

Judges Chapter 2 Part 7

We previously looked at connections between the book of Judges and the Exodus. We saw that is chapter 1 and in Judges 2:1.

Starting with Judges chapter 1

Judges 1:20 Then they gave Hebron to Caleb, as Moses had promised (spoken)...

Judges 2:1 And he (the Angel of the Lord) said, "I brought you up out of Egypt and led you into the land which I have sworn to your fathers

Judges 3:4 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.

These obvious references to the Exodus generation tie the book of Judges to previous history. There is a continuum. But there are less obvious threads that we will see. There is vocabulary and concepts that tie this book to previous history.

Judges 2:18 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; for the Lord was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who oppressed and afflicted them.

Judges Chapter 2 Part 7
Judges 2:17-23

The Lord raised up judges for them. The sense is that God put someone in charge. Throughout the book of Judges, the sons of Israel stray off course without a human in charge. They do not follow their real king, God, because they do not see Him nor His works. Only when there is a human deliverer do they respond, except in rare cases.

The Lord always takes the initiative. In grace, He raised up deliverers or military leaders to deliver them.

There is something to keep in mind. When God gives someone a task, He will equip that person. Whether that person makes use of the provision from God is up to that person. Will he or she walk by faith? Be prepared to see the Holy Spirit take a role in the book of Judges.

The Lord was with the judge. How was the Lord with the judge? This is a logical and obvious question that I almost missed. Of course, God is “with” him. But what does that mean? Are we talking Angel of the Lord (second person of the Trinity) or the Spirit of the Lord (third person of the Trinity)? If you don’t ask the right question, you may miss the riches of the text. This is intriguing. Could this mean the judge was somehow empowered by the Holy Spirit? In fact, surprisingly, the Holy Spirit is given to at least four of the judges. The text says so! Here is a table:

Judges Chapter 2 Part 7
Judges 2:17-23

Verse	Judge	Text (NASB)	Method
3:10	Othniel	“The Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he judged Israel....”	Came upon
6:34	Gideon	“So the Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon...”	Literally, “clothed Gideon”
11:29	Jephthah	“Now the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah...”	Came upon
13:25	Samson	“And the Spirit of the Lord began to stir him...”	Literally, “thrust or impel”
14:6	Samson	“The Spirit of the Lord came upon him mightily...”	Literally, “rushed upon him”
14:19	Samson	“Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon him mightily...”	Literally, “rushed upon him”
15:14	Samson	“And the Spirit of the Lord came upon him mightily...”	Literally, “rushed upon him”

Notice that the Holy Spirit came to Samson at least four times. This is not the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This is not the filling of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not “in” but came “upon” or clothed. In the Old Testament, God empowered individuals with the Holy Spirit for specific tasks. It was possible for believers to ask for this empowerment. It could also be lost, presumably due to continual sinning. Here is what L.S. Chafer said in his Systematic Theology:

“The Spirit came upon men for the accomplishment of divinely appointed undertakings reaching even to mechanical tasks and to works of art. Especially to be observed is the fact that there was no provision for, and no promise of, an abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the life

Judges Chapter 2 Part 7
Judges 2:17-23

of any Old Testament saint. In this truth is to be seen one of the most differentiating features of the Spirit's relationship in the Mosaic age, as compared to the present age. The term sovereign best describes the Spirit's relation to men of old. He came upon them and departed according to His sovereign good pleasure. In no instance did the faith of men determine the Spirit's actions." [Volume 6 page 71]

I said, previously, that the book of Judges is a book about spirituality. Mostly, the sons of Israel were rejecting any semblance of spirituality. Yet, not only is the Angel of the Lord, the pre-existent Christ active in the book of Judges, so is the Holy Spirit as I just mentioned. This surprised me. The point is, where sin abounds, grace abounds even more. Oh, wait! Paul said that in

Romans 5:20 the Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,

Here is a pertinent comment by Douglas Moo on Romans 5:20 that applies to our passage. "How many times, after reminding Israel of her blatant, repeated sin, do the prophets yet proclaim the willingness of God to forgive; indeed, his settled purpose to bless his people, in spite of themselves. In Christ, of course, we find the fulfilment of the promise of God's "superabounding" grace." God wants to bless you. Please let Him.

Just one more note on the Holy Spirit coming upon the judges. Note that three of the judges listed in the table above are in the Hebrews chapter 11 list of faith heroes. Barak is in the Hebrews chapter 11 list but not identified as receiving the Holy Spirit. Nonetheless, I suspect that each judge may have been "clothed" with the Holy Spirit to carry out God's tasking.

