

## Judges 2 - Thursday, September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2012

(1) NKJV Then the Angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said: "I led you up from Egypt and brought you to the land of which I swore to your fathers; and I said, 'I will never break My covenant with you. (2) And you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall tear down their altars.' But you have not obeyed My voice. Why have you done this?"

- Right out of the shoot there's something very important in these first two verses and it's something that's not so easily visible at first glance.
- Notice how that the word Angel is capitalized in verse one, and the LORD is all capitalized as well. This is known as a Christophany.
- A Christophany is a pre-Bethlehem appearance of none other than Jesus Christ in the Old Testament, and such is the case here in Judges.

- The reason we know this is that He's claiming divinity by virtue of the fact that He says I led you up from Egypt and brought you to the land.
- It's important to note why it is that this is Jesus Christ the second person of the trinity and not the Father in that God the Father isn't visible.
- We know this from passages like 1 Timothy 6:16, and 1 Timothy 1:17, where we're told that no man has seen nor can see God the Father.

Charles Spurgeon - "Was not this the great angel of the covenant, even the Lord Jesus? Who could use such language but one Who is equal with God?"

- I suppose now the question is, why is this so important? One thought is, this rises to the level of concern that warrants Jesus addressing it.
- In other words, Jesus must Himself, speak to them concerning their disobedience and the consequences that will come as a result of it.
- Namely, as we'll see next, this will be to their own peril in that their sin will come back to haunt them in how it will become a trap for them.

- One more thought before we move on to verse three. I can't get over how the Lord is always faithful to convict us when we have sinned.
- By that I mean, whenever we disobey Him, as the Israelites had just done, He is ever so loving in His conviction, without condemnation.
- I find it interesting that even in this disobedience on the part of Israel, God would never forsake them because of His covenant with them.

(3) Therefore I also said, 'I will not drive them out before you; but they shall be *thorns* in your side, and their gods shall be a snare to you.'"  
(4) So it was, when the Angel of the LORD spoke these words to all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voices and wept. (5) Then they called the name of that place Bochim; and they sacrificed there to the LORD. (6) And when Joshua had dismissed the people, the children of Israel went each to his own inheritance to possess the land.

- We know from Israel's history, this is exactly what happens to them. These enemies became a thorn in their side and their gods a snare.
- Notice their response to the Lord telling them that He would not drive the enemies out for them is that they lifted up their voices and wept.
- Actually, these four verses have woven into the fabric of them the answers to a couple of very important questions that need to be asked.

- First, why doesn't God show them mercy when they start weeping? Answer, because this was not a godly sorrow that leads to repentance.
- There are two kinds of sorrow in the Bible, the first of which is the sorrow of being caught, and secondly the sorry that leads one to repent.
- The reason why we know that this sorrow is not a godly sorrow, is that there is no repentance as evidenced by what's foretold in Numbers.

Numbers 33:55 NKJV But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall be that those whom you let remain shall be irritants in your eyes and thorns in your sides, and they shall harass you in the land where you dwell.

- The second question this passage answers for us is related to God punishing us. In other words, is God being punitive and even harsh?
- The simple answer is that there's a difference between punishing and disciplining, and I'm of the belief that what we see here is the latter.
- One commentator said it best this way, "all the punishment you or I ever deserved was put upon Jesus at Calvary. Yet, we punish ourselves."

Charles Spurgeon - "Their sin was to be their punishment. If we will not smite our sins, our sins will smite us."

(7) So the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD which He had done for Israel. (8) Now Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died *when he was* one hundred and ten years old. (9) And they buried him within the border of his inheritance at Timnath Heres, in the mountains of Ephraim, on the north side of Mount Gaash. (10) When all that generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation arose after them who did not know the LORD nor the work which He had done for Israel.

- These verses sort of haunt me as a parent specifically where verse ten says the next generation that arose after them didn't know the Lord.
- This because there are no grandchildren in the family of God. Just because you're born in a Christian home doesn't make you a Christian.
- Only being born again makes you a Christian and there are no guarantees for the next generation, which is why we must teach them.

