

GOD'S GRACE – PART 1

--JUDGES 2:16-3:6--

INTRODUCTION:

All that we have covered so far in the book of Judges has been an introduction, preparing us for the rest of the book, setting the stage for the coming of the judges. The author wants us to understand the condition that Israel was in before introducing us to the judges. In the rest of chapter 2 the author gives us a summary of the rest of the book, he explains to us how God will use the judges that He raises up and what the result will be for each judge and how that will affect their region.

As we begin to look at this summary of the book that we will be covering in the latter half of chapter two we will also discover another aspect of God's character. The act of raising up judges is an act of God's grace brought about by His love and compassion for the people of Israel. Remember that the definition of grace is God giving sinners what they do not deserve. We will see that Israel by their behavior, by their apostasy, they do not deserve to be delivered from their oppressors, but God in grace raises up judges to give them the deliverance that is not deserved because of His love and compassion for them.

I. GRACE GIVEN (Judges 2:16-18)

- a. The first verse of this passage which gives us a _____ of what we are about to read in the rest of this book begins with an action of God.
- b. First, this is _____ in the face of the most appalling unfaithfulness. (Exodus 24:3; 6-8)
- c. Joshua then led them into the land of Canaan and the LORD fulfilled all the promise to the people of Israel by giving them the _____ through Joshua. (Joshua 24:22-24)
- d. But then, we learned last week that when the last of the elders of Joshua's generation died, the people of Israel _____ exactly what they vowed they would not do.
- e. Second, this grace poured out on the people of Israel by God is an act of _____.
- f. Third, the grace of God that we see in this passage is a grace that _____.

- g. Fourth and finally, this grace was _____ and scorned, which brings us to another persistent theme in this summary that the author gives us leading into the main portion of the book.

II. GRACE SCORNED (Judge 2:17-19)

- a. God's grace was abused and scorned by the people of Israel; they were willfully _____ toward the God who poured out His grace on them.
- b. The _____ that appears in these verses has commonly been described as circular.
- c. This period of history, the time of the judges was characterized by sheer, mind-boggling, willful persistence in self-destructive _____.
- d. According to both the Old and the New Testaments, willful sin is an abuse of God's grace that is without _____.
(Numbers 15:30-31; Hebrews 10:26-31)

CONCLUSION:

This morning we have looked at two characteristics that become themes in the book of Judges, the first was the characteristic of God's grace that He poured out on the people of Israel because of His compassion for them in their distress. The second characteristic that is seen in this book is the persistent willfulness of the people of Israel, God pours out His grace and they turn their back on His grace and go after other gods, bowing down to them and serving them, becoming more and more corrupt with each passing generation.

This characteristic of persistent willfulness or defiance still exists today in our world. The author of Hebrews spoke of it in the passage that we just looked at where he spoke of people willfully sinning after receiving the truth. God's grace is a precious gift to be treasured, purchased with the death of Jesus Christ, do not abuse it, do not scorn it, do not go on willfully sinning. Come to the Lord Jesus Christ in true repentance believing that His death and resurrection make God's gift of grace available to you.