

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 (30)

*Gabriel Rodriguez*

### Inside This Issue:

**How Israel Fell From Glory (28)**

*Shepherd's Corner:*

**There Will Be Some Surprises At The Reward Of The Righteous**

As the Levite, his concubine, and his servants stayed with the old man from Mt. Ephraim in Gibeah, “*behold, the men of the city, certain sons of Belial, beset the house round about, beat the door, and said to the master of the house, the old man, saying, Bring forth the man that came into your house, that we may have sexual relations with him*” (19:22). The old man then went outside and tried to reason with these men saying, “*No so my brothers, do not act so wickedly; since this man has come into my house, do not do this vile thing*” (19:23). Then he offered his virgin daughter and the Levite’s concubine to do whatever they wanted with them, but unto the Levite (a male), his guest, he pleaded not to do this folly (19:24). The men persisted in their request, but the Levite “*seized his concubine and made her go out to them. And they had sexual relations with her, (gang raped), all night until the morning. And as the dawn began to break, they let her go*” (19:25). As the morning appeared, the woman walked to the old man’s house and fell down at the door. When the Levite opened the door to go his way, he saw his concubine lying at the door of the house (19:27). The Levite then told her, “*Get up, let us be going,*” but the woman did not answer (implying the woman was near death from her sexual and traumatic experience). The

Levite then put the woman on his donkey and went his way home (19:28). While at home, (inferring that the concubine was already dead), the Levite then “*took a knife and divided the concubine, limb by limb, into twelve pieces, and sent her throughout all the territory of Israel*” (19:29). All who witnessed this horrific act said, “*Such a thing has never happened or been seen from the day that the people of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt until this day*” (19:30).

There is a lot to parse here and so many questions. We’ll spend several articles here. First, as we saw in 19:1, this section of Scripture begins with, “*And it came to pass in those days, when there was no king in Israel, concluding that every man did which was right in his own eyes.*” This shows the humanistic conditions of Israel. In other words, Israel was in a state where God’s laws was absent; therefore, what follows is man’s distorted view of self and others. This was progressed with the idea and actions of idolatry. Idolatry was an act that glorified men’s pleasure and imagination. This is why God had such a disdain for it and why He commanded the extinction of Israel’s neighbors who were infested with idolatry. Sadly, Israel did not eradicate such actions. May God be praised!

# How Israel Fell From Glory (27)

A Study in the Book of Isaiah

## Church News and Announcements

### CONGREGATION

The fellowship luncheon is today after our morning service. Everyone, especially our visitors are invited to eat and fellowship with us.

The family home devotional hosted by the Baltierras will be this Friday at their home. Festivities will begin at 7:00 pm. We look forward to a great crowd.

The Ladies Bible Class and Men's Training Class will meet at 4:00 pm on February 26th. The ladies will be studying lesson 6 and the men will continue their singing class.

### YOUTH

We would like to thank everyone who had a part in making a first lock-in a success. A special thanks to sister Billie Dorries for her help in organizing the event and sister Carolyn for helping with food.

### YOUNG ADULT

Our next young adult devotional is scheduled for February 24th. The Rodriguez family will be hosting this event. Festivities will begin at 7:00. The menu is healthy potluck.

### AREA NEWS

See Bulletin Board for area wide meetings

The context we are in is when God spoke concerning the use of pagan nations (*Assyria and Babylon*) to destroy and put into captivity His people, disobedient Israel. In this section God says, *"I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me...I am the Lord, and there is none else"* (45:5-6). God reminded Israel that despite what they would experience, God remains Sovereign. He then gave an interesting statement: *"I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things"* (45:7). Contextually, the passage makes sense. The ideas of *"darkness"* (*choshek*) and *"evil"* (*ra*) doesn't refer to sin and wickedness, rather they referred to misery, destruction, pain, trials, and tribulation. So in other words, God reminded Israel that He was the one responsible for their blessings and cursings, meaning if they would have obeyed Him then He would have brought them blessings and peace, but since they disobeyed Him, He sent them misery, destruction, pain, trials, and tribulation in the form of conquering pagan nations.

We know that God was serious about their chosen despicable lifestyle, because verse 8 says, *"Drop down, ye heavens from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring*

*forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the Lord have created it."* God mentions, and uses the imagery of rain to teach Israel what they lacked - the refreshment of rain water, which was equivalent to God's word leading to righteousness and salvation (cf. Deut. 32:2-3). Hence, Israel was asked to be the rain from heaven and through her actions, to be the ones that refreshed the earth, by leading and showing her neighbors around her how to live life effectively (Deut. 4:1-7). God then pleaded with His nation to think about who they were in connection with Him. Likening to the consummation of father and mother (45:9), God reminded Israel that He was their maker and Father. As their Father, God said, *"I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways..."* (45:13). What God desired was, through Israel's actions nations of the world would be led to God and *"all Israel"* (Jews and Gentiles) would be saved (45:14-17). Isaiah then said that God made the world and its inhabitants, but did not speak in secret so that no one could discover Him, rather He revealed Himself to all humanity, through nature and through a chosen people (45:18-19). 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) and given the hope of eternal life (Acts 2:38).

