

The Promise Keeper for Promise Breakers

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 02 April 2023

Preacher: Bill Story

[0 : 00] in the unfolding drama of the Old Testament, making sense of the Old Testament.

Joshua. So remember there's the first five books of the Bible, right? Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

First five, they're called the Pentateuch, right? Those first five are called the Law, the Torah. So now we get to the next section of 12 books in your contents, which are historical books, beginning with Joshua, all the way through Esther.

Okay, so with this fourth act, we saw in Act 1, in Genesis, God gave promises to the patriarchs. And then in Act 2, the book of Exodus shows us the travel from Egypt to Sinai by way of redemption by the blood of the Lamb.

Act 3 is shown in the book of Numbers, where they travel now from Sinai, where they had got the law, the tabernacle, covenant relationship with God, and now they proceed from Sinai to Kadesh, to the very southern end of the promised land.

[1 : 27] And as they are there, and as Moses sends in 12 spies, one from each tribe to spy out the land, they come back and two spies say, it's everything God said it was, let's go.

Ten spies said, it's everything God said it was, we're not going. We will not go. And so there's rebellion in the wilderness, and that generation will then die over 40 years.

Now we come to Act 4, 40 years later, the book of Joshua shows us now the next generation who will go into the promised land, and God will keep his promise, and he will give them rest in this land. So I'm going to read from chapter 1 in Joshua 1, 1 to 9, and then I will read from chapter 21, verses, the last three verses of chapter 21.

So I should probably get that out so I can get to it. All right, if you're able, please stand as I read from Joshua, beginning at chapter 1, verse 1 through verse 9.

[2 : 47] After the death of Moses, the servant of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua, the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, Moses, my servant, is dead.

Now therefore arise. Go over this Jordan, you and all the people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the people of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon, I have given to you, just as I promised to Moses.

From the wilderness and this Lebanon, as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites to the great sea, toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory.

No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you.

I will not leave you or forsake you. Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them.

[3 : 56] Only be strong and very creative, creative, no, courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses, my servant, commanded you.

Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go. This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it.

For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous.

Do not be frightened. Do not be dismayed. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go. Chapter 21, verse 43.

Thus the Lord gave to Israel all the land that he swore to give to their fathers, and they took possession of it, and they settled there.

[5 : 11] And the Lord gave them rest on every side, just as he had sworn to their fathers. Not one of all their enemies had withstood them, for the Lord had given all their enemies into their hands.

Not one word of all the good promises that the Lord had made to the house of Israel had failed. All came to pass.

So it reads, let us pray. Father, guide us today as we walk through this kind of big picture of the book of Joshua, when we see how you are the true, the one, the only promise keeper.

You are the one we can count on. Help us to see that in the book of Joshua, how you brought it all to pass. And help us to see as we follow up with the book of Judges that we are not the promise keepers, we are the promise breakers.

And so, Father, show us again our need for Jesus. Because we can't do it. We are not able.

[6 : 21] Except as you give us your spirit, and we rely on you. Instill that in us today, Father, that we might see your glory and our need of you.

We pray in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. Please be seated. Promise keeper sounds familiar, doesn't it?

Remember the promise keepers? How many of you were part of that when it came out? Okay, showing your age. Okay. It was 90s. Promise keeper was popular crusade of the 90s.

Desire to build up godly men of integrity. Very good thing, isn't it? Kind of makes sense. During the 90s, this would fill stadiums.

You remember that? Inspiring, motivating messages from godly men. And then the singing.

Remember the singing?

[7 : 26] 30,000 to 50,000 men in a football stadium, singing, holy, holy, holy. Whoa.

That was worth it in itself. Promise keepers, who sought to encourage men to keep their promises. To build in men a resolve to be more diligent, to be more committed, to be men truly of integrity, to lead their families, to lead their churches, as God had called them.

Promise keepers had a good start, and it had a godly motivation. But what happened over time?

Where did promise keepers go?

Now, I know they're back. They've rebooted in 2018. But in 2003, when Coach McCartney needed to retire, promise keepers retired.

[8 : 38] What happened? What happened? What happens is the Peter syndrome.

It's a good motive and desire to want to make promises and keep those promises. And to think that if we're committed enough, we will keep those promises.

