

--We are studying the entire book of JUDGES!

TODAY:

WEEK 1 – WE MUST OCCUPY

Today, we are beginning a new series – A KINGLESS KINGDOM – an entire study of the Book of Judges; chapter by chapter, verse by verse..

The book of Judges describes a period between the LEADERSHIP of Moses and Joshua and the establishment of the monarchy and kingdom in Israel...making SAUL the first king of Israel in 1 Samuel...

We have some different GENERATIONS represented up until this point in Israel

WILDERNESS generation – Israelites that followed Moses out of Egyptian slavery and wandered in wilderness for 40 years, seeing signs and wonders and miracles of God leading them out of captivity and slavery

CONQUEST generation – Israelites following Joshua into the promised land after Moses died and Joshua took over

And NOW a **NEW generation** of people after these 2 have come in to adulthood and they have 2 choices – worship the God that they have heard testimony about and that has provided a way for them to live in freedom...or go another way...

JOSHUA did not appoint a leader after him to guide the nation...

So the people were in a CRITICAL place to trust God MORE INTENSELY than ever before...

THIS PERIOD in Judges lasts about 340-350 years....and there is NO standing office of national leadership in Israel...they had NO king, NO president, NO prime minister, NOTHING...ONLY GOD...

And at the appropriate time, GOD would bring up a leader, a JUDGE, to rise up to lead the people back to GOD when they cried out to HIM

The leaders were not chosen – they were God's gift...

THEY ONLY HAD 1 requirement to maintain peace... ABIDE and TRUST in God – LIVE right...

The LAST chapter in JOSHUA speaks of ALL that God had done....and what He expected of His people....and he starts off by reminding of what God had done

Joshua 24:2-13 (NLT)

2 Joshua said to the people, "This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: Long ago your ancestors, including Terah, the father of Abraham and Nahor, lived beyond the Euphrates River, and they worshiped other gods. 3 But I took your ancestor Abraham from the land beyond the Euphrates and led him into the land of Canaan. I gave him many descendants through his son Isaac. 4 To Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. To Esau I gave the mountains of Seir, while Jacob and his children went down into Egypt. 5 "Then I sent Moses and Aaron, and I brought terrible plagues on Egypt; and afterward I brought you out as a free people. 6 But when your ancestors arrived at the Red Sea, the Egyptians chased after you with chariots and charioteers. 7 When your ancestors cried out to the Lord, I put darkness between you and the Egyptians. I brought the sea crashing down on the Egyptians, drowning them. With your very own eyes you saw what I did. Then you lived in the wilderness for many years. 8 "Finally, I brought you into the land of the Amorites on the east side of the Jordan. They fought against you, but I destroyed them before you. I gave you victory over them, and you took possession of their land. 9 Then Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab, started a war against Israel. He summoned Balaam son of Beor to curse you, 10 but I would not listen to him. Instead, I made Balaam bless you, and so I rescued you from Balak. 11 "When you crossed the Jordan River and came to Jericho, the men of Jericho fought against you, as did the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. But I gave you victory over them. 12 And I sent terror ahead of you to drive out the two kings of the Amorites. It was not your swords or bows that brought you victory. 13 I gave you land you had not worked on, and I gave you towns you did not build—the towns where you are now living. I gave you vineyards and olive groves for food, though you did not plant them.

GOD DID ALL OF THIS..WITH YOU IN MIND...SO....

