

## Judges Chapter 2 Part 5

We will start with an overlap of what we covered last week. We start with the new generation.

**Judges 2:10 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.**

**Gathered to their fathers.** This is a way of indicating death. Let me expand on what I said last week. There is a series of events that occur around death. Being gathered to their fathers is just one of those events. Remember, this is before Jesus Christ went to the cross when everyone went to Sheol/Hades. Unbelievers went to Torments and believers to Paradise/Abraham's bosom. Gesenius says "gathered to ones fathers or people" was "used of entering into Hades, where the Hebrews regarded their ancestors as being gathered together. This gathering to one's fathers, or one's people, is distinguished both from death and burial, Gen 25:8; 35:29; 2 Ki 22:20."

**Genesis 25:8 Abraham breathed his last and died in a ripe old age, an old man and satisfied with life; and he was gathered to his people.**

So in Genesis 25:8, Abraham dies and then is gathered to his people in Sheol.

**Genesis 25:17 These are the years of the life of Ishmael, one hundred and thirty-seven**

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**years; and he breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people.**

In Genesis 25:17, Ishmael dies and is gathered to his people.

**Genesis 35:29 Isaac breathed his last and died and was gathered to his people, an old man of ripe age; and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.**

Again, Isaac died and was gathered to his people. His sons Esau and Jacob then buried his body.

So dying involves a series of events: 1) breathing his last, 2) died, 3) gathered to his people and 4) buried. In some cases the word “slept” is used instead of “gathered”

**2 Chronicles 21:1 Then Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David, and Jehoram his son became king in his place.**

The point to remember is that after death, before Christ, everyone went to one of the compartments of Sheol. So everyone was there.

OK, since I am on the topic, just a couple of points on the compartments of Sheol. Partly this is from Herman’s study of Matthew chapter 24.

1. Paradise/Abraham’s Bosom: Luke 23:43, Luke 16:22. This was for Old Testament believers only. It is currently empty since the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paradise was removed to heaven. But the Old Testament believers have not been “resurrected” with a resurrection body. That will not take place until the end of the Tribulation.

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2. Great Chasm: Luke 16:26. This was a separation between Paradise/Abraham's bosom and Torments.
3. Torments: Luke 16:23. This is the location of the dead unbelievers who are awaiting their final judgment at the great white throne and eventual location in the Lake of Fire.

**Arose.** This means that they are now in charge. After WWII, the "Boomers" arose in the USA. Now that the "Boomers" are dying out, "Millennials" are arising in the USA. The "Boomers" tend to know God and have been taught God's deliverance in WWII. The "Millennials" neither know God (in general) nor have they seen or been taught God's deliverance in war.

**Did not know the Lord.** Did the parents not evangelize their children?

**Nor yet the work.** Some people come to know the Lord through evangelization. Others may come to know the Lord through His word or His works in their lives.

As a result of lack of knowledge (they did not know God) they had a lack of success:

**Hosea 4:6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being My priest. Since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.**

**Isaiah 5:13 Therefore My people go into exile for their lack of knowledge; And their honorable men are famished, And their multitude is parched with thirst.**

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Now let us read Deuteronomy chapter 6. That is pertinent to our study of why the children did not know the Lord or His work.

Note in Judges 2:11-13 the words “served” and “forsook.” They are in a type of chiasmic structure. That means they repeat as A-B-C-B’-A.’ In this case A and A’ are “served” and B and B’ are “forsook.” This kind of a structure emphasizes what is in the middle, in this case “C.” God brought the Israelites out of Egypt. Then the Israelites 1) followed other gods, 2) bowed themselves down to other gods 3) as a result the Lord was “provoked.”

**Judges 2:11 Then the sons of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord and served the Baals,**

**Israel did evil.** Here is a good explanation of evil from Robbie Dean:

“The word used here for evil is the Hebrew word *ra*. It can mean something that is just destructive, a non-moral sense of something that is just disagreeable, bad or doesn't work; but it also, in most places, has a spiritual sense and it illustrates the violation of the will of God. It is evil because God says it is evil, it is evil in the sight of the Lord. It is focused on idolatry—“and they served the Baals.” The root of all evil is the transfer of allegiance and priority from God to something else in the created order. This is what happens over and over.”

Interesting to note that this includes the definite article: “the evil.”

Also note that this word evil is used throughout the book of Judges.

**In the sight of the Lord.** Literally in the eye of Yahweh. This is an anthropomorphism. The writer gives God a human body part like eye, hand, mouth, etc. to help us understand the function of God. In actuality, God is omniscient, all-knowing. This did not surprise God. He already knows what is going to happen in the Millennium. Later we will encounter the nose of God. You won't see that in the English, but it is

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there in the Hebrew. Again, Hebrew needs concrete things that can be seen or heard or touched to make something real.

