

The Book of  
**JUDGES**

*Testing the Heart of God's Children*



Second Generation Syndrome

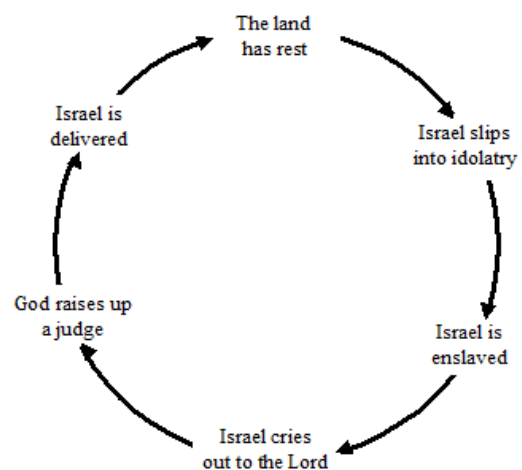
Judges 2:1-23  
Lesson 2

### Introduction

Our passage begins with an accusation from the Angel of the Lord. In sharp contrast to the peaceful unified picture of Israel at the end of the book of Joshua, the breakdown of the Israelite society is already evident. Chapter 2 tells us that once the generation that had seen the great miracles of God had all died, another generation “who did not know the Lord” arose (v10). They forgot the Lord, they forsook His ways, and deliberately refused to acknowledge God’s authority over their lives. It was not that they had not heard, it was that they did not have an experiential and relational relationship with the Lord, and therefore did not believe.

What is the first thing that God says about that generation? “The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served the Baals.” (v11). Instead of acknowledging God as their King, they disregarded His Word, which led to compromise and culminated in both dwelling with the enemy and worshiping their gods. True to His promise, God delivered Israel into the hands of their enemies. He announces that He will no longer drive the nations from before them, but will leave the enemy in the land to test, or refine them. What was in their hearts? Would they obey His word or rely on their own senses and abilities to direct them?

Chapter 2 outlines the pattern that will be repeated throughout the book. Israel is **disobedient** to God’s Word, God **disciplines** them by the hands of their enemy, they fall into **despair** and cry out to God, God raises up judges to **deliver** them from their oppression, followed by a period of rest. When the judge dies and they no longer have someone to unite the people, the cycle begins all over again. The cycle should encourage us to look closely at behavior that brings God’s blessing contrasted with what elicits His discipline. What some commentators have called “the book of failure”, is a dramatic lesson into the condition of the human heart that does not know God relationally but only by reputation, a perfect manifestation of walking in the flesh.



## Looking for Gold - What does it say?



The first step in mining for gold is getting the lay of the land. **Carefully observe the text** looking to see where you might dig to find hidden treasure. **Mark your text** looking for repeated words, contrasts or similarities. Look for answers to, Who? What? When? Where? Why or How?

*Setting the scene: Read Deut. chapters 6-8, paying special attention to 6:6-8. Refer back to these chapters to remember what God had said as Israel came into the Promised Land. Use an atlas or other sources to place the cities in the appropriate place on your map. Pay attention to who's inheritance they are occupying.*

### Judges 2:1-6

1 Then the Angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said: "I led you up from Egypt and brought you to the land of which I swore to your fathers; and I said, 'I will never break My covenant with you. 2 And you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall tear down their altars.' But you have not obeyed My voice. Why have you done this? 3 Therefore I also said, 'I will not drive them out before you; but they shall be thorns in your side, and their gods shall be a snare to you.'" 4 So it was, when the Angel of the Lord spoke these words to all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voices and wept.

5 Then they called the name of that place Bochim; and they sacrificed there to the Lord.

6 And when Joshua had dismissed the people, the children of Israel went each to his own inheritance to possess the land.



### Digging Deeper

Dig deeper using other resources such as a dictionary, concordance, maps, cross-references. Notate where you found it to share with the group. Look for commands to obey or questions to be answered. What does God want you to know about Himself?

