

JUDGES

Breaking the Yo-Yo Sin Cycle

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Main idea: how to keep from repeating the same sins over

INTRODUCTION

TELL STORY OF PRODIGAL SON

How did the story continue in years to come?

What if a couple months later son left again, then home in a few more months?

Then did it again, and again for rest of life

What think of son then?

What think father should do?

Not as nice a story, certainly not as popular

TRANSITION

That's what book of JUDGES is like

Not too popular either!

Good book to read on stormy winter night when depressed!

DARK AGES of Israelite people

Sad book, opposite of Joshua

REVIEW up to this point

Book theme

Chart of ups and down

JUDGES: defeat and deliverance

Followed by another defeat and deliverance, and another....

Cycles of sin...

I. CAUSE OF THE CYCLES 1-2

A. FAILURE (POLITICAL) 1

GENTILES still in land, not all driven out

Used for slave labor

Gradually grew stronger

Jewish men married pagan wives

Children raised to worship her idols

Before long Jews living like pagans they defeated

B. FAITHLESSNESS (SPIRITUAL) 2

7 cycles (downward spirals)

1. Compromise

COMPROMISE gradual

Land eroded into river slowly

Drapes fade in living room, don't notice right away

Our lives gradually drift from God

2. Disobedience

Judges 2:11 Then the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord and served the Baals. 12 They forsook the Lord, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of Egypt. They followed and worshiped various gods of the peoples around them. They provoked the Lord to anger 13 because they forsook him and served Baal and the Ashtoreths.

GOD PUNISHES SIN – wickedness of human heart clearly seen in Judges

3. Bondage

Judges 2:14 In his anger against Israel the Lord handed them over to raiders who plundered them. He sold them to their enemies all around, whom they were no longer able to resist.

8 to 40 years at a stretch

4. Misery

Judges 2:15 Whenever Israel went out to fight, the hand of the Lord was against them to defeat them, just as he had sworn to them. They were in great distress.

Hit bottom, helpless

5. Deliverance

Judges 2:16 Then the Lord raised up judges, who saved them out of the hands of these raiders.

'Judge' (deliverer) raised up

Patriots and religious leaders both

George Washington

15 judges, sometimes 2 or 3 together

6. Peace, Rest

20 to 80 years of rest

1. Compromise again...

Judges 2:17 Yet they would not listen to their judges but prostituted themselves to other gods and worshiped them. Unlike their fathers, they quickly turned from the way in which their fathers had walked, the way of obedience to the Lord's commands. 18 Whenever the Lord raised up a judge for them, he was with the judge and saved them out of the hands of their enemies as long as the judge lived; for the Lord had compassion on them as they groaned under those who oppressed and afflicted them. 19 But when the judge died, the people returned to ways even more corrupt than those of their fathers, following other gods and serving and worshiping them. They refused to give up their evil practices and stubborn ways.

TRANSITION

What is true of them PHYSICALLY true of us SPIRITUALLY

APPLY TO US TODAY

Us like that as well - Cycles: close to God, sin, away, repent, back close, sin, away
How many times have you been like that in life?
YO-YO spiritual life, up and down, up and down,

1. compromise, disobedience
2. bondage, misery
3. repentance, deliverance
4. peace, rest

1. COMPROMISE, DISOBEDIENCE

DRIFT FROM GOD

Judges: things going OK so forget need for God

-TOO BUSY

Use time for self, make money, enjoy life
Don't see need for God so ignore Him

-TOO SATISFIED

Everything well, safe, secure, don't need God

COMPROMISE

Judges: keep outer form of 'religion' but play around with sin as well

INDIA Compromised with sin: homosexuality

Materialism

How people treat others

CHRISTIANS Go through motions out of guilt

Tempted to play around with sin seems like 'fun'

FALSE GODS, IDOLATRY

Baal and other false gods everywhere, many of them

IDOLS TODAY which we put before God, turn to for needs, worship

-SELF, pride, ego,
satisfy self,
entitlement,
expectations for self

-MATERIALISM, things,
home,
savings,
\$ for needs met,
security,
feel good about self

-OTHER PEOPLE,
athletes,
singers,
actors, 'American idol',

rich
politicians!

INDIA Security here, needs met
Faith in, depend on for future

-MATE, FRIEND Expect them to meet all needs
Expect them to make us happy
Depend on them instead of God

SENSUALITY & LUST

Judges: idol worship and paganism VERY sensual, sex great part of it all

EVERYTHING ABOUT SENSUALITY TODAY

-SEX - Everywhere today: computers, TV, movies

-FOOD - Idol, to meet needs, medicate

Gluttony

Turn to instead of God

Can't resist, turn from, say no to temptation

2. BONDAGE, MISERY

Judges: to other nations around them

US: Consequences of sin
Emptiness of not living for God
Demonizing open selves up to
Separation from God and His joy, peace, etc.

