

The Cycle Judges 1 – 2

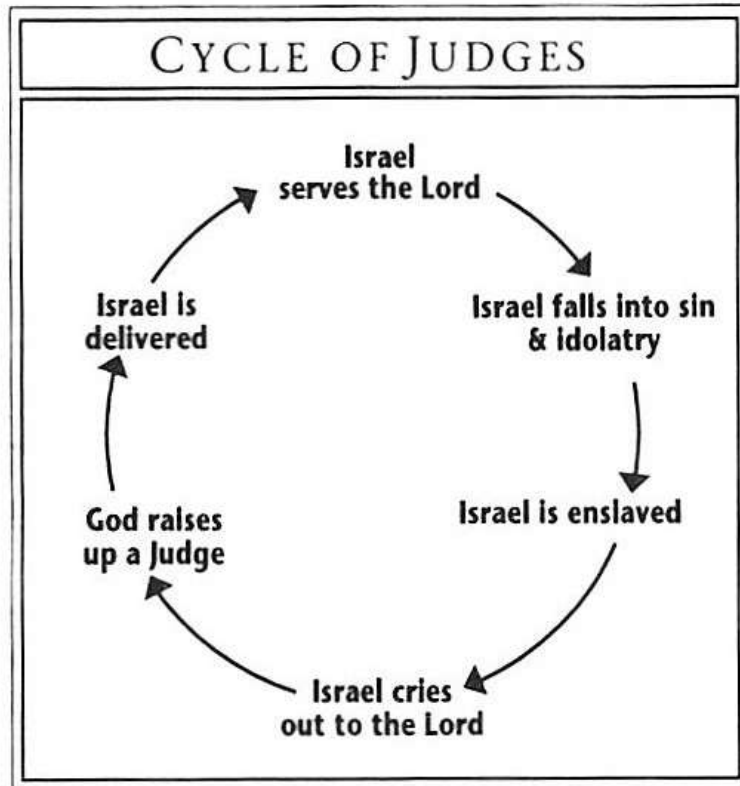
The Cycle Introduction

- A quick look back to Joshua:
 - Joshua 1:7-9
 - Joshua 23:1-13
- The Lord waited hundreds of years to give Israel this land.
- They were now in it.
- It was time to possess their possessions.
- So what happened?

The Cycle

- Judges 1 Snatching defeat from the jaws of victory.
- 2:1-5 The angel of the Lord is very likely a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus Christ.
- He speaks in the first person as God, “I brought you up ... So now I say...”
 - *These people were deceived as to the depth and sincerity of their own feelings. Doubtless they reckoned themselves choice penitents when they were only cowardly tremblers, labouring under impressions which were as useless as they were transient.*
– Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892)
- 2:6-10 “And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua ...”
- Notice how long Joshua’s influence lasted.
- This is his legacy.
- He had a big influence on the nation, but his influence eventually died out.
- This did not have to happen.
- Israel only needed more people like Joshua.
- We should pray, determine and work toward the goal that we would be like him.
- Judges 2:11 “The people ... did what was evil in the sight of the Lord.”
- This is a repeated line in Judges (7x). Also see:
 - Judges 3:7
 - Judges 3:12
 - Judges 4:1
 - Judges 6:1
 - Judges 10:6
 - Judges 13:1

- Judges 2:11-23 describes the cycle of sin and repentance that Israel fell into.
- 2:19 It was more than a cycle; it was a downward spiral.
- The disobedience and idolatry kept taking Israel further away from God and deeper into sin and sadness.
- By the end of the book, we'll see that Israel violates its covenant with God in nearly every imaginable way.



- Reasons for the cycle – for Israel and for us:
 - Self-deception
 - Compromise
 - Fear
 - Fatigue
 - *We have all unconquered 'Canaanites' in our hearts, and amity with them is supreme folly and crying wickedness ... Israel was in some respects conquered by Canaanites ... Let us take care that we are not overcome by our inward foes, whom we fancy we have subdued and can afford to treat leniently.*
- Alexander Maclaren (1826-1910)

- Reasons for the cycle – for Israel and for us:
 - Self-deception – We think we have sin beat when we really don't
 - Compromise – We compromise on our responsibilities when we should only compromise on our rights. We accommodate sin. Do we secretly love it?
 - Fear – We fear the opinions of others. We fear there will be negative consequences to our faithfulness. We fear the reactions of people rather than fearing God.
 - Fatigue – fighting battles is hard, so we make excuses. Iron chariots. "I've tried so hard to resist this temptation, but it won't go away. We justify defeat and weakness rather than persevering in the strength of God.

Breaking the Cycle

- Step 1 is to fear God.

Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Proverbs 8:13 The fear of the Lord is hatred of evil.
Pride and arrogance and the way of evil and perverted speech I hate.