Delivered them from the hand of their enemies. God does the work. In the various deliverances, it is God who delivers.

Judges Chapter 2 Part 7
Judges 2:17-23

All the days of the judge. As long as there was a visible human leader, there was some semblance of peace.

The Lord was moved to pity. According to Robert Chisholm, the verb “moved to pity,” in Hebrew can be translated in several ways. Included are “be grieved, be comforted, regret, relent, change one’s mind.” He says that in this case it means “be moved to pity,” that is, “be grieved to the point where one extends help and thereby seeks to reverse a present condition.” God does not change. He is immutable. God acts in history based upon His character, His essence. He acts from His love for His chosen people with whom He has a covenant. He sees a need and tries to fulfil that need in grace. As R.B. Thieme Jr. said, Grace is everything God can do on the basis of Christ’s work on the cross.

Groaning. This noun is used only four times in the Old Testament. The first two times it is used in Exodus. Here we have another link to the Exodus generation through a word/concept. I think it is useful to look at those three other passages.

Exodus 2:23 Now it came about in the course of those many days that the king of Egypt died. And the sons of Israel sighed because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry for help because of their bondage rose up to God.

Exodus 2:24 So God heard their groaning; and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Exodus 2:25 God saw the sons of Israel, and God took notice of them.

Judges Chapter 2 Part 7
Judges 2:17-23

Exodus 6:5 Furthermore I have heard the groaning of the sons of Israel, because the Egyptians are holding them in bondage, and I have remembered My covenant.

Ezekiel 30:24 For I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon and put My sword in his hand; and I will break the arms of Pharaoh, so that he will groan before him with the groanings of a wounded man.

This last reference in the book of Ezekiel uses both the noun and the verb in relation to Pharaoh. It may seem like I am making a big deal out of a single word. Perhaps. But don't you think that someone who is intimately familiar with the Hebrew text would pick up on a word that is associated with Egypt, Pharaoh and the Exodus?

Robert Chisholm comments about parallels between the affliction under Egypt at the time of the Exodus and the affliction here in Judges. "The description of Israel's affliction is reminiscent of the Exodus account, which tells how the oppressive Egyptians (Exod. 3:9) caused the Israelites to groan (Exod. 2:24; 6:5)."

Don't forget what the Angel of the Lord said at the beginning of Judges chapter 2:1.

Judges 2:1 ...And he said, "I brought you up out of Egypt and led you into the land which I have sworn to your fathers; and I said, 'I will never break My covenant with you

There are repeated references to what happened at the Exodus. The fabric of Scripture is evident.

Judges Chapter 2 Part 7

Judges 2:17-23

Here let me go off on a tangent because I want to emphasize the parallels between the Jews and their memory of the Exodus and Jesus and His work on the cross and His resurrection.

The text of Judges does not apply to Christians. But there are principles embodied in the typology of Christ. Moses empowered by God, parted the waters of the Red Sea so that the children of Israel could cross over to the other side. Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, He opened the way for the resurrection of all believers.

In the book of Judges, the sons of Israel are reminded of God's work in the past on their behalf and the resulting covenant. This should have been motivation to worship God. Christians are reminded of Christ's past work on the cross and His resurrection. As Herman and other pastors have told us, there should be a motivation for the Christian to live by faith dependence on the Holy Spirit because we look forward to the resurrection and the Judgement Seat of Christ and rewards.

God burdened my heart to teach about resurrection. Perhaps someone was praying for this. I don't know. So I have taken my notes from R.B. Thieme Jr., Herman Mattox as well as notes from Robbie Dean's teaching in 1 Corinthians chapter 15.

The following quotes are from Robbie Dean's teaching [<https://deanbible.org/new-testament-menuitem/1-corinthians-menuitem>]. They were helpful in clarifying my understanding of resurrection.

Notes on Resurrection

1. The importance of the resurrection

“There are two crucial doctrines on which everything in Christianity depends: the virgin birth and the resurrection. If either of these two is lost then our faith is in vain, as Paul says in this chapter [1 Corinthians 15]; it is meaningless. Christianity, unlike all of the other world religions, is not founded on some philosophy, it is

Judges Chapter 2 Part 7
Judges 2:17-23

founded on a person and what that person did in space-time history. If we remove the virgin birth or the resurrection we have no Christian faith.”

“The resurrection is also crucial because it provides a visible victory over physical death. We know that physical death is not the penalty for sin.”

