



## Yo-Yo's and Life

I have never been able to master the skills of tossing a yoyo, in fact, I gave up the practice many years ago after sustaining some self-inflicted bruises and having to sweep up some freshly broken pottery. This seemingly simple toy, when placed in the hands of a skilled yoyo master can both mesmerize and inspire the inner child in all of us.

As I started reading through the book of Judges, I felt a bit like a yoyo spinning and moving in what seems like an unpredictable direction. Following the death of Joshua, the nation of Israel was without a leader, someone who could keep them focused on moving forward in their life and faith in God. The absence of a leader set into motion an up and down cycle of sin, punishment, repentance, and ensuing rescue. Their rescue came when God chose for them a “judge” or leader who led them back into knowing who God is and into his endless grace and mercy for them.

Chapter by chapter as we read from a distance about the lives of the Israelite people, we find ourselves spinning through this yoyo like cycle of ups and downs with them. The final words of Judges lay out for us the cause of all that happens through the rest of its narrative, “In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit”. (21:25)

Judges chapter 2 highlights the foundation of why “everyone did as they saw fit”. The generations of people who followed that of Joshua had lost sight of who God was and what he had done for the nation of Israel in the past. Chapter 2:11-12 recounts what happened next, “Then the Israelites did evil in

the eyes of the Lord and served the Baals. They forsook the Lord, the God of their ancestors, who had brought them out of Egypt. They followed and worshipped various gods of the peoples around them”. This, as we see throughout the book is the beginning of the cycle (sin) that leads into punishment, repentance and rescue of a God who continued to love them.

The seemingly unpredictable direction I mentioned earlier becomes more and more predictable as we read along. God himself was always in the picture. The people may have been blinded to his presence at times, but God never left them. Each time the nation cried out for help, he rescued them by providing a judge, a leader to draw them back toward him and live in peace once again.

As believers today we live and serve the same God that was looking over the nation of Israel, a God who loves and cares for every created being. At times, the lives that we live today fall into a similar cycle lived out in the pages of Judges. When we do as we see fit for our own lives, when we let the heart of the world overtake the heart of Christ in us, we draw ourselves further away from God our Father. What do we do when things come crashing down around us? Well, as the cycle continues, we cry out to God (who has never left us in the first place) and He restores our heart, our soul and mind through his incredible mercy and grace.

Our rescue is forgiveness and restoration through Christ's love, a love that has no limits. Life will sometimes become tangled and spin out of control like a yo-yo, but in the hands of a master (our Father in heaven) comes beauty and inspiration. Do you need to cry out to God today? He is near to you; He will answer the call from your heart with love and forgiveness.