Joshua 24:14-28 (NLT)

14 "So fear the Lord and serve him wholeheartedly. Put away forever the idols your ancestors worshiped when they lived beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt. Serve the Lord alone. 15 But if you refuse to serve the Lord, then choose today whom you will serve. Would you prefer the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates? Or will it be the gods of the Amorites in whose land you now live? But as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord." 16 The people replied, "We would never abandon the Lord and serve other gods. 17 For the Lord our God is the one

who rescued us and our ancestors from slavery in the land of Egypt. He performed mighty miracles before our very eyes. As we traveled through the wilderness among our enemies, he preserved us. **18** It was the Lord who drove out the Amorites and the other nations living here in the land. So we, too, will serve the Lord, for he alone is our God." **19** Then Joshua warned the people, "You are not able to serve the Lord, for he is a holy and jealous God. He will not forgive your rebellion and your sins. **20** If you abandon the Lord and serve other gods, he will turn against you and destroy you, even though he has been so good to you." **21** But the people answered Joshua, "No, we will serve the Lord!" **22** "You are a witness to your own decision," Joshua said. "You have chosen to serve the Lord." "Yes," they replied, "we are witnesses to what we have said." **23** "All right then," Joshua said, "destroy the idols among you, and turn your hearts to the Lord, the God of Israel." **24** The people said to Joshua, "We will serve the Lord our God. We will obey him alone." **25** So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day at Shechem, committing them to follow the decrees and regulations of the Lord. **26** Joshua recorded these things in the Book of God's Instructions. As a reminder of their agreement, he took a huge stone and rolled it beneath the terebinth tree beside the Tabernacle of the Lord. **27** Joshua said to all the people, "This stone has heard everything the Lord said to us. It will be a witness to testify against you if you go back on your word to God." **28** Then Joshua sent all the people away to their own homelands.

JOSHUA WARNED THEM – He wont forgive your rebellion, He will destroy you, He will turn against you....YOU HAVE to turn to Him...

And they SAID "OF COURSE WILL WILL"

BUT FOR THE NEXT 400 years....THEY LIVE IN COMPLETE rebellion...

SO GOD sends 12 Judges throughout this time period to TRY to redeem them..

THIS TERM "Judge" – is not the same meaning as our word JUDGE – someone sitting in a court and deciding legal issues...

The HEBREW word – SHAPHAT – means "heroic leader" or "to Put right so to rule"

THEY WERE leaders God brought to bring the people back in RIGHTSTANDING with Him as THEIR KING - SO they could RULE....

JESUS purchased you with HIS BLOOD to make you RIGHTEOUS – to bring you in to RIGHT STANDING with the FATHER – SO TO RULE....

Matthew 6:31-33 (NLT)

31 "So don't worry about these things, saying, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?' **32** These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. **33** Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

So many are dominated and can not RULE because they have no peace – they are worried about ALL THE THINGS you need to rule..

God says – SEEK FIRST GOD and LIVE in your right standing.. and HE will provide you WITH EVERYTHING, so your thoughts are not consumed with WORRYING - - - so that - - - you can effectively RULE under God...

WELL – the Nation of Israel, the Israelites, the people of God

Did not live like that....and many NEGLECT and LOOK OVER judges because it is often regarded as a DARK time in Israel's history...

BUT in a story of people who REBELLED and LIVED APART – we see a story of the LOVE of God and how HE CORRECTED His people for one purpose – TO BRING THEM BACK TO HIM

THERE ARE MANY "Kingless Kingdoms" today

AMERICA... THE EARTH... HOMES... JOBS... THE CHURCH

Where we have operated APART from GOD

Where we DON'T honor LEADERSHIP

Where we OUTVOTE our KING...

SO HOW do we get back...what do we do...HOW WILL GOD REDEEM THE CULTURE...THAT IS WHAT THIS SERIES IS ALL ABOUT...

Judges 1:1-2 (NLT)

1 After the death of Joshua, the Israelites asked the Lord, "Which tribe should go first to attack the Canaanites?" **2** The Lord answered, "Judah, for I have given them victory over the land."

Here – they start off doing the RIGHT thing – the thing Joshua would have wanted them to do, TRUST in GOD – and when Israel SOUGHT HIM – HE GUIDED THEM

THIS IS GOING TO BE THE PATTERN in JUDGES –
WHEN THE PEOPLE SEEK – God never failed to DELIVER and HELP

Luke 11:9-10 (TPT)

9–10 So it is with your prayers. Ask and you'll receive. Seek and you'll discover. Knock on heaven's door, and it will one day open for you. Every persistent person will get what he asks for. Every persistent seeker will discover what he needs. And everyone who knocks persistently will one day find an open door.

