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Why Have You Done This?

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

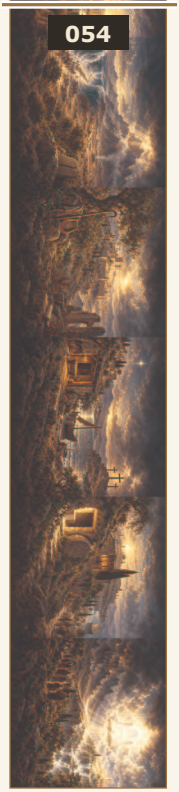
PSALM 119:105



JOHN WEAVER

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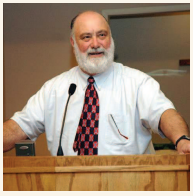
Ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this?

JUDGES 2:2, EXCERPT

The question in Judges 2 calls Israel to account for disobedience to God's covenant commands. John Weaver examines what happens when earlier instruction and remembered deliverance no longer govern present conduct. These two messages invite readers to consider compromise, its consequences, and the difference between sorrow over trouble and obedience to God's voice.

“I want you to understand that there is a vast difference between worldly sorrow and godly sorrow.”

JOHN WEAVER



John Weaver

John Weaver's sermons form the teaching collection presented by Weaver Bible College. This volume gathers his teaching from that collection.

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Why Have You Done This?

Covenant Theology

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CHAPTER 1

Why Have You Done This?

Part One of Two

SCRIPTURE READING - Judges 2:1-9 (KJV)

Introduction and Scripture Reading

Open your Bibles to the book of Judges, chapter 2. This is a two-part message: the first part is today, and the second part will be next Sunday, Lord willing. The title of the message is, "Why Have You Done This?" That is a scriptural question in our text. Beginning with verse 1, we'll read through verse 13.

"And an angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt and have brought you into the land which I swear unto your fathers. And I said, I will never break my covenant with you. And you shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land. You shall throw down their altars, but you have not obeyed my voice. Why have you done this? Wherefore, I also said, I will not drive them out from before you, but they shall be as thorns in your sides and their gods shall be a snare unto you." It came to pass when the angel of the Lord spake these words unto all the children of Israel,

> that the people lifted up their voice and wept. And they called the name of that place Bochim, and they sacrificed there unto the Lord. And when Joshua had let the people go, the children of Israel went every man into his inheritance to possess the land. And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord that he did for Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died being 110 years old.

And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the mount of Ephraim, on the north side of the hill Gaash. And also that generation were gathered unto their fathers. And there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord and served Baalim. And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them and provoked the Lord to anger. And they forsook the Lord and served Baal and Ashtoreth.

In verse 2, the Lord asked Israel, "Why have you done this?" This is a question that has been asked innumerable times. We ask it of our children, spouses, friends, and even our enemies. Many times we even ask it of our pets. Sometimes we know the answer: "Your instructions were not clear," or, "I did not know any better." Usually, however, the unspoken answer is, "I don't care what you said or what you asked. I did what I wanted to do." That is nothing less than pure rebellion, and it is the real answer most of the time.

This question was not asked only of individuals; it was also asked of a nation. Nations are made up of individuals, families are made up of individuals, and Scripture teaches that individuals are answerable and accountable to God. They are His creatures and sinners, and they will give an account to Him. But nations are also answerable and accountable to God, because He is the Creator, the lawgiver, the Judge, and the sovereign. Covenant nations—those that adhere to a covenant with God—are especially answerable and accountable to Him. Israel was a covenant nation.

America as a Covenant Nation

Everyone knows that the covenant was given at Mount Sinai and that the people agreed to it. That was God's law, given in Exodus chapter 20 and also in Deuteronomy chapter 5. But what many people do not understand is that America was begun as a covenant nation also. All you have to do is examine copies of our founding documents. Look, in fact, at the Mayflower Compact, or the Mayflower Covenant.

There are numerous covenants. I want to give you a couple of original documents to prove that America was begun as a covenantal nation as well. Here is the first charter of Virginia, dated April 10, 1606. It was granted by King James I for those individuals who would endeavor to settle Jamestown. Listen to this paragraph:

"We greatly commending and graciously accepting of their desires for the furtherance of so noble a work, which may, by the providence of Almighty God, hereafter tend to the glory of His Divine Majesty in propagating of Christian religion to such people as yet live in darkness and miserable ignorance of the true knowledge and worship of God, may in time bring the infidels and savages living in those parts to human civility and to a settled and quiet government."

They were saying that they intended to honor God, establish this work, and try to reach these individuals for His honor and glory.

Here is the first charter of Massachusetts, dated March 4, 1629, granted by King Charles I. Listen to this paragraph:

"For the directing, ruling, and disposing of all other matters and things, whereby our said people may be so religiously peaceable and civilly governed, as their good life and orderly conversation may win and incite the natives of the country to the knowledge and obedience of the only true God and Savior of mankind, and the Christian faith, which in our royal intention and the adventures' free profession is the principal end of this plantation."

The principal end, he said, was honoring and glorifying God and reaching those who were unsaved.

One more is the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut, dated January 14, 1639. This was the first constitution actually written in America, and it was the model even of our American Constitution,

the United States Constitution. It was penned by Roger Ludlow after he had heard a message by the Puritan pastor Thomas Hooker. Hooker then helped Ludlow in his congregation. This was the founding document of Connecticut. It was so impressive that Connecticut is now known as the Constitution State. I want to give you one little sentence and then the first two articles.

"Which according to the truth of said gospel, is now practiced among us." Now listen carefully: "And also in our civil affairs to be guided and governed according to such laws, rules, orders, and decrees as is from the word of God." These are the first two articles of the Constitution of Connecticut.

Article 1 states: "That the scriptures hold forth a perfect rule for the direction and government of all men in all duties, which they are to perform to God, to men, as well as in families and commonwealths"—that is, civil government—"as in matters of churches." Article 2 states: "That as in matters which concern the gathering and ordering of a church, so likewise in all public offices which concern civil order, as the choice of magistrates and officers, making and repealing laws, dividing allotments of inheritance, and all things of like nature, they would all be governed by those rules which scripture held forth to them."

Once again, these colonies were saying, "We are going to follow the law of God. We're going to follow the word of God."

You may say, "I would really like to see that for myself, but I don't have access to all of those documents." Surely you do. Go on the internet and type in the Avalon Project. You will find the documents from the 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries, all up to date. You can read the charters and the Constitution of every colony and every state.

I could multiply illustrations, but I think you get the picture: America was actually begun as a Christian nation and in covenant with the one true and living God through the Lord Jesus Christ.

God's Faithfulness vs. Man's Unfaithfulness

Now, in Judges chapter 2, as we look at the text where God asks, "Why have you done this?" note that, not only in Judges chapter 2

but particularly throughout the book of Judges, as well as throughout the Bible, there is a very strong contrast: the absolute faithfulness of God and the unfaithfulness of man. Put another way, the contrast is between God's faithfulness to His covenant and the unfaithfulness of men and nations to His covenant. Look in Judges chapter 2 and verse 1.