**Served.** The word means to serve or to be a slave. Continue to note this is a spiritual book. Here Israel served in the physical world through idol worship something that is taking place in the spiritual world. Again, this reminds me so much of the Gospel of John chapter 4. Jesus has food that His disciples do not know about or understand. As Jesus said, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work.” In this context, “served” means “worshipped.”

**Baals.** This is in the plural to indicate this is not just the Canaanite god Baal, but the whole pantheon of Canaanite gods. Typically, they worship idols made of stone or wood. Man-made sticks and stones that can kill spirituality.

**Judges 2:12 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.**

**They forsook.** The word means to leave or desert. As we read in Deuteronomy, the parents, the father in particular, was to teach the sons about God. They deserted the God of their fathers, the God that chose them, the God that did amazing things for them.

The “Exodus” generation was witness to some of the most amazing acts of God. But the first generation died in the desert. The second generation, the children, went into the Land. When they died off, their children were not taught about God. Instead, they went after the gods of the land.

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Israel is ever reminded of what God did in Egypt for His chosen people. All He wants is for them to trust Him so He can bless them. Read Ezekiel chapter 20.

Same situation for us. God wants to bless us. In the New Testament there are so many blessings God did for us the chosen. Start with the 34 blessings. One of those blessings in being positionally in Christ.

**Bowed themselves down to them** [gods of the indigenous people]. Bowed down is to prostrate oneself before a monarch or superior. This is worship. They are worshiping an idol, a nothing.

According to Robert Chisholm, “These deities were especially attractive to Israel, for they promised their worshipers agricultural prosperity, abundant offspring, and national security.” From a pagan perspective, each land has its own god who must be served in order to be prosperous. 2 Kings 17:24-41.

**Provoked to anger.** That is what the Hebrew means, provoked to anger. This is an anthropathism which is different from the anthropomorphism mentioned earlier. God doesn’t change. He doesn’t get “angry.” This is a human emotion. An anthropathism is attributing to God a human emotion to communicate his His character as it applies to this situation. Their actions went counter to God’s integrity (His righteousness and justice). As a result, since they are His chosen people, He disciplines them to bring them back into fellowship. Each of us as Christians is familiar with this routine. We sin. We get disciplined. We return to faith dependence.

**Judges 2:13 So they forsook the Lord and served Baal and the Ashtaroth.**

Here is repeated “forsook” and “served” in the reverse order that they are presented in verses 11-12 which emphasizes the Exodus work of God.

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There is a litany of words expressing Israel's negative volition toward God:

Verse 10: who did not know the Lord, nor yet the work

Verse 11: did evil in the sight of the Lord and served the Baals

Verse 12: they forsook the Lord, followed other gods, bowed themselves down to them, provoked the Lord

Verse 13: So they forsook the Lord and served Baal and the Ashtaroth

L. S. Chafer once told his students that they should be pioneers. His students should expand knowledge of the Bible. So, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the doctrine of reversionism that was developed by Thieme and expanded on by others. This is one way to describe what happened during the times of the judges.

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## ***Reversionism***

These points are based upon the work of R. B. Thieme Jr, Robert Dean and Warren Doud (Gracenotes.info). I have edited the notes extensively to better reflect the audience at Spring Valley Bible Church. In some places I have kept the original wording since I could not improve on the impact. The point is to give a term for what happened to the sons of Israel in the book of Judges.

1. Reversionism is an act of reversing or backing up or going in the opposite way, or a state of being so turned.
2. Reversionism is the act of reverting to a former state, habit, belief, or practice of sinning. Reversionism is the status of the believer who fails to execute the plan of God for the Church Age or in the case of Judges in the Age of the Jews. He returns to his pre-salvation modus operandi and modus vivendi. Reversionism must be distinguished from carnality.

Carnality is an absolute which describes the believer out of fellowship with God and in a state of sin under the control of the sin nature like Romans chapter 7

Reversionism is relative. It is a relative state of apostasy and decline described by the various categories of retrogression. In reversionism, you are perpetually carnal, constantly operating in the realm of the sin nature.

3. There eight are stages in reversionism. We start off with our spiritual advance and then we start into the decline.

### **A. Reaction and distraction.**

**Romans 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will**

**of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.**

The presence of reactor factors in the life result in distraction from doctrine. These include:

Wrong Priorities

Rejection of authority

Personality conflict

Lack of Objectivity

others

- B. **Frantic search for happiness.** We start shifting our focus and value in life away from doctrine and away from God and on to the details of life.