2. Importance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ (Herman Mattox <http://www.springvalleybiblechurch.org/Audio/Easter/notes/20110501Easter3.pdf>)
 - A. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is our assurance of our own resurrection at the rapture. 1 John 3:2-3
 - B. The resurrection of Jesus Christ sets the pattern for our resurrection. We will have a resurrected body just like His: incorruptible and never subject to death. 1 John 3:2
 - C. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is part of the gospel. 1 Corinthians 15:1-4
 - D. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is vital to our salvation. 1 Corinthians 15:12-17. It would be useless to believe in Jesus Christ if He remained dead. This is yet another aspect that separates Christianity from all other religions of the world.
 - E. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is crucial to the Ascension and Session of Jesus Christ for the victory in the invisible warfare. 1 Corinthians 15:20-25
 - F. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is proof of our justification. Romans 4:25
 - G. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is necessary for the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant, for the perpetuation of the line of

Judges Chapter 2 Part 7
Judges 2:17-23

David to sit on the throne of David. Romans 1:3-4; 2 Timothy 2:8

- H. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is necessary for the faithfulness of God where in Isaiah 53:10 He will crush Jesus Christ but will also prolong His days. This, through the resurrection.
- I. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the confidence of every believer in the future, therefore in living each day with no fear of death or after death. Romans 6:4; 1 Corinthians 6:14 therefore resurrection is the guarantee of ultimate sanctification. 1 Corinthians 15:20-23; Philippians 3:21
- J. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is also a pattern of our spiritual recovery. Every time we sin, results in temporal death but we are raised to new life by faith in the Holy Spirit.

3. Fact of the resurrection [R.B. Thieme Jr. from teaching in 1972]

“The fact of the resurrection is based upon the existence of the empty tomb and the competency of the witnesses. They would rather die than change their testimony about the resurrection. This is historical accuracy and competency of witnesses. The subsequent change of the disciples after the resurrection also indicates the validity of the resurrection. Before His death, they were afraid, despondent. After His death, the same thing continued. But after His resurrection, they were joyous and fearless. The existence of the Day of Pentecost and the first sermon ever preached in the Church Age was a sermon on resurrection. The observation of the first day of the week called the Lord’s day the very existence of the Christian church logically depends upon the resurrection. The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is a fact.

4. The nature of the resurrection. [R.B. Thieme Jr. from teaching in 1972]

Judges Chapter 2 Part 7
Judges 2:17-23

Jesus Christ in His resurrection body still had the scars and the nail prints in His hands and feet. Ps 22:16; 2 Chronicles 12:10; John 20:25-29. He also retained the scar of the wound in His side. John 20:25-29. Christ was recognized as the one who died and rose again by His disciples attested in 17 different appearances. However, after resurrection He could eat. Luke 24:42-42, although He did not depend upon food to sustain Him. Christ had a true body which could be felt. Matthew 28:9; Luke 24:39; John 20:17. His resurrection body could breathe. John 20:22. His resurrection body possessed flesh and bone. Luke 24:29-40. His resurrection body could walk through an open door or a closed door. Luke 24:36; John 20:19. He appeared and disappeared at will. Luke 24:17 (after resurrection). His body could move horizontally or vertically.

5. There are two resurrections and not one: John 5:24-29; Daniel 12:2; Revelation 20:6, 13? [R.B. Thieme Jr. from teaching in 1972]
 - A. The first resurrection involves the Lord Jesus Christ and believers only.
 - 1) The resurrection of Jesus Christ. Like a battalion review in 1 Corinthians 15, every man in his own battalion as opposed to every man in his own order. Jesus Christ is the first to be resurrected (Able Company) and seated at the right hand of the Father. 1 Corinthians 15:23; Romans 1:4; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 2 Thessalonians 2:8; 1 Peter 1:3.
 - 2) Baker company is the rapture of the church. 1 Corinthians 15:51-57.
 - 3) Charlie company, the Old Testament saints and the Tribulation martyrs. Daniel 12:13; Isaiah 26:19-20; Revelation 24:31

Judges Chapter 2 Part 7
Judges 2:17-23

4) Dog company the Millennial saints and those who survive the tribulation to enter the Millennium in physical bodies.

B. The second resurrection occurs at the end of the Millennium. It is a resurrection of all unbelievers since the beginning of time and judged and cast into the Lake of Fire forever and ever.

The point of this detour is that we have a motivation to continue in “good works” through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. We look forward to our resurrection and beyond. In these Old Testament passages, God emphasizes something physical done on behalf of the sons of Israel.

Judges 2:19 But it came about when the judge died, that they would turn back and act more corruptly than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them and bow down to them; they did not abandon their practices or their stubborn ways.

When the judge died. No more human leader. And the people apparently would not follow or worship something they could not see, God.

