

LESSON 6
October 11, 2026

Unit II: Lacking Leadership and a Moral Compass
Choosing Badly

DEVOTIONAL READING: 1 Corinthians 10:1-14

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: Judges 2

PRINT PASSAGE: Judges 2:6-15

KEY VERSE

And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim. (Judges 2:11, KJV)

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Then the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD and served the Baals. (Judges 2:11, NIV)

Lesson Aims

As a result of experiencing this lesson, you should be able to do the following:

- **Believe that God shows love for humanity.**
- **Discover God's faithfulness to His covenant with His people.**
- **Return to God after they have strayed.**

***Key Terms**

Enemies (verse 14)—Hebrew: 'ôyêb (o-yabe'): foes; adversaries; those who hate or oppose; people acting with hostility.

Evil (verse 11)—Hebrew: ra' (rah): bad; wicked; harmful; unpleasant; unkind; calamity.

Forsook (verse 12)—Hebrew: 'âzab (aw-zab'): left; abandoned; let go; neglected; deserted. The people abandoned the Lord for the gods of the land, Baal and Ashtaroth.

Inheritance (verse 9)—Hebrew: nachălâh (nah-khah-lah): estate; possession; heritage; property; patrimony; portion.

Works (verse 7)—Hebrew: ma'ăseh (mah-as-eh'): deeds; acts; labor; doings; "things . . . done" (NIV). The new generation of Israelites were not aware of what God had done while Joshua was alive.

***(Word Study Supplement—Refer to page 2)**



The Biblical Context

Judges 2 describes the beginning of a repeated pattern in the Israelites' life after settlement. Joshua's generation served the Lord, but after they died, a new generation arose that did not know the Lord or remember the Lord's works. This shift helps explain why Judges is marked by spiritual confusion and moral disorder (Beldman, 33-34).

The writer presents Israel's story through the lens of covenant faithfulness. When God's people remain loyal, the community experiences stability. When they turn to other gods, the community becomes vulnerable, and hardship follows. This is not portrayed as random tragedy but as the result of abandoning God's ways and God's warnings (Keck, 762).

The chapter also helps explain why the tribes later longed for stronger leadership. Without shared remembrance and obedience, the people lived without a common moral compass, and many did what seemed right to them, even when it was destructive (Brueggemann, 145-146).

Judges 2 offers a mirror that calls us to consider how faith is learned, practiced, and passed on, and it invites renewed commitment to worship and obedience in everyday life. This pattern echoes covenant teaching given through Moses. The chapter sets the tone for the cycle of sin, suffering, crying out, and rescue that repeats in Judges (Coogan and Chapman, 219-220).

Introduction

Adults often notice a pattern in life. What we celebrate and what we ignore can shape what we become. A family can drift from one generation to the next, not because someone planned rebellion, but because faith was never practiced, talked about, or lived in front of the next generation. Many people can name a season when they were taught what to value, but later realized they had not been taught how to follow God with a steady heart.

Israel faced that kind of turning point after Joshua's generation. The people had seen God make a way through the Jordan and had heard the covenant call to serve the Lord. Yet, as time passed, a new generation grew up that did not know the Lord or remember what God had done. When faith is not remembered, it is often replaced by whatever is nearby, popular, or convenient.

This lesson shows what happens when worship becomes divided and obedience becomes optional. It also reminds us that God's love does not disappear when people drift. As you study this passage, consider what you have received from those who came before you and what you are passing on to those who follow. Faith grows when it is spoken, shared, and embodied in daily choices, not only on Sundays.

ANALYSIS OF THE BIBLICAL TEXT

When a New Generation Forgets the Lord (*Judges 2:6-10*)

KJV

6 And when Joshua had let the people go, the children of Israel went every man unto his inheritance to possess the land.

7 And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD, that he did for Israel.

8 And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being an hundred and ten years old.

9 And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnathheres, in the mount of Ephraim, on the north side of the hill Gaash.

10 And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.

NIV

6 After Joshua had dismissed the Israelites, they went to take possession of the land, each to their own inheritance.

7 The people served the LORD throughout the lifetime of Joshua and of the elders who outlived him and 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 a hundred and ten.

9 And they buried him in the land of his inheritance, at Timnath Heres in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash.

10 After that whole generation had been gathered to their ancestors, another generation grew up who knew neither the LORD nor what he had done for Israel.

These verses describe a quiet but dangerous shift. The people served the Lord during Joshua's lifetime and while the elders who remembered God's works were still leading. Then Joshua died, and that generation passed away. Scripture says a new generation arose that did not know the Lord or the works God had done. This does not mean they had never heard the name of God. It means they did not live with personal knowledge, active trust, and practiced remembrance (Buttrick, 199).

Adults understand how this happens. If faith is treated as private, occasional, or assumed, children can grow up around religion without growing into relationship. They may inherit traditions but not conviction. They may know stories but not the God of the stories; over time, memory fades and gratitude weakens. These Scriptures call the community to face an honest question. What will the next generation know about God because of the way we live today? Joshua's generation had witnessed deliverance, provision, and covenant instruction. The next generation lacked that lived memory, and the result was spiritual drift.

These verses invite intentional faith formation. Tell the stories. Practice worship. Name God's help. Make obedience normal. When a generation forgets the Lord, it rarely happens overnight. It happens through neglect. This passage urges adults to guard against spiritual amnesia by keeping God's works in view and passing faith forward with consistency and love. Faith grows when it is spoken, shared, and embodied in daily choices, not only on Sundays.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What practices help you remember God's work in your life. Choose one story of God's help, tell it this week, and write why it matters.