If we're diligent enough and we're serious enough and sincere enough, we will keep those promises this time. Right? I do not doubt the integrity or the sincerity or the desire of any men in that.

I was part of that. What did Peter say? I will never, never deny you.

It's not in me, Jesus. You don't even know what you're talking about. I'm so committed. Was he?

Absolutely. I am so loyal. Absolutely. I love you to death.

[9 : 58] Did he? Yeah. I'll take on the Roman soldiers. Just don't sneak up on me with a little servant girl when I don't have my guard up.

And all of a sudden, I'm not as committed as I thought I was. It's Peter syndrome. I would love to be a promise keeper.

I want to be a promise keeper. But I know I'm a promise breaker. It doesn't mean I don't still make promises.

It doesn't mean I still don't pledge myself or commit myself to the Lord. But it's very, very important for me to recognize I am not a promise keeper. But I know one.

In fact, I know the only one who's a promise keeper. Who has kept his promise. Who never breaks his promise. And that's what the book of Joshua tells us about.

[11 : 01] A real promise keeper. The only PK. PK stands for something else, doesn't it? Preacher's kid. The original PK.

The original PK. Peter's kid. Oh, promise keeper kid. Yeah. All right. I'm not making fun of promise keeper's.

I'm not. I wholeheartedly was behind it. I just believe though the motivation is pure and sincere and good the method is flawed.

And so many Christian movies over the past decades have come out on the same method. Sign a pledge. Make a commitment.

Then you'll get better. It doesn't last. It's worthy. It's honorable. But it's flawed.

[11 : 58] Because we are not promise keepers. I want to be. Okay. If you haven't tuned me out yet, we come, we're looking at this whole picture of the Old Testament.

How do we make sense of it all? It's so big and vast. So we are breaking it down into eight acts. It's an unfolding drama of redemptive history.

God's working out his plan from Genesis to Malachi. Right? He starts with promises to the patriarchs in Genesis. He makes three huge promises to Abraham who has an old wife and no children.

He says, one, I will make of you a great nation. Your offspring will fill the earth. Your offspring will be like the stars of heaven, like the sand of the sea.

25 years later, he has what? One child. One child. I'll make of you a great nation. Phenomenal promise. Second promise he made to him.

[13 : 10] I will come into this land. I will give you all this land. It will not only be a possession for you, but he uses the word in Genesis 13. It will be an everlasting possession for you.

Not a temporary place, but an eternal place. That's why the book of Hebrews tells us Abraham Abraham was looking further than Canaan. He was looking for the real thing because that wasn't it. Because remember when Moses got, Moses, Moses too. But when Abraham got to the land of Canaan, what was it? There's famine, there's people there, it's not so great.

Lots of obstacles. I'm going to give you land. And then the third promise that he made to Abraham, also huge, not only a great nation, not only an everlasting land, but in your seed, singular, in one of your descendants, I will bless all the families of the earth.

Not just your nation, but all the families of the earth. So God made to Abraham a promise that was vast, huge, that would take the whole Bible to see fulfilled.

[14 : 19] And that's what I want you to keep in mind as we go through all this. That's what he's going to fulfill. So promises in Genesis, Exodus, the promise starts to be fulfilled because now he releases them from slavery, bondage, and he frees them by redemption.

But he says to them at Sinai, if you keep my covenant, you will be to me, what? A treasured possession, a holy nation.

He's already building them as a nation. And a kingdom of priests. That's what you'll be if. That was...

So they get to the whole... Right? Then they rebel in the wilderness. So now we come to Act 4. Forty years after Moses, Moses has died. Joshua takes his place. And now we see a promise keeper who gives them rest in the land.

So the theme of this part is the Lord gives Israel rest, but the people grow restless. The Lord keeps his promise, but the people break their promise. That's what this story's about. Joshua, God keeps his promise, judges, people break their promise.

[15 : 32] So two stories we're going to look at today very briefly. Joshua, story of Joshua is a fight for the promise. Israel, God's people must fight for what has already been promised.

Isn't that interesting? God has promised it all along. I will give it to you. You must go in and take possession. You must fight for it. And then the book of Judges is about the people, God's people, who fall, who abandon the Lord.

And they fall into self-destructiveness because it just comes, goes crashing down. And that prepares us for the next act, the next turning point, which is a king.