"And the angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt and have brought you into the land which I swear unto your fathers. And I said"—here's what he said—"I will never break my covenant with you." Now, here's a good question. Who was this angel? The angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim. The Hebrew word for angel here is malach. It literally means an angel, a messenger, or a theophany, or a theophanic angel, as we would call that. So what is a theophany? A theophany is a pre-incarnate appearing of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament, before He actually became incarnate or before He actually became flesh. So the angel here is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

I'll show you that in just a moment. If you will turn back in your Bibles just a few pages to Joshua chapter 5, I will show you this again, beginning there with verse 13, and we'll read through verse 15. "And it came to pass when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes, and behold, there stood a man over against him with a sword drawn in his hand." Now Joshua had to be a very brave man. "Because Joshua went unto him and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?"

"And he said, Nay, but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my Lord unto his servant? And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so." This is the same message that was given to Moses at the burning bush: "Take your shoes off. The ground on which you're standing is holy." So we have, then, in Joshua chapter 5, a theophany, that is, a pre-incarnate appearing of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament.

Now, if we go back to Judges chapter 2 in verse 1, we can ask this question: How do we know that this is the Lord Jesus Christ? How

do we know that this is a theophanic angel? The answer to that is very simple. When you look at verse 1, the angel said this: “I made you to go up out of Egypt, and I brought you into the land which I swear to your fathers.

“I will never break my covenant with you.” It was the Lord himself who brought Israel up out of the land of Egypt and into the promised land. It was the Lord himself who swore unto the fathers. It was the Lord himself who now has said, “I will never break my covenant with you.”

God has never broken His covenant. He has never lied. He has never broken His word. Israel has broken the covenant multitudinous times, but God has never ever broken His covenant because He is the faithful God.

Here is a scripture that I would encourage everyone to memorize. It is found in Deuteronomy chapter 7 and verse 9. The Word of God says, “Know therefore that the Lord thy God, He is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations.” Note, if you would, He is the faithful God. When you get to 1 Corinthians chapter 1 and verse 9, the Bible simply says, “God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.”

The faithfulness of God is given to us throughout Scripture. If you would take the time when you get home to read Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy chapter 28, you will find that God sets forth His blessings and His curses. God tells us in these passages, as well as many others, that He is faithful to bless those who obey Him, and He is also faithful to curse those who disobey Him. In other words, He is faithful to His covenant, whether in blessing or in cursing. He is the faithful God. Now I want you to contrast verse 1 with verses 2 and 3 of Judges 2. Look at it. Here is what the angel said: “And

God had said, “You shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land. You shall throw down their altars. But you have not obeyed my voice.” Then came the question: “Why have you done this? Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you, but

they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you." So God asked them, "Why have you done this?"

Unhappily, in Judges chapter 2, this was not a single incident of rebellion. Rebellion is recorded of the nation and of the people over and over. They rejected God's law, violated His commandments, and did so multitudinous times. "And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, bowed themselves unto them and provoked the Lord to anger." Again, "And they forsook the Lord and served Baal and Ashtoreth."

"Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them." Yet "they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a-whoring after other gods and bowed themselves unto them. They turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the Lord. But they did not so." When the Lord raised up judges, He was with the judge and delivered them from their enemies all the judge's days. "For it repented the Lord because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them." But when the judge died, "they returned and corrupted themselves more than their fathers in following other gods to serve them and to bow down unto them. They ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way."

Israel's Repeated Rebellion

There is a phrase that appears over and over in the book of Judges. It is also found in the book of Nehemiah. The phrase is simply this: "they did evil again." Judges 3:12 says, "And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord. And the Lord strengthened Eglon, the king of Moab, against Israel because they had done evil in the sight of the Lord." Notice: they did evil again.

Judges 4:1 says, "And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord when Ehud was dead." Judges 10:6 says, "And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim, and Ashtoreth, and the gods of Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and

the gods of the Philistines, and forsook the Lord, and served him not."

Judges 13:1 says, "And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years." Nehemiah 9:28 says, "But after they had rest, they did evil again before thee, and therefore leftest thou them in the hand of their enemies, so that they had dominion over them. And when they returned and cried unto thee, thou heardest them from heaven, and many times didst thou deliver them according to thy mercies," but note: they did evil again.

We know that God is faithful. We know that God is infinitely holy, righteous, and just. He is merciful, kind, and loving. But we also know that man, fallen man, is depraved. He is a sinner, wicked, rebellious, and ungodly. Therefore, he is in rebellion against God.

This is why our Lord asked this question in verse 2: "Why have you done this? I told you exactly what to do. I gave you clear commandments and instruction, but you have not obeyed my voice." Why have you not done what I asked you to do? Let me ask this question and try to begin answering it for you.

God looks at the nation Israel and asks, "Why have you done this?" So let us ask the same question of America: Why have you done this? We have forsaken God and His law for man and his law. We have turned from the worship of God to the worship of money and materialism, from honoring God to sheer humanism, and from theology into secularism. We have essentially done the same thing as national Israel; we have turned our backs upon Him. Why have we done it? Why did Israel do it? Why are we doing it?

First Reason: Remorse Without Repentance

There are clear answers to this question in our text, but today I can give only two. Lord willing, next Sunday I will give the other three. When our Lord asks, "Why have you done this?" here is the first answer: they had remorse without repentance. It is the same truth in America: we have remorse without repentance.

In verse 4, we read, "And it came to pass when the angel of the Lord spake those words unto all the children of Israel, that the

people lifted up their voice and wept. And they called the name of that place Bochim, and they sacrificed there unto the Lord." Weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth are not necessarily signs of repentance. Just because someone weeps, becomes emotional, or grows sentimental does not mean that he has repented.

It may be a sign of embarrassment, or that he is sorry he was caught in his sins or exposed. It may also be a sign of sheer hypocrisy and deceit. In my lifetime I have known many people who wept over a situation, made a temporary change, and vowed that they would become different people. They would never again do such a thing. They kept their word for at least two weeks, then went right back to their old ways and habits. What does that mean? They had remorse, but they did not have repentance. How do we know that Israel merely had remorse and not repentance?

They continually committed the same sin over and over. They committed idolatry. They left God. They left His law. They left His worship. They went to Baal, to Ashtoreth, and to all the other gods as well.

I want you to understand that there is a vast difference between worldly sorrow and godly sorrow. In 2 Corinthians 7:9, the Apostle Paul, writing to these Corinthians, said, "Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but"—watch this—"but that you sorrowed to repentance. For you were made sorry after a godly manner, that you might receive damage by us in nothing." Then he makes this statement: "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of, but the sorrow of this world worketh death."