- Even when we teach them, the choice is still there's and the jury is still out as to whether or not the next generation will know the Lord.
- The reason I say that is because verse ten does not say that they did not know "about" the Lord, rather, it says they did not know the Lord.
- This is not a play on words, just because someone knows "about" the Lord, does not mean that they truly know the Lord in a saving way.

- This begs the question of whether or not the first generation is to blame for the second generation not knowing the Lord in a saving way.
- To that I would say, "no way." Here's why I say that, first, no where in the pages of Holy Writ does God ever condemn the first generation.
- Secondly, to blame the first generation is to take the onus off the second generation, which in turn will be all too ready to blame the parents.

- If the truth be known, the second generation should not only know the Lord, they should excel in the Lord because of their godly heritage.
- I'll take it a step further and suggest it's deliberate when a son or daughter doesn't know the Lord even after being raised in a godly home.
- Let me explain, when verse 10 says they didn't know the work, which God had done for Israel, it's the same word for "acknowledging it."

- This changes the whole complexion of it, and in so doing removes a heap of guilt and condemnation from parents who blame themselves.
- Here's how I get there, of course they knew about the Lord, and about the works of the Lord, but they will not acknowledge it as the Lord.
- Perhaps a better way to say it would be that our children have their own free will, and some will choose the Lord, and yet others will not.

- Right about now you may be wondering why I've not brought up the famous Proverb in chapter twenty-two and verse six. Well, lets read it.

Proverbs 22:6 NKJV Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.

- While we don't have time to do an in-depth study of this, suffice it to say, I believe this promises a greater propensity for parenting success.

(11) Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served the Baals; (12) and they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt; and they followed other gods from *among* the gods of the people who *were* all around them, and they bowed down to them; and they provoked the LORD to anger. (13) They forsook the LORD and served Baal and the Ashtoreths.

- This is what I mean by their sorrow not being a godly one that leads to repentance. The reason being is that they turn to these other gods.
- We need look no further as to why it is that some will turn from God and seek after other gods all of whom are very much alive and well.
- They're not known by these ancient names, but the names have been changed in order to protect the guilty and keep people in bondage.

- By the way, remember back in verse three where God says that these gods would become a snare to them, guess what, they are a snare.
- Never imagine God warning us about danger ahead when there's no danger ahead. In other words, God will always warn us for a reason.
- I think of King Asa, who at the time God warned him about fully devoting himself to the Lord, that he would actually do the very opposite.

(14) And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel. So He delivered them into the hands of plunderers who despoiled them; and He sold them into the hands of their enemies all around, so that they could no longer stand before their enemies. (15) Wherever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for calamity, as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had sworn to them. And they were greatly distressed.

- At first glance, this may have the appearance of being cold and heartless for God to do this to Israel, yet, the reality is, He does it for Israel.
- If you really think about it, when a parent doesn't do anything in the way of discipline or correction, it's usually because they just don't care.
- The worst thing a parent can do is nothing at all as evidenced by some teenagers who wished that their parents would've stopped them.

(16) Nevertheless, the LORD raised up judges who delivered them out of the hand of those who plundered them. (17) Yet they would not listen to their judges, but they played the harlot with other gods, and bowed down to them. They turned quickly from the way in which their fathers walked, in obeying the commandments of the LORD; they did not do so. (18) And when the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with the judge and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; for the LORD was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who oppressed them and harassed them. (19) And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that they reverted and behaved more corruptly than their fathers, by following other gods, to serve them and bow down to them. They did not cease from their own doings nor from their stubborn way.

- Here we have that cycle we talked about beginning in chapter one. For lack of a better word, it's the sin cycle of bondage and deliverance.

(20) Then the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel; and He said, "Because this nation has transgressed My covenant which I commanded their fathers, and has not heeded My voice, (21) I also will no longer drive out before them any of the nations which Joshua left when he died, (22) so that through them I may test Israel, whether they will keep the ways of the LORD, to walk in them as their fathers kept *them*, or not." (23) Therefore the LORD left those nations, without driving them out immediately; nor did He deliver them into the hand of Joshua.

- I suppose you could say that this is God's way of using the sin of the Israelites to both teach them a lesson, and test them on that lesson.