Stay in it WAY longer than need to
-don't want to give up the sin/'pleasure'
-pride keeps us from yielding to God

3. REPENTANCE, DELIVERANCE

Finally so bad, convicted, we confess (admit sin, agree with God about it)

When we repent, confess = God there to carry and restore us!

4. PEACE, REST

GREAT being back with God!

1. COMPROMISE, DISOBEDIENCE

DRIFT FROM GOD

COMPROMISED

FALSE GODS, IDOLATRY

SENSUALITY & LUST

CYCLES CONTINUE!!!!

TRANSITION

7 cycles (downward spirals) over 400 years

Between Joshua and kings – Saul, David, Solomon

II. COURSE OF THE CYCLES 3-16

BONDAGE TO	CHAPTER	SIN	YEARS OF BONDAGE	DELIVERER	PEACE
Mesopotamia	Judges 3	Idolatry, intermarriage	8 yrs	Othniel	40 yrs
Moabites	Judges 3	Immorality, idolatry	18 yrs	Ehud, Shamgar	80 yrs
Canaanites	Judges 4-5	Departed from God	20 yrs	Deborah, Barak	40 yrs
Midianites	Judges 6-8	Departed from God	7 yrs	Gideon	40 yrs
Civil War	Judges 9	Departed from God	3 yrs	Tola, Jair	45 yrs
Ammonites	Judges 10	Idolatry, great apostasy	18 yrs	Jehthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon	31 yrs
Philistines	Judg. 13-16	Departed from God	40 yrs	Samson	

DELIVERER: SAMSON

Special child, promised by God

Blessed, strengthened by God – killed lion by hand

Philistine wife, sexual attraction, not following God

Later with Philistine prostitute

Taunted her/them with strength, couldn't capture him

Gave up secret about hair, strength, blinded, ground grain

COMPROMISE, DISOBEDIENCE

Physical appearance #1

Sex, lust main goal

BONDAGE, MISERY

Blind, grinding grain like ox

REPENTANCE

Hit botrtom! - REPENTED

Gave up own life destroying many Philistines

PEACE, REST

TRANSITION

I. CAUSES of the cycles

II. COURSES of the cycles

III. CONDITIONS in the cycles

HOW TO STOP THE CYCLES?

Judges: to other nations around them

1. WATCH THE SMALL DRIFTING

Erosion of river bank

Fading of living room curtains

Prodigal son: mind wanders, appeal of 'outside' grows

Turn from it, think of Father and provision here
Remember how awful it was when away!
(we think this time different, better – never is!)
US: remember, learn from past mistakes, misery
Alert to ‘little’ drifting of heart, affections

Hebrews 2:12 *We must pay more careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away.*

HEARD = Remember TRUTH, THE WORD
Remember this lesson from Judges
Remember solution to cycles of sin

2. STAY CLOSE TO THE FATHER

Prodigal son: develop close love relationship W/ Father
When drift, not as close put him first again
US: QUALITY TIME WITH God each day....

Philippians 3:7-10 *But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. 8 What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. ... 10 I want to know Christ*

KNOW = intimacy, personal relationship
Takes quality time
Takes quantity time
Takes openness, honesty, vulnerability

3. RESIST THE APPEALS OF THE WORLD

Prodigal son: needs met ‘out there’ – fun, satisfaction,
Replace with fellowship, joys in father’s house
US: lie that ‘out there’ is better than in here!
Replace with fellowship, joys in Father’s house

Hebrews 12:1-2 *Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.*

PATIENCE, PERSEVERANCE, don’t quit
Race not easy but keep going
Fix eyes on final prize/goal to keep going
“well done my good and faithful servant”

2 *Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

HOW to keep going? Eyes on Jesus, not world, temptation, PETER: eyes on Jesus walking on water

JESUS endured cross by looking to future victory in heaven
Same for us...

HOW TO SHORTEN THE CYCLES?

Prodigal son: while walking down road turn around and come home

Can't always stay as close as we should, but as soon as even a little away

CONFESS SIN

Don't make excuses, blame, justify, etc.

Do humble self and come back right away

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

CONCLUSION

Where are you on the cycle right now?

GROUP, INDIVIDUAL PRAYER TO COME BACK NOW....

**PEACE
REST**

**COMPROMISE
DISOBEDIENCE**

**REPENTANCE
DELIVERANCE**

**BONDAGE
MISERY**



