

Judges 2:6 - 3:11

Second Prologue: Overview:

Cycle of Oppression and Deliverance

I. The Cycle Explained

A. A Leader Dies (2:6-9; Jos 24:28-31)

B. A New Generation (2:10,19)

C. Idolatry and Sin (2:11-13,19; 3:5-6)

1. Baal¹
2. Ashtaroth²
3. Asheroth³
4. Evil (See 17:16)
5. Intermingling
6. Inter-marriage

D. Oppression (2:14-15,20-23; 3:1-4)

1. "...gave them into the hands of..." (See also 6:1; 13:1)
2. "...sold them..." (See also 3:8; 4:2; 10:7)

E. Deliverance (2:16-18)

II. The Cycle Exemplified: Othniel, the First Judge

A. The Sin (3:7)

B. The Enemy: Cushan-Rishathaim⁴, King of Aramnaharaim⁵ (3:8)

C. The Cry (3:9)

D. The Deliverer: Othniel Ben-Kenaz, nephew and son-in-law of Caleb (3:9; See also 1:11-15; Jos 15:15-19)

¹ Baal: "Master"; Canaanite and Phoenician fertility god; son of Dagon and El; also called Hadad (Syria) and Adad (Babylon); often shown riding on a bull or storm cloud with lightning bolt for a spear; worshipped with prostitution and child sacrifice

² Ashtaroth: collective term for various goddesses: Ashtoreth, consort of Baal, and Asherah, consort of El; Ashtoreth was Evening Star, the goddess of war and fertility, also called Ishtar (Babylon), Athtart (Syria), Astarte or Aphrodite (Greece), or Venus (Rome)

³ Asheroth: wooden fertility poles of Asherah

⁴ Cushan-Rishathaim: "Doubly-Wicked Cushan"

⁵ Aramnaharaim: "Aram of the Two Rivers", that is, Mesopotamia

E. The Deliverance: Victory at war in the power of the Spirit (3:10)

F. Rest for a Generation (40 yr) (3:11)

G. The Leader Dies (3:11)

III. Application and Discussion

A. What is the significance of new generations? How careful are we to pass on our faith to the next generation?

B. What are some of the idols in our lives? Do they lead to oppression?

C. Do we consider that trials may be a way of God testing us and preparing us? (See 3:1-4)

D. What advantage do we have over the Israelites if we are oppressed?

1. Our Deliverer is Jesus.
2. The Spirit is not limited only to the Judges.
3. Other advantages?

E. We, too, can enter a rest now that our Deliverer has died. But our rest does not end because our Deliverer still lives. (See Heb 4.)