A king is the answer. If we just get the right king, he'll make it all happen. So, let's look at this. So Joshua's story, first of all, we learn that God's people must fight a spiritual battle for the promised land.

This is a principle that's true today. God's people still must fight a spiritual battle for what has already been promised to them. We must fight. God has promised us many, many things, but we must fight to hold them.

[16 : 48] We fight a spiritual battle. We put on a spiritual armor. We fight for what's promised. We fight an enemy. We fight our own baggage.

So, I want you to see how Joshua is laid out. Once again, it's a chiasm, a chiasm, however you want to say that. Notice that the story unfolds. We go from Joshua's commission to entering the land to the conquest of the land.

Then we come back out. It repeats the themes in reverse order. Conquest of the land leads to the division of the land, which leads to Joshua's charge.

So, notice that Joshua begins with a commission. Be strong. Do all that is written in the book of the law. We just read that in chapter 1. Joshua, the book, will end with the very same commission, but it's now Joshua giving the charge to the people.

He says the very same words. Be strong. Do all that is written. Do all that is written in the book of the law. So, same strategy. By the way, that is the strategy for the war they're going into.

[17:57] Here's your strategy. Be strong and creative. I want to say creative. Why? Courageous. New age. I don't know.

Bad speaking discipline. That's the strategy. Be strong. Do all that's written in the word of God. Huh. Interesting battle strategy, isn't it? So, we saw that in that opening thing, God tells him to go into the land. I've given it to you just as I promised.

And then he makes this statement to Joshua. Moses is dead, but just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. Isn't that interesting? You're the new Moses.

Moses. And in fact, we find that Joshua goes through some very similar experiences as Moses. He too will give the people the law.

[18:58] He too will first be rejected by the people. Remember, Moses was rejected, went into the wilderness 40 years, came back and led them. Joshua also was rejected by his people when he brought back the good report and they said, no, we're not going.

And then he went into the wilderness 40 years, came back and he leads them. Interesting pattern, isn't it? Then we saw that, what, both Moses and Joshua led people through water or not water, restrained water.

He led them on dry land through water masses. Both of them. Both of them sent spies into the, into the land to spy out first.

And both of them had an encounter on holy ground. Moses in the wilderness before the burning bush. Joshua in chapter 5 before not a bush, but a scary warrior with a sword drawn.

And Joshua said, are you for us or against us? And the warrior said, no, neither. I am the commander of the Lord's army.

[20:14] By the way, boy, get on your face. You're standing on holy ground. The leaders back then had to be on their face a lot. That was kind of part of the thing.

So he is the new Moses. He's the new Moses. It's fascinating. These patterns. So then we see that they enter the land in chapters 1 through 5.

They enter the land to take possession. They go to the, the spies go in. Rahab saves the spies. Remember? Rahab. Who's she? She's a harlot. She's a prostitute.

Oh, interesting. She's in the story. Rahab saves the spies and says to them, the Lord has given you the land. How did she know that? Because she had heard something.

She heard all about what they did. They heard all about what God has done. She heard and she said, our hearts melted and, and please take me with you because this place is toast. She had faith already.

[21:12] By the way, she made it into the, the Hebrews 11 book of faith. She also made it into the genealogy of Jesus Christ. See, she married a man who was probably one of those spies and, and, and they had a son by the name of Boaz.

Ever heard of Boaz? Boaz found a woman who was a remarkable woman, but she wasn't an Israelite. She was a Moabite. Didn't stop him because his mother, you know, no big deal.

Boaz, he marries this wonderful woman named Ruth. They have a son by the name of Obed. Obed married and had a son by the name of Jesse.

Jesse married and had a son by the name of a whole bunch of sons, but the main one was David. See, Rahab, Ruth, lead us to David.

Who will lead us to the real David? David. Pretty cool, huh? So then they crossed the Jordan in chapter 3 of Joshua.

[22:20] The Lord will do wonders. We see another picture of salvation through death, right, through water, what only God could do. Chapter 4, they set up 12 memorial stones. Remember, well, I don't know how long the priests had to stand in the middle of the river holding the ark, right, but for a long time because there's like millions of people crossing, right, and they all had to be 3,000 yards or feet away from the ark and whatever.

And then, oh, we're not done. Go get some stones and, you know, carry the stones and we'll build a memorial. The memorial was as a teaching lesson you shall teach your children that it was the hand

of the Lord that dried up the waters of the Red Sea.

