

# OUR GOD'S FAILURES & FAITHFULNESS

## STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF JUDGES

Part 3 — “Partial Obedience & Worldly Sorrow” — May 25, 2025

### Introduction: Discipline, Sorrow, & Repentance

“...it is very easy to make a Welshman cry, but it needs an earthquake to make him change his mind.”—D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

**Main Point:** God’s discipline in our lives is intended to bring us to genuine \_\_\_\_\_ and not just to produce feelings of worldly \_\_\_\_\_ or regret.

### Judges 1:1-2:5

This portion of Judges serves as the first introduction to the book. It functions to link all that follows with what has come before in the book of Joshua. It also highlights the failings of the tribes of Israel to obey the Word of the Lord and to faithfully continue the conquest of Canaan that had begun under the leadership of Joshua.

#### Observations:

1. The Lord is always \_\_\_\_\_ to the people according to His promises to them.

- The tribes inquire of the Lord and He answers them.

Judges 1:1-2—<sup>1</sup> After the death of Joshua, the people of Israel inquired of the Lord, “Who shall go up first for us against the Canaanites, to fight against them?” <sup>2</sup> The Lord said, “Judah shall go up; behold, I have given the land into his hand.”

- Israel has success in battle just as He promised.

Judges 1:4—Then Judah went up and the Lord gave the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand, and they defeated 10,000 of them at Bezek.

- He continues to be “with” them even as they begin to rely upon their own strength (1:19,22).

2. \_\_\_\_\_ is highlighted from among the tribes for carrying on the conquest of Canaan.

- They exercise leadership while also cooperating with other tribes and groups (1:3, 16-17, 21).
- They faithfully carry out the command the Lord had given regarding the conquest (Deut. 7:2)

Judges 1:17a—And Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they defeated the Canaanites who inhabited Zephath and devoted it to destruction.

3. The three mini-narratives in the section hint at the \_\_\_\_\_ compromises that Israel begins to make.

*The Defeat of Adoni-Bezek (1:4-7) → Cultural \_\_\_\_\_*

⇒ Having defeated the “Lord of Bezek,” they did to him as he had done to others he had defeated in battle.

“...the purpose of the “eye for an eye” instruction was to prevent the escalation of violence, not continue or exacerbate it; [this] suggests that the retribution signals the accommodation of the Israelites to Canaanite practices.”—Boda & Conway

*Caleb’s Vow & Achsah’s Request (1:11-15) → Failure to \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord*

⇒ Although Caleb and his forces defeated some of the leaders in Hebron, the text does not say that the city was “struck down” or “devoted to destruction,” hinting at a qualified success. In the following action, Caleb vows to give his daughter as a prize for anyone who could capture Debir.

“Without inquiring of God, Caleb offers his own daughter in a desperate attempt to motivate someone, anyone, to destroy the town, apparently because he is disappointed in YHWH who did not “give” it into his hands.”—Boda & Conway

⇒ Othniel is introduced as an important military figure and his wife, Achsah, is described as responding to her father’s gift to her with further petition rather than disappointment.

“Achsa’s method of obtaining land models the approach Caleb *should* have used in his disappointment with YHWH...[she] does not given in...nor does she attempt to bribe anyone...Thus her actions act as an implicit critique of Caleb.”

—Boda & Conway

***Joseph's Capture of Bethel (1:22-26) → Self-\_\_\_\_\_***

⇒ Men from the tribe of Joseph scout the city and make a secret agreement with one of its residents who gives them information that allows them to capture it.

“The language here has clear overtones of making a...covenant with the man, in spite of direct admonitions from YHWH...Joseph starts out with YHWH's enabling presence and conquers the city, but the victory is tainted by disobedience and lack of trust.” —Boda & Conway

**4. The \_\_\_\_\_ nature of the conquest is increasingly emphasized.**

- The Lord's presence is said to be “with” them even as they fail to actively look to Him and experience setbacks (1:19).
- Ironically, their list of failings grows even as they themselves increase in strength.  
Judges 1:28—When Israel grew strong, they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but did not drive them out completely.
- Eventually, the conquest begins to be reversed.

Judges 1:34—The Amorites pressed the people of Dan back into the hill country, for they did not allow them to come down to the plain.

**5. The Lord came personally to \_\_\_\_\_ the people with their sin.**

- In spite of God's presence among them & His promises to them, they had not obeyed His instructions regarding the conquest of the land.  
Judges 2:2—‘...you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall break down their altars.’ But you have not obeyed my voice. What is this you have done?
- For rejecting His provision, they would now experience the consequences of their rejection of Him & His Word:
  - (1) He would no longer \_\_\_\_\_ their enemies for them.
  - (2) Their enemies would be a continual sources of \_\_\_\_\_ and difficulty.
  - (3) The gods of their enemies would become a \_\_\_\_\_ to them.
- Although the people weep over God's judgment and sacrifice to Him, He does not relent or change His mind.