There is a worldly sorrow that can be expressed in embarrassment or shock: "I got caught. I got exposed." There can be a worldly sorrow that is hypocritical, that is deceptive. But there is also a godly sorrow, and that godly sorrow works repentance that is not to be repented of. In other words, there is a genuine repentance, and then there is simple remorse without repentance. One is merely sorry for the consequences; the other turns the heart back to God.

Repentance is a change of mind that leads to a change of conduct. If I happen to be walking due east and I repent, I change my mind, do an about-face, 180 degrees, and turn and begin walking west. The

word for repentance is metanoia. Noeo is the verb, noia would be the noun, and meta- means "with." So it actually means "with the mind."

The Nature of True Repentance

Repentance begins in the mind. We change our mind concerning God. We change our mind concerning sin. We change our mind concerning our attitudes and our actions. Then, of course, we turn from our sins unto God.

There is a negative aspect to repentance and a positive aspect of repentance. In 1 Thessalonians 1:9, the Apostle Paul writes about the effect of the gospel upon these Thessalonians: "For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God."

“And to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come.” Verse 9 says, “For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, how ye turned to God from idols.” In other words, repentance has a negative aspect: you leave your sin and rebellion, turning from everything contrary to God and His Word. But there is also a positive aspect: you turn to God from idols to serve the living and true God. Those who have genuinely repented give evidence of it by turning from their sins and turning to God to serve Him and wait for His Son from heaven—that is, to be faithful and continually obedient until He returns.

This is one problem we have today in our modern churches. We have churches full of people who have never genuinely repented of their sins. Consequently, they are not intent upon serving God; they are not obedient, submissive, or faithful. We have a church full of individuals who profess to be Christians but have never repented.

It is impossible to have true faith without repentance, just as it is impossible to have true repentance without faith. Those two things go together. As a result, churches are filled with people who cause more problems than anything else, while being interested in their programs and in everything except the Word of God and the worship of God.

They do not want any part of true worship. We have turned our churches into social organizations and business meetings. They have become nothing more than social clubs, because so-called worship is now basically ceremony and ritual. If the Holy Spirit of God were taken out of the world tomorrow, most churches would continue as usual. There would be no problem, because they have all their programs, plans, and everything—except the true worship of God.

Turn to Amos chapter 5. You can also find a similar passage in Isaiah chapter 1, but notice what God says particularly in Amos chapter 5, verse 21. Look what God says to Israel. They have taken the worship of God and boiled it down into ceremonies and rituals. God says, "I hate, I despise your feast days." Did not God ordain those feast days? Yes, He did.

He said, "I will not smell in your solemn assemblies." Did not God ordain the solemn assemblies? Yes, He did. In verse 22: "Though you offer me burnt offerings and your meal offerings, I will not accept them. I don't want them. I won't have them. Neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. I will not take anything that you give me." Then He said, "Take away from me the noise of thy songs." In other words, all your singing and all your music are nothing but noise in My ears. I do not want them. He said, "For I will not hear the melody of thy viols." Why? They have rituals and ceremonies, but they do not have truth.

He says in verse 24, "But let judgment run down as waters and righteousness as a mighty stream." God has never meant for His worship to be turned into ceremonies and rituals. God said, "I hate it. I despise it. I will not have it." So this is where we are today. In America, in our modern-day churches, you can ask this question: "Why hast thou done this?"

The answer is always going to come back to rebellion: We do not want God. We do not want His Word or His law. We do not want Him governing, ruling over us, directing us. So the first answer to “Why hast thou done this?” is that we have remorse without repentance.

Second Reason: Leaders Without Leadership

The second point is this: “Why hast thou done this?” We have leaders without leadership. In verse 7, “And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord that he did for Israel.” The people were faithful as long as Joshua was alive, and they were also faithful as long as the elders who outlived Joshua were alive. But when they died off, new leaders came into existence who did not lead in a biblical manner.

The same thing is true in America. When America began, we began as a Christian nation, and our founding fathers laid forth principles from the Word of God. The Bible is the most often quoted book in all the founding documents, and the book of Deuteronomy is the most often quoted book in the Bible, dealing with God's law. When our founders died off, we began to drift into pure humanism, secularism, and materialism.

There is an adage that says, “Leaders lead.” That is true, but not every leader is a Christian or has a biblical philosophy. Not every leader believes the Word of God and wants to bring his life into conformity to it. There is a vast difference between a biblical, godly leader and a worldly, unsaved leader. We do have leaders today, and they are leading, but they are leading in the wrong direction. They are not leading us in conformity to the Word of God, in the worship of God, or to biblical obedience. They are leading in such a way as to destroy our country, the people of the country, our freedom, and our prosperity. When you stop and think about prosperity, the truth of the matter is this.

We probably have more money today than we have ever had in our entire lives, but it is more worthless today than it has ever been. That is why it takes so much money to live. Inflation is not higher prices; higher prices are the symptom of inflation. Inflation happens through the constant and continual printing of more and more money. The more money that is printed, the less valuable is that which you possess, and thus it takes more and more.

When Alice and I got married nearly sixty-three years ago, I gave her ten dollars a week to buy groceries for us. I would almost fuss if

she did not bring two or three dollars back. That meant the two of us could live all week on six or seven dollars' worth of groceries, including meat, milk, vegetables, bread, and whatever else we wanted. Today, you cannot even walk out of the grocery store with a loaf of bread for less than five or six dollars.

We have been destroyed. Our politicians today are more like leeches, bloodsuckers sucking the blood out of our country. They are serving themselves and not us, enriching themselves at the expense of the nation. You have seen this in some of the exposés that have been going on. When a government organization loses a trillion dollars, something is wrong somewhere. We are being led in the direction of idolatry and tyranny.

There are indeed leaders that lead, but they can lead in the wrong direction. Jeroboam the First, king of Israel, was the first king of the northern kingdom. He had been a servant who worked under Solomon until Solomon became jealous of him, and Jeroboam had to leave. When there was a split under Rehoboam, Solomon's son, Jeroboam was called out of Egypt and became the first king of the northern kingdom of Israel.

Jeroboam was a very industrious and smart man, and he took counsel. You can read about this in 1 Kings 11 and 12. He made the two golden calves and said, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." He put one in Dan and the other in Bethel.

SCRIPTURE READING - 2 Kings 21:9-16 (KJV)

> And it became a huge sin. He drove out the Levites that were there, the true priests, and made priests of his own. In other words, here was a man who led the people into idolatry for one simple reason: to preserve his life and his rule. He said, "If I let them go down to Judah, then they'll return to Rehoboam and they'll kill me. And what's going to happen to my rule and my power and my posterity?"
>
> And so he introduced the two golden calves. He was a real leader, but he led an entire nation into idolatry. "It's too much for you to go up to Jerusalem to worship. Stay right here. Worship these golden calves."