Lots of memorials. Later, when they divide the land, they enter the land to take possession. That's the language in those chapters. In chapters 13 to 22, when they divide the land, the language is they took possession.

They got it. The promises fulfilled the Lord gave to Israel all the land as we read in chapter 21. And again, there's another altar of witness.

Interesting. But the heart of the story is chapters 6 through 12, which are, which is the conquest of the land. And the conquest of the land is made clear over and over again.

[23 : 37] The conquest of the land is by faith that the Lord is the one fighting for you. The Lord is the one fighting for you. So, in chapter 5, we had that encounter which I described to you.

At the end of chapter 5, Joshua meets this man with a sword drawn and tells him, I'm the commander of the Lord's army. You're not really leading Joshua. I am.

And I don't just lead the earthly host. I lead the heavenly host. I am the commander. This is not Gabriel.

This is not Michael. This is a pre-incarnate Jesus Christ. He is leading them in this battle.

So, chapter 6, we have Jericho. Remember the story of Jericho? Joshua fit the battle of Jericho.

Ooh, Jericho. Ooh, Jericho. Then you do the Wallace poem, you know.

[24 : 38] It's like, I knew that song but I never read the story. I'm like, I kind of knew the story and children's stuff. But then if you read that story as an adult, it's like, wait a minute, what?

Wait, what? Let me just read you the first five verses. Chapter 6, Jericho was shut up inside and outside because of the people of Israel. Right?

Jericho is a mighty fortress. They're scared of Israel, these little people. Yeah. As Rahab had said, our hearts melted when we heard what God did to the Egyptians, to the Red Sea, the crossing of the Jordan.

Oh yeah, we know what's been going on and we're terrified. So, they're shut up. None went out, none came in and the Lord said to Joshua, see, behold, I have given Jericho into your hand with its king and mighty men of valor.

You shall march around the city, all the men of war going around the city once. Thus you shall do for six days. Great battle strategy. It's in the art of war, isn't it?

[25 : 45] Sorry. Thus you shall do for six days. Seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of ram horns before the ark. They go first. On the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times and the priests shall blow their trumpets and when they make a long blast with the horns ram, when you hear the sound of the trumpet then all the people shall shout with a great shout and the wall of the city will fall down flat or the Hebrew is underneath itself.

Something, I'm not quite sure what it means and the people shall go up and everyone straight before him. Done. Done. Is it the Lord or is it Israel?

I mean, walk around the city, right, do it six days. Okay, seventh day, do it now, do it seven times. Okay. Right?

I always wonder what are they thinking when they're doing that? Is the Lord having them do that for their benefit or for Jericho? Is it to terrify Jericho? I'm sure it did.

What are they doing now? They're doing the same thing. Oh, they're going two times. No, they're going three times. Oh boy, something's going to happen. Did they do it for Jericho or did they do it for Israel?

[27 : 11] As Israel walks around these huge walls, they get to know the wall. They already knew where Rahab lived because they made a promise they're going to get her out first. Right?

They got a scarlet thread. Got to get those. You see it? See it? Yeah, Joshua. See it? Yeah, I got it. Oh, it's probably Solomon because he's the one that married Rahab. I don't know.

But what a strategy. Walk around, then play some trumpets, and then everybody yell. And the walls fall down. Okay, sure. It's the Lord.

It's a spiritual battle with spirit weapons. This is not, our enemy is not flesh and blood. This is a spiritual battle.

Israel, God's people, must fight with spiritual weapons for what has been promised. next chapter, we have a little problem.

[28 : 13] Chapter 7, one says, the people of Israel broke faith and regarded the devoted things for Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, the tribe of Judah, took some of the

devoted things and the Lord's anger burned.

So, then they set out to go capture this next city called, we read it, Ai, I think in Hebrew it's pronounced Ai, Ai, Ai, sounds Australian, Ai.

They go in and they say, oh, we don't need very many people, there are not very many there, we'll go, we'll get them. And, they get wiped out. And Joshua comes back and says, Lord, why, why, why, why did we even come?

Why, what are you doing? And, and of course he's on his face and the Lord's saying, get up, what are you doing on your face? Israel has sinned. Somebody's taken the devoted things and they draw lots and they figure out who it is.

