

Shenandoah

church of Christ

TRIUMPH

“Do you know that in a race all the runners compete, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it” (1 Cor. 9:24)

The Judges of Israel (3)

Gabriel Rodriguez

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Because of Israel's cowardice and disobedience to God, she failed to eradicate all of the evil inhabitants of Canaan, which led to ungodly influences stifling her spiritual growth (2:11-23). Although God could have eradicated all of the inhabitants of Canaan for Israel, this would not have allowed Israel to showcase her responsibility in this matter. In other words, Israel had to eradicate the Canaanites on their own with the tools God provided them, namely their mind, which would lead to their ingenuity of warfare, discipline of mind, and bravery of action. But Israel chose not to use these tools and consequently, many of the inhabitants of Canaan were left to reside with them. God allowed this, even though they failed in their obedience to Him *“to prove Israel by them... that they might know to teach them war...and to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of the Lord”* (3:1-4).

Here is our lesson. **God will not and doesn't make things easier for us.** God allows the choices we make to determine our success and/or failure in life. In other words, we make our lives to become what we want. If we want success, we must make decisions that will lead us to paths of success, and if we want to avoid difficulty, then we must make decisions that will help us avoid strenuous times. In the case of Israel, if Israel wanted to live a life free of complications and sinful influence, it was up to her to eradicate all of the Canaanites as God commanded, but through their choice of disobedience and failure, they made their life much more difficult than it had to be. And as such, the children of Israel

“took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods” (3:5-6). The union of marriage proved to be a vital blow to the integrity of righteousness (e.g. Gen. 6:1-2; Num. 25:1-4), and as a result, the power of evil influence (1 Cor. 15:33) overcame the goal and desire to abide by God's law. Once Israel was ensnared, the fruits of sin brought forth pain and complications. As Israel would soon learn, their peaceful existence would be compromised through the serving of idols and their abominable practices. Their choice would backfire on them as they eventually cried unto the Lord for peace and safety (Judg. 2:18)

The point is, if we want to be rewarded and live peacefully, then we must get rid of everything that would beset our lives, namely sinful habits (Heb. 12:1). When we don't take responsibility for our own lives to get rid of ideas and actions we know will influence us to sin, then we set ourselves up for failure and hardship. This is what happened to Israel. Israel didn't eradicate “all” of the inhabitants of Canaan and she ultimately suffered in the end. She, as well as today's Christian, create their own problems of life, and then when life gets tough, we're left scrambling to survive. But in reality, we've brought this problem to ourselves through the choices we've made. Life only becomes difficult when we reject God and His will. And when we become involved in sin then we emboldened ourselves to experience pain and suffering. May God be praised!

How Israel Fell From Glory (1)

Church News and Announcements

CONGREGATION

The fellowship luncheon will be next Sunday, August 14, after our morning service. The menu is healthy potluck meals. Be creative and bring a dish that is both delicious and nutritious.

The family home devotional will be on August 19th at 7:00 pm in the home of Austin and Merissa Maldonado. The menu is healthy potluck.

YOUTH

Our next youth devotional will be August 12th at 7:00 pm at the Hipps' home. All our youth are encouraged to attend.

Our youth have been invited to a Youth Rally on Oct. 22-23 at Camp Bandina, hosted by the Weber Rd. congregation. Cost is \$20, which will cover food and a place to sleep. See Gabriel if you are interested in attending.

YOUNG ADULT

Our next young adult devotional is scheduled for August 26th. More details to follow.

AREA NEWS

See bulletin board in the foyer for many area wide meetings and youth events.

The importance of learning from the past is an indispensable quality (Rom. 15:4). What we learn from Old Testament history that would help us as New Testament Christians is, how Israel gained prominence with God (Ex. 19:4-6), but slowly evaporated into oblivion (Mal. 2:1-12). The same could be said today of God's church if we're not careful repeating the same mistakes of Israel. For this reason we'll be looking at the book of Isaiah to chronicle the demise of Israel and how she fell from glory.