IT IS NOT JUST that God will GIVE YOU WHAT YOU NEED
YOU GOT TO SEEK and ASK....

AND THERE is MANY PEOPLE KNOCKING – without the SEEKING
And we EXPECT God to answer prayers and sometimes we are knocking on the wrong door – we come to God with this "I DESERVE" rather than "I NEED"
God's door isn't "come cause you deserve"
God's door is "ive made you worthy, what do you need that you don't deserve"

AND GOD SAYS – I WANT JUDAH TO GO IN FIRST...
The very TURUBE that JESUS came from...the LION of JUDAH
JUDAH will lead the way....

NOW what is funny is, under Joshua's leadership, Israel had already broken the military strength of the CANAANITES – but EACH TRIBE had to ACTUALLY GO IN and posses what God had given them...

JESUS defeated DEATH on the cross...but HE also gave us something...

Luke 10:19 (NLT)

19 Look, I have given you authority over all the power of the enemy, and you can walk among snakes and scorpions and crush them. Nothing will injure you.

JUST BECAUSE IT IS FINISHED – doesn't mean we DON'T have thigns to do
We have to go in and POSSESS the land that the enemy has taken because the LORD has BROKEN the STRENGHT of the enemy and has given US the AUTHORITY to WALK RIGHT IN and take BACK what was taken

WE ARE CALLED to extend the REDEEMING blood of JESUS in to EVERYTHING

IF we are going to SEEK and KNOCK and ASK

We have to be ready to follow through with a MANDATE

IT IS OUR RESPONSE to how GOOD He is to us...

Judges 1:3-4 (NLT)

3 The men of Judah said to their relatives from the tribe of Simeon, "Join with us to fight against the Canaanites living in the territory allotted to us. Then we will help you conquer your territory." So the men of Simeon went with Judah. **4** When the men of Judah attacked, the Lord gave them victory over the Canaanites and Perizzites, and they killed 10,000 enemy warriors at the town of Bezek.

The TRIBE of JUDAH partnered with the TRIBE of SIMEON; functioning together to accomplish the mission of GOD....

1 Corinthians 12:12-13 (NLT)

12 The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ. **13** Some of us are Jews, some are Gentiles, some are slaves, and some are free. But we have all been baptized into one body by one Spirit, and we all share the same Spirit.

THE TRIBES functioned TOGETHER as ONE BODY...

In GENESIS 29 we actually see that the tribes of JUDAH and SIMEON are related – we are ALL BROTHERS AND SISTERS in CHRIST

JUDAH was the STRONGEST TRIBE....

1 Corinthians 12:22 (NLT)

22 In fact, some parts of the body that seem weakest and least important are actually the most necessary.

TO WALK in RIGHTEOUSNESS is not just a call to perfection or not just a striving to walk out of sin, BUT WALK IN TO the wholeness of CHRIST BODY – which is a unified church, absent of pride, realizing WE ALL NEED EACH OTHER in order to FULLY walk in the IMAGE of CHRIST

Romans 12:4-5 (NLT)

4 Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, **5** so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other.

IF WE ARE going to walk in a KINGDOM MANDATE – we have to ASK what God what to do and realize – IT WILL CAN NOT HAPPEN ALONE....

Judges 1:5-7 (NLT)

5 While at Bezek they encountered King Adoni-bezek and fought against him, and the Canaanites and Perizzites were defeated. **6** Adoni-bezek escaped, but the Israelites soon captured him and cut off his thumbs and big toes. **7** Adoni-bezek said, "I once had seventy kings with their thumbs and big toes cut off, eating scraps from under my table. Now God has paid me back for what I did to them." They took him to Jerusalem, and he died there.

The name ADONI-BEZEK meant "Lord of Lightning"

Luke 10:18-19 (NLT)

18 "Yes," he told them, "I saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning! **19** Look, I have given you authority over all the power of the enemy, and you can walk among snakes and scorpions and crush them. Nothing will injure you.