I want to read something key that the Lord said to them. The Lord said in, in Joshua 7, verse 13, he says, consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, for tomorrow, for thus says the Lord, God of Israel, there, there are devoted things in your midst, O Israel.

[29 : 27] You cannot stand before your enemies until you take away the devoted things from among you. There's a principle there.

You cannot stand before your enemies until you take away the hidden sin. Hidden sin. Because in this context, Achan had taken the devoted things and hidden them.

And the Lord will find them. And as long as he kept those devoted things hidden, that sin of covetousness hidden, you will not stand before your enemies. Think that applies today?

You think you can stand before the enemy if you keep something hidden? A sin that you're coveting? Something that you're not repenting of? Will you stand before your enemies? Please?

The Lord says, until you remove those hidden things, then you will stand. You will stand before the devil and say, flee.

[30 : 30] And he will flee. I don't have that kind of power. Yes, you do. In Jesus' name, you have that kind of power. The strength of the Lord, you have that kind of power.

With the Holy Spirit within you, you have that kind of power. Because he may be looking at you, but he's seeing the Holy Spirit behind you. There's a movie scene like that. Oh, never mind.

It's kind of like that's what he sees. He sees the Holy Spirit in you. He's like, I'm messing with that. Greater is he who is in you than he who is in the world.

So we have the conquest of the land. Obviously, God took possession. We see in chapter 10 the battle where the sun stands still. Okay, we've got to be some way we can explain that, right?

We've got to be some way we've got to rotation something. There's got to be a scientific explanation for that because otherwise that can't happen. Yeah, it's like the walls falling down in Jericho.

[31 : 33] It can't happen by just marching around them. Well, maybe they were crumbling already. Maybe it was all the marching that made them fall. Yeah, that's what it was. The sun stands still because the Lord fought for Israel is what the text says.

They took possession. So we see this Joshua leading the people. We see in Joshua a picture of Jesus. Not a picture in every detail. We see a broad outline of Jesus in Joshua just like we saw it in Joseph.

Just like we saw a picture of Jesus in Moses. We see one who's first rejected by his people. Then he's exalted to his leadership. He then proceeds to take leadership and bring salvation.

He is the mediator of salvation for his people. And he brings them to a land of rest. He brings them to the fulfillment of promise. And that's exactly what Jesus does because he's rejected by his people.

We've been reading about it all through Lent. He's rejected by his people. He will suffer and die. Then he will raise up exalted and he will sit on his throne. And by his death he conquers our greatest enemy.

[32 : 46] Not the devil but our sin. He conquers our sin. Speaking of sin we come to the next chapter. So Joshua ends with a charge be strong do all that is written in the book of the law.

Chapter 23 of Joshua he gives his commission. to them in verse 11 he says to them chapter 23 this is how he ends chapter 23 11 be very careful therefore to love the Lord your God for if you turn back and cling to the remnant of these nations remaining among you and make marriages with them so that you associate with them and they with you then know for certain that the Lord your God will no longer drive out these nations before you but they shall be a snare and a trap for you a whip on your sides and thorns in your eyes until you perish from off the good ground that the Lord your God has given you.

Joshua said I'm about to go the way of the earth and you know in your hearts and souls all of you that not one word has failed of all the things the Lord your God promised concerning you. all have come to pass for you not one of them has failed but just as all the good things that the Lord your God promised concerning you have been fulfilled for you so the Lord will bring upon you all the evil things until he has destroyed you from off the good land that the Lord your God has given you if you trespass the covenant of the Lord your God which he commanded you and go and serve other gods.

What's that covenant? What's the covenant? What covenant did God give to Israel? We're not talking about the covenant with Abraham but the covenant with Israel. We learned about in Exodus when they stood before the mountain right?

[34 : 51] The Lord said if you obey me and keep my covenant then I will bless you if you do not obey and keep my covenant shorthand I will kill you if you are a promise breaker.

What was the covenant? The ten words of the law. Not not all of Deuteronomy not all of Exodus chapter 17 of Exodus excuse me chapter 20 of Exodus those 17 verses the ten commands the ten that were written on the stones the ten words written on the stone that's the covenant.

The rest of it is our applications of those ten words but those ten words are the heart and soul of the covenant. That's what set Israel apart. We talked about that a few weeks ago right?