We begin in chapter 1 where God tells Israel of His close involvement with them: "*I have nourished and brought up children*" (v.2). It was not that God was an aloof parent, derelict in his duties toward Israel, but on the contrary, it was Israel who "rebelled" against God by not "*considering and understanding*" the will of the Lord (v. 3b). In other words, Israel did not use their mental faculties to please and praise God. God then gave as an argument for Israel's failed allegiance unto Him by using the example of animals who instantly know their creator; likewise, Israel should have known their Creator and obeyed Him (v. 3a). But Israel allowed her passions and desires to deceive her, which resulted in a "*sinful nation, heavy in sin, a seed of evildoers; children that had become corrupt, forsaking the Lord*" (v.4a). Their corruption led God to anger, for Israel had "*gone away backward*" (v. 4). The problem was simple - their mind had been corrupted by sinful pleasures (v. 5), which in turn produced "*no soundness from the sole of the foot unto the head*" (v. 6a). Hence, their actions had left Israel porous and ripe for the taking from invading forces that God sent as punishment (vss. 7-8; Heb. 12:5-9). Although, a small remnant would be left to continue the lineage of God's faithful followers (v.9), Israel was in shambles and was described in

the same sad state of Sodom and Gomorrah, who for their sin was eventually destroyed by God (Gen. 19). But the interesting part to all of this was, Israel's apparent delusion that they were in good standing with the Lord. From verses 11-15 God tells Israel of their vain worship and sacrifices given to Him. Their life belied true worship to God. Hence, the reason God said, "*Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil*" (v. 16). For God to acknowledge and respond to their worship, Israel had to be clean. But what was to be cleansed? As noted from verses 5 and 6, their mind, which led to their actions. Therefore, Israel had the responsibility to purify their minds by putting an end to doing evil. They had to repent and seek after God wholeheartedly. This required that they restrain themselves in doing good: "*Learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow*" (v. 17). What is intimated in this passage is, Israel's neighbors and countrymen were being mistreated severely, and this due to selfishness and pride. But Israel had to re-teach herself by getting rid of sinful thoughts and habits about doing what was right and good. This meant that Israel had to think and analyze matters. In other words, they had to connect the dots of life and do what they knew was right through logic, reason, and common sense. This is why God says, "*Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool*" (v. 18). God wanted Israel to use their minds to figure out what the problem was. He wanted Israel to correct their own problems and save themselves from their untoward generations. May God be praised! **Bro. G. Rodriguez**

WHAT SAITH THE LORD?

Nearly two thousand years ago an important question was raised before the Apostles after they had delivered the good news of Jesus's life, death, burial, and resurrection (Acts 2:21-36). The hearer's conscience were pricked of sinful conduct (2 Cor. 7: 10-11) and asked: "Men and brethren, what shall we do (in order to be saved)? (Acts 2:37). Without hesitation, Peter elevated his voice and proclaimed: "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

Upon hearing the words of Peter, the people obeyed. This demonstrated their belief in Christ (Jn. 8:24). Hence, they repented of sin and confessed allegiance to the name of Christ (Matt. 10:32-33). Afterwards, the people were baptized for the remission of their sins (Acts 2:41, cf. Mrk. 16:16; 1 Pet. 3:21).

The people's submission to the words of salvation granted them a relationship with God the Father by accessing citizenship into the church of Christ (Acts 2:47, cf. Matt. 16:18; Mrk. 9:1; Acts. 2:1-4). As a member of Christ's body (Acts 8:4) the people were then encouraged to live faithful unto death by conquering sin in their lives (Rev. 2:10; Rom. 6: 4-12; 2 Tim. 4: 6-8). We then await for the coming day in which all men shall be judged the word of God (Jn 12:48; Acts 17:30-31; 2 Cor. 5:10). Will we be ready?

SHEPHERD'S CORNER

Learn To Forgive And Forget

"He who covers a transgression seeks love, but he who repeats a matter separates intimate friends" (Prov. 17:9). Many homes are damaged because people will not let go of the past. Every marriage has had its share of problems. Some married people can never let their spouses forget their mistakes. In every discussion or argument the past will be brought up. In some cases all former problems, including the kitchen sink, are thrown in others' faces. This process of repeating offenses does terrible damage. It forces people to live defensively, never knowing if a past mistake would once more be brought up to haunt them. For children it can cause serious damage, creating a climate in which self confidence is undermined. The past lurks like some terrible ghost, waiting to remind the child of past failures. Instead of bringing up the past, God asks us to cover over an offense. This is what Paul taught us as well. "And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you" (Eph. 4:32). We are to offer others the same mercy God has offered us. Just as our forgiveness from God is undeserved, so often will our mercy toward a spouse or child be undeserved as well. But that is to be the tone of our relationships. We are to be eager to forgive. This will call on us to release all rights to bringing up the past. God promises to never bring up our sins after He has forgiven us. So too we are called on to forgive others, especially those in our homes, with the idea that they will never again face those charges.