NO MATTER WHAT YOUR ENEMY PRESENTS YOURSELF AS
GOD has already seen him fall....QUICKLY
THE ENEMY – fell – past tense....

**And the VERY THING this enemy needed to be a POWERFUL WARRIOR
TOES AND THUMBS...were taken....**

IN ROMAN TIMES – if you had no thumbs, you were not worthy to be called in to the military, sometimes parents did it to their kids to protect them

HIS AUTHORITY to act as a warrior was STRIPPED AWAY

Then they took him to JERUSALEM and he died

And YET, we walk as a DIVIDED CHURCH running from a devil stripped of his authority.....and LET him reign WITH NO ability to REIGN

And we WONDER why the ONLY power he has is suggestion and fear
CAUSE HIS THUMBS ARE REMOVED – NO RIGHT

Judges 1:8-18 (NLT)

8 The men of Judah attacked Jerusalem and captured it, killing all its people and setting the city on fire. **9** Then they went down to fight the Canaanites living in the

hill country, the Negev, and the western foothills. 10 Judah marched against the Canaanites in Hebron (formerly called Kiriath-arba), defeating the forces of Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai. 11 From there they went to fight against the people living in the town of Debir (formerly called Kiriath-sepher). 12 Caleb said, "I will give my daughter Acsah in marriage to the one who attacks and captures Kiriath-sepher." 13 Othniel, the son of Caleb's younger brother, Kenaz, was the one who conquered it, so Acsah became Othniel's wife. 14 When Acsah married Othniel, she urged him to ask her father for a field. As she got down off her donkey, Caleb asked her, "What's the matter?" 15 She said, "Let me have another gift. You have already given me land in the Negev; now please give me springs of water, too." So Caleb gave her the upper and lower springs. 16 When the tribe of Judah left Jericho—the city of palms—the Kenites, who were descendants of Moses' father-in-law, traveled with them into the wilderness of Judah. They settled among the people there, near the town of Arad in the Negev. 17 Then Judah joined with Simeon to fight against the Canaanites living in Zephath, and they completely destroyed the town. So the town was named Hormah. 18 In addition, Judah captured the towns of Gaza, Ashkelon, and Ekron, along with their surrounding territories.

Judah takes Jerusalem, Hebron, the land of Debir, Jericho, Zephath, Gaza, Ashkelon, Ekron and all surrounding territories

THEY WERE OCCUPYING THE LAND under a KINGDOM MANDATE to conquer the CANAANITES with only ONE leader – GOD...

And they were UNITED in that call...

AND IN THE MIDDLE of all this.... WE HAVE DETAILS about CALEB offering his daughter to any man that captured DEBIR – that man was OTHNIEL – which by the way, he will be the FIRST JUDGE God calls out to REDEEM Israel back to Him...

But the DETAILS are about Othniel's wife – Acsah

SHE receives a HUSBAND

SHE then ASKS for a FIELD

SHE then ASKS for SPRINGS of WATER

And it was a combination of her asking her FATHER for more and then the FATHER asked her; want more do you want, then she told him....and HE gave her MORE than what she wanted – HE GAVE her MORE THAN ENOUGH

IN THIS KINGDOM MANDATE – do you realize that the KING is also our FATHER
HE PROVIDED US A HUSBAND – the church is the BRIDE of CHRIST
HE GAVE US A FIELD – the land – the earth

And then He says "approach my throne boldly and I'll give you the
desires of your heart when they align with mine"

SHE WAS BOLD in that because SHE KNEW and HAD RELATIONSHIP with her
FATHER to such a degree that WAHTEVER SHE ASKED....she received...

John 15:7 (NLT)

7 But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you
want, and it will be granted!

JESUS speaking about the time he would not be with the disciple anymore...

