

I. Israel's Sin and Judgment (vv 11-15).**A. The Objective Holiness of God**

- 1) The refrain of the Book of Judges
 - a) This is repeated 7 times in the book of Judges (2:11; 3:6, 12; 4:1; 6:1; 10:16; 13:1).
 - b) The refrain changes from having the holy God as the subject, to having sinful Israel as the subject (14:3, 17:6, 21:25)
- 2) In the beginning of Judges, we are being trained to see the objective holiness of God (Romans 1:24-25)
- 3) Self-Examination: Do you care more for what you think is right, or what God says is right?

B. The Worsening Catalogue of Sins

- 1) The Sequence: 2:11 – 2:12a – 2:12b – 2:13a
- 2) Sin does not stop itself, but will only grow (Jer 23:12a)

C. The Increasing Judgement from the Lord

- 1) The Sequence: 2:12b – 2:14a – 2:14b – 15a
- 2) *Use*, Seek to discern whether our troubles and trials are due to our sin.
- 3) This is still a comfort (Pr 3:11-12)
- 4) *Use*, Make good use of discipline (Rom 2:3-5)

D. The Result — *And they were in terrible distress* (v 15b)**E. Further Uses from the Text**

- 1) Heed God's threatenings
 - a) Which is a fruit of saving of faith (WCF 14.2)
 - b) Which has a right view of God (Gal 6:7-8)
- 2) As long as we have life, we are called to repentance and freely offered salvation and restoration (1 Sam 7:3-4)

II. God's Mercy and Deliverance (vv 16, 18).**A. The means used by God: Judges**

- 1) The Office — *Then the LORD raised up judges* (v 16)
 - a) Given out of total, unilateral mercy
 - b) As distinct from an already prescribed office
 - i. There were to be judges in Israel to execute justice in Israel and were appointed by the people (Dt 16:18)
 - ii. This was a distinct office of one appointed *by God* from within Israel to execute justice *toward the nations, for Israel*.

2) The Character of these Judges

- a) For all: To give them success in their mission to deliver Israel.
 - b) For some, the measure of grace was particular (3:12, 31; 7:1; 10:1; 13:1)
- 3) These Judges are to instruct us in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - a) Even this mercy is still a matter of justice (Rom 3:26)
 - b) We are saved through a Mediator (1 Tim 2:5).
 - c) Jesus Christ is true and very man
 - d) Jesus Christ is true and very God
 - e) Jesus Christ is holy (Mt 4:1; Isa 61:1).
 - f) The Lord Jesus Christ is the only Saviour (Acts 4:12).
 - g) The Lord Jesus Christ is the conqueror triumphant over His enemies (Lk 11:21-22)

B. The Result: Deliverance

- 1) The work itself
- 2) The longevity of the work

C. Further Uses from the Text

- 1) We are to rest in the finished work of Jesus Christ, and not anything in ourselves.
- 2) We may have a full assurance of salvation in Christ Jesus, for this work of salvation can never be undone.

III. More Sin and Judgment (vv 17, 19-23).**A. The Sins of Israel (v 19)**

- 1) The Catalogue of Israel's Sins (v 17)
 - a) Hatred of God's Word
 - b) Hatred of their Fathers (1 Sam 8:7; 2 Chr 33)
- 2) The Character of Israel's Sins (v 19):
 - a) Their Swiftmess to Sin
 - b) The Escalating of their Sins
 - c) Their Stubbornness against God's Law and the Light of Conscience

B. The Judgment of God against Israel (vv 20-23)

- 1) Withdrawing the kindness of His providence (Col 1:17)
- 2) Permitting them to enter into difficult testing of faith and obedience (Heidelberg Catechism 127)

C. Further Use from the Text: Let us heed the warning of this passage by humbling ourselves before the holy God, but looking with faith to our Saviour Jesus Christ, and walk in obedience to Him.