Proverbs 9:10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.

- Step 2 is to remember God's goodness to us.
 - *Memory is a gift. Remembering the past teaches us countless lessons about how to live today. The Israelites forgot. They did not remember the miraculous events that brought them to their land or the covenant that united them to their God. But God did not forget His covenant—and because of His great love for His people, He disciplined His sinful children so that they might return to Him.*
— Charles Swindoll (1934 -)
- Step 3 is to try to see our sin the way God does and begin hating it.
 - *"God is the only being who is good, and the standards are set by Him. Because God hates sin, He has to punish those guilty of sin. Maybe that's not an appealing standard. But to put it bluntly, when you get your own universe, you can make your own standards.*
— Francis Chan, *Crazy Love: Overwhelmed by a Relentless God*
- Step 4 is to do whatever it takes to overcome it with God's help. See Judges 3:1-4.

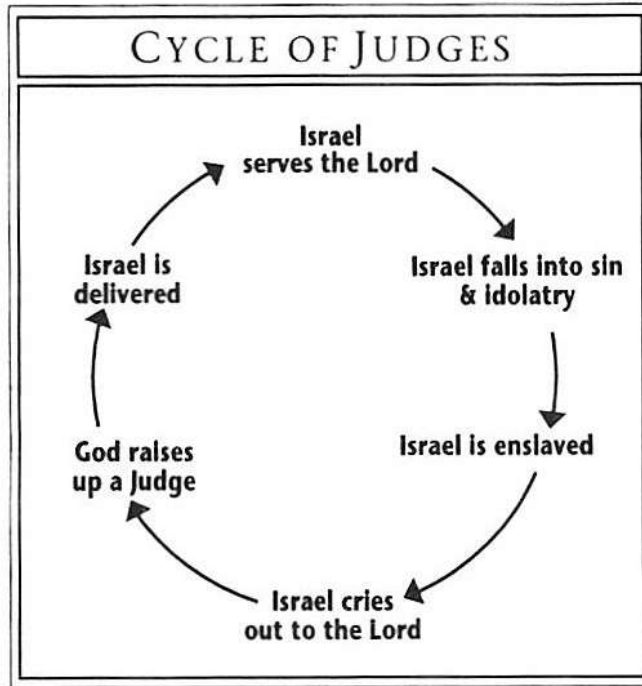
- We have sinned.
- We have strayed from God's path.
- There are consequences for our actions.
- Christ is our Deliverer.

1 Corinthians 15:56-57 ⁵⁶The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.
⁵⁷But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

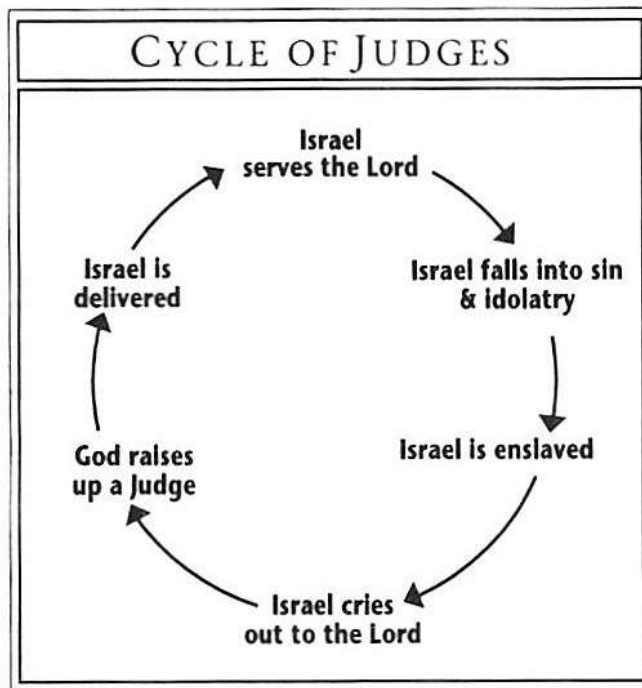
Romans 6:11-14 ¹¹So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹²Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions. ¹³Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. ¹⁴For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

- The deliverers in the book of Judges are all imperfect.
- Their deliverance is woefully short-lived.
- We have Christ, a flawless and eternal Deliverer.
- The deliverers in Judges only rescued Israel from the consequences of their sin – the trouble they were in at the moment.
- Christ delivers us from sin's power. We are not only forgiven, not only helped, but transformed.
- The victories of sin are never irreversible.
- When evil appears to triumph, we only need to remember the cross.
- God uses imperfect people – even failures.
- Finally, Hebrews 11:32-33 – Judges in the Hall of Faith

Hebrews 11:32-33 ³²And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets— ³³who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises ...



(Ryrie Study Bible)



(Ryrie Study Bible)