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

### There Will Be Some Surprises At The Reward Of The Righteous

No doubt, many will be surprised at who the righteous are. Our righteousness will not avail (Isa. 64:6), for "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10). If we are judged righteous at that time, it will be because we have become the righteousness of God" in Christ (2 Cor. 5:21). Jesus told the self-righteous Pharisees, "The publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you" (Matt. 21:31). It wasn't that they were better, it was simply that they repented and turned to the Lord. They didn't trust their own goodness, they trusted the Lord to save them. Jesus illustrated this with the story of the publican and Pharisee in Lk.18:10-14; while the Pharisee boasted of his righteousness, the publican said, "Be merciful to me, a sinner," Jesus said the publican was the one who was justified.

No doubt, many will be surprised at the reward of the righteous. "What die he ever do to deserve such a reward?" may well be the question many ask. And the answer is simple: "The wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6:23). Anyone who hears the Lord say, "Well done, good and faithful servant" (Matt. 25:21) will know that his reward is a gift, not what he deserves. Can you imagine a place where there is no sorrow, no pain, no separation, no sin, no death? Where all the redeemed ones abide for eternity with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in that place where the river of life flows from the throne of God, "and they shall reign for ever and ever" with Christ? (Rev. 21:4-5,27; 22:1-5). Surely there are many details about heaven we are not told, but God is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Eph. 3:20), and heaven will far surpass your greatest dreams, imaginations and desires. And no matter how sinful, when one turns to Christ, obeys the plan of salvation, and lives faithfully until death, he can be assured that reward will be his.

No doubt, there will be surprises at the duration of the reward of the righteous. It will not be just a day or two, or a year or two, or a millennium or two. Jesus said, "These shall go into eternal life" (Matt. 25:46). Eternal, for ever, without end. Peter describes the hope given by the resurrection of Jesus: "Unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Pet. 1:4). It will never spoil, nor be spoiled, the joys will never diminish. And it will last for ever.

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

## DEACONS

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

*Brother Raul Baltierra*

(210) 843-9730

*Brother Bill Dorries*

(210) 253-0173

## GOSPEL PREACHER

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

*Brother Gabriel Rodriguez*

(210) 315-4453



## February 12

### AM WORSHIP

Announcements: *G. Rodriguez*  
 Opening Prayer: *R. Baltierra*  
 Song Leader: *A. Maldonado*  
 Lord's Supper: *E. Castillo; R. Baltierra Jr.; T. Mayces; D. Mathis*

Scripture: *Jn. 19:17-22*  
 Sermon: *G. Rodriguez*  
 Benediction: *J. Mokry*

### PM WORSHIP

Announcements: *G. Rodriguez*  
 Opening Prayer: *M. de la Garza*  
 Song Leader: *E. Castillo*  
 Lord's Supper: *J. Watkins; J. Guillen*  
 Sermon: *G. Rodriguez*  
 Benediction: *Z. Watkins*

After Greeter: *S. Amos*  
 Greeter/Usher: *B. Dorries*  
 AV Duty: *J. Guillen*  
 Elder in charge: *E. Hipp*

### REMEMBERING OUR BELOVED

(by writing, calling, and praying)  
 Wayne Holmes  
 Joe Guillen  
 Ina Dial  
 David and Elijah Sudhoff  
 Caral O'Banon  
 Helen Gross (aunt of sister Sarah)  
 Sam Amos (awaiting surgery)  
 Parents of David Lyssy  
 Sandra Welch (sister-in-law of Billie Dorries)  
 Lavender Nelson  
 Tita Cortez (sister of Sam Ramirez)  
 Eloise Creek (battling various issues)  
 Dolly Gribble (hurt back)

### BATTLING CANCER:

Johna Dorries      Abigail Reyes  
 Graciola Anderson      Sonny Cary  
 Arturo Hernandez  
 Renalto (brother-in-law of Joe Guillen)

### SHUT-INS:

Dazel Ball  
 Mildred Geest  
 Sarah Cannon

### TRAVELING:

A. Jacob; Courtney Cobb (Japan)

### SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES FEBRUARY

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

AM Theme:

**The Hall of Fame:**  
*A Study of Hebrews 11*

PM Theme:

**God's Love For His Church:**  
*A Study of the Song of Solomon*

AM Sermon:

*The Account of Joseph (3)*

PM Sermon:

*Third song (3)*

### WEDNESDAY NIGHT DEVOTIONAL

February 15: *A. Maldonado*

February 22: *R. Baltierra*

## FOR THE RECORD

### FEBRUARY 5/8

#### Attendance:

Sunday Bible Study      53  
 Sunday AM Worship      57  
 Sunday PM Worship      34  
 Wednesday Bible Study      50  
 Budget/Offering:      **\$2,140.02/ \$2,331.00**

Weekly Bible Readers: 5 (Adult Bible class)

### SHENANDOAH CHURCH OF CHRIST

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[shenandoah@shenandoahcofc.org](mailto: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