lord to anger. So they forsook the Lord and served Baal and Ashereth. The anger of the Lord burned against Israel. And he gave them into the hands of the plunderers who plundered them.

And he sold them into the hands of their enemies around them so that they could no longer stand before their enemies. 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 that they were severely distressed.

Judges chapter 2, verses 6 through 15. Last week or last Sunday when we introduced this, we saw that we would be introduced to a number of judges. There's primarily 12, but there's really 7 to 8 grand stories or grand narratives of a judge being raised up and delivering them.

We'll get that in just a moment. But what we have found is that every time the nation cries out and God rises up or raises up a judge and the judge delivers them and they serve the Lord all the days of that judge and then that judge dies and they go right back.

These are local judges. So it's not national, right? It's not like the whole nation repents. But it's one thing that we've noticed that each time it says that the Lord caused the agony which led the people to cry out.

[ 7 : 28 ] They didn't cry out until God caused or created or allowed the discomfort. Now, to some of us that creates a problem because we don't think that God would cause that thing.

Is God the cause of bad or is God the cause of evil? And the answer to that is no. But does God allow those things to come about so that his people will be drawn to him? And the biblical answer to that is yes.

We see that quite often. You see that even in your own story and in your own life, right? The circumstances that were allowed or permitted to take place in your life, that brokenness, that broken

heart and that pain which really God used to draw you to cry out to him in a moment of need really finds a root in God, not necessarily a root in man.

God allows us to get the fruit of our efforts, if you will. He allows us to have a little bit of a taste of the sin fruit in our life.

Now, it is our sin which brings us to that place and it is the mercy and the grace of God that keeps us from experiencing the full weight of our sin. But it's those moments where God allows us to taste it and to sense it that causes us to cry out to him.

[ 8 : 49 ] And we've seen that there's this, at least, this God-allowed, permitted, caused effect that really permeates history.

And we see the theological cause for their failure here. Their relationship with God, not necessarily what they did, but who they were. And we see it just in three parts in this text.

And it's really striking as you pay attention to it because the first thing we notice is a responsibility neglected. There's a responsibility neglected. Now, this speaks to us, right?

This speaks to us because the reality of the text repeats what the book of Joshua closes with. And it says that Joshua had dismissed the people, the sons of Israel, each to his inheritance to possess the land.

So this thing we looked at Sunday, the nation is about to go into a time of uncertainty. When they left Egypt, there was a man before them.

[ 9 : 52 ] Moses was leading them, right? Moses was there. Aaron was there as well. But there was a man before them. They needed water, they cried out to Moses. They needed food, they cried out to Moses.

They needed to cross the Red Sea on dry land, they cried out to Moses. They needed to know where to go, they cried out to Moses. Moses was there. Moses dies, they're getting ready to go take possession of the promised land.

They need a man. So then there's Joshua, right? They need to cross the Jordan River, there's Joshua. They need to know how to fight the Battle of Jericho, there's Joshua. They need to know what happened when they were defeated at Ai, because nobody was aware of the sin of Achan, there's Joshua.

They need to know what to do each step of the way. There's a man before them who is Joshua.

Now they're going from sojourning pilgrims to an inhabiting people, right? No longer are they traversing and traveling around.

Now they are taking possession of their own land. And there's a shift in responsibility. Because now each individual is to be responsible for the spiritual well-being of his household.

[ 10 : 53 ] Deuteronomy chapter 6. Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one. Right? It's the Shema. It's the most repeated and quoted phrase in the nation of Israel.

It is the one thing that every, at least faithful Jewish individual, and even half-committed Jewish individual, would remember. Deuteronomy chapter 6, starting with the Shema.

It's this most important passage in all of Jewish texts. As a matter of fact, every Jewish boy by the time he was 15 would have had the book of Deuteronomy memorized. Okay, the book.

Not that passage. The book. That's just kind of one of the tenets of Judaism, right? To remember the book of Deuteronomy. And why would they? Because hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, he is one God. And then he goes on and starts talking about responsibilities to teach your children as they go.

To tell them about it when you're walking. When you rise up. When you sit down. When you're going down. To write it on the doorpost of your house. To put it over the lentils. Right? To put it on your gates. All those. Remember all those admonitions?

[ 11 : 52 ] God didn't give that to a man. He gave that to a people. Which means it's now it's their responsibility. When you settle down and you have a house to live in. And you have a gate at your house.

And you have an opportunity to rise up and to walk about and to go about your day. It is your responsibility to teach your family and your children and your kin about the Lord your God.