Judah had her wicked kings as well. Manasseh was one of them. He not only led the southern kingdom into idolatry, but also into immorality. Turn in your Bibles to 2 Kings chapter 21. You need to read the entire chapter. You will see the wickedness of this man and what he did. Look in 2 Kings chapter 21, beginning with verse 9, and we will read through verse 16. The Bible says:

"But they hearkened not." That is, they would not listen to the prophets of God. They would not listen to the law of Moses, but they hearkened not. "And Manasseh seduced them to do more evil than did the nations whom the Lord destroyed before the children of Israel. And the Lord spake by his servants the prophets, saying, Because Manasseh, king of Judah, hath done these abominations, and hath done wickedly above all that the Amorites did which were before him, and hath made Judah also to sin with his idols: Therefore thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Behold, I am bringing such evil upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whosoever heareth of it, both his ears shall tingle. And I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab. And I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth the dish, wiping it and turning it upside down. And I will forsake the remnant of mine inheritance, and deliver them into the hand of their enemies. And they shall become a prey and a spoil to all their enemies, because they have done that which was evil in my sight, and have provoked me to anger, since the day of their fathers came forth out of Egypt, even unto this day."

Watch this: "Moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood very much"—that is, the babies—"till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another, beside his sin wherewith he made Judah to sin, in doing that which was evil in the sight of the Lord."

Now look at verse 17: “Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh and all that he did, and his sin that he sinned, are written in the book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah.” Of course, you can find this same truth in 2 Chronicles as well as 2 Kings. Manasseh had children, had babies, sacrificed to Baal and to Molech. He even put sodomites in the temple. He even put an idol in the temple.

Here is a king who again seduced an entire nation and led them into immorality and idolatry. If the people are idolatrous and immoral, then they are not going to condemn their leaders who are idolatrous and immoral. Understand something: there are many leaders, whether good or bad, with great personalities, great abilities, great oratory, goals, and desires. But most of these, instead of being biblical, are unsaved and ungodly.

The Need for Godly Rulers

This is why in Deuteronomy 17 God said that, if you have a king, equivalent to a ruler, he has to be one from among your own brethren. That is, he has to be like you. He has to be a believer. He cannot be a foreigner or an unbeliever. Moreover, he has to have his own copy, his own personal copy, of the law of God, and he is to read therein every day. He has to be a man of the covenant. That is what the Word of God is emphasizing.

Here is a quote from our Supreme Court justice—in fact, our very first Supreme Court justice, John Jay, who was appointed by George Washington. John Jay said this: “Providence has given to our people the choice of their ruler, and it is the duty as well as the privilege and interest of our Christian nation to select and prefer Christians for their rulers.”

Now, I do want you to turn to Isaiah chapter 3. Look, if you would please, at verse 12. This is one of the problems that we are experiencing in this country. This is not a put-down on you ladies, but it is a truth that God shows us, and I think you can understand some of this. Look in Isaiah chapter 3 and verse 12. Look what God says.

"As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them." He says, "O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err and destroy the way of thy paths." So he says, children are your oppressors, and women rule over you. Stop and think about the women—and some men as well—in Congress. It is kind of like the man who said, "I wouldn't put them with my dogs."

Think about AOC, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. She was a former bartender and has been in Congress for six years. She started with

nothing, and this week I read that she is now worth 30 million bucks. How do you amass 30 million bucks in six years on a $285,000-a-year salary? I do not know. That is not all. Everybody is aware of Nancy Pelosi. According to the New York Post, Paul and Nancy Pelosi's net worth surged to $413 million from their 2023 net worth of $370 million. How do you get $413 million? Wow.

In 2020, a stat analysis found that 72 senators and 302 House members received contributions from the pharmaceutical industry, representing over two-thirds of Congress. The industry donated a total of $14 million that cycle, with major PACs like Pfizer contributing to 228 lawmakers. The top four recipients were Kamala Harris, Democrat, $11,341,349; Joe Biden, Democrat, $9,128,291; Barack Obama, Democrat, $6,041,678; and Hillary Clinton, Democrat, $4,622,654.

I think it would be wise to check all the names of your senators and representatives who have taken gifts, quote-unquote, which are really bribes, from such interests. I read this week that, out of 535 members of Congress, only 10 reject AIPAC money—that is, money from Israel. The claim is that 525 members, or 98.2 percent, are paid to put Israel's interests before yours. Only 10 do not receive money from Israel.

I have read that another COVID shot is being promoted. In light of all the death, devastation, disease, and heartache from the first COVID shots, if you are stupid enough to take another one, you really need your head examined. Anything they are pushing now, you had better beware of and learn to do your own research. You should understand why vaccines are supported by our leaders: it is not for our benefit, but because they are being paid by pharmaceutical interests. They have their interests in mind, and not yours.

I want you to turn in your Bibles, if you would, to 2 Samuel chapter 5. Here are two questions that I am going to ask before I make some applications. I want you to look at verse 12. Here is my question: Do you personally know or have you ever known of a politician in our modern times who has come to this realization? Anyone or any group of them—I do not care.

Look in 2 Samuel 5, verse 12: “And David perceived that the Lord had established him king over Israel and that he exalted his kingdom for his people Israel's sake.” What did David realize? God made me king. God established His kingdom. Why? For His people Israel's sake. In other words, it is my responsibility to protect His people. It is my responsibility to promote His people. It is my responsibility to serve them, not myself. God put me in this position of authority. God put me in this position of power for His people's sake.

Now, I want you to turn, if you would, please, to 2 Samuel chapter 23. I want you to look, if you would, at the first three verses.

So here is my second question: Do you know any politicians, any leaders who have come to this realization and truth? Watch carefully: 2 Samuel chapter 23, verse 1.

“Now these be the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob and the sweet psalmist of Israel said—the spirit of the Lord spake by me—His word was in my tongue—The God of Israel said—the Rock of Israel spake to me.” David is claiming direct inspiration for this one simple sentence: “He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.”

You cannot rule in the fear of God unless you are obedient to God, because fearing God and obedience are synonymous. You cannot be just unless you are obedient to God in His Word. That is why our Lord said in Luke chapter 18 that there was an unjust judge who feared not God, neither regarded man. If there is no fear of God, there is no regard for man. It is just that simple. What has happened to Israel? What has happened to America? The same exact thing.

Without biblical, godly leadership, there is loss. Without it, loss becomes deadly, devastating, and disastrous. Consider all the lives lost in wars, particularly needless, useless wars. Do you know why there are so many wars? Here is the answer: war is profitable. If you took the profit out of war, nobody would want to fight anymore.

General Smedley Butler said it correctly: war is a racket. Look at the devastation from the last COVID shots and flu shots. I am simply pointing out the facts. Without biblical, godly leadership, there is loss, and it is a deadly loss. I have given you two reasons for the

answer, “Why hast thou done this?”: remorse without repentance, and leaders without leadership—that is, without godly leadership.