They would turn back. Instead of turning back to God, they turned away from Him. They turned to gods of wood and stone.

Act more corruptly. This Hebrew word first shows up in Genesis chapter 6:

Genesis 6:11 Now the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and the earth was filled with violence.

Judges Chapter 2 Part 7
Judges 2:17-23

Genesis 6:12 God looked on the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth.

By their attitudes which resulted in corrupt behavior, they qualified for divine discipline if not destruction.

Following other gods to serve them and bow down to them. Here we have the forms of idolatry repeated: 1) follow (walk or behavior), 2) serve them (service) and 3) bow down (reverence). These explain what corruption is in God's sight.

Abandon. This is not the same word translated earlier as abandon as in abandon God. This is more like to cause to fail.

Stubborn. This word was used in Ezekiel chapters 2 and 3 as descriptions of the Jews in captivity that Ezekiel was told to address.

Judges 2:20 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,

Anger of the Lord. This is a repetition of the phrase in verse 14, "the nose of the Lord burned." The anthropomorphism (God has a nose) which becomes an anthropopathism (anger).

Judges 2:21 I also will no longer drive out before them any of the nations which Joshua left when he died,

No longer drive out. This has already been said twice before. The first was said by the Angel of the Lord in verse 3. The word there was garash, meaning simply to drive out. However, this is a different word than used

Judges Chapter 2 Part 7
Judges 2:17-23

here in verse 21 and again in verse 23, yarash. This means, “destroy someone so that someone else can possess his property, ...” Combined with the next verse, God is saying, I will not destroy them. They will not be removed.

Nations which Joshua left when he died. The job was not complete when Joshua died. He conquered the territory but did not completely remove the indigenous population. That was left for the individual tribes to do in Judges chapter 1. Since they did not complete the job and since they quickly took up worship of the gods of wood and stone, but allow the people of the land to stay.

Judges 2:22 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.”

In order to test Israel. In our lives, God has left many people to test us. We grow through testing and suffering. We learn of God’s grace and provision. We learn to trust Him for it. I knew a pastor in Tallahassee Florida when I was a student at Florida State University that was asked by a new Christian how to grow quickly as a Christian. The answer was to ask God for lots of suffering. The idea was not to seek their failure but to seek their success in just trusting God.

Judges 2:23 So the Lord allowed those nations to remain, not driving them out quickly; and He did not give them into the hand of Joshua.

The Lord allowed to remain. God is in charge of history. The word means to let remain.

Nations. Divine institution #4, nations are authorized by God. When man tried to unite to impress God by building the tower of Babel, He scattered

Judges Chapter 2 Part 7
Judges 2:17-23

the people and caused the development of a variety of languages and the establishment of individual nations.

Not give. Our Hebrew word natan, to give. In this case, God did not give Joshua success in clearing out all the strongholds of resistance.

Now let us look the repetitions we find in verses 11-23. It is almost a chiasm, but not quite. When I saw this, I thought there was something wrong. Exactly. There is. For lack of a better term, I called it a broken chiasm. Remember a chiasm is a narrative in two parts. The second part mirrors the first part in reverse order. It is like A-B-C-B'-A'. The "C" being in the middle is emphasized.

Judges Chapter 2 Part 7
Judges 2:17-23

The Broken Chiasm of Judges Chapter 2

<p>V11: Then the sons of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord and served the Baals, V12: 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; thus they provoked the Lord to anger. V13: So they forsook the Lord and served Baal and the Ashtaroath.</p>	<p>V23: So the Lord allowed those nations to remain, not driving them out quickly; and He did not give them into the hand of Joshua. v22: 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.” V21: I also will no longer drive out before them any of the nations which Joshua left when he died,</p>
<p>V14: The anger of the Lord burned against Israel, and He gave them into the hands of 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.</p>	<p>V20: 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,</p>
<p>V15: 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. V17: 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 in obeying the commandments of the Lord; they did not do as their fathers.</p>	<p>V19: But it came about when the judge died, that they would turn back and act more corruptly than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them and bow down to them; they did not abandon their practices or their stubborn ways.</p>
<p>V16: Then the Lord raised up judges who delivered them from the hands of those who plundered them.</p>	<p>V18: 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 because of those who oppressed and afflicted them.</p>

Judges Chapter 2 Part 7 Judges 2:17-23

The repetition reminds us that what follows in the book of Judges is a cycle that is explained here in chapter 2 and the first few verses of chapter 3. It looks like verse 16 is out of place. God's grace is undeserved. God raising up judges is undeserved grace from God.

Here is the cycle as depicted by Ryrie:

