



# SMALL GROUP STUDY

## From Conquest to Compromise to Conquered

Joshua's passing marks the end of a strong, central, spiritual leadership for the nation. There is a period of 350 years between Joshua and the first king, King Saul. During this period the twelve tribes fragment into separate tribal governments. There were now judges who were leaders, sometimes military leaders of different sections of the land. The children of Israel have barely made their declaration to serve and obey God when they plunge into a cyclical pattern of sin. First rebellion - the people get tired of God. Then retribution - they want to leave God so He delivers them to their enemies. Then repentance - Now they are sorry and they want God to save them. And finally, restoration - God forgives them, rescues them, and blesses them. Seven times they fall and seven times God saves them. We see through these cycles God's covenant, unrelenting, pursuing great love for His people.

### Conquest

After the death of Joshua, the children of Israel inquire of God as to what they should do. He gives them his instruction, they follow it and they succeed. This is very wise of them to seek God and His direction.

#### *Discussion Questions:*

- a. Who are the thirteen judges?
- b. Examine your heart: In what areas of your life can you and do you need to inquire of God and seek His direction?

### Compromise

After Joshua died and all the elders who outlived Joshua died, the children of Israel become complacent in their service to God. They did not fully follow God, nor inquire of Him in their daily decisions. Neither did they fully trust Him to deliver the land to them. They turned away from the God that they once loved and served.

#### *Discussion Questions:*

- a. What does Amos 6:1 teach us about compromise in our walk with the Lord?
- b. Do you notice a difference in your relationship with the Lord during times of blessing versus times of adversity?

### Conquered

The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord by serving the false God's of the Canaanites. Suddenly they were no longer victorious in their battles. Diminished power is a result of diminished faith. The Lord warned them about this through Moses back in Deuteronomy 8:11 "when you get into the land.....beware lest you forget the Lord your God." History can repeat itself. When people lose their morals, they become ready for the collapse of their nation.

#### *Discussion Questions:*

- a. How did Abimelech reap what he sowed?
- b. How did the Lord test the faith of Gideon and the children of Israel?
- c. How can you pray and be active in and for your nation as a Christian today?
- d. What is the scarlet thread of redemption in this book of the Bible?