Applications: Repentance and Prayer for Leaders

Let me make a couple of applications. First, we will never, as individuals or as a nation, be acceptable unto God without repentance. Our Lord made that exceedingly clear in Luke chapter 13, when He said to those people, "Except you repent, ye shall likewise perish." They said, "Hey, did you hear about those men whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices? And did you hear about those eighteen men on whom the tower in Siloam fell?" Our Lord said, "Do you think they were sinners above all others? Nay, I tell you, but except you repent, you shall all likewise perish." If we do not repent, we will perish. There are many different ways to perish. We can perish spiritually, physically, financially, emotionally, and mentally. We can perish any number of ways.

The Word of God tells us in Acts chapter 17, verses 30 and 31, "And the times of this ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent."

Why does God command all men everywhere to repent? "Because he, God, hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man, whereof he hath given assurance unto all in that he hath raised him from the dead." Just as surely as God raised Jesus Christ from the dead, there is going to be a judgment. Just as surely, men will give an account to God. Therefore He commands all men everywhere to repent. Without repentance, there is no way individuals, families, societies, or nations can be acceptable with God.

The second one is this: We need to learn to pray for biblical, godly leaders. Those who do not lead biblically and scripturally are going to lead us into idolatry, immorality, and destruction. It is just that simple. So we have to have the courage to stand against all of the ungodliness, all of the immorality, and all of the idolatry that is going on in the world today, in America today.

There is persecution on every hand, and it is probably going to get worse. But listen to what our Lord said in Revelation chapter 2 in

verse 10: "Fear none of those things which you shall suffer. Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that you may be tried, and you shall have tribulation ten days. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life."

So what we have to do in this age of wickedness, immorality, idolatry, humanism, secularism, and materialism is stand. We have to say, “Here I stand, I can do no other.” We have to determine that we are not going to sell our souls for materialism or gain. We are not going to quit, we are not going to give in, we are not going to give up; we are just going to stand.

Who will abide the persecution? I can tell you that right now: only those who know the Word of God, only those who know the Lord Jesus Christ, only those who know that God is the faithful God, and only those who know that we know that all things work together for good to them who are called according to His purpose.

It does not matter what transpires. We know. We know. We are going to stand, and we are going to be true and faithful. So why hast thou done this? We have remorse without repentance, and we have leaders without leadership. Next Sunday, Lord willing, I am going to show you the other three problems that Israel had that we have.

Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we bow to Thee. We thank You for Your Word. We thank You for Your truth. Lord, I pray that You would open our eyes. Make us wise, Lord; give us wisdom, give us understanding, give us insight, and give us a holy boldness and a holy determination to stand for Thee and Thy Word. In the name of Jesus Christ, we ask and pray. Amen.

CHAPTER 2

Why Have You Done This?

Part Two of Two

SCRIPTURE READING - Judges 2:1-15 (KJV)

Introduction and Review

Let us open our Bibles to the book of Judges, chapter two, and read several verses. Why have you done this?

"And an angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you into the land which I sware unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you. And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars.

"But ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this? Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you. And it came to pass, when the angel of the Lord spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice, and wept. And they called the name

> of that place Bochim: and they sacrificed there unto the Lord. And when Joshua had let the people go, the children of Israel went every man unto his inheritance to possess the land. And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord, that he did for Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being an hundred and ten years old.
>
> "And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the mount of Ephraim, on the north side of the hill Gaash. And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim: and they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the Lord to anger. And they forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashtoreth. And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel."

"And he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies." Now look at verse 15: "Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them for evil, as the Lord had said, and as the Lord had sworn unto them: and they were greatly distressed."

You remember verse 2: God had given clear and concise commands and instructions to Israel, and yet they disobeyed. His commands could not have been misunderstood. God said they were not to make a league with the inhabitants of the land. Now the word "league" means a covenant. They were not to make any covenants. They were also to throw down the pagan altars, but they disobeyed. And so God asked this question in verse 2, "Why have you done this?"

So let us ask the question: Why did Israel disobey? Why did America, and why does America, disobey? We can make it personal:

Why do you disobey? Why does your family disobey? Why does your church disobey? Why does your society disobey? Why does your nation disobey? In other words, each one of these questions is applicable to our society and to our nation today.

America, like Israel, was indeed a covenantal nation. If you examine the original constitutions, charters, and covenants, you will find that they were indeed in league with God, seeking to obey Him and make His laws their laws. I pointed this out in the very first message and quoted numerous articles. So, although I quoted several, allow me to quote one more.

The Massachusetts Bay Colony, through the work of John Cotton, a Puritan preacher, developed a legal framework known as "Moses, His Judicials" in 1636. It was intended as a set of laws agreeable to the Word of God and influenced the colony's legal system, though it was not formally adopted as the state's official laws. This draft was part of a broader effort by Puritan reformers to base colonial governance on biblical principles and specifically the Mosaic Law.

There is a strong contrast in this chapter between the absolute faithfulness of God and the unfaithfulness of His people. When we stop and think about our own unfaithfulness, we must consider that God has been so merciful and saved us, so gracious unto us, and has supplied our every need.

And yet the truth of the matter is that we still remain unfaithful. This should exceedingly humble us before Him and encourage us to plead for forgiveness and mercy. Even in this day and age, this truth does not affect the average Christian. In 1 Corinthians chapter 4, verses 1 and 2, the Apostle Paul said it like this: "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." Everything that God has given you, whether financial, talents, or abilities, you are a steward over those things for God and for His honor and glory.

If you go back to verse 1: "And an angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I sware unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you." This angel

happened to be a Christophany, that is, a pre-incarnate appearing of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament before He became flesh.

Sometimes the word "theophany" is used, but the word "theos" is the word God. In other words, it would be an occurrence or occasion where God manifested Himself. We know that this angel was the Lord because He said, "I made you go up out of Egypt." He also said, "I brought you into the land, which I sware unto your fathers." We know it was God who swore unto their fathers.

Then He said, "I will never break my covenant with you." It was God who brought the covenant and entered into that covenant with the nation itself. God has never broken His covenant. God has never broken His word. God has never lied. Israel broke the covenant multitudinous times, but God did not. The reason God did not break that covenant is very simple: God is faithful. He is the faithful God. He is faithful in His blessings, and He is also faithful in His cursings. Read Deuteronomy chapter 28 and Leviticus chapter 26, and you will find where God has made all of these promises to bless those who obey and to curse those who disobey.

Professions Without Possession

The first reason for the answer to the question, “Why have you done this?” was that they had remorse without repentance. They came and wept before the Lord; they were weeping aloud and were sorry that they were in that situation. But weeping, crying, wailing, and gnashing of teeth do not necessarily mean that someone has genuinely repented. Repentance is a change of mind that leads to a change in conduct.

“Metanoia” is the Greek word. “Meta” means “with” and “change,” and “noieo” is the Greek word for mind. So you actually change your mind. You change your mind in relation to God, in relation to sin, and in relation to yourself. In fact, you change your mind on a lot of things. Real, genuine repentance will always lead to obedience.

