

Judges 2:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

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.

This verse occurs in the crucial second chapter establishing the covenant lawsuit and cyclical pattern of apostasy. The Angel of the LORD's covenant lawsuit exposes Israel's violation of covenant obligations despite God's faithfulness. The cyclical pattern introduced here—sin, servitude, supplication, salvation, silence—repeats seven times through Judges, demonstrating both human depravity and divine mercy.

The theological significance includes understanding God's character as both just judge and merciful deliverer. When Israel sins through idolatry and covenant breaking, God's justice demands judgment, bringing foreign oppression. Yet when Israel cries out in repentance, God's mercy provides deliverance through judges. This cycle reveals human inability to maintain faithfulness (the need for divine grace) and God's patience in dealing with persistent rebellion.

The phrase "the generation that knew not the LORD" (2:10) emphasizes the critical importance of intergenerational discipleship. Joshua's generation served the

LORD, but failed to adequately pass on covenant faithfulness to their children. This failure resulted in spiritual amnesia—the next generation forgot both God's mighty acts and covenant requirements. Application to modern believers is clear: faithful transmission of biblical truth to the next generation is essential for maintaining covenant faithfulness.

Historical Context

Historical Setting: The Book of Judges spans approximately 350-400 years (c. 1375-1050 BCE) during the Late Bronze Age collapse and early Iron Age. This period saw the disintegration of major empires (Hittites, Mycenaeans) and weakening of Egyptian control over Canaan, creating a power vacuum filled by emerging peoples including Philistines (Sea Peoples), Aramaeans, and regional kingdoms. The decentralized tribal structure left Israel vulnerable to external oppression and internal chaos.

Cultural Context: This passage relates to the covenant lawsuit and cyclical pattern of apostasy. Canaanite religion dominated the region, centered on Baal (storm/fertility god), Asherah (mother goddess), and Anat (war goddess). Archaeological discoveries at Ugarit (Ras Shamra) have provided extensive information about Canaanite mythology and religious practices. Baal worship involved ritual prostitution, child sacrifice, and fertility rites tied to agricultural seasons. Israel's persistent attraction to these gods demonstrates the strong cultural pressure to conform to surrounding nations' religious practices.

The material culture of this period shows gradual Israelite settlement in the Canaanite hill country, with simpler pottery and architecture than coastal Canaanite cities. Iron technology was beginning to spread, giving military advantage to peoples who mastered it (note the Philistines' iron monopoly, 1 Samuel 13:19-22). The absence of centralized government during the judges period stands in stark contrast to the bureaucratic city-states of Canaan and the imperial administration of Egypt and Mesopotamia. This political structure reflected Israel's theocratic ideal—God as king—yet the repeated cycles of apostasy showed this ideal required more than political structures; it demanded heart transformation.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does this passage about the covenant lawsuit and cyclical pattern of apostasy reveal God's character in dealing with persistent human rebellion and incomplete obedience?
2. What patterns of spiritual compromise or incomplete obedience in your own life mirror Israel's failures during the judges period?
3. How does understanding the cyclical nature of sin and deliverance in Judges help you appreciate Christ's perfect and final deliverance from sin's power?

Interlinear Text

תִּתְנַתֵּן בִּשְׁרָאָל לְיְהוָה אֶת־יִתְר
was hot And the anger of the LORD against Israel and he delivered
H2734 H639 H3068 H3478 H5414

תִּמְכַר מִן־אֹתָם לְשָׁבֵד שָׁבֵד בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל
them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them and he sold
H3027 H8154 H8155 H853 H4376

כִּכְלֵל וְאַל מִסְבֵּב יְבָא אֹוְבִּיקָּם:
them into the hands of their enemies round about so that they could
H3027 H341 H5439 H3808 H3201

אֹוְבִּיקָּם: לְפָנֵי לְעַמְּדָה עַד
not any longer stand before of their enemies
H5750 H5975 H6440 H341

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 32:30 (References Lord): How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the LORD had shut them up?

2 Kings 17:20 (References Lord): And the LORD rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight.

Leviticus 26:37 (Parallel theme): And they shall fall one upon another, as it were before a sword, when none pursueth: and ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies.

Judges 4:2 (References Lord): And the LORD sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, that reigned in Hazor; the captain of whose host was Sisera, which dwelt in Harosheth of the Gentiles.

Judges 10:7 (References Lord): And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hands of the Philistines, and into the hands of the children of Ammon.

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