John 16:23-24 (NLT)

23 At that time you won't need to ask me for anything. I tell you the truth, you will
ask the Father directly, and he will grant your request because you use my
name. 24 You haven't done this before. Ask, using my name, and you will receive,
and you will have abundant joy.

DO YOU REALIZE the position we have been put in because of the BLOOD of
Jesus?

Want to know why we are LIVING in a KINGLESS KINGDOM?

Cause we have stepped out of the REALITY of our IDENTITY with the FATHER

ALL Acsah really asked was – GIVE ME A BLESSING – Thank you for the land you've
given me; now give me what I need to steward the LAND correctly

SHE asked for the WATER for the LAND...and the FATHER gave 2 springs...

CAUSE HER ASK was INLINE with THE FIRST GIFT

IS YOUR ASK in LINE with OUR CALL to REDEEM the earth and OCCUPY it
under the KINGSHIP of our GOD?!?!?!?

SO....Israel is doing good....but then a shift....

Judges 1:19-20 (NLT)

19 The Lord was with the people of Judah, and they took possession of the hill country. But they failed to drive out the people living in the plains, who had iron chariots. 20 The town of Hebron was given to Caleb as Moses had promised. And Caleb drove out the people living there, who were descendants of the three sons of Anak.

AS IMPRESSIVE as Judah's victory was – it was INCOMPLETE....

They didn't defeat the nation that had the LATEST technology – Iron Chariots

IT WAS NOT that the CANAANITES had military superiority

THEIR military authority was stripped with Joshua's leadership -all they had to do was OCCUPY - GOD GAVE them victory already....

Psalms 20:7 (NLT)

7 Some nations boast of their chariots and horses, but we boast in the name of the Lord our God.

THEY began to rely on SELF more than the NAME OF GOD and the NATIONS that relies on MAN-MADE invention WON

THEY LET FEAR of a FALSE AUTHORITY cause them to lose a battle GOD had given them a victory over.....

AND WE ALL HAVE that "CHARIOT" that for some reason we don't think GOD is stronger than – that "CHARIOT" that can't be redeemed by the BLOOD

and when we see it; we BACK UP and we DO NOT OCCUPY

And then THAT AREA remains KINGLESS....

Judges 1:21 (NLT)

21 The tribe of Benjamin, however, failed to drive out the Jebusites, who were living in Jerusalem. So to this day the Jebusites live in Jerusalem among the people of Benjamin.

FUNNY – Jerusalem had already been WON in verse 8, this tribe SIMPLY needed to OCCUPY in a KINGDOM MANDATE – but they didn't...

AND THERE ARE A LOT OF AREAS that REMAIN KINGLESS – cause the FIGHT scares us – when in reality – IT IS ALREADY OURS – *but we DO NOT walk by FAITH – we walk by SIGHT – sometimes you gotta walk by FAITH in OCCUPYING*

Judges 1:22-26 (NLT)

22 The descendants of Joseph attacked the town of Bethel, and the Lord was with them. **23** They sent men to scout out Bethel (formerly known as Luz). **24** They confronted a man coming out of the town and said to him, "Show us a way into the town, and we will have mercy on you." **25** So he showed them a way in, and they killed everyone in the town except that man and his family. **26** Later the man moved to the land of the Hittites, where he built a town. He named it Luz, which is its name to this day.

Here again – the DESCENDANTS of Joseph were actually composed of 2 tribes – Ephraim and Manasseh. – and the LORD was with THEM

When 2 come together.....UNITY in the BODY

BUT WATCH THE COMPROMISE....

THEY DIDN'T fully depend on God – they allowed ONE man and his family lie...and he was RE-LOCATED to the land of the HITTITES, which God gave the Israelites victory over as well, LIKE the CANAANITES, and built a town and NAMED it the former name of BETHEL

THEY WERE SUPPOSED TO CONQUER – ALL of the canaanites...

GOD has called us to OCCUPY every area with HIS GLORY and HIS DOMINION

But we SO often make SEEMINGLY OK and PEACEFUL compromise..

AND THEN watch happens with these 2 tribes OF JOSEPH...

