

Our Daily Homily - Judges

by F.B. Meyer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of relying on the power of the Holy Spirit to overcome persistent evil habits and develop direct dealing with God.

Scripture: Judges 1:27, Judges 2:18, Judges 3:20, Judges 4:9, Judges 5:31, Judges 6:14, Judges 7:13, Judges 10:16, Judges 11:12, Judges 19:1

Topics: "The Kingship of Christ", "Overcoming Evil Habits"

Description

F.B. Meyer emphasizes the persistent nature of evil habits in our lives, likening them to the Canaanites who resisted being dislodged from the land. He reminds us that as believers, we have no right to allow these habits to dwell in our hearts, as they have been made over to Christ. Meyer encourages us to recognize the kingship of Jesus in our lives to overcome these struggles and to seek the Holy Spirit's power for complete deliverance. He also reflects on the importance of God's messages, the need for personal faith, and the significance of our vows to God amidst the challenges we face. Ultimately, he calls for a recognition of Christ's authority to bring about lasting change in our lives.

Transcript

The Canaanites would dwell in that land - Judges 1:27

How persistent evil habits are! They have dwelt in our lives so long that they dislike being dislodged. Why should they quit their dwell-ing-place and go out into the void? Sometimes, at the beginning of our Christian life, we make a feeble effort against them, and hope to cast them out; but they stubbornly resist. Whenever a remonstrance is addressed to us, we are apt to reply, "Do not find fault; we couldn't help it. These Canaanites are self-willed and persistent, they would dwell in the land."

But the one point that Israel should have borne in mind was that they had no right there. The land was not theirs, it had become Israel's. And, moreover, God was prepared to drive them out; so that His people would have no fighting to do, but only to chase a flying foe. One man was to chase a thousand (Jos 23:10).

So these evil habits have no right to persist in the believer's life. The whole soil of his heart has been made over to the Son of God, and there should be no part left to weeds. "Sin shall not have dominion over you," said the Apostle. Nor is this all. The Holy Spirit is prepared to lust against the flesh, that we may not fulfill it in the lusts thereof, or do the things we otherwise would. The hasty temper may be natural to you:

but seeing that your position in Christ is supernatural, this Canaanite must be conquered. There is a complete deliverance possible to all who will open their hearts to the might of the Spirit of God. Talk no more of these Canaanites who would stay in the land; but say of the blessed Spirit, "He is well able to drive them out."

The Lord raised them up judges - Judges 2:18

This was better than nothing. It was better to have even the fitful gleam of deliverance than to settle down under a monotony of servitude; but how much better it would have been if their national history had been a steady progression from one degree of prosperity to another, like the sun rising toward the perfect day! It was of God's kindness and grace that the judges created these temporary respites; it was the fault of their own infidelity and sin that they were not always delivered.

This fitful life is too often the experience of the believer. We have our Gideons, and Baraks, and Samsons; times of revival, times of deep and blessed experience, followed by backsliding and relapse; times when the flood-tide of grace rises high in our soul, to be succeeded by the ebb, with long stretches of desert sand. Thank God for the judges; but be on the alert for the reign of the kings, for David and Solomon, Josiah and Hezekiah - for the reign of the King.

The days of the judges were those in which there was no king over Israel. The fitfulness of our experience is often attributable to our failure to recognize the kingship of Jesus. We worship other gods - the gods of the nations around; the idols of the market-place, the studio, the camp, and the bar. The aims and practices of the worldly and ungodly too much engross our thoughts, and sway our behavior. Alas for us! Is it strange that God leaves us to reap much bitterness, recalling us when He can, but longing to be able to do some permanent work of salvation and edification? Oh, let us gladly accord Him what is His right, to "sit and rule upon His throne."

I have a message from God unto thee - Judges 3:20

God's Messages are often secret. - When Eglon was assured that Ehud had brought a Divine message, which could only be delivered in secret, "a secret errand" (Judges 3:19), he fearlessly bade all his retinue go forth from the audience chamber. And in utter loneliness the one passed to the other the message of death. So there are crises in our lives when God's messengers bring us the secret message, in which none can intrude or interfere.

God's Messages must be received with reverence. - When Ehud said, "I have a message for thee," Eglon rose out of his seat. This was a mark of respect, the attitude of attention. It is with similar awe that we should ever wait for the revelation of the Divine will. "What saith my Lord unto His servant?"

God's Messages leap out from unexpected quarters. - Ehud was left-handed; his sword was therefore on his right side, and he appeared unarmed. No one dreamed of looking for his sword, except on his left side; he was therefore allowed to pass unchallenged into the presence of the king. So Nathan strode into David's presence, who thought his sin was undiscovered, and said, "Thou art the man." Cultivate this surprise with sinners.

God's Messages are sharp as a two-edged sword, and cause death. - A scimitar is sharp at the edge, and blunt at the back to strike; whilst a two-edged sword is made to pierce. God's Word pierces as a two-edged sword to the dividing of soul and spirit in the recesses of the being, and is a discernor of the

thoughts and intents of the heart. When the Eglon of self has received its death-wound, the glad trumpet of freedom is blown on the hills.

The journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honor - Judges 4:9

Barak preferred the inspiration of Deborah's presence to the invisible but certain help of Almighty God. It was Jehovah who had commanded him to draw his forces toward the River Kishon, and had promised to deliver Sisera into his hand. But he seemed unable to rise to the splendor of the situation. If only he could have Deborah beside him he would go, but otherwise not. He is mentioned in Heb. 11. as one of the heroes of faith; but his faith lay rather in Deborah's influence with God than in his own. Thus he missed the crown of that great day of victory. It is the mark of the carnal Christian that he has no direct dealings with God for himself, but must needs deal with Him through the medium of another's prayers, and words, and leadership. Barak must have Deborah. It is faith, though greatly attenuated and reduced by the opacity of the medium through which it passes. Such do not attain "unto the first three." God cannot honor them as He does those who have absolutely no help or hope save in Himself. "Them that honor Me I will honor; and those that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed." If God tells you to go alone to a work, be sure and obey. Go, at whatever cost. Dare to stand by yourself if God is with you. In such hours we realize what Jesus meant when He said, "Whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou taken up and cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that what he saith cometh to pass, he shall have it." Yet if you are unbelieving, your unbelief cannot make God's faith of none effect. He abideth faithful. He cannot deny Himself. He will still deliver Israel.

Let them that love Him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might - Judges 5:31

So sang Deborah; and we may take up her strain, making it our prayer for all that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

We desire it for His sake. - It cannot be for His glory that His followers should be weak-kneed and decrepit, waning and flickering, backsliding and inconstant. Men will judge Him by them, and will count His light a vanishing luminary if He cannot maintain the glow and fire in those that follow Him. Besides, how great the anguish of His heart must be when those on whom He has expended pains and care deceive and fail Him!

We desire it for their sakes. - Think of the beneficent ministry of the sun - awakening bird and blossom; painting the rich colors of natural beauty; ripening fruits; gladdening children and grandsires; carrying everywhere healing with his beams. If he were conscious of the good he imparts, what blessedness would be his! Would he grudge the expenditure of his vitalizing forces, when from millions of upturned lips he heard himself blessed? Such may the bliss of the Christian worker be if, without diminution of light and heat, his life grows to the perfect day. Blessed are they who bless. If it is happy to receive, it is far happier to impart. "Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."

We desire it for the sake of others. - The world is sunless enough! Many are perishing for a bath of sunshine! Darkness broods chili and deathly. Let no clouds dim your pathway, or, if they do, transmute them to gold. Shine forth, ye righteous, in the kingdom of your Father, satellites of the greater central Sun of Righteousness!

And the Lord looked upon him and said, Go in this thy might - Judges 6:14

The strength-giving power of a look from the eyes of Christ! Gideon was weak enough. He said, quite naturally, "My family is the poorest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house" (Judges 6:15, R. V.). But from the moment of that look, accompanied by that summons, he arose in a strength that never afterward faltered. How truly "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty."

It was a look of expectation. - Gideon felt that the angel expected him to save Israel. It is a great matter to excite hope in a man. Tell him that you are anticipating some noble deed from him, and you may light a spark that will set his whole soul aglow. It is of immense importance to stir the timid and retiring with fresh conceptions of the possibilities of their lives.

It was a look of encouragement. - Those gentle, loving eyes said, as though they spoke, "I will be with thee; do not hesitate to look for Me in every hour of need." Such looks Christ still gives us across the battlefields of life; and if our eyes are fixed upon Him, we shall surely hear Him saying to us, "My grace is sufficient for thee: go in this thy might!"

It was a look of strength-giving might. - It carried help with it. On its beam new spiritual force sped from the speaker to the listener; from captain to cadet. So from the excellent glory one look from Jesus will bring reinforcement. As He looks on us He imparts His strength to us, and says, Go in this thy might. "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might."

A cake of barley bread - Judges 7:13

Like most dreams, incoherent and grotesque! Whoever heard of a cake of barley bread upsetting a tent! To the dreamer and his comrade, there was no sense in it. But how much it meant to the two Hebrews, who had crept up to the other side of the curtain, in the thick darkness, and were drinking in each word!

The dream was very humbling. - It brought Gideon back to the simplicity and helplessness of his own resources. In the gathering of these crowds of warriors, in the notoriety he had achieved, in the loyalty of the three hundred, there was much to inflate his pride. Therefore God brought him face to face with himself. He was only a cake of barley bread at the best. Before God can uplift, use, and anoint us, He must show us what we are, humbling and emptying us, bringing us into the dust of death. Before God can use thee to work a great deliverance, He must convince thee of being only a cake of barley bread. "Five barley loaves, and two small fishes."

It was full of hope. - A cake of barley bread might be a worthless thing; but if God were behind it, it would upset a tent! So when the weakest life is placed at the disposal of the Almighty, and taken in hand by Him, it becomes mighty to the pulling down of strongholds.

It is full of teaching. - How much has to be learned by us on these lines! We are too strong for God. We vaunt our might, we count our warriors, we magnify our generalship. This may not be! So God brings us down, to the brook and tests us there; and reduces our force to three hundred men, and ourselves to barley-cakes, and there gets the victory with His right hand, and His holy arm.

As thou art, so were they; each one resembled the children of a king - Judges 8:8

It was a magnificent tribute to the royal bearing of this illustrious family. All the children had the stamp of kingliness on them, which had impressed even these barbaric princes. Would that a similar confession could be extorted from those who behold the members of the royal house of Jