



## Judges - Chapter Two

### I Judges 1:1-3:6 - The Roots of Israel's Apostasy (continues)

#### I.a Judges 1:1-2:5 - Prelude to Apostasy: Incomplete Conquests (continues/concludes)

##### Summary of Chapter Two

Although God confirms that he will never break the covenant he has made with Israel, because they have not remained faithful to him, he will not drive out the remaining nations that still live in the land of Canaan.

The chapter recounts the death of Joshua and the leaders of his generation. Although Israel had remained faithful to God under Joshua's leadership, the generation that replaced them neither knew God nor what he had done for their ancestors.

Because of this, they turned away from the Lord and worshipped the gods of the people around them. This caused God to become angry and he allowed the nations around them to come in and defeat the Israelites, for God no longer fought for them. However, in his grace and mercy, he would raise up judges from time to time who would lead them out of their adversity. Yet they did not even listen to the judges and the cycle of apostasy, adversity and salvation continued.

#### I.a.ii Judges 2:1-5 - Israel's Disobedience

The angel of the Lord now makes explicit that Israel's failure to drive out the Canaanites as God had instructed is the cause of his handing them over to the vicissitudes of life among their enemies. The roots of Israel's apostasy are now in full view.

<sup>1</sup> Now the angel of the Lord went up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, ‘I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you into the land that I had promised to your ancestors. I said, “I will never break my covenant with you.

### Judges 2:1

The angel of the Lord. Some commentators and theologians believe this was God’s representative, either a human prophet or angelic being, speaking authoritatively to the people about their apostasy. He shows up suddenly elsewhere in Judges sometimes causing fear (6:22-23), probably because of the warning about humans seeing God in Exodus 33:20. As the Lord’s designated messenger, Hebrew *mal’ak*, the angel speaks as the Lord himself; refer to the comments made on Genesis 16:7 and Exodus 3:6. Some commentators believe this angel may be the same one promised to Moses in Exodus 23:20-23, or a theophany of the Lord himself; that is, an appearance of the pre-incarnate Messiah.

Assuming this to be a divine appearance, it can be surmised that this was Jesus Christ appearing to the people of Israel before his incarnated appearance in Bethlehem for two reasons:

1. The Angel of the Lord here claimed divinity by saying that he was the one who led Israel up from Egypt, who made a covenant with Israel, and who personally called Israel to obedience (v.2).
2. This person, appearing in human form before Israel, cannot be God the Father, because the Father is described as invisible in 1 Timothy 1:17, and one whom no man has seen or can see in 1 Timothy 6:16.

The idea of Jesus, the Second Person of the Trinity, appearing as a man before Bethlehem is provocative, but logical. It is known that he existed before his birth in Bethlehem from Micah 5:2, John 1:1-2, and 1 John 1:1-3; why should he not, on isolated but important occasions, appear in bodily form? Scripture reveals other times and places where this happened, such as in Genesis 18:16-33, Genesis 32:24-30, and Judges 13:1-23. Charles Spurgeon wrote: “Not in such a body as God had prepared for him when he took upon himself the form of a servant, but in such a form and fashion as seemed most congruous to his divine majesty, and to the circumstances of those he visited, this angel of the divine covenant whom we delight in came and spoke unto this people.”

Gilgal was Israel’s first encampment west of the Jordan: <<*The people came up out of the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and they camped in Gilgal on the eastern border of Jericho*>> (Joshua 4:19).



Possible Location of Gilgal

**I brought you up.** The first thing the Angel of the Lord did was to remind Israel of God's great love and faithfulness to them. He delivered them from Egypt's bondage; he gave them an abundant Promised Land; he gave them a covenant that he would never break. **You** is plural, referring to the entire nation since those addressed here were not part of the original exodus.

It is God's general pattern to remind people of his great love and faithfulness to those who want to follow him before calling them to obedience or confronting their sin: <<*We love because he first loved us*>> (1 John 4:19), and people can only really obey him as they walk in his love and abide in his covenant with them: <<*I was overjoyed to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as we have been commanded by the Father*>> (2 John 4), and: <<*I was overjoyed when some of the friends arrived and testified to your faithfulness to the truth, namely, how you walk in the truth*>> (3 John 3). The words, **I will never break my covenant with you** is a reminder that even though Israel never fully lived up to their part of the covenant, God promised that he would never forsake his part of the covenant. On God's eternal covenant faithfulness, refer to Leviticus 26:44 and Psalm 89:34.

<sup>2</sup> For your part, do not make a covenant with the inhabitants of this land; tear down their altars." But you have not obeyed my command. See what you have done! <sup>3</sup> So now I say, I will not drive them out before you; but they shall become adversaries to you, and their gods shall be a snare to you.'

### Judges 2:2-3

God had commanded Israel to not make a covenant with pagan nations and to tear down their altars: <<*You shall make no covenant with them and their gods*>> (Exodus 23:32), and: <<*Break down their altars, smash their pillars, burn their sacred poles with fire, and hew down the idols of their gods, and thus blot out their name from their places*>> (Deuteronomy 12:3). As a consequence of Israel's disobedience, these nations would be a snare to them, e.g. by pagan rituals: <<*Gideon made an ephod of it and put it in his town, in Ophrah; and all Israel prostituted themselves to it there, and it became a snare to Gideon and to his family*>> (Judges 8:27), just as God had promised. The announcement that the Canaanites would remain as problems to the nation was promised beforehand to Israel if they would not faithfully drive out the Canaanites: <<*But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then those whom you let remain shall be as barbs in your eyes and thorns in your sides; they shall trouble you in the land where you are settling*>> (Numbers 33:55).

But you have not obeyed my command. See what you have done! The Angel of the Lord confronted Israel in love. The question was stinging in its simplicity; there is never a good reason for disobedience to God. Israel's real problem was not one of military power or technology; it was a spiritual problem, and it was what they had done - no one else!

I will not drive them out before you; but they shall become adversaries to you. The Angel of the Lord announced that he would allow the work of possessing the land to go unfinished as a way of correcting a disobedient Israel. I will not drive them out before you is a reminder that God would not do the work of conquering Canaan all by himself. In the early years of the campaign in Canaan God did fight for Israel in a supernatural way. Yet he never intended it to be that way for the entire campaign of conquering the Canaanites. Some believers often wish that God would do the work of Christian maturity for them; that they would wake up one morning and a certain besetting sin will just be gone. Sometimes God grants such a miraculous deliverance, and he should be praised for it. However, more commonly he requires a partnership with him in the process of Christian growth. That partnership is important to God because it shows that the heart is where his heart is; that his people are truly growing close to God.

<sup>4</sup> When the angel of the Lord spoke these words to all the Israelites, the people lifted up their voices and wept. <sup>5</sup> So they named that place Bochim, and there they sacrificed to the Lord.

## Judges 2:4-5

The people lifted up their voices and wept. This emotional response of the people was very hopeful. With all the weeping and wailing, there was reason to believe that God's Word had a deep impact upon them, and they that were on their way to a genuine revival of God's work among them. Sadly, it was not the case. The subsequent record of the Book of Judges shows that this initial reaction of sorrow and repentance did not mature into a real, lasting repentance. Real repentance shows itself in action, not necessarily in weeping. Anyone can be sorry about the consequences of their sin without being sorry about the sin itself. One can weep and outwardly show repentance without ever inwardly repenting. This is why the Lord later challenged Israel: *<<Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing>>* (Joel 2:12-13).

So they named that place Bochim, which means weepers.

There they sacrificed to the Lord. The Israelites' apparent distress at God's threats, and their attempts to pacify God by sacrificing, were short-lived. Verses 11-15 show their more usual pattern of apostasy. The notion that God is an angry god who needs to be perpetually appeased is something that is at the heart of the pagan understanding.

### I.b Judges 2:6-3:6 - The Unfolding and Consequences of Apostasy

In the second part of the book's introduction, the breakdown chronicled in Chapter One is assumed, but the focus is less on incomplete conquests than on a theological analysis of Israel's apostasy and its consequences. The recurring downward cycle of history presented in 2:16-23 is especially captured by the statement: *<<But whenever the judge died, they would relapse and behave worse than their ancestors>>* (2:19). The final section (3:1-6) emphasises God's purposes in the punishments mentioned in 2:14-15 and 2:21-23, which have to do with testing Israel.

#### I.b.i Judges 2:6-10 - Death of Joshua

This is a flashback to Joshua 24:28-31 and a transition to the second part of the introduction. Joshua had already died, but the repetition of the information about Joshua introduces the apostasy to follow.

<sup>6</sup> When Joshua dismissed the people, the Israelites all went to their own inheritances to take possession of the land. <sup>7</sup> The people worshipped the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great work that the

Lord had done for Israel. <sup>8</sup> Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died at the age of one hundred and ten years. <sup>9</sup> So they buried him within the bounds of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash. <sup>10</sup> Moreover, that whole generation was gathered to their ancestors, and another generation grew up after them, who did not know the Lord or the work that he had done for Israel.

### Judges 2:6-10

When Joshua dismissed the people. This shows that Judges Chapter Two begins as retrospect, looking back to the days even before the death of Joshua, which was described in Judges 1:1. This hopeful response to the Angel of the Lord started when Joshua was still alive.

The people worshipped the Lord all the days of Joshua. Joshua's legacy was seen in the godliness of Israel during his leadership. He was truly one of history's great men of God. However, the sad point to this statement is that they seem to have thought more highly of Joshua as their leader than they did of God as their true Lord and King.

All the days of the elders who outlived Joshua. Israel was also faithful to God in the days of Joshua's immediate successors, or at least those who had been elders during Joshua's lifetime and had served him faithfully.

Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died at the age of one hundred and ten years. The servant of the Lord is a deeply meaningful title for Joshua. It is applied only to great men of God like Moses: <<*Then Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there in the land of Moab, at the Lord's command*>> (Deuteronomy 34:5), and David in the title of Psalm 18:1, and the courageous prophets: <<*You shall strike down the house of your master Ahab, so that I may avenge on Jezebel the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the Lord*>> (2 Kings 9:7).

However, it should be noted that several apostles considered themselves to be servants of the Lord: <<*Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ*>> (Titus 1:1a), <<*James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greetings*>> (James 1:1), <<*Simeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ*>> (2 Peter 1:1a), and: <<*Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, To those who are called, who are beloved in God the Father and kept safe for Jesus Christ*>> (Jude 1).

Another generation grew up after them, who did not know the Lord. The positive picture painted in Joshua, especially: <<*Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua and had*

*known all the work that the Lord did for Israel*>> (Joshua 24:31), is marred by a reference to the next generation, who had forgotten the work that he had done for Israel, including the work done through Joshua.

### I.b.ii Judges 2:11-23 - Israel's Unfaithfulness

This section deals with the recurring patterns of Israel's apostasy and God's reaction to it. The unit might be divided into three subsections:

1. Israel's apostasy and God's anger (vv.11-15).
2. God's grace and Israel's continuing apostasy (vv.16-19).
3. God's anger (vv.20-23).

The first and third sections are similar in describing Israel's apostasy and then in describing how God punished the nation, although the third section ends without reference to God's grace. The middle section presents a summary of the recurring pattern seen throughout the remainder of the book: God graciously raises up successive judges to deliver Israel, but the people fall away from him each time.

<sup>11</sup> Then the Israelites did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and worshipped the Baals; <sup>12</sup> and they abandoned the Lord, the God of their ancestors, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt; they followed other gods, from among the gods of the peoples who were all around them, and bowed down to them; and they provoked the Lord to anger. <sup>13</sup> They abandoned the Lord, and worshipped Baal and the Astartes.

### Judges 2:11-13

Then the Israelites did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. This clear statement of Israel's apostasy recurs throughout this book, and again many times in 1-2 Kings, with reference to the kings of Israel and Judah, for example King Nadab: <<*He did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, walking in the way of his ancestor and in the sin that he caused Israel to commit*>> (1 Kings 15:26), and King Manasseh: <<*He did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, following the abominable practices of the nations that the Lord drove out before the people of Israel*>> (2 Kings 21:2). Israel's tendency throughout its history was to turn away from the Lord. Only God's grace and the leadership of a few godly individuals kept Israel from complete paganism.

In the sight of the Lord implies that the sin was even more offensive to God because it was done right before his eyes. To give an extreme example, it is bad enough for a married person to commit adultery; but to commit adultery in the presence of one's spouse would be especially offensive.

Worshipped the Baals. The Canaanite idol Baal was an attractive rival to Yahweh because he was thought to be the god over the weather and nature for the Canaanites; he was essentially the god of agricultural success. In an agricultural society people served Baal because they wanted good weather for abundant crops and flocks. One might say that the bottom line with Baal was the bottom line; he was effectively the god of personal wealth. Refer to the comment made on Judges 3:7.

It is strange that anyone would want to trade a personal, real, living God for a false god that is the figment of someone's imagination. Yet there is something within humankind that is afraid of the exact God they need; many would rather serve a god of their own creation than the real, living God whom they cannot control. The gods people create for themselves are the gods wanted by their sinful desires.

They abandoned the Lord. God made it clear that Israel's pursuit of these gods was nothing less than forsaking the God of their ancestors. Yet, in all likelihood, Israel did not see their idolatry as forsaking God; they probably just thought they were adding a few gods along side of the God of their ancestors. Nevertheless, the God of Israel is a jealous God who demands exclusive worship. One Biblical illustration of a relationship with God is to describe it as a marriage relationship between husband and wife. It would be wrong for a wife or a husband to add many lovers to their marriage, claiming that they simply could love them all. A husband or wife has a righteous claim on the exclusive affection of their spouse; God has a righteous claim on the exclusive worship of everyone as he created them.

They followed other gods, from among the gods of the peoples who were all around them. This shows another root cause for Israel's tragic idolatry. The influence of the Canaanites that they allowed to remain in their midst led them to idolatry. The result of not fully driving out the Canaanites was far worse than Israel imagined.

The Astartes or Ashtaroth is the plural form of Ashtoreth, Greek *Astartē*, a goddess of fertility, love, and war who was closely associated with Baal: <<***The Israelites again did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, worshipping the Baals and the Astartes, the gods of Aram, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the Ammonites, and the gods of the Philistines. Thus they abandoned the Lord, and did not worship him***>> (Judges 10:6), and: <<***So Israel put away the Baals and the Astartes, and they served the Lord only***>> (1 Samuel 7:4). She was an attractive rival to Yahweh because she was thought to be the goddess of love, sex, and fertility. She was usually honoured by the practice of ritual sex with a priestess-prostitute. One might say that the bottom line with Ashtoreth was sex and love. Canaanite texts seldom mention Ashtoreth, but she appears in Mesopotamian texts by the name Ishtar and in Egyptian representations of Canaanite religion. Ashtoreth and its plural Ashtaroth should not be confused

with Asherah or its plural Asheroth; refer to the comments made on Judges 3:7 and 6:25-26.

<sup>14</sup> So the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he gave them over to plunderers who plundered them, and he sold them into the power of their enemies all around, so that they could no longer withstand their enemies. <sup>15</sup> Whenever they marched out, the hand of the Lord was against them to bring misfortune, as the Lord had warned them and sworn to them; and they were in great distress.

### Judges 2:14-15

So the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel. This response of God to the unfaithfulness of Israel was no surprise. He specifically promised that he would do this in the covenant he made with Israel, which was characterised by blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience, as in Leviticus Chapter 26 and Deuteronomy Chapter 28.

Christians now serve God under the terms of a different covenant, a better covenant, as explained in Hebrews 8:6. When Christians forsake God and do not abide in Jesus Christ, things may and often do go badly for them, but not because God has actively set his hand against them as he did to Israel under the Old Covenant. When a person does not abide in Jesus and things go badly for them, it is simply because their actions have consequences and they reap the bitter fruit of not keeping themselves in the love of God: *<<keep yourselves in the love of God; look forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life>>* (Jude 21).

He gave them over to plunderers who plundered them. The purpose of all this was so that when Israel was greatly distressed, they would turn their hearts back to Lord. God's goal was not punishment in itself, but repentance. Therefore, this should be seen as a manifestation of God's love for Israel instead of his hate. The worst judgement God can bring upon a person is to leave them alone, to stop trying to bring them to repentance.

As the Lord had warned them and sworn to them. God had threatened to deliver Israel into its enemies' hands if it forsook him: *<<The Lord will cause you to be defeated before your enemies; you shall go out against them one way and flee before them seven ways. You shall become an object of horror to all the kingdoms of the earth>>* (Deuteronomy 28:25), and: *<<For if you turn back, and join the survivors of these nations left here among you, and intermarry with them, so that you marry their women and they yours, know assuredly that the Lord your God will not continue to drive out these nations before you; but they shall be a snare and a trap for you, a scourge on your sides, and thorns*

*in your eyes, until you perish from this good land that the Lord your God has given you*>> (Joshua 23:12-13). He also warned that these nations would be snares and traps to Israel in Exodus 23:33, Deuteronomy 7:16, and especially in Numbers 33:55, which came true with a vengeance during the period of the judges.

<sup>16</sup> Then the Lord raised up judges, who delivered them out of the power of those who plundered them.

#### Judges 2:16

Then the Lord raised up judges. Because of his great love for his people, God raised up judges - heroic leaders - who then rescued Israel from their calamity. God did not do so because Israel ever deserved such a deliverer from God, but in spite of the fact that they were undeserving. The judges' primary, if temporary, function was military; they were provided by the grace of God.

<sup>17</sup> Yet they did not listen even to their judges; for they lusted after other gods and bowed down to them. They soon turned aside from the way in which their ancestors had walked, who had obeyed the commandments of the Lord; they did not follow their example.

#### Judges 2:17

Although God gave Israel these heroic leaders, they did not listen even to their judges in matters of spiritual leadership. They wanted the judges as political and military leaders, but not as spiritual leaders.

For they lusted (whored) after other gods and bowed down to them. The metaphor of Israel's committing adultery against God by following other gods is one of the most powerful in the OT. Ezekiel spoke against Jerusalem's adultery in Ezekiel Chapters 16 and 23, and Hosea's ministry was inextricably linked with God's command to marry a wife of whoredom (Hosea Chapters 1-3). Israel's unfaithfulness was reprehensible to the God who had chosen, loved, and provided for his people.

<sup>18</sup> Whenever the Lord raised up judges for them, the Lord was with the judge, and he delivered them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; for the Lord would be moved to pity by their groaning because of those who persecuted and oppressed them.

#### Judges 2:18

The Lord was with the judge. This explains the source of power with the judges God raised up. They were able to lead Israel in dramatic acts of deliverance

because the Lord was with the judge, not because the judge was necessarily great or powerful in themselves.

The Lord would be moved to pity. During the time of the judges, Israel only cried out to God and really depended on him in times of emergency. When they did cry out to him with groaning, he answered with pity and faithfulness. Pity is Hebrew *Nakhama*, and is translated as <<**change his mind**>> in 1 Samuel 15:29, and Jonah 3:10. It is also translated as 'have regret' or relent. God graciously changed his course of action concerning the Israelites, i.e. to give them over to their enemies (vv.14-15) because of his compassion for their suffering: <<**So they put away the foreign gods from among them and worshipped the Lord; and he could no longer bear to see Israel suffer**>> (Judges 10:16).

This principle explains why some people are in a constant state of crisis; God knows that is the only way they can be kept trusting in him. Instead, God's desire is that his people remain in a constant relationship of dependence on him. This is exactly how Jesus lived: <<**Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, the Son can do nothing on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise**>> (John 5:19).