Judges 1:27-29 (NLT)

27 The tribe of Manasseh failed to drive out the people living in Beth-shan, Taanach, Dor, Ibleam, Megiddo, and all their surrounding settlements, because the Canaanites were determined to stay in that region. **28** When the Israelites grew stronger, they forced the Canaanites to work as slaves, but they never did drive them completely out of the land. **29** The tribe of Ephraim failed to drive out the Canaanites living in Gezer, so the Canaanites continued to live there among them.

The Canannites were STUBBRON, they DIDN'T WANT TO LEAVE

That is called a STRONGHOLD

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NLT)

3 We are human, but we don't wage war as humans do. **4** We use God's mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments. **5** We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps people from knowing God. We capture their rebellious thoughts and teach them to obey Christ.

They waged war like humans – USING ESPIONAGE to make a deal with the CANAANITE family in BETHEL...

And NOW the CANAANITES are raising their opinion of "We think we should stay" above God's want of "leave" and the ISRAELITES don't drive them out...

Cause they appear to not be strong enough

BUT DID YOU NOTICE....in Verse 28 – it says "ISRAEL GREW STRONGER...BUT they didn't drive them out of the land, they kept them in the land as slaves"

When you first come to believe, you may not be strong enough in your thinking and faith to drive out everything....but as YOU GROW IN THE LORD....you have a call to CONTINUE to drive some things OUT of your life

BUT we just keep them dormant....and don't deal with them...we keep them JUST IN CASE we need them to our advantage

ISRAEL FORGOT – when it came to the CANAANITES – **THE LAND WAS NOT THEIRS**....God didn't want them in that land WHATSOEVER

And we make TOO MANY TREATIES with stuff that was NEVER meant to stay

Matthew 10:1 (NLT)

1 Jesus called his twelve disciples together and gave them authority to cast out evil spirits and to heal every kind of disease and illness.

Cast OUT, not down or suppress or control... GET IT OUT...

The word for EVIL there means UNCLEAN

HE WANTS THE LAND CLEAN....so DRIVE OUT all UNCLEAN stuff –
WE MUST OCCUPY

Judges 1:30-36 (NLT)

30 The tribe of Zebulun failed to drive out the residents of Kitron and Nahalol, so the Canaanites continued to live among them. But the Canaanites were forced to work as slaves for the people of Zebulun. **31** The tribe of Asher failed to drive out the residents of Acco, Sidon, Ahlab, Aczib, Helbah, Aphik, and Rehob. **32** Instead, the people of Asher moved in among the Canaanites, who controlled the land, for they failed to drive them out. **33** Likewise, the tribe of Naphtali failed to drive out the residents of Beth-shemesh and Beth-anath. Instead, they moved in among the Canaanites, who controlled the land. Nevertheless, the people of Beth-shemesh and Beth-anath were forced to work as slaves for the people of Naphtali. **34** As for the tribe of Dan, the Amorites forced them back into the hill country and would not let them come down into the plains. **35** The Amorites were determined to stay in Mount Heres, Aijalon, and Shaalbim, but when the descendants of Joseph became stronger, they forced the Amorites to work as slaves. **36** The boundary of the Amorites ran from Scorpion Pass to Sela and continued upward from there.

DO YOU SEE all the compromise throughout the TRIBES of ISRAEL????

COMPROMISE and allowing the Canaanites to occupy as slaves

And NOW they LIVING with the CANANNITES in peace...

AND some tribes are even being CONTROLLED by the Canaanites

THE PEOPLE OF GOD called to DRIVE OUT the unclean thing...are being controlled and are making treaties with the thing GOD DID NOT WANT THERE

AND THAT IS EXACTLY what has happened in our homes...in our relationships...in our country...and in our churches

We have allowed too much that should not be and made treaties with
UNCLEAN things

AND WHEN you make TREATIES with UNCLEAN THINGS

SATAN basically says "I wont harm you or come against you if you'll just leave me alone" – and sometimes that looks like BIG CHURCH....

