

The Old-Time Evangelistic News

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Volume 6, Issue 7

December 2009

What Will Happen To The Next Generation? (Part 6) Judges 2:8-15

We concluded last month thinking about The Obedience that the Israelites displayed in The Following of the Posterity. We noted that the word bowed means “to depress; to prostrate; to fall down flat; to humbly beseech; to do reverence; to worship.” The Israelites were completely devoted to these false gods. To take it a step further, they would do anything that they thought these gods wanted them to do. If the god wanted child-sacrifices as Baal demanded, they would burn their child upon the altar. If they were told that Ashtaroth wanted them to practice prostitution, then they would practice prostitution. It is amazing how depraved false worship can become. Think for a moment about the Hindus. They believe in reincarnation. It is said that they will not eat certain animals because they believe their ancestor has come back as that animal. That is hard for us in America to accept, but our gods are no better. Many will listen to a “preacher” on television who says that they can have prosperity if they will send a certain amount of money to that “preacher.” Poor, deceived people will send all that they have hoping for something in return. They receive nothing because they are following and obeying a false gospel. Meanwhile, the “prosperity gospel preachers” are becoming rich because they have deceived people into giving them their money. The Bible nowhere teaches what these men and women are saying.

We in America may not worship idols of wood and stone, nor do we worship animals that once were supposedly our ancestors, but many are worshiping the false gods of the Mormons, the Catholics, the Seventh Day Adventists, the Jehovah Witnesses, the Muslims, and whatever other false religion that I have not named. Some of these may name Jesus, but it is not the Jesus of the Bible. Many will

-2-

spend all of their money following sports stars and entertainment stars, but it will not do them any good when they are on their death bed.

Still others have begun to worship money and possessions. They will do anything to get as much money as they can, so they can purchase something that they think they cannot do without. The greed and covetousness of the average American is a stench in the nostrils of God. They want what everyone else has and will sacrifice everything and anything to obtain it. Even saved people have fallen into the snare of covetousness. They want possessions. But they must be reminded of what Jesus said in Matthew 6:19-20, “*Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.*” We must reject the false gods, in whatever form they occur, and turn to the true God of the Bible.

Having considered The Failure of the Parents, The Forsaking of the Posterity, and The Following of the Posterity, we must now consider **The Forcefulness of the Powerful One**. Does God know what is going on, and if He does, does He care how succeeding generations have responded to His truth? Did He care that the Israelites had rejected Him and were following other gods? Does He care that a nation that was founded on the Word of God, such as the United States, has now rejected Him and is following its own way? The answer to each of these questions is a resounding, “YES!” God does know what is going on. He does care how succeeding generations have responded to His truth. He did care that the Israelites were following other gods. He is grieved that a nation like the United States has turned their back on the truth. We may think that God is ignorant and does not know what is going on, but that shows how ignorant we are and our lack of knowledge about what the Bible teaches. God is all-knowing, and He knows how people are living. God does care what people do with His truth.

Notice His Attitude as it is revealed in Judges 2:12 and 2:14. The end of verse 12 says that the people had “*provoked the LORD to anger.*” The beginning of verse 14 says, “*And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel.*” These verses show beyond the shadow of a doubt that the Lord did notice what was going on and He did care how the people were living. The word provoked means “to trouble; to grieve; to enrage; to be indignant; to be wroth.” The clause “anger...was hot” means “to glow warm; to blaze up; to burn; to be displeased.” As you can see in the meanings of these words, the Lord was not happy with how the Israelites had turned out. He was not happy that the parents had failed to teach their children; He was not happy that the succeeding generation had forsaken Him; He was not happy that this generation was now following false gods. He was intensely angry with the rejection of the truth and the wholehearted devotion to idolatry.

We can see other passages where God was angry with the people when they rejected Him. I Kings 15:30 says, “*Because of the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and which he made Israel sin, by his provocation wherewith he provoked the LORD God of Israel to anger.*” Speaking of Ahab, I Kings 22:53 says, “*For he served Baal, and worshipped him, and provoked to anger the LORD God of Israel, according to all that his father had done.*” Speaking of Ahaz, II Chronicles 28:25 says, “*And in every several city of Judah he made high places to burn incense unto other gods, and provoked to anger the LORD God of his fathers.*” Jeremiah 8:19 says, “*Behold the voice of the cry of the daughter of my people because of them that dwell in a far country: Is not the LORD in Zion? is not her king in her? Why have they provoked me to anger with their graven images, and with strange vanities?*” And Jeremiah 32:30 says, “*For the children of Israel and the children of Judah have only done evil before me from their youth: for the children of Israel have only provoked me to anger with the work of their hands, saith the LORD.*” Is the Bible not crystal clear? God is not pleased when people reject Him and turn to other gods.

But what does God do in response to His anger? Notice His Action as displayed in Judges 2:14b-15. “*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.*” How sad and tragic the nation of Israel would become as the book of Judges unfolds. A nation that once had seen the mighty hand of God displayed against the Egyptians in the ten plagues, that had seen God part the Red Sea, that had seen God provide manna each morning, that had seen God provide water out of the rock, now could see God turned against them.

This was the nation that had seen God knock down the walls of Jericho, that had seen God enable them to defeat Ai, and that had seen God make the sun to stand still so they could defeat the alliance of towns that had come against them and Gibeon. They had seen God perform miracle after miracle, but they rejected Him, and now He is against them. Instead of enabling them to defeat the enemy, He sends the enemy and uses them to chasten Israel. In Judges, He will send an enemy to defeat Israel and make them subservient to that enemy. After a while, they will turn back to God, and God will allow them to defeat that enemy and be independent again. But then the cycle begins again when they forget God and worship false gods. God sends an enemy and puts them in bondage until they turn back to Him.

Eventually, the people demand a king and after Saul, God gives them a man after His own heart—David. The nation prospers under David and Solomon until Solomon turns to idolatry. Upon the division of the kingdom under Rehoboam, the ten northern tribes (Israel) never do follow God. The two southern tribes (Judah) will alternate between following God and rejecting God, depending upon the righteousness of the king in power. Eventually both nations are sent into captivity because they rejected God and turned to idolatry,

exactly as God had warned them over and over.

But what will happen to us? Will God allow the United States to go into captivity? A captivity like Israel's will probably not happen, but the hand of God could be removed from the United States, and our position and stature in the world could be diminished, just as the stature of England has lessened because they turned away from God. More importantly, an individual who turns away from God may face the "*sin unto death*" as described in I John. God will often kill prematurely a believer who turns away from God. Corporately, the hand of God may be removed from the churches of this country, and Bible-believing churches may not even be in existence. Jesus warned the church of Ephesus that if it did not turn back and return to their "first love," He would remove the candlestick (the church). Ephesus did not turn back and now the country where it once was is Turkey—a Muslim country. England was once known for its power with God, but is now mostly pagan. The United States is speedily headed toward the same path of paganism and complete rejection of God. What will happen to the next generation? Will you completely sell out to God? Will you beg Him to make His presence known again? May we seek God's face individually and corporately!