<sup>19</sup> But whenever the judge died, they would relapse and behave worse than their ancestors, following other gods, worshipping them and bowing down to them. They would not drop any of their practices or their stubborn ways. <sup>20</sup> So the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel; and he said, 'Because this people have transgressed my covenant that I commanded their ancestors, and have not obeyed my voice, <sup>21</sup> I will no longer drive out before them any of the nations that Joshua left when he died.' <sup>22</sup> In order to test Israel, whether or not they would take care to walk in the way of the Lord as their ancestors did, <sup>23</sup> the Lord had left those nations, not driving them out at once, and had not handed them over to Joshua.

### Judges 2:19-23

But whenever the judge died, they would relapse and behave worse than their ancestors. The pattern of bondage, deliverance and blessing; followed by sin and bondage again is a discouraging fact in many Christian lives today. This discouraging cycle was more understandable in ancient Israel than in the life of the modern Christian. This is because the Christian, as part of the New Covenant, lives with the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit and is made a new creature in Jesus. These are privileges that Israel in the days of the Judges knew nothing of.

They would not drop any of their practices or their stubborn ways. Their sin was their own practices; they could not blame it on anyone or anything else. In the

same way, their sin was their own, they did not learn it from God, but it came from their own corrupt natures. The ancient Hebrew word translated stubborn, also translated as stiff-necked, is a word that was also applied to Israel many times during the Exodus, e.g. Exodus 32:9, 33:3, and 33:5. This shows that a change of location - even coming into the Promised Land - did not necessarily mean a change of heart for Israel. Christians should never count on sanctification by relocation; wherever a person goes, they take their inner self with them. A new environment does not always mean a new attitude. The ancient Hebrew word for stubborn, *kawsheh*, comes from the idea of being hard or severe. To be stubborn against the Lord is to have a hard and unyielding heart; and it results in a hard life.

So the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel. God may be full of love, grace and mercy, but he does get angry when people abuse his name or break their trust with him. God is not a soft touch: <<***Who considers the power of your anger? Your wrath is as great as the fear that is due to you***>> (Psalm 90:11).

This people is literally ‘this nation,’ Hebrew *goy*, a term normally reserved for pagans. Biblical writers usually refer to Israel as a ‘people’ (Hebrew ‘*am*, a more intimate word). The usage of ‘this nation’ here rather than the term ‘my nation’ is laden with contempt and reflects the disgust God feels toward his people, whom he now regards as just like the other nations.

I will no longer drive out before them any of the nations that Joshua left when he died. This repeats the promise and threat that God had made to the Israelites in Joshua 23:13, which is then carried out here. Israel wanted these Canaanite nations around, so God gave them the worst punishment he could think of: he would allow it.

In order to test Israel. This testing was to see if Israel would truly follow the Lord, as when God tested Abraham by instructing him to sacrifice his only son Isaac in Genesis 22:1-19, and King Hezekiah: <<***So also in the matter of the envoys of the officials of Babylon, who had been sent to him to inquire about the sign that had been done in the land, God left him to himself, in order to test him and to know all that was in his heart***>> (2 Chronicles 32:31). Through adversity, God tested Israel in order to refine them. Later in the Book of Judges, Gideon ‘tested’ God in a display of weak faith; refer to Judges 6:39.

**This type of testing is seen elsewhere in Scripture:** <<***And I will put this third into the fire, refine them as one refines silver, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on my name, and I will answer them. I will say, ‘They are my people’; and they will say, ‘The Lord is our God’***>> (Zechariah 13:9), <<***Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw – the work of each builder will become visible, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each has done. If what has been built on the foundation***>>

*survives, the builder will receive a reward>> (1 Corinthians 3:12-14), <<For our appeal does not spring from deceit or impure motives or trickery, but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the message of the gospel, even so we speak, not to please mortals, but to please God who tests our hearts>> (1 Thessalonians 2:3-4), and: <<In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith – being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire – may be found to result in praise and glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed>> (1 Peter 1:6-7).*

The Lord had left those nations, not driving them out at once. After setting their hearts on sinful things, Israel found that God gave what their sinful hearts desired. This illustrates the great danger of setting the heart on sinful things; people may get to the point where God may allow them to have such things, thus bringing sin, bondage, and pain into their lives.