**2 Timothy 3:1 But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come.**

**2 Timothy 3:2 For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy,**

**2 Timothy 3:3 unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good,**

**2 Timothy 3:4 treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,**

**2 Timothy 3:5 holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these**

- C. **Soul poverty (Robbie Dean) or Operation Boomerang (Thieme).** We see this in Psalm 106:15. Let us read the entire Psalm. Herman asked us to read a Psalm as homework. So let us accomplish some homework during the study period. In particular, note verse 15 when we get there:

**Psalm 106:15 So He gave them their request, But sent a wasting disease among them** (literally leanness or wasting into their soul, in other words, soul poverty. This word is used only three times in the Old Testament. This is the first of those usages).

- D. **Emotional revolt of the soul.** The soul is made up of five components and they all interrelate: self-consciousness, the seat of our identity, who we are; mentality, which is where we think, reason; volition, where we make our choices; conscience, where our norms and standards reside; and we have emotion, the responder to what goes on in the mentality of the soul. Our actions are to be initiated by thinking, not by emoting. We think, and the result is that our emotions follow along based on what we think. What happens in emotional revolt is that emotions start driving the soul and you start making decisions based on how you feel. The emotions start becoming the criterion for life and so you start making decisions based on how it is going to make you feel. That is enslavement to emotion. This leads to an intensification of the whole process of reversionism. You are now down to the point where you are emoting all the time and it is very hard for you to

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concentrate and think and use doctrine, so you become ingrained in negative volition. At this point it is more and more difficult for you to ever get a focus on the Bible. In fact, what happens is that whenever you hear doctrine you immediately reject it because it doesn't make you feel good.

Emotional revolt of the soul is described in

**Philippians 3:18 For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ,**

**Philippians 3:19 whose end is destruction (sin unto death), whose god is their appetite (Sometimes translated stomach or belly.), and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things.**

**Philippians 3:19 (God's Word translation) In the end they will be destroyed. Their own emotions are their god, and they take pride in the shameful things they do. Their minds are set on worldly things.**

Look around us today. What do we see? People driven by their emotions. I sometimes use the phrase, "sex, drugs and rock and roll" to describe this. People are focused on what makes them feel good.

- E. **Blackout of the soul.** At this stage the Scripture says that our souls become enshrouded in darkness again, and rather than operating on the truth of God's Word we have sucked in so much false doctrine that we are walking in darkness again.

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Ephesians 4:17 gives the technical Greek word for the blackout of the soul: MATAIOTES. MATAIOTES is a vacuum that sucks in false doctrine.

**Ephesians 4:17 So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind,**

**Ephesians 4:18 being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;**

**Ephesians 4:19 and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.**

Here are some notes from Kenneth Wuest that may be helpful:

For Ephesians 4:17, futility (NASB) or “vanity” in other translations. “”Vanity” is mataios, “that which is in vain, aimless, resultless, futile.”

For Ephesians 4:18, ““Darkened” is the perfect participle of skotoo, “to darken or blind the mind.” The perfect tense speaks of a process completed in past time having present results. Paul uses the perfect tense here to show the finished and permanent result of the blinding of the mind by sin.”

For Ephesians 4:19 callous “The word “blindness” is porosis, “hardness.” The word is formed from poros, “hard skin or induration.” It means literally “the covering with a callous.” The

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word occurs in Mark 3:5; Romans 11:25, and here, and is used of mental or moral hardening. These Gentiles were alienated from God through their culpable moral and spiritual ignorance and through the hardening of their hearts.”

- F. **Scar Tissue.** This in turn produces a situation in the soul called the hardness of the heart in Scripture. We saw that in Ephesians 4:19. It produces calluses of scar tissue on the soul so that you become less and less sensitive to God's leading in your life. So now to get your attention God can't just tap you on the shoulder, He has to pick up a baseball bat and hit you soundly between the eyes just to get your attention. What happens is you go further and further in negative volition and the hardness of heart until that baseball bat doesn't even phase you, and as soon as God stops hitting you with the baseball bat you say, I managed to survive that so I guess life is going to work out after all. You have distorted the whole practice.
- G. Scar tissue of the soul leads to **reverse process reversionism** when you are so sunk in pagan thought that you don't know light from darkness anymore, right from wrong, you have totally reversed everything and you are living, operating and thinking no different from any unbeliever.

When we get to look at Israel, they have gone through this process and so God is going to respond to their apostasy. Judges 2:14, "And the anger of the Lord burned against Israel." Life is going to be miserable for them. Everything in between these words and verse 20 is a description of God's anger. The anger of the Lord is a function of His justice, His integrity, and the operation of divine grace. In the middle of this we will see that God still deals with the apostasized, pagan Israelites in grace, v. 18. The interesting thing about this is that there is no repentance in Israel when God raises up the judge.