Right? There's a shift from looking to a man to looking within. And this is a passage that is of utmost importance.

But we find in our text that Joshua sends them home to do this thing. By the way, three times a year they were to take a pilgrimage. Three times a year they were to take a pilgrimage.

Three times a year they were to come back to wherever the Lord their God had established his name. And to keep the Passover. To do the festival of tabernacles. To do the end gathering. [12:52] Right? What we call the Pentecost festival. To do all these great festivals. Three times a year they were not supposed to just take their wives or their sons. They were to take their whole household. Even their servants. Three times a year. And then bring other sacrifices.

So that they could worship God. So they could see God. We don't have a record of them doing this. Any. In the book of Judges. Matter of fact, we don't have but just a couple of references. To them keeping the Passover. In all of the Old Testament. And it's always after God really just kind of wakes them up. Right? After they come out of captivity.

After they have been broken. But what do we notice here? The people served the Lord all the days of Joshua. And all the days of the elders who survived Joshua. Who had seen all the great work of the Lord which he had done. Then we have a problem. Because Joshua dies. And those elders die. And there's that scary line there.

[13:53] Found for us. In verse 10. All that generation also were gathered to their fathers. And here it is. And there arose another generation after them.

Who did not know the Lord. Nor yet the work which he had done for Israel. Here is. Responsibility neglected. There is always another generation coming.

And many people have said it. The church is only one generation removed. From not existing anymore. Now one of the great testimonies by the way.

Of to the validity of the Christian faith. And the reality of Christ as Savior. Is the endurance of the church. I mean the church has existed in spite of man. Not because of man.

Right. It is his church. And we can see. We failed over and over and over and over again. But yet the church is still here. I don't mean the local church. War Trace Baptist Church. I mean. I mean this is a testimony.

[14:52] I mean since 1868. What a testimony. Right. What a testimony. But we see this. These people had a responsibility. They neglected. Evidently.

They never taught their children. Evidently. They never displayed their children. Because the word know their means. It's not that they didn't hear about it. The word know means. They did not have an experimental relationship with.

They did not know it personally. They never had an encounter as individuals. Head knowledge only takes you so far. Those are great stories.

It is when the individual is disciplined. And led to the place of a personal encounter. With the Lord their God. And all of a sudden they become to know in a relational way.

They neglected that grand responsibility. We see two things of this. Number one. We see the danger of living on a heritage faith.

[15:49] Or another person's faith. There's danger in that. Right. There's this catastrophe of living on the faith of another individual. Because when that generation dies.

Doesn't do you any good. There's a danger. Number two. There's the responsibility that that generation has. Because.

Let's face it. We're all going to die. Unless the Lord tarries. One thing I have found. Is that there's a day appointed unto each one of us.

And we have a grand responsibility until that day. Because there is another generation coming. And the responsibility is on us.

And we see here in this reality. That they neglected the responsibility. Is that man cannot do it on his own. He has to have one before him.

[16:50] And ultimately that one is Jesus Christ. Man has to have one that will lead him. We have that. So we are doubly without excuse. For neglecting such responsibility.

This is the theological cause. Second. We see a relationship forfeited. There's a responsibility neglected. But there's also a relationship forfeited.

Because let's not pick on the generation that went before. Right. Let's not pick on those who are dead. It'd be easy to go to the caskets. And the tombstone. And say. Yeah. I see. It's their fault. And it'd be easy to point to those who went before us.

And say. It's their fault. And be easy to say. Well if they had done a better job. We would be in a better place. That's called blame shifting. And we don't ever want to do that. Because ultimately.

Each person is held accountable for their own sins.

The Bible tells us that. Right. We're not held accountable for the sins of our fathers. And our children are not held accountable for our sins. Every man is held accountable for his own actions. Which means we all bear responsibility.

[ 17 : 50 ] That though that generation neglected their responsibilities. Look at what it tells us in verse 11. Then the sons of Israel. Those who were alive. Then the sons of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord. And served the Baals.

So they made a choice. Right. And the reason we know they made a choice. Because okay. We could see. Let's just think about this intelligently. If that generation had never told them about the Lord their God.

And if that generation had failed to show them the Lord their God. And if that generation had failed to disciple them. And lead them to a place. You know. Back to the tabernacle. And in those worship services. Where they could have this experience.

This personal experimental knowledge of the Lord their God. And they grew up and did nothing. Then we would say okay. Well. They didn't. They just didn't know. Right. They didn't really have any options.

They didn't have anything. But what we find. Is they grow up and they worship. But the passage very clearly tells us. They choose to worship the Baals and the Asherahs.