### **Applying the Text**

**1. Israel's subtle compromises with sin and their tendency towards self-reliance serve as a \_\_\_\_\_ to us.**

Heb. 3:12-13—<sup>12</sup>Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. <sup>13</sup>But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

**2. God has given to us His very great and precious promises. Do we \_\_\_\_\_ ourselves of them?**

2 Pet. 2:3-4—<sup>3</sup>His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, <sup>4</sup>by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire

**3. When \_\_\_\_\_ with our sin, what will be our response?**

2 Cor. 7:10-11a—<sup>10</sup>For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death. <sup>11</sup>For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you

# OUR GOD'S FAILURES & FAITHFULNESS

## STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF JUDGES

Part 3 — “Partial Obedience & Worldly Sorrow” — May 25, 2025

### Introduction: Discipline, Sorrow, & Repentance

“...it is very easy to make a Welshman cry, but it needs an earthquake to make him change his mind.”—D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

**Main Point:** God’s discipline in our lives is intended to bring us to genuine repentance and not just to produce feelings of worldly sorrow or regret.

### Judges 1:1-2:5

This portion of Judges serves as the first introduction to the book. It functions to link all that follows with what has come before in the book of Joshua. It also highlights the failings of the tribes of Israel to obey the Word of the Lord and to faithfully continue the conquest of Canaan that had begun under the leadership of Joshua.

#### Observations:

1. The Lord is always available to the people according to His promises to them.

- The tribes inquire of the Lord and He answers them.

Judges 1:1-2—<sup>1</sup> After the death of Joshua, the people of Israel inquired of the Lord, “Who shall go up first for us against the Canaanites, to fight against them?” <sup>2</sup> The Lord said, “Judah shall go up; behold, I have given the land into his hand.”

- Israel has success in battle just as He promised.

Judges 1:4—Then Judah went up and the Lord gave the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand, and they defeated 10,000 of them at Bezek.

- He continues to be “with” them even as they begin to rely upon their own strength (1:19,22).

2. Judah is highlighted from among the tribes for carrying on the conquest of Canaan.

- They exercise leadership while also cooperating with other tribes and groups (1:3, 16-17, 21).
- They faithfully carry out the command the Lord had given regarding the conquest (Deut. 7:2)

Judges 1:17a—And Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they defeated the Canaanites who inhabited Zephath and devoted it to destruction.

3. The three mini-narratives in the section hint at the subtle compromises that Israel begins to make.

*The Defeat of Adoni-Bezek (1:4-7) → Cultural Appropriation*

⇒ Having defeated the “Lord of Bezek,” they did to him as he had done to others he had defeated in battle.

“...the purpose of the “eye for an eye” instruction was to prevent the escalation of violence, not continue or exacerbate it; [this] suggests that the retribution signals the accommodation of the Israelites to Canaanite practices.”—Boda & Conway

*Caleb’s Vow & Achsah’s Request (1:11-15) → Failure to seek the Lord*

⇒ Although Caleb and his forces defeated some of the leaders in Hebron, the text does not say that the city was “struck down” or “devoted to destruction,” hinting at a qualified success. In the following action, Caleb vows to give his daughter as a prize for anyone who could capture Debir.

“Without inquiring of God, Caleb offers his own daughter in a desperate attempt to motivate someone, anyone, to destroy the town, apparently because he is disappointed in YHWH who did not ‘give’ it into his hands.”—Boda & Conway

⇒ Othniel is introduced as an important military figure and his wife, Achsah, is described as responding to her father’s gift to her with further petition rather than disappointment.

“Achsah’s method of obtaining land models the approach Caleb *should* have used in his disappointment with YHWH...[she] does not given in...nor does she attempt to bribe anyone...Thus her actions act as an implicit critique of Caleb.”

—Boda & Conway

### ***Joseph's Capture of Bethel (1:22-26) → Self-Reliance***

⇒ Men from the tribe of Joseph scout the city and make a secret agreement with one of its residents who gives them information that allows them to capture it.

“The language here has clear overtones of making a...covenant with the man, in spite of direct admonitions from YHWH...Joseph starts out with YHWH's enabling presence and conquers the city, but the victory is tainted by disobedience and lack of trust.” —Boda & Conway

#### **4. The partial nature of the conquest is increasingly emphasized.**

- The Lord's presence is said to be “with” them even as they fail to actively look to Him and experience setbacks (1:19).
- Ironically, their list of failings grows even as they themselves increase in strength.  
Judges 1:28—When Israel grew strong, they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but did not drive them out completely.
- Eventually, the conquest begins to be reversed.

Judges 1:34—The Amorites pressed the people of Dan back into the hill country, for they did not allow them to come down to the plain.

#### **5. The Lord came personally to confront the people with their sin.**

- In spite of God's presence among them & His promises to them, they had not obeyed His instructions regarding the conquest of the land.  
Judges 2:2—‘...you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall break down their altars.’ But you have not obeyed my voice. What is this you have done?
- For rejecting His provision, they would now experience the consequences of their rejection of Him & His Word:
  - (1) He would no longer drive out their enemies for them.
  - (2) Their enemies would be a continual sources of pain and difficulty.
  - (3) The gods of their enemies would become a snare to them.
- Although the people weep over God's judgment and sacrifice to Him, He does not relent or change His mind.

### **Applying the Text**

#### **1. Israel's subtle compromises with sin and their tendency towards self-reliance serve as a \_\_\_\_\_ to us.**

Heb. 3:12-13—<sup>12</sup>Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. <sup>13</sup>But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

#### **2. God has given to us His very great and precious promises. Do we \_\_\_\_\_ ourselves of them?**

2 Pet. 2:3-4—<sup>3</sup>His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, <sup>4</sup>by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire

#### **3. When \_\_\_\_\_ with our sin, what will be our response?**

2 Cor. 7:10-11a—<sup>10</sup>For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death. <sup>11</sup>For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you