When Faithfulness Is Replaced by Compromise

(Judges 2:11-13)

KJV

11 And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim:

12 And they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger.

13 And they forsook the LORD, and served Baal and Ashtaroth.

NIV

11 Then the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD and served the Baals.

12 They forsook the LORD, the God of their ancestors, who had brought them out of Egypt. They followed and worshiped various gods of the peoples around them. They aroused the LORD's anger

13 because they forsook him and served Baal and the Ashtoreths.

Verses 11-13 show what spiritual drift looks like in practice. The Israelites did evil in the sight of the Lord and served Baalim. They forsook the Lord, the God of their fathers, and followed other gods from among the nations around them. This is not simply a change in opinion. It is a change in worship, loyalty, and daily direction (Brueggemann, 147-148). Compromise often begins with small steps. A person starts trusting what is visible more than what is true. A community begins borrowing values that feel useful. Over time, what was once unthinkable becomes normal. The passage shows that idolatry is not only about statues. It is about giving ultimate trust and obedience to something other than God. The text also names the emotional result. The people provoked the Lord to anger. This language teaches that covenant relationship is personal. God is not indifferent to divided devotion. God desires faithful love, not occasional attention.

In order to operate in faithful love there must be careful self-examination. What shapes your decisions when you are tired, afraid, or pressured. What do you reach for when you need comfort, control, or approval. Judges 2 warns that when faithfulness is replaced by compromise, worship shifts, and life follows. Returning to God begins with honest confession and a renewed choice to serve the Lord with the whole heart. Seekers can hear this as an invitation, not condemnation. God exposes false gods so we can be freed. The first step back is turning, and turning is always possible (Coogan and Chapman, 222).

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What competes with God for your loyalty and attention right now? Name it, then take one step to turn toward God through prayer, worship, or obedience.

Consequences Are Promised, Too (*Judges 2:14-15*)

KJV

14 And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies.

15 Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for evil, as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had sworn unto them: and they were greatly distressed.

NIV

14 In his anger against Israel the LORD gave them into the hands of raiders who plundered them. He sold them into the hands of their enemies all around, whom they were no longer able to resist.

15 Whenever Israel went out to fight, the hand of the LORD was against them to defeat them, just as he had sworn to them. They were in great distress.

This passage describes consequences that follow disobedience. The anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and God delivered them into the hands of spoilers and sold them into the hands of their enemies. The people who had once walked in strength now found themselves weakened and oppressed. Scripture is clear that this was not an accident. It was the outcome of turning from the Lord (Beldman, 41-42). This is hard language, but it teaches an important covenant truth. God's promises include blessing and warning. When God's people choose God's ways, life is protected and shaped toward peace. When God's people choose other ways, harm follows, both spiritually and socially. The community becomes vulnerable to forces that do not share God's purposes.

The passage also says the hand of the Lord was against them, as the Lord had sworn. That statement reminds the reader that God had already spoken about the cost of disobedience. Consequences were promised too. God is faithful, even when that faithfulness comes as discipline meant to bring people back (Longman and Dillard, 161). An important element for God's people in this lesson is that of humility. Sin is never a private action. Compromise affects families, churches, and communities. Yet the larger story of Judges also shows mercy. When the people later cry out, God raises deliverers. The warning in Judges 2 is meant to lead us to repentance, renewed worship, and a return to the God who rescues and restores.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Where have you seen consequences follow compromise? Ask God for honesty, then choose one change that protects your faith and strengthens your household or community.

A Closing Thought

Judges 2 shows how faith can fade when a generation forgets the Lord. After Joshua's death, the people drifted into compromise and gave their worship to other gods. The result

was consequences that brought distress and vulnerability. Yet this sobering lesson also calls believers to hope and responsibility. We can practice remembrance, teach the next generation, and choose faithfulness in daily life.

Your Life

Think of one person younger than you in faith or age. Share one story of how God has helped you. Then choose one habit this week that keeps you close to God, such as prayer or Scripture reading, and do it daily. Write one sentence about what you learned.

Your World!

Look for someone who feels spiritually disconnected or confused. Offer them a brief encouragement about God's faithfulness and share with them from Judges 2. Listen to them without judgment, then share one practical way to return to God through prayer, hope, and trust in Jesus Christ today.

Closing Prayer

Lord, keep us from forgetting You. Help us to remember Your word and turn from anything that is disobedient to You. Strengthen our homes and church to pass on faith. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Conclusion

(Preparing for Next Week's Lesson)

The lesson topic for Sunday, October 18, 2026, is "A Hero Who's Not a Hero." The Devotional Reading is Ecclesiastes 7:1-13, the Background Scripture is Judges 3, and the Printed Passage is Judges 3:15-23, 30.

Home Daily Bible Readings		
MONDAY, October 12	"Courage to Live or Die"	(Philippians 1:21-30)
TUESDAY, October 13	"Let Your Light Shine"	(Matthew 5:11-16)
WEDNESDAY, October 14	"A Humble Servant of God"	(Psalm 84)
THURSDAY, October 15	"Let Us Strive for God's Rest"	(Hebrews 4:11-16)
FRIDAY, October 16	"God Will Not Overlook Your Work"	(Hebrews 6:1-12)
SATURDAY, October 17	"God Tests God's People"	(Judges 3:1-7, 12-14)
SUNDAY, October 18	"Restoring Rest to the Land"	(Judges 3:15-23, 30)