[ 18 : 51 ] Because it seems to me. That they look around and say. Well I would rather worship that God. Than this God I keep hearing about. Because oh. There are experiences with the Baals. The Baal.

There's just one God. The reason it's plural there. Is because there are a multitude of shrines. Around that land. And Baal is a fertility God. And cult prostitution was a very real thing. And part of it. And it's really easy to have experiences there.

Right. And so they decided. That that looks better than what. That I've been told about. And this looks more pleasing. Than what I've thought about. And it seems to be what everybody else is doing. And it's part of that. Allowing the enemy to lay in the land.

And to stay around them. Right. It gave them an option. It gave them a choice. And now all of a sudden. We understand. And it's not just a neglect of the responsibility of the generation that went before them. It is the forfeit of a relationship of the generation that's now alive.

Because they decide. I'm going to worship something. And I want to worship that. Because they had the opportunity to worship the Lord their God.

[ 19 : 50 ] And the reason we know it. Is because. If they had just went to Shechem. There were two stones that had been whitewashed. That had the word of God recorded on it. Right. They had the scroll of the word of God. Evidently the book of Deuteronomy.

They had that. Because it says Joshua. And in the book of Joshua. It says they added something to it. Which means they put another piece of paper in with the scroll of the book of Deuteronomy. And rolled it up into that scroll. They didn't write it at the bottom of it.

They just put another page in. If you will. Under the scroll. They had the record of the written word of God. They had the testimony of the name of the Lord God. God had caused his name to dwell somewhere. First at Gilgal.

And then later at Shiloh. His name was dwelling somewhere. The tabernacle was there. The Ark of the Covenant is still there. We find that later on. We get into the book of 1 Samuel. It's there. They lose it. So there's all these testimonial things there.

What we can say is exactly what Paul says in Romans 1. What could have been known about God had been clearly revealed by God. Therefore man is without excuse for not worshiping God.

[ 20 : 47 ] Paul says that all men are without excuse. Not necessarily because people have failed in their responsibilities. Though the responsibility is ours to make sure the generation that comes has the opportunity to hear.

Paul says all men ultimately are without excuse because what may be clearly seen of God and known about God has been revealed by God. Which means God has given all people the opportunity to choose.

Don't ever forget this. When someone doesn't worship God it ultimately is a choice. And I know instantly a lot of arguments in your mind say well what about those who have never heard?

What about this? What about that? The only authority we have to stand on is scripture. And the Bible tells us in Romans chapter 1 all men are without excuse. And the reason they don't is

because of choice.

And it's a relationship forfeited. I would rather worship something else. That's exactly what they did. I have the opportunity.

[ 21 : 56 ] But I would rather do this. Naturally, that's it. Even those who deny the existence of God.

Those who are agnostic or atheistic or those who claim there is no God. What ultimately they're saying is though I may see the reality of that. Though I may see the testimony of that.

I would rather do this. I would rather live this way because it fits my desires more. It fits my ambitions more. It is I don't want that relationship. I just want to do me.

Right? And so we see here there's a relationship forfeited. Given up. Man gives it up. And this is a cause for failure.

Those who had the responsibility of teaching the next generation failed. Those in that generation who had the opportunity to choose a relationship failed. And now we come to the third and final thing is a relinquished position.

[ 22 : 53 ] Because when we fail to pass on to the next generation what God has commanded us to pass on to the next generation. And then that generation refuses to enter into that relationship with God.

Even though they're going to enter into a relationship with a God. Lowercase g. All of a sudden the position that the people of God hold. All of a sudden gets relinquished or given up. We want to understand it.

All you got to do is go to the very first part of your Bible. Right? You go into Genesis chapter 1. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And he made everything beautiful. Right? Everything's awesome. And everything's amazing. Then we get into Genesis chapter 2.

And God creates man. And then he fashions a woman. And then God gives great responsibility to man. Right? God tells man to rule over creation. Man's position there is a position of authority.

Right? God gives him the responsibility and the positional authority to rule over everything he's created. Think about that. He ruled over it. We know he ruled over it because he named it.

[ 23 : 52 ] It amazes me when I think about what Adam named. Even before woman was fashioned and formed. Right? God caused all the animals to go by him and he named it. I literally think. I think that was a literal progression.

Right? There's this great, if you will, parade. He goes on to the ark. But the first one to see a parade was Adam. As they went by him. And he said, this is this. This is this. This is this.

This is that. He names them. And whatever he called them, that's what it was called. Now, I don't think he said a lion, an elephant, a tiger, a bear. You know, my. He didn't say any of that stuff.