ISRAEL has now gone from VICTORY in GOD to INCOMPLETE victory...

And have accommodated the enemy...

THERE IS NOTHING LEFT INCOMPLETE in the victory of JESUS....

SO WHY do we give glory to HIM as if there IS incomplete victory?

Isaiah 43:7 (NLT)

7 Bring all who claim me as their God, for I have made them for my glory. It was I who created them.'"

WE were MADE for HIS GLORY which is COMPLETE victory

A CALL to occupy what was LOST with the VICTORY in JESUS...

And I WANT TO READ JUDGES 2 – which is really written in retrospect to all we just saw.....

Judges 2:1-23 (NLT)

1 The angel of the Lord went up from Gilgal to Bokim and said to the Israelites, "I brought you out of Egypt into this land that I swore to give your ancestors, and I said I would never break my covenant with you. 2 For your part, you were not to make any covenants with the people living in this land; instead, you were to destroy their altars. But you disobeyed my command. Why did you do this? 3 So now I declare that I will no longer drive out the people living in your land. They will be thorns in your sides, and their gods will be a constant temptation to you."

4 When the angel of the Lord finished speaking to all the Israelites, the people wept loudly. 5 So they called the place Bokim (which means "weeping"), and they offered sacrifices there to the Lord. 6 After Joshua sent the people away, each of the tribes left to take possession of the land allotted to them. 7 And the Israelites served the Lord throughout the lifetime of Joshua and the leaders who outlived him—those who had seen all the great things the Lord had done for Israel. 8 Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died at the age of 110. 9 They buried him in the land he had been allocated, at Timnath-serah in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash. 10 After that generation died, another generation grew up who did not acknowledge the Lord or remember the mighty things he had done for Israel.

11 The Israelites did evil in the Lord's sight and served the images of Baal. 12 They abandoned the Lord, the God of their ancestors, who had brought them out of Egypt. They went after other gods, worshiping the gods of the people around them. And they angered the Lord. 13 They abandoned the Lord to serve Baal and the images of Ashtoreth. 14 This made the Lord burn with anger against Israel, so he

handed them over to raiders who stole their possessions. He turned them over to their enemies all around, and they were no longer able to resist them. **15** Every time Israel went out to battle, the Lord fought against them, causing them to be defeated, just as he had warned. And the people were in great distress. **16** Then the Lord raised up judges to rescue the Israelites from their attackers. **17** Yet Israel did not listen to the judges but prostituted themselves by worshiping other gods. How quickly they turned away from the path of their ancestors, who had walked in obedience to the Lord's commands. **18** Whenever the Lord raised up a judge over Israel, he was with that judge and rescued the people from their enemies throughout the judge's lifetime. For the Lord took pity on his people, who were burdened by oppression and suffering. **19** But when the judge died, the people returned to their corrupt ways, behaving worse than those who had lived before them. They went after other gods, serving and worshiping them. And they refused to give up their evil practices and stubborn ways. **20** So the Lord burned with anger against Israel. He said, "Because these people have violated my covenant, which I made with their ancestors, and have ignored my commands, **21** I will no longer drive out the nations that Joshua left unconquered when he died. **22** I did this to test Israel—to see whether or not they would follow the ways of the Lord as their ancestors did." **23** That is why the Lord left those nations in place. He did not quickly drive them out or allow Joshua to conquer them all.

BAAL – another word for BAAL was husband....

They gave worship to another HUSBAND than GOD...

And they set their hearts on SINFUL THINGS – therefore reaped it

A life absent of the favor and covenant and promise of God...

And the rest of this book is ABOUT the JUDGES and cycle of REDEMPTION of a LOVING GOD

Cause EVERY TIME they asked for HIM

EVEN THOUGH they KEPT BREAKING COVENANT – He always answered...

HE IS ALWAYS THERE FOR YOU

LET HIM OCCUPY ALL OF YOU So HE CAN OCCUPY every place you walk in to

AMEN