

Light and Life

Completely Following God

The first chapter of Judges is a brilliant illustration of what happens when people do not completely follow God. It was time for the descendants of Abraham to receive the promised land, but God required them to put their faith into action by battling against the heathen inhabitants of Canaan. This would have been a daunting task due to the advanced military technology they were up against (Jdg. 1:19), but with God on their side all things were possible!

Judges 1:27-36 shows how Israel went from allowing the Canaanites to “dwell among them” to “dwelling among the Canaanites”. Just in these few verses there is a definite shift in power! The passage begins with Manasseh failing to drive out the Canaanites and ends with Dan being defeated by the Amorites!

God used battles such as these to test His people, “to know whether they would obey the commandments of the Lord, which He had commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses” (Jdg. 3:4). In those days, battles were not won by military might, but by faith in God! Their lack of trust in God was demonstrated by their disobedience and defeat. They may have made some effort to win the battles God gave them, but they were not **fully** devoted.

When Solomon was led into idolatry by his many foreign wives, the scripture says that “he did not **fully** follow the Lord” (I Ki. 11:6). Because of Solomon’s divided interests, his kingdom was divided (I Ki. 11:11-13)!

In the battle against sin, partial commitment will do us no good! We must love the Lord with **all** our heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mk. 12:30)! “In **all** your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your steps” (Pr. 3:6). We would do well to follow the instruction of Paul regarding our personal commitment to the teachings of God: “give yourself entirely to them” (II Ti. 4:15).

Are you **fully** committed?

- Sam Bunyard

Another Perspective

God Gave Them Up

Many people would be shocked at the title of this article. They have the perception that God accepts all and condemns none. But Paul plainly said that there were some whom God gave up. He gave them up to do those things which are not fitting. Why? Because they refused Him. They had a choice but chose poorly. God gave evidence to them, and everyone else, that He exists. But rather than see that evidence and seek God, they refused Him. This is Paul’s explanation to the Roman Christians (Ro 1:16-31). But this is not the end of the story.

Paul informed us that we have all sinned. He addressed the sinful state of all humanity in the first two chapters of the book of Romans and capped off that argument in the beginning of the third chapter. Then he reminded these Christians of God’s great mercy. God did not leave us without hope but sent His Son Jesus to redeem us from sin. The third chapter of Romans develops this great theme, and it continues through the rest of the letter. Salvation is the free gift of God through Jesus Christ (Ro 6:23).

Throughout his letter, Paul reminded the Roman disciples — and us — that the Christian life is different. We have been raised to walk a new life. We have died to sin (Ro 6:1-7). There are challenges in life, and we err at times, but we have the victory through Jesus (Ro 7:1-25). The great declaration is given by Paul that, “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit” (Ro 8:1).

Yes, God gives up those who reject Him. But He also has provided the way of salvation through Jesus. When we obey the Lord and walk in His path, we are the Lord’s! The choice is ours. Choose well each day!

- Dave Hart (edited for space)

ASSEMBLY TIMES

Sunday

Morning Bible Class 9:30
Morning Assembly 10:30
Evening Assembly 5:00

Wednesday

Evening Bible Class 6:30

RADIO PROGRAM

The Bible Speaks



Sunday 9:00–9:30a.m.
Thursday 11:30a.m.–noon
KURM 790AM

Downtown Church of Christ

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GOSPEL MEETING with David Fiddament

Today thru Tuesday

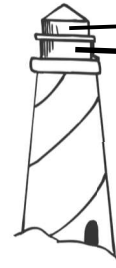
Regular Times Today
Mon & Tues @ 6:30pm

ELDERS:

Otis Hardin
Perry Johnson
Ken Parker
Alan Revier
GW Walsh

DEACONS:

TJ Burleson
Scott Hale
Jason Hill
Chris Johnson
Brock McKeel
Randy Potter
Tim Roberts
Randy Shell



DOWNTOWN GOSPEL BEACON

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GUEST ARTICLE

Before the Fall

God establishes nations, and He has used them in various ways. He often raised one nation as a corrective against a previous nation whose citizens succumbed to evil. Israel is a good example of this (De 9:4-5).

Unfortunately, Judah also went wayward. And so, God raised Babylon to punish them in turn. But Babylon did their own evils, so again, another nation was sent to punish them (Is 13:17-20). Babylon's pride in their sin brought about the same end as Sodom and Gomorrah.

Solomon knew this. "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling" (Pr 16:18).

In this way, the moniker 'Babylon' serves as a description of every proud place that loves sin and hates God. And like Babel or Jerusalem, every proud place falls and is scattered. "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the Great! She has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit ...and I heard another voice from heaven saying, 'Come out of her, my people, so that you will not participate in her sins and receive of her plagues..." (Re 18:2-4).

Brethren, we live in proud Babylon, Jerusalem, Sodom, and Gomorrah – and pride comes before the fall. So **do not get attached!**

- David Fiddament (edited for space)

FAMILY NEWS

PRAYER LIST –

Preachers we support: Japan, Philippines, Vietnam, Canada, Mexico, Peru, & U.S.

Sick: Fletchers, Swims, JMarshall, RStarr, MiBader, ADosier

Shut-ins: Billie Pennington, Shirley Cole, Susan Wiese, Virgil Carter

Military: Kyler Sullins, Sean Potter

2024 EVENTS – Apr 14-16 (meeting, David Fiddament); Apr 19 (singing, Stevens & Shepard); Jul 21-25 (VBS, PJ Anderson); Aug 2-4 (Ben Hall)

SENTENCE SERMON – Do all things without complaining, so that you may shine as lights in the world. **Really.**