Right? He named it whatever it was in his naming.

And we don't really know what that is. And he had all the time in the world, literally, to do that.

Because he's an eternal being. But by naming it, he rules over it. He has the position of authority over it.

That's scriptural. Everything God names, he has authority over. That's why when he gives you a new name in the book of Revelations, guess what? That means he rules over you. Right? When you name it, you rule it.

[ 24 : 50 ] And so that's what he's doing. He gave Adam a place of authoritative position. When Adam refused to maintain that relationship, he forfeited the relationship because he listened to Eve more than he listened to God.

The relationship wasn't forfeited when Eve took from the fruit. It was forfeited when Adam took from Eve. And that's not to put anybody down. Right? Because Adam had this position.

And Eve had it with him in connection to him. Because the two had become one. When he forfeited that relationship, the Bible tells us that he handed over his position.

And the reason we know he handed over his position is because when Christ was tempted, remember the 40 days of temptation in the wilderness? You remember one of those temptations that Satan brought to him?

He showed him all the kingdoms of the earth, all the realm of the world. And he says, if you'll bow down and worship me, I'll give you the keys to these kingdoms for they are mine.

[ 25 : 55 ] And Jesus didn't argue with him. Jesus didn't say, you don't rule this earth. Jesus says, I'm not going to worship you. Because Satan does have the keys to the world currently.

Because Christ knew that when he died on the cross, was dead and buried in the tomb three days and three nights, and would come up again, that he would come out with the keys of death, hell, and the grave.

And then eventually the keys of the kingdom, the keys of the world, would be handed back to him. The world would be his footstool. And what you put your feet on, normally you own as well. Right? You come to my house and you want to put your feet up on something, that's fine.

As long as you ask permission. I normally don't ask permission. I think it's, you know, if it's mine, I can put my feet on it. Right? And that's okay. If you see me put my feet on it, you put your feet on it. Every now and then, Brandon will be like, dad, you can't put your feet up on there.

Or dad, you can't walk in here with those shoes on. And I always remind him, son, I'm paying for it. Therefore, I can do it. And that's not being mean or anything. As long as Carrie doesn't get on to me, I can do it. Right?

[ 26 : 53 ] And as long as I don't get in trouble, it's okay. And I always kind of look at her, she's like, yeah, you're fine. Go ahead. But there's a big difference in the expectation I have for him. Because he's not paying for it.

He doesn't own it. But when Christ puts his feet on the world, that's his footstool. Right? We understand it. So what we know is that man relinquished his position of authority when he refused to maintain his relationship.

The moment he forfeited his relationship, he lost his position. Look at what it tells us in the book of Judges. They forfeited their relationship and they chose to worship the other gods, lowercase g, the bells and the asherah.

And then it says this. The anger, because it tells us again in verse 13. And so they forsook the Lord. That's an intentional choice, by the way. So they forsook the Lord and served Baal and Asherah.

Verse 14. The anger of the Lord burned against Israel. And here's where we start getting into this theological cause. He gave them into the hands. He sold them into the hands of the enemies.

[ 27 : 53 ] And wherever they went, evil came against them. Why? Because in relationship with him, they had position of victory and authority.

What was the theme of the book of Joshua? Victory wins the... Faith wins the victory. As long as they were in a relationship with the Lord, their God, they walked in faith and faithfulness, victory was theirs.

The moment they forfeit that relationship, they're no longer standing in a place of victory. Rather, they're standing in a place of evil. Because God says, if you're faithful to me, I'll be faithful to you.

You rebuke me. You walk away from me. I will bring these curses upon you. God is faithful to his word, both the blessings and the curses. Ultimately, it is not that God brought evil upon them.

God is not the author of evil. It is God allowed the evil they chose to come upon them. Because they removed themselves from a position of authority and put themselves in a place of condemnation.

[ 29 : 10 ] They gave up their position. They relinquished their rights. And the people of God today, born again, redeemed.

I believe in the eternal security of the saints. And I'm closing. I know we've got to pray. I believe in the eternal security of the saints. But I think there's great danger when we refuse to maintain that relationship in a faithful way.

Because the danger comes, all of a sudden, we are giving up our position. And we are putting ourselves in a place of punishment. And we see it all throughout scripture.

And these are the theological causes for the failure of God's people. The theological just means, where's God in all the picture? Not what did they do, but what are they doing with the Lord their God?

Or what are they not doing? Not their actions so much, but what about their relationship? And we see it over and over again in the book of Judges.

[ 30 : 14 ] Thank you, brothers. Thank you.