How many of those laws are still enforced today? Those ten commands how many laws of those ten commands are enforced today? murder maybe stealing maybe lying depending on unless you're a lawyer politician sorry Don's not here I don't have to apologize Don's not one of those okay so that made them distinct if you keep all them did they keep those are easy right?

Murder you gotta go to some effort to murder adultery okay you gotta go to more effort to do that stealing okay no that's pretty easy lying that's pretty easy coveting oops so and does our nation does our culture does our nation care about any of those commands besides murder?

[36 : 38] They don't care about adultery you're not going you're not going to get in trouble for adultery well with your wife or your you know but not with the state they don't care abortion abort yeah well yeah well we redefine what murder is well in that case we're redefining what a person is so we dismiss what God says crazy Christians but what has God said?

what did Joshua say? do all that is written in the book of life if you're careful to do it all then you will prosper then you will have success not American success okay but success in God's fight and battle against the enemy so Joshua ends the story in chapter 24 15 some of you know this verse 14 he says fear the Lord serve him in sincerity put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the river and in Egypt serve the Lord and if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord choose this day whom you will serve heard that phrase?

choose this day whom you will serve whether it's the gods of your fathers that your fathers served in the region beyond the river or the gods of the Amorites who in this land you dwell but as for me in my house we will serve the Lord so that's his last commission choose whom you will serve that leads us to a transition to the next book of Judges who will they serve?

they were faithful as long as Joshua was alive but when Joshua died things changed in fact that will be the theme of the next book of Judges so let me very briefly go through Judges I say briefly that's like a pastor saying with this I close right he goes another 20 minutes so I'm trying to but I don't have as much to look at here so story one is God's faithfulness right the people must fight a spiritual battle for the promised land story two is God's people sink into self destruction every time they abandon the Lord the theme of this book it's stated four times at the end of the book in those days there was no king but everyone did what was right in their own eyes kind of sounds like today doesn't it?

everyone did what was right in their own eyes there's no king nobody to hold me accountable the implication is by the end of the book of Judges is maybe we need a king because everybody does what's right in their own eyes it's getting terrible around here maybe we do need a king because maybe he'll hold us in check we can't hold ourselves in check maybe we need a king yeah everybody all the other lands have kings we should have a king that will lead us to the next story Judges is the transition between Joshua promise kept and the next story in Samuel and the kings David and the United Kingdom how do we get from the land to David and the United Kingdom through the book of Judges so there are three reasons that Judges shows us notice again on your outline you see Judges in three parts here also a chiasm it starts and ends with Israel's unfaithfulness in the beginning first two chapters they fail to drive out the enemy and their gods so

they those people and their gods become thorns and snares to them and then in the end [40 : 26] Israel's moral decline everyone does what is right in their own eyes so we have that kind of bracketing that Israel's unfaithfulness Israel's unfaithfulness bracketing the middle section which is the Lord responding to Israel's unfaithfulness by raising up Judges now these Judges are not like we think you know they have robes and they sit in courts and they make decisions not that kind of Judge these Judges were deliverers they were usually military people they led campaigns they made judgments on other people they weren't Judges in the sense we think of they were more like saviors deliverers mighty people not all men by the way we had one Deborah right Deborah was a she woman you know go make things happen so so the Lord raises up so three reasons why they self destroyed one they failed in chapters one and two they failed to drive out the enemy two in chapters three to sixteen

God raised up Judges but Israel did not listen Israel would not listen to the Judges and then finally the last chapter seventeen to twenty one Israel's moral decline was because they did what was right in their own eyes that's why they self-destructed right they don't do they don't finish what they're called to do they tolerate an enemy presence they didn't drive out the enemies with their gods and by the way the book of the book of Judges and Joshua is not about a holy war against whoever you want to have a holy war against okay let's make that crystal clear because while he told them to drive out the people of that land because four hundred years earlier to Abraham he said you don't get the land yet because these people are in the land and their time's not up in four more in four hundred more years their time will be up and that's exactly where we're at now so God's judgment on the people of the land is God's judgment not not our judgment against whoever we think is unholy okay this was a very specific it was not genocide it was a very specific judgment because on the other hand they're also told to to welcome foreigners they're also told to include people like