The second point was that they had leaders without leadership. After Joshua and all those elders died, other leaders came along who were not interested in leading according to biblical principles or obeying the commands of God. Consequently, they led the people

into idolatry. It is the same thing today. We have leaders who are willing to lead us into socialism, communism, fraud, debt, war, wickedness, and immorality.

Just as Israel had its Jeroboam and Judah had its Manasseh, we have our Jeroboams and our Manassehs as well. How many politicians do you know who have come to the conclusion David reached in 1 Samuel 23:1-3? Five times David claimed direct inspiration for this simple truth: "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." It is impossible for anyone to rule justly unless he is ruling in the fear of God.

Profession Without Possession

The third reason they did what they did is found in verse 10: we have professions without possession. "And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel." Years ago, I preached a message titled "Another Generation." It seems that we in America are in that another generation today.

In fact, we have turned so much from the foundation that our founding fathers laid. We have turned from the worship of God and from the principles of the Word of God. We have embraced secularism and humanism, and basically deserted biblical principles. We have the same problem today that they had back then: professions from individuals who did not have possession of the Lord Jesus Christ.

R. A. Torrey was an American evangelist, pastor, educator, and writer. Born in 1856, he died in 1928. He believed that one of the greatest mission fields was our churches and that ninety percent of our church members were lost. Ray Comfort, a modern-day evangelist, has said basically the same thing: ninety percent of church members are lost.

I knew one pastor who had a rather large work, with five thousand members in his church. He made the statement that if he could get ten percent of them to heaven, he would be happy. Of course, the truth is that he could not get even one to heaven—not any of himself.

What he meant was that he was hoping and praying that ten percent of that large congregation would end up with the Lord. That would mean that ninety percent of them were lost.

When you examine modern-day Christians and compare their lives with the unsaved, you will notice that there is not very much difference. Professing Christians today are just as worldly, deceitful, fraudulent, and cunning as the unsaved. The only difference is that they attend church, but not so regularly or faithfully. Amazingly, the divorce rate is about equal between the unsaved and professing Christians as well. The truth of the matter is that most professing Christians live by their feelings, emotions, or sentimentality rather than by the principles of the Word of God.

This is one of our great problems. We live by circumstances, situations, feelings, and emotions rather than by the principles of the Word of God. Emotions, circumstances, situations, and feelings change, but the principles of the Word of God are eternal and never change.

Now look back at verse 10, because I am talking about being a professor without actually possession. It says, "And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord." They knew not the Lord. Here they are in a covenant nation, supposedly a covenant people.

And yet they are unsaved. They knew not the Lord. Let me show you what I am talking about. The Apostle Paul explains this very clearly for us in Romans chapter 9, verse 6: “Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel.”

In other words, just because you were in a covenant nation and among the covenant people did not mean that you were saved. It did not mean that you were actually a believer. And so clearly, you could have individuals in the nation of Israel who were lost, who were in that covenant nation, and yet they did not know the Lord.

Likewise, you can have people in a church, even where the Word of God is preached. Once you join the church, you are actually in a covenant with God as well and a covenant with the other people. In

fact, some churches have covenants posted on their church walls. But just because you are in that covenant group does not mean that you are saved. You can be a church member and then lost. You can be baptized and lost. You can be a Sunday school teacher and lost. You can even be a preacher and be lost.

You can have a profession without a possession. Not everyone is born, quote unquote, again. Not everyone has Jesus Christ. Consequently, you cannot ride to heaven on the coattails of anyone else. You are not saved by association. You are saved only by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, and salvation comes by grace through faith in Him and in Him alone.

Consider what Scripture says after Judges chapter 2, where it says that they did not know the Lord. In 1 Corinthians chapter 10, beginning with verse 5, the Bible says, “But with many of them God was not well pleased.” Think about this question: If with many of them God was not well pleased, with how many of them was God well pleased? The answer is found in verse 5: “But with many of them God was not well pleased.”

Here is how He showed His displeasure: “For they were overthrown in the wilderness.” These things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. “Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”

How many of these people was God well pleased with? The answer is two: Joshua and Caleb, because the rest of them were overthrown in the wilderness.

Hebrews chapter 4, verse 1, says, “Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as

well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." They had the truth, but it did not profit them because it was not mixed with faith.

Just because someone hears the word externally does not mean that he is saved. Just because someone can hear the word regularly and audibly does not mean that he is saved. The Israelites heard the commands of God and the word of God; they even heard the actual voice of God. Yet it was not mixed with faith, and therefore they perished.

It is true that the Bible says in Romans 10:17, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." But this hearing is far more than external, audible hearing. It is hearing in faith, receiving it as indeed the very word of God, and receiving it in obedience. Thus, external and audible hearing of the word of God does not say it is a spiritual and internal hearing exercised in faith that actually saves us.

Go back to the book of Judges, chapter 2, and look at verse 10 again. This is astounding. We can understand the first part, but here it is: "And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel."

They were not only unsaved; they did not even know the works God had done for Israel. They did not know the Lord personally, and they did not know the Lord providentially. It is almost difficult to conceive that from one generation to another, everything was lost. Their faith was lost, and their knowledge of history and truth was lost as well. It is almost inconceivable to think that there were Israelites who did not know about the deliverance from Egypt, who did not know about the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea, who did not know about the wanderings of the wilderness, or the great provision that God made for these people.

Historical Ignorance

It is inconceivable that they had never even heard of the manna that God sovereignly provided, or how He dried up the Jordan so they could cross it and conquer Jericho. It is almost inconceivable to

think that they were absolutely ignorant of their history. But that is what the Bible says: they did not know the Lord, nor yet the works which He had done for Israel. They had forgotten everything.

It is also inconceivable to realize that most Americans and most Christians have no idea of the causes for the War of Independence. Neither do they know the marvels and miracles that God wrought to deliver us from the tyranny of George III and Parliament. We are absolutely ignorant. We do not even know anything about the War of 1812, when England attacked us again. During that war they burned the White House and captured many Americans. Moreover, we are just as ignorant today concerning the war of northern aggression.

That war is commonly referred to as the Civil War, which is not a good name because it was not a civil war. The truth is that it had absolutely nothing to do with slavery. I could prove that in a number of ways, but that is not my message. Most Christians and most southerners do not even know about a set of books known as the "War of the Rebellion." This set is a compilation of the official records of the Union and Confederate armies and consists of 128 volumes, including a general index and an accompanying atlas.

The collection was organized between 1881 and 1901. I preached a series of messages, I think thirteen, on where we are and how we got here, dealing with history, especially the war of northern aggression. It is possible to sit down, open these volumes, and read the correspondence between General Beauregard and Major Anderson at Fort Sumter in South Carolina before the bombing, during the bombing, and after the bombing, when the fort surrendered. General Beauregard wrote a letter to Major Anderson and asked him to surrender.