This is the spirit of patience and mercy that could transform relationships. If more spouses would only forgive, covering over the offense, then peace could come more quickly to relationships. If more parents would confront their children, and then never again mention the mistake made, then more children would live with a sense of security and safety that they were loved. Those children will know they are loved, because "love covers a multitude of sins" (1 Pet. 4:8).

Bro. W Holmes

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

BISHOPS/SHEPHERDS/ELDERS

(1 Tim. 3: 1-6)

Brother Elwyn Hipp (830) 510-6311,
Brother Wayne Holmes (210) 696-8597

DEACON

(Acts 6: 1-5; 1
Tim. 3: 7-12)

Brother Raul Baltierra
(210) 843-9730

GOSPEL PREACHER

(1 Cor. 9:1-16; 1 Tim.
4:6; 2 Tim. 4: 2-5)

Brother Gabriel Rodriguez
(210)315-4453



August 7

AM WORSHIP

Announcements: *G. Rodriguez*
 Opening Prayer: *R. Baltierra Jr.*
 Song Leader: *E. Castillo*
 Lord's Supper: *R. Baltierra; A. Maldonado; J. Mora; R. Trevino*

Scripture: *Ps. 22:14-18*
 Sermon: *Guest Speaker*
 Benediction: *J. Mokry*

PM WORSHIP

Announcements: *G. Rodriguez*
 Opening Prayer: *J. Guillen*
 Song Leader: *A. Maldonado*
 Lord's Supper: *B. Dorries; Z. Watkins*

Sermon: *Guest Speaker*
 Benediction: *T. Mayez*

After Greeter: *E. Creek*
 Greeter/Usher: *T. Mayces*
 AV Duty: *M. de la Garza*
 Elder in charge: *E. Hipp*

REMEMBERING OUR BELOVED

(by writing, calling, and praying)

Wayne Holmes
 Rina White
 Joe Guillen
 Ina Dial
 David and Elijah Sudhoff
 Roy Guajardo (battling Parkinsons)
 Rose Scott (grandmother of Clay and Wes Bond)
 Caral O'Banon

BATTLING CANCER:

Barbara Oakes Johna Dorries
 Abigail Reyes Graciola Anderson
 Briana Nieves Sonny Cary
 Elwyn Hipp Lori Main's father
 Tomas Guillen

SHUT-INS:

Dorothy Harper
 Dazel Ball
 Mildred Geest
 Sarah Cannon

TRAVELING:

A. Jacob; Courtney Cobb (Japan)

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

August

Organizing Monthly Luncheon: *NA*
 Preparing Lord's Supper: *Rodriguez*
 Auditorium Service Duties: *Rodriguez*
 Wash baptismal garments; clean cry room
Rodriguez
 Brother in charge of services: *NA*

AM Theme:
"Praising God" - A Study in the book of Psalms
 PM Theme:
Setting the Church in Order - A Study in the books of 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus

AM Sermon:

Guest Speaker

PM Sermon:

Guest Speaker

WEDNESDAY NIGHT DEVOTIONAL

July 27: *E. Castillo*

August 3: *J. Guillen*

August 10: *R. Baltierra Jr.*

FOR THE RECORD

JULY 31/AUG 3

Attendance:

Sunday Bible Study 46
 Sunday AM Worship 71
 Sunday PM Worship 31
 Wednesday Bible Study 40
 Budget/Offering: **\$2,140.02/ \$1,485.18**

Weekly Bible Readers: 11/30 (Adult Bible class)

SHENANDOAH CHURCH OF CHRIST

11026 Wurzbach Rd.
 San Antonio, TX 78230
 (210) 696-5532

Fax: (210) 696-5181

Church email Address:

shenandoah@shenandoahcofc.org

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES:

Sunday: Bible Study at 9:30 am; Worship at 10:30 am;
 Worship at 5:00 pm.

Wednesday: Bible Study at 7:00 pm