Rahab and Ruth and others okay so so don't take this out of context but what they did do is tolerate an enemy that God said to get to drive out there's a point for us are you tolerating an enemy presence it's kind of like the other one right you can't stand before your enemy as long as you're there's a hidden sin are you tolerating an enemy presence because if you're tolerating an enemy presence whether that's through something you look at something you're just compromising with something I don't know what that is for you but as long as you're tolerating an enemy presence they will be a snare to you they will be a trap for you they will be thorns in your side you will not progress and you won't stand so this middle section is what we're looking at chapters 3 to 16 we're not going to read that

I want to read a small portion in Judges chapter 2 because this explains the whole book of Judges there's a pattern that keeps repeating all the way through Judges the people abandon the Lord they break their promise the Lord sells them into the hand of their enemies and then the Lord is moved to pity by their groaning and prayers and then the Lord raises up spirit empowered judges to save them that pattern will repeat abandonment selling them move to pity judges to save them abandonment right goes on over and over and over again so read chapter 2 that will explain it chapter 2 Judges chapter 2 verse 1 is the clock working I've only been up here about 2 minutes I just fixed that see how good I am Judges 2 now I want to know what time it is

I don't know what time oh thank you Lord I got all the time now the angel of the Lord went up from Gilgal to Bokim and he said I brought you up from Egypt interesting the angel of the Lord brought them up I brought you up from Egypt and brought you into the land that I swore to give to your fathers I said I will never break my covenant with you and 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 so now I say I will not drive them out before you but they will become thorns in your sides and their gods will be a snare to you down to verse 10 and all that generation was gathered to their fathers it's talking about Joshua's generation all that generation was gathered to their fathers and there arose another generation after them who did not know the Lord interesting now this is the third generation we have in the story first generation was in

[46 : 26] Exodus right they came out that first generation did not have faith to enter the promised land so what do we do 40 years we have a second generation they do go in and conquer the land now this is after that another 40 years whatever now we have a third generation so the first generation was unfaithful second generation was faithful third generation not faithful what that tells us is if you're that second generation that's faithful to the Lord your faithfulness to the Lord does not

guarantee your children will be faithful to the Lord I agree I don't even know what it said did you get that even though you're if you're that second generation that is faithful and you conquer the land it does not guarantee your children will be faithful after you because here was a faithful generation and the next was not okay now do we have responsibility in it as parents absolutely is it guaranteed what we do no no it must be the

Lord my parents were faithful I was not we'll go into that so another generation chapter 2 verse 11 judges and the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and served the Baals and they abandoned the Lord the God of their fathers who had brought them out of the land of Egypt they went after other gods from among the gods of the peoples who were around them and bowed down to them and they provoked the Lord to anger they abandoned the Lord and served the Baals and the Ashtaroth 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 hand of their surrounding enemies so that they could no longer withstand their enemies whenever they marched out the hand of the Lord was against them for harm as the Lord had warned as the

Lord had sworn to them and they were in terrible distress then the Lord raised up judges who saved them out of the hand of those who plundered them yet they did not listen to their judges for they whored after other gods and bowed down to them they soon turned aside from the way in which their fathers had walked who had obeyed the commandments of the Lord and they did not do so whenever the Lord raised up judges for them the Lord was with the judge and he saved them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge for the Lord why for the Lord was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who afflicted and oppressed them sounds like Egypt doesn't it but whenever the judge died they turned back and were more corrupt than their fathers going after other gods serving them and bowing down to them they did not drop any of their practices or their stubborn ways so the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel and he said because this people has transgressed my covenant what is that ten words because they well they did that with the first one what's the first commandment you shall have no other gods before me right you shall not make graven images and you shall treat my name as holy they couldn't even keep the first one can we they have transgressed my covenant that I commanded their fathers and have not obeyed my voice I will no longer drive out before them any of the nations that Joshua left when he died in order to test Israel by them whether they will take care to walk in the way of the Lord as their fathers did or not is that what he's doing with us are we in a time where the Lord has not driven out our enemies in our land but is testing us by those very enemies whether we will be faithful to the Lord or not whether we will keep his commands or not whether we will turn to what the commands of the world say and throw our commands out oh that baby is not a person yet right let's define it as the world defines!

