

Judges 2

Main Idea: When we forget God, life falls apart—but even then, God's covenant mercy refuses to quit.

When Victory Fades

The book of Joshua ends well. The land is taken. The enemies are all defeated. The promises have been fulfilled. Israel is blessed. But here's the sobering truth: Blessing is often dependent upon faithfulness. When the pressure eased and the battles ceased the urgency faded. And slowly... almost unnoticed... Israel's faith moved from passion to memory. That's where the Book of Judges begins.

Famous Judges

There are 12 judges who rescued Israel from its oppressors. I'm sure you've heard of Samson, Gideon, and possibly Deborah. These weren't perfect people. In fact, the judges included an assassin, someone who doubted God, and a sexually promiscuous man. But when they were submissive to God, God worked through them in amazing ways!

Covenant God in a Forgetful World

God never stopped being faithful. For more than 600 years—from Abraham to Joshua—God kept every promise He made. He never drifted. He never compromised. He never forgot. As long as Israel honored the covenant: God protected them, He led them, He provided for them. But when they wandered from God, life began to unravel. Not because God was vindictive, but because He was faithful. Covenant loyalty cuts both ways. God made a promise to Joshua, but now Joshua is long gone. The people forgot their side of the covenant.

What Changed?

In Judges, Israel goes from feared conquerors to frightened survivors. Why? "...another generation grew up who neither knew the *LORD* nor what He had done for Israel" (Judges 2:10). They knew the stories, but they never owned the faith – a faith that was inherited—but not embraced. That's one of the greatest dangers facing every generation. You can grow up around faith...without growing into faith. Secondhand faith never survives first-hand pressure.

Baal, Ashtoreth, and Modern Idols

Israel didn't just drift—they replaced God. They served Baal and Ashtoreth. This wasn't harmless spirituality. This was worship that celebrated: sexual exploitation, power, violence, and self-gratification. Sound distant? Replace the names and it feels very modern. We may not bow to statues, but we worship comfort, sexuality, success, control, and self.

111 Years Under Pressure

Judges covers 330 years. One-third of that time—111 years—Israel lived under oppression. Six enemies. Six cycles. Same pattern every time: sin, oppression, the people cry out, deliverance, repeat. Judges is not random chaos. It's a loop. It's a repetitive pattern. Even when the nation drifted, God's covenant Mercy refused to quit.

Family Night – Read Judges 2:6-23

- **Elementary School:** Ask, "How old was Joshua when he died? What did the people do after Joshua went to heaven? What did the Judges do for the nation? When the people came back to God, what did He do?"
- **Middle / High School:** Ask, "Why is it important to own your personal faithwalk and not rely on someone else? How might we know that ours is a 'second-hand faith'? What distractions can draw us away from true worship?"

Prayer: "Father, thank You for your covenant mercy. Help us remain loyal to You. Amen"

Velocity (Middle and High School Students)

Velocity: Meet this Wednesday, Jan. 21 at 6:30pm.

Winterblast – January 16-19.

Gravity: Starts back on Jan. 25th.

Today's Songs

Can't Help But Praise You.....Jordan Colle

Mighty Name of Jesus.....Hope Darst

Death Was Arrested.....Northpoint

"The Story" New Series

We cover Chapter 8 today. Books are \$5 in the lobby.

Wild West Round-Up

Sign Up in KidsJAM for pizza, games, and crafts; plus learn more about Moses. It all happens on Wednesday night, January 28. Fun starts at 6:00pm.

Father/Daughter Valentine Dance

The dance is February 6th at Pine Needle Plantation. Cost is \$35 per family. Please register online before February 1st so that we can provide an accurate headcount for the caterer.