

Uh Oh, it's another Test

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In Judges 2 we get the generic account of Israel's move into the promised land and their subsequent failure to obey God and take it for their own possession. Because they had broken the covenant they agreed to when entering the land, God also forsook His side of that covenant. He determined that He would not clear the land of enemies, but leave them for Israel to contend with. The reason was for "testing" them.

Chapter 3 begins with an explanation of that testing and reasons why God made such a determination. The reason God left them enemies to deal with was so that (according to v. 2) the generations of Israel might be taught war, those that had not experienced it. It appears that God wanted them to learn how to deal with ENEMIES. That's because enemies are real, in spite of what some in our culture believe. They are out there and they mean to do you harm. That's a hard concept, it appears, for each generation to grasp. We just don't want to believe the stove is hot, until we get burned. We don't want to believe that others would invade, take our wives and children captive, and leave our bodies for the buzzards until they march up to our walls.

We don't want to believe that good neighbors, friends, and even brethren want to silence us and close the doors of the church, and truthfully, they may not realize it themselves. Spiritual battles in the fifteenth century (the reformation) in the 18th century (the restoration) and in the sixties and seventies in this country should teach us the value of learning about spiritual warfare. But it appears that each generation has to get burned for themselves. Each generation has Jeremiah's accusation of, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace." Each generation has those who want to compromise and "friendly up" with error until they lose the truth, lose their children, or lose their own spiritual focus in emotionalism, tolerance, and false teaching.

The Father had no intention of his children (Israel) becoming a nation of sissies. He determined to leave them enemies so that they would learn how to deal with warfare. We too have spiritual enemies to deal with. Some send suicide bombers to kill the innocent and these are the obvious ones. Others would not ever wish physical harm. At the same though, they desire you to be quiet about the truth. Don't talk about moral values, sound doctrine, the path of obedience, and even the all sufficiency of the church of Christ. They don't want to hear it, and would be more than happy if the doors of the kingdom were shut. Don't make the mistake of missing these enemies of our Lord. Don't be fooled until it's too late and you've lost too much to the great enemy of our souls. Be on your guard for we are truly at war, and we are being tested.