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**Judges 2:7-10**

7 So the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord which He had done for Israel. 8 Now Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died when he was one hundred and ten years old. 9 And they buried him within the border of his inheritance at Timnath Heres, in the mountains of Ephraim, on the north side of Mount Gaash. 10 When all that generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation arose after them who did not know the Lord nor the work which He had done for Israel.



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**Judges 2:11-15**

11 Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served the Baals; 12 and they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt; and they followed other gods from among the gods of the people who were all around them, and they bowed down to them; and they provoked the Lord to anger. 13 They forsook the Lord and served Baal and the Ashtoreths. 14 And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel. So He delivered them into the hands of plunderers who despoiled them; and He sold them into the hands of their enemies all around, so that they could no longer stand before their enemies. 15 Wherever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them for calamity, as the Lord had said, and as the Lord had sworn to them. And they were greatly distressed.



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**Judges 2:16-23**

16 Nevertheless, the Lord raised up judges who delivered them out of the hand of those who plundered them. 17 Yet they would not listen to their judges, but they played the harlot with other gods, and bowed down to them. They turned quickly from the way in which their fathers walked, in obeying the commandments of the Lord; they did not do so. 18 And when the Lord raised up judges for them, the Lord was with the judge and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; for the Lord was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who oppressed them and harassed them. 19 And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that they reverted and behaved more corruptly than their fathers, by following other gods, to serve them and bow down to them. They did not cease from their own doings nor from their stubborn way.

20 Then the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel; and He said, "Because this nation has transgressed My covenant which I commanded their fathers, and has not heeded My voice, 21 I also will no longer drive out before them any of the nations which Joshua left when he died, 22 so that through them I may test Israel, whether they will keep the ways of the Lord, to walk in them as their fathers kept them, or not." 23 Therefore the Lord left those nations, without driving them out immediately; nor did He deliver them into the hand of Joshua.



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### **Boiling it Down – What does it mean?**



What **lesson** can I draw from my observations?

State each lesson in a simple sentence (aim for 10 words or less).

Judges 2:1-6 \_\_\_\_\_

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Judges 2:7-10 \_\_\_\_\_

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Judges 2:11-15 \_\_\_\_\_

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Judges 2:16-23 \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Refined as Gold - How can I apply it?**

How should it change me? Ask yourself, "What **course of action** do I need to take to apply each lesson?" (aim for 10 words or less)

Judges 2:1-6 \_\_\_\_\_

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Judges 2:7-10 \_\_\_\_\_

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Judges 2:11-15 \_\_\_\_\_

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Judges 2:16-23 \_\_\_\_\_

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**Challenge:** Use cross-references to find correlating scripture that backs up the main point of the chapter. Summarize your findings in your own words.

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### Storing up Your Treasure . . .

What did God say? Deut. 4:9-14

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What caused Israel's disobedience after Joshua's generation died? Judg. 2:10

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What was the root of their children's failure to know God? 1 Chron. 28:9 may help

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Why did God leave the enemy in the land? v. 21-23

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What words or phrases are repeated?

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**Checking for Clarity:** See if you can boil down the meaning of **each section** into one or two words. This helps you fully understand what the author is trying to convey. (It's fun to alliterate if you want to try) Did you catch the vision?

Judges 2:1-6 \_\_\_\_\_

Judges 2:7-10 \_\_\_\_\_

Judges 2:11-15 \_\_\_\_\_

Judges 2:16-23 \_\_\_\_\_

**Bars of Gold:** State the main **point** of the passage in the form of a title.

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**Flex Your Muscles:** Can you discover an N.T. example of this O.T. truth?

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### **Hide Your Treasure in your Heart**

You should know in your heart that as a man chastens his son, so the Lord your God chastens you. Deut. 8:5

Radiating His Truth . . .

The sin in our lives that we fail to conquer will eventually conquer us.

-Bible Expository Commentary



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## *Message Notes*

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