Or will we keep the word of God that says I knew you before I made you you already existed before there was anything made what will we do say I believe God is testing us our world is declining our culture is like Israel the moral decline we don't drive out enemies we don't listen to the Lord and we do what is right in our own eyes that is our culture will we as believers do the same will we say one thing and do the other so what difference does all this make let me just point out a few just a few of the promises fulfilled in

[51 : 57] Joshua one the land is given okay that fulfills the great promise from Genesis 12 there's a sinner who's redeemed so there's a sinner and a Gentile who's included in Israel so the third promise is already starting to be fulfilled he will bless all the families of the earth through the descendants so we got Rahab saved and making the hall of faith and Ruth included not only among the Israelites but among the bloodline of Jesus Christ we have sinners and rebels saved from their enemy though they are promise breakers God is still merciful we have Christ foreshadowed over and over again in Joshua and in judges did I show you the the the judges okay the judges are kind of like good the bad and the ugly okay they start good you know you got a couple of good ones

Deborah is one of the good ones and then you get to chapter six through nine and you got kind of okay Gideon Gideon you know he's not a man of faith he needs help he's real reluctant and then by the end but he does serve the Lord he does is used of the Lord but then by the end he kills somebody and he goes to idol worship so kind of disappointing and then in the middle chapters ten through twelve you have the bad the bad the one who does child sacrifices and then in chapter thirteen to sixteen you go from good to bad to really ugly and that's Samson he's ugly oh I'm sure he's pretty I mean with long flowing hair he's a Nazirite wow right he's got the long hair I mean so

long that Delilah could you know make long braids and wrap him he was a violent man he was a man who visited prostitutes he was a man who was very arrogant and proud not a godly man at all but in his death he typified

Jesus Christ because in the end remember he was captured Delilah seduced him right and remember Delilah was approached by the Philistines to seduce him and get out of him where his strength lies and we'll give you money ooh money that sound familiar if you get that savior we'll pay you so she ends up betraying him for a sum of money he is not only betrayed but then he's bound and he's delivered to his to the rulers when he's delivered to the rulers they mock him and make sport of him they bring him into this great house which it's called a house where really it's like a stadium because it's got 3,000 people in there and he is mocked and they make entertainment out of him and in the end he says you know he's blinded by then right so he asked the servant put me between two pillars right and he gets between two pillars and he asked the

Lord right give me one more time his hair had started to grow back he just prayed Lord let me let me die with my enemies I'm willing to die to bring victory a willing sacrificial death now Samson by the details of his life is no picture of Jesus Christ but in those last moments of his life he was very much like Christ betrayed delivered over bound mocked and scorned willing to lay down his life for victory and in the end he destroys more in that one act than he did all of his life so even the ugly examples in scripture can point us to Jesus did you know that Christ is foreshadowed all through this drama there's a few Christian applications in this these books the land the promised land is pointed to points to the

Sabbath rest in Hebrews chapter four the writer of Hebrews connects the land and rest and the Sabbath all together in Hebrews four and he says today is the day to have the rest come to me all who are weary and heavy laden I'll give you rest it also points toward heaven's promise the land points towards heaven's promise Hebrews 11 talks about how Abraham saw the land and said uh-uh something better I'm still I'm still looking Lord I'm looking for the land where God built the city where it's everlasting because this land yeah parts are nice but you know besides the Lord said everlasting possession and then finally we learn the same principle that Israel learned in the book of Joshua that we must wage spiritual battle for the things that are already promised be strong in the [57 : 44] Lord and the strength of his might put on the armor of the Lord for our battle is not against flesh and blood but it's against the invisible spiritual forces of evil hidden that are controlling our society and controlling our government officials and controlling our schools and controlling you name it many religious organizations and churches so put your armor on and rest because God takes care of it no he says put on your armor and what stand truth righteousness gospel faith salvation sword of the spirit sword sword of the spirit which is your one attack on the enemy and you use the word of

God and he will flee he will fall he cannot stand against the word of truth sounds easy right it's simple but it's not easy let's pray father we thank you for this journey because we see your big picture we see man's always ruining himself chapter after chapter we we abandon you we we turn aside we're we're distracted by other things and we come to our ruin and we come to despair and you answer you pursue sinners you come after us and you then redeem us and rescue us and become the remedy for our ruin we thank you that we see that picture over and over again through the scriptures and we thank you that it's not just a vague picture that we see in the Old Testament but it's a real person in

Jesus Christ we thank you that he has fulfilled all of that help us to stand by faith we pray in Christ's name amen and as we prepare for communion please standNING