He said, “You may keep your flag, you may keep your arms; you just need to leave this property.” Major Anderson wrote back that he could not submit and could not do that. General Beauregard wrote back, “Dear Major Anderson, it is my distinct honor to be able to open fire upon you at 12 o’clock noon.” In other words, he said, “We’re going to start at 12 o’clock noon.” When one shell happened to hit an ammunition supply and a fire started in the fort, Beauregard ceased firing, sent men over, and asked Major Anderson if they needed help putting the fire out.

You do not ever read or hear about anything like that, and yet that is exactly what happened. It is all contained in the official records—128 volumes. You may say, "I cannot afford 128 volumes." You do not have to buy them; they are in most libraries. When I used those volumes, I went to my little local library in Fitzgerald, Georgia. They had them in a special room, and they would put you in that room and let you read those books. They watched you because those books were extremely valuable. Today, you can buy those same volumes on CD, which is much, much cheaper.

It is astounding to me how ignorant we are of our own history. So here is my question: Do you know why we learn our history from the victors? The answer is because we are too lazy and indolent to research and study for ourselves. You have to understand that the victor is always going to elevate his side and his views, while downplaying and denigrating the side of his enemies. If you want real truth, you are not going to get it from a public school, a government, or a state college. The only way you are going to get truth is to do your own research in the original documents.

You may object, "Well, I'm not really interested in history either." If you're not interested in history, are you interested in the providence of God? I remember when I was a boy, I could not figure out why I needed to know that in 1492 Columbus sailed the ocean blue. I did not know why I needed to know 1776 or 1812, or anything like that, until God saved me and showed me the absolute truth.

So I can ask this another way: Do you want to know the secretive will of God? The Bible says in Deuteronomy 29:29, "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law." How would you know the secret things of God? Here is the answer: The secret things of God are revealed to us in history. History is nothing less than the eternal decree of God coming to pass in time.

The Importance of History

History is important because it is the revelation of God's secretive will, which He began before the world was ever formed. It was His eternal decree, and He brings it to pass in time. Please understand

this: History is not cyclical; history is linear. It goes in a straight line. Genesis 1:1 says, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” Then, when it ends in the book of Revelation, the angel of the Lord says, “And time shall be no more.” You have a point of beginning and a point of ending. Many people say, “History is cyclical. It goes around in circles.” No, it does not go around in circles.

The reason it seems cyclical is that men commit the same sins over and over, and God judges them in the same way over and over. It is not cyclical; it is fallen, depraved men committing the same sins and receiving the same judgment. Thus, in our churches today, just as in Israel, there are those who profess but do not possess. When our Lord asks, “Why have you done this?” it is not merely remorse without repentance, leaders without leadership, but also profession without possession.

Here is the fourth: compromise without conviction. In verses 10 through 13 we read: “And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim: and they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the Lord to anger. And they forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashtoreth.”

Compromise Without Conviction

The reason there is so much compromise with evil, immorality, and idolatry is that there are no real convictions among the people of God. Conviction is not preference. It is fixed and firm, so strong that it will not be changed. No argument, however clever; no oratory, however great; no begging or beseeching can change a conviction. A conviction comes from received and recognized truth: we have received the truth, recognized it as truth, know it is truth, and will not change.

In one sense, convictions may be instantaneous, because God can sovereignly and supernaturally open our eyes to see. Yet once we

begin to see truth, convictions are developed more fully. They become more mature, and we hold them more firmly as we live and understand what God is doing. Nothing can mature unless it was there originally and initially. Therefore, when we look around today and see millions of areas in which professing Christians have compromised the Word of God, the explanation is simple: there is no conviction.

So here are some questions. Do you believe that Jesus Christ is God in the flesh? Do you believe that the Bible is the inspired, inerrant, and infallible Word of God? If you do, and if these are convictions, you will die before you will deny them. You will not falter, you will not fail, you will not back up, you will not back down; you will hold these truths to the death. Now, Israel had no such convictions. That's why the Bible says they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods. They forsook the Lord God and served Baal and Ashtoreth. Their lack of convictions shows how quickly they compromised. Look back in your Bibles to Exodus chapter 32. This is the chapter where Aaron made the golden calf. He told the people, "Take off your golden earrings."

Moses was up in the mountain, where he was supposed to remain forty days and forty nights. Even the forty days had not expired. Israel had just come out of Egypt and arrived at the mountain, yet the Lord said unto Moses, “Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves: they have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.” In less than thirty days, they had turned aside and made a golden calf.

Where were their convictions that their God was the one true and living God? Judges 2:16-17 says, “Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them. And yet they would not hearken unto their judges. But they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the Lord; but they did not so.”

What would it take to get you to compromise? Does every man have his price? Would you deny Christ for five million bucks? You say, "No, I would never do that." How about ten million? How about twenty million? Would you sell out your people for a measly hundred thousand bucks? We have politicians that do that even for less. Would you sell out your people or compromise for power, fame, or lust?

God tells us that we are to be faithful unto death. Faithful men are difficult to find. One of my daily prayer requests is that the Lord will make me faithful, and faithful unto death. Mark this truth down in your hearts: without convictions, there is only compromise. Without divine convictions, there is only devilish compromise.

Our Lord asks, "Why have you done this?" According to our text, they had remorse without repentance, leaders without leadership, profession without possession, and compromise without conviction. Where do these things lead? What is the end result of these four grievous errors and sins?

Defeat Without Deliverance

This brings me to the fifth and final point: they will bring us to defeat without deliverance. Judges 2:14–15 says, "And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies. Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them for evil, as the Lord had said, and as the Lord had sworn unto them: and they were greatly distressed."

Without deliverance, there is only defeat. Without divine deliverance, there can only be deadly defeat. Without God's sovereign protection and preservation, Israel was easily defeated. I must say this: without God's sovereign protection and preservation, America will be easily defeated.

I have read so much about how people are afraid of China, saying, "China is so great." But God does not necessarily have to use China to whip us. He could use dinky little Cuba if He wanted to. Once God withdraws His power, His protection, and His preservation, we are

helpless. I just read where Trump said that Russia was a paper tiger. I think his assessment is wrong, but the truth of the matter is that this leads to destruction in and of itself.

Turn in your Bibles to Joshua, chapter 7. You know the story: God had given Jericho into the hands of His people, a great and mighty city. God had said, “Look, the city is cursed. Don’t touch anything. Everything is dedicated to destruction.” Achan saw the Babylonian garment, the wedge of gold, and the silver; he stole them and hid them under his tent. Then some soldiers said, “Ai is the next town. It is a small town. We do not need the whole army. A few of us can take care of Ai.”

They went up against Ai, and Ai came out and defeated them. They ran like scalded dogs with their tails tucked between their legs, and thirty-six Israelites were killed. Joshua went to prayer, and in Joshua chapter 7, verse 10, the Lord said unto Joshua, "Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face?" Then God said, "Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff. Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because they were accursed."

"Neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you." What did He say? You will have no more victories unless you deal with this sin, unless you deal with this rebellion. God says, "I'm just not going to do it. You are not going to be blessed anymore. You're not going to have victory anymore. That's all there is." Joshua did indeed deal with it, and Achan and his family were put to death. Someone says, "Wow, you mean Achan and his whole family was put to death because he stole?"

It was more than stealing. First, it was stealing against the Lord and from the Lord. Second, it had been cursed. Third, his theft caused the death of thirty-six men. Fourth, his family had to be privy to it because it was buried under his tent. You cannot do that without everybody knowing about it. Yes, they were stoned to death because they had sinned against God.

Victory is dependent upon the Lord. If He withholds His hand, there is no victory. There is only defeat, death, and destruction. You remember Psalm 127, verse 1: "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."

Jeremiah 17 shows another curse connected to this. This is why I am telling you that President Trump said Russia was a paper tiger. He said, “We have the greatest army. We have the greatest military power. We have the greatest this, we have the greatest that.” But Jeremiah 17:5 says, “Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited.”

Then he says, “Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.” So God says there is a curse upon man who trusts in man and makes flesh his arm.

I have news for you. If we did have the greatest military, the greatest armies, and the greatest power, it is still nothing if that is what we are trusting in, because we are under the curse of God, and all that will fail and fall. Clearly, our preservation and protection are in God’s hand. When God withdraws that protection and preservation, we are going down just like Israel did.

They forsook the Lord. Judges 2:15 says, “Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them for evil, as the Lord had said, and as the Lord had sworn unto them: and they were greatly distressed.” It did not matter where they went or what they did; the hand of the Lord was against them.

Our Lord asked Israel, “Why have you done this?” The answer given in Judges 2 is this: They had remorse without repentance, leaders without leadership, professions without possession, and compromise without conviction. All that led to defeat without

deliverance. Here are the applications: Death and destruction always follow disobedience.

Applications and Call to Stand Fast

The curse of God is upon individuals who forsake him and his word. I hope you remember Proverbs 8 and verse 36. Our Lord, whose wisdom personified, said this: “Whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord.” The last part of that verse is this, where he says, “All they that hate me love death.” So when you stop and think, the only thing any government or any nation can provide, apart from God and His truth and His word, is a society of death. There is no life, there is no protection, there is no preservation apart from God.

Now here’s a second application. This message should encourage us to faithfulness, obedience, and steadfastness in the faith. I want to give you one verse. I want to quote it. Then I want to show you at least five other verses, and I want you to follow me. The first verse I would like to quote is 1 Corinthians chapter 15 in verse 58, where the apostle Paul said, “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

Now listen to what it said: “Be ye therefore stedfast, unmoveable.” I want you to understand the force of this exhortation. The Word of God calls us to remain faithful, obedient, and steadfast in the faith, not merely for a moment, but in the work of the Lord, knowing that our labor is not in vain in the Lord.

The Greek word that each of these verses has in it is translated as “stand fast.” The Greek word is steko, and it means to stand fast, to stand firm, to persevere, to persist in, and to keep standing. Look at it in 1 Corinthians chapter 16 and verse 13: “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.” Stand fast in the faith. Then in Galatians chapter 5 and verse 1, here it is again, the Greek word steko: “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” Stand fast. Stand fast.

Philippians 4:1 says, “Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.” Isn’t this sounding how many times we are encouraged to stand fast? First Thessalonians 3:8 says, “For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.” So we have been admonished to stand fast in the faith, stand fast in liberty, and stand fast in the Lord. Second Thessalonians 2:15 says, “Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.”

Stand fast. Do not give in, do not give out, do not give up, do not quit, do not pitch in the towel. Stand fast. Stand fast. Notice this: stand fast.

I cannot control anyone. I cannot make Steve do right. I cannot make Leah do right. I cannot make Alice do right. I cannot control anyone. But by the grace of God, there is one person I can control, and that is myself—by His grace, by His power, by His help, and by His mercy. So if each of us took the attitude, “I am going to stand fast. I am not going to be like these individuals in Judges chapter 2. I am going to obey the Lord. I am not going to forsake Him. I am not going to forsake His Word. I am not going to forsake His truth. I will stand fast in the Lord.”

That is exactly what you and I should do. We are going to find that when we stand fast, we are going to find the blessings of God. If we are the compromisers, we are going to discover the curses of God. In the book of Zechariah, chapter 1, there is an interesting verse where God says to those people, “Be not as your fathers.” He is talking about these individuals who compromised and forsook Him. We do not want to be like other people. We do not want to be like those who forsake God. We want to be those who stand fast in the faith, stand fast in the Lord, stand fast in liberty, and stand fast in the truth that He has given us.

Why have you done this? The answer is that they disobeyed in all these areas and refused to do that which is right. Do not be like these people. Obey and bring your life into conformity with His Word.

Father, we ask in the name of Jesus Christ for Your help, grace, mercy, and truth. Enable us to stand, Lord—not to compromise, give

in, give up, give out, or quit. Keep us keeping on by Your grace and mercy. Give us that which we need. Turn us, O Lord, and we shall be turned. Quicken us, Lord, and we shall call upon Thy name. We cannot stand apart from Thee or without Thee, for without Thee we can do nothing. We ask for Your grace, mercy, power, preservation, and protection. Bless us as we serve Thee. In Christ's name, we pray. Amen.

Closing Prayer

I said this this morning: I cannot control anyone. I cannot make Steve do right, Leah do right, or Alice do right. But by the grace of God, there is one person I can control, and that is myself—by His grace, power, help, and mercy. If each of us took this attitude—"I am going to stand fast. I am not going to be like these individuals in Judges chapter 2. I am going to obey the Lord. I am not going to forsake Him, His Word, or His truth. I will stand fast in the Lord"—that is exactly what you and I should do.

When we stand fast, we will find the blessings of God; if we are compromisers, we will discover the curses of God. In Zechariah, chapter 1, God says, "Be not as your fathers," speaking of those who compromised and forsook Him. We do not want to be like other people or those who forsake God. We want to stand fast in the faith, in the Lord, in the liberty, and in the truth that He has given us.

So why have you done this? The answer is, because they disobeyed in all of these areas and refused to do that which is right. Do not be like these people. Obey and bring your life in conformity to his word.

Father, we ask in the name of Jesus Christ for your help, grace, mercy, and truth. Enable us to stand, Lord—not to compromise, give in, give up, give out, or quit. Keep on keeping on by your grace and mercy. Give us that which we need. Turn us, O Lord, and we shall be turned. Quicken us, Lord, and we shall call upon Thy name. We cannot stand apart from Thee or without Thee, for without Thee we can do nothing. We ask for your power, preservation, and protection, and that you would indeed bless us as we serve thee. In Christ's name, we pray. Amen.

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