

BROKEN SAVIORS

THE BOOK OF JUDGES



THE CYCLE OF IDOLATRY.

Insanity has been described as repeating the same thing again and again and expecting a different result. The Israelites could be classified as insane. Throughout the book of Judges, they repeatedly fall into the trap of idolatry. Idols were the basis of every other nation's spirituality and they often included worship rites involving sexual practices that the Israelites could have found incredibly tempting. At the foundation of all this was the idea: Everyone did what was right in their own eyes. (Judges 21:25)... Sound familiar?

The Israelites fell into sin without knowing about the cross. We fall into sin after knowing all Jesus has done for us. Our idols may not be made of stone and they may not include crazy rites, but they manifest in other ways: wealth, popularity, busyness. Could we be even worse than the Israelites were? Perhaps. What's crazy is that Jesus still pursues us, knowing all we've done and all we'll continue to do. He's the only one who can actually save us from the cycle of idolatry.

IN THE BIBLE.

Judges 2:10-23

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. 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 anger¹³ because they forsook him and served Baal and the Ashtoreths. 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.

16 Then the Lord raised up judges, who saved them out of the hands of these raiders. 17 Yet they would not listen to their judges but prostituted themselves to other gods and worshiped them. They quickly turned from the ways of their ancestors, who had been obedient to the Lord's commands. 18 Whenever the Lord raised up a judge for them, he was with the judge and saved them out of the hands of their enemies as long as the judge lived; for the Lord relented because of their groaning under those who oppressed and afflicted them. 19 But when the judge died, the people returned to ways even more corrupt than those of their ancestors, following other gods and serving and worshiping them. They refused to give up their evil practices and stubborn ways.

20 Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel and said, "Because this nation has violated the covenant I ordained for their ancestors and has not listened to me, 21 I will no longer drive out before them any of the nations Joshua left when he died. 22 I will use them to test Israel and see whether they will keep the way of the Lord and walk in it as their ancestors did." 23 The Lord had allowed those nations to remain; he did not drive them out at once by giving them into the hands of Joshua.

QUESTIONS.

- 1.) What things are you most tempted to idolize?
- 2.) Why do we fall into cycles of sin?
- 3.) How can we escape?

Whenever you read the Bible, ask yourself these three questions:

1. What does this tell you about God?
2. What does this tell you about yourself and the world?
3. How is this going to change who you are and how you live?