



03a Message Judges Chapter 2 – The Daily Choice to Follow – Wednesday Night Discussion

2 Then the Angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said: "I led you up from Egypt and brought you to the land of which I swore to your fathers; and I said, 'I will never break My covenant with you. ² And you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall tear down their altars.' But you have not obeyed My voice. Why have you done this? ³ Therefore I also said, 'I will not drive them out before you; but they shall be thorns in your side, and their gods shall be a snare to you.' " ⁴ So it was, when the Angel of the LORD spoke these words to all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voices and wept. ⁵ Then they called the name of that place Bochim; and they sacrificed there to the LORD. ⁶ And when Joshua had dismissed the people, the children of Israel went each to his own inheritance to possess the land.

When I went to graduate school in NC I visited a Baptist Church the first Wednesday night I was there and I think I heard the hymn "Trust and Obey" for the first time in my life. I thought, "Where has this hymn been for my entire life".

When we walk with the Lord
 In the light of His Word,
 What a glory He sheds on our way;
 While we do His good will,
 He abides with us still,
 And with all who will trust and obey.

Trust and obey,
 For there's no other way
 To be happy in Jesus,
 But to trust and obey.

source:

<https://www.lyricsondemand.com/miscellaneouslyrics/christianlyrics/trustandobeylyrics.html>

When we come to Christ we immediately receive the Holy Spirit within us. He takes up residence within us, but then we must decide if we will abide (remain, continue, stay, or await) in Him. That decision is made daily. You can get up, take a breath and thank God for your life, and look to Him and His word for direction or you can make a choice to have it your own way and make a decision to sow to your flesh. In Judges we see the Nation of Israel over and over 1) Forgetting their identity in God, and 2) Choosing to not walk in His ways. We too have parallels in the Christian life.

- 1 Angel of the Lord - most scholars think this was the pre-incarnate Christ (a Christophony).
- 2 God was telling them that they have broken their end of the bargain, and because of that the Lord says, "I won't drive out the people of the land".

When they heard this angel of the Lord, the people wept. I think they were probably **genuine in their weeping**, but there are actually people who can fake crying. **Fake crying** doesn't really come from the spirit. It is a **technique of manipulation**. Perhaps you've met people who can **turn crying off and on like a kitchen faucet**. The people in the text appeared to be sorry for situation.

Sorry they got caught or truly sorry? "Godly sorrow" calls out for true repentance which is not only a change of mind but a change of direction. "Worldly sorrow".

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

Wow. This is **amazing that an entire generation arose that DID NOT KNOW THE LORD NOR THE WORK WHICH HE HAD DONE.**

A God has no grandchildren.

B know "about the Lord" isn't "knowing the Lord" It's a "knowing" such as the Bible describes the intimacy between a husband and a wife.

- 1 Being able to quote the bible doesn't mean that you "know the Lord" in an intimate way.
- 2 Attending church doesn't mean you "know the Lord"

- 3 Being a giver doesn't mean you know the Lord.
- 4 Knowing the Lord is Knowing the Lord. As I've explained, when you believe and receive the gift that Jesus paid it all for you, you receive the first deposit of your inheritance by receiving the Holy Spirit. You then get to know God by spending time in His word and spending time in prayer. Your life can become in many ways an on-going conversation with Him. The Holy Spirit lives within you to comfort you and to guide you. Submission to the Spirit is much of what Paul the Apostle is talking about in Romans chapter 12 in which he implores us to present ourselves as a "living sacrifice" that is holy and acceptable. After you've walked with the Lord for a long time, you gain a feel for what's consistent with God's thinking even if you don't find the specific answer for your specific problem in the Bible.

Holy Spirit + Time in the Word = a mind bathed in His thinking.

We must encourage our kids, our nephews, our nieces, and any young person in the sphere of our influence to help them know the Lord. They are not going to get all that they need at youth group. It's not just the youth pastor's job. We should all do what we can to make sure that they don't leave this group without knowing not only about God, but how to know Him in a deeper better way.

The text tells us that this second generation in Israel made their own choice to reject Him. We can lead our children and teach our children, but at the end of the day, they have a choice of whether or not they're going to know and serve the Lord. We have close friends that did EVERYTHING they could do to raise their children in the Lord, but several of the kids have just rejected the Lord. That choice is theirs, but we should do all that we can to influence that choice.



¹¹ Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served the Baals; ¹² and they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt; and they followed other gods from among the gods of the people who were all around them, and they bowed down to them; and they provoked the LORD to anger. ¹³ They forsook the LORD and served Baal and the Ashtoreths. ¹⁴ And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel. So, He delivered them into the hands of plunderers who despoiled them; and He sold them into the hands of their enemies all around, so that they could no longer stand before their enemies.

¹⁵ Wherever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for calamity, as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had sworn to them. And they were greatly distressed.

So why did they turn to Baal? Serving Baal was all about serving themselves and their own sexual desires. Does that sound familiar in America today? Their belief was that to stimulate the productivity of the ground etc, the gods needed to be stimulated and aroused. Those who followed Baal would go to a “temple” and have sex with male and female temple prostitutes in front of statues of Baal and Asherah (Ashtarte, Asheroth).¹ The idea was that the male and female gods would watch and get aroused and somehow they also would get into a sexual experience that would stimulate the crops and bring productivity to the land. It was all just superstition but notice how it centered on self and on pleasure. Sin and appeals to our flesh.

The Pull of the World - We sometimes raise our kids to know the Lord, but the world gets the upper hand and wins out because it appeals to their flesh. Many who were raised knowing “about God” are living in sin. They’ve seen what the world has to offer and they’ve chosen it. But, when we choose the world there are always consequences. This cycle of sin will repeat itself seven times throughout the Book of Judges.

Their wickedness took them into a terrible place. It took them into bondage. In fact, the name “Baal” itself means “dominator”. God NEVER dominates. He liberates! God wasn’t just punishing them to hurt them. Rather, God was trying to get their attention to understand where their choices, passions, and sins had taken them. When we choose to not follow the Lord, He allows the natural consequences of sin to take us into defeat and bondage. God allows those things to get our attention. The writer of Hebrews tells us that even believers are chastened when we get outside of the will of God. *“For whom the LORD loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.” (Hebrews 12:6 NKJV)*

Let us pray.

¹ Asherah was also identified as the moon goddess who belonged to the family of gods associated with Baal the sun god ([Judges 3:7; 6:28](#)). Worship to her included sexual immorality, prostitution, divination, and fortune telling. As a result, the Mosaic Law spoke specifically against Asherah worship ([Deuteronomy 16:21](#)). /.

<https://www.compellingtruth.org/asherah.html>