



# The Kingdom Perspective

## Freedom and Bondage in Judges

Hello, this is Pastor Don of Christ Redeemer Church. Welcome to The Kingdom Perspective.

The Old Testament book of Judges has some of the ugliest stories in all the Bible. Why is this the case? Well, the book of Judges chronicles the cycle of rebellion, retribution, and redemption that the children of Israel went through, repeatedly, as they first entered the Promised Land.

God had promised freedom and prosperity, if only they would obey. However, they did not take God up on this promise, but turned instead to idolatry, obeying the pagan gods of the Canaanites and suffering the consequence of chaos.

Listen to Judge 2:

... they abandoned the LORD, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt. They went after other gods, from among the gods of the peoples who were around them, and bowed down to them. And they provoked the LORD to anger.... and he gave them over to plunderers who plundered them... And they were in terrible distress.

This shows us something very profound about us as human beings. Freedom can only be found under the authority of God. God's authority brings freedom.

This is the very opposite to our common assumption. Foolishly, we think the choice is between God's authority and our own freedom. Nothing is further from the truth. When we stop serving God, we do not become our own person. Rather, we become slaves of someone or something else. We were made for worship. When we do not worship the true God, we will substitute something in His place.

And this is the essence of sin. To the degree that we reject the true God to that degree other "gods" will rule over us. Since we were not made for other gods, chaos ensues in both our soul and society. Sadly, the book of Judges tells the story of our lives.

Something to think about from The Kingdom Perspective.

"And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and served the Baals. And they abandoned the Lord, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt. They went after other gods, from among the gods of the peoples who were around them, and bowed down to them. And they provoked the Lord to anger. They abandoned the Lord and served the Baals and the Ashtaroth. So the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he gave them over to plunderers, who plundered them. And he sold them into the hand of their surrounding enemies, so that they could no longer withstand their enemies. Whenever they marched out, the hand of the Lord was against them for harm, as the Lord had warned, and as the Lord had sworn to them. And they were in terrible distress.

Then the Lord raised up judges, who saved them out of the hand of those who plundered them. Yet they did not listen to their judges, for they whored after other gods and bowed down to them. They soon turned aside from the way in which their fathers had walked, who had obeyed the commandments of the Lord, and they did not do so. Whenever the Lord raised up judges for them, the Lord was with the judge, and he saved them from 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 afflicted and oppressed them. But whenever the judge died, they turned back and were more corrupt than their fathers, going after other gods, serving them and bowing down to them. They did not drop any of their practices or their stubborn ways. So the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he said, "Because this people have transgressed my covenant that I

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commanded their fathers and have not obeyed my voice, I will no longer drive out before them any of the nations that Joshua left when he died, in order to test Israel by them, whether they will take care to walk in the way of the Lord as their fathers did, or not.” So the Lord left those nations, not driving them out quickly, and he did not give them into the hand of Joshua.”

~ **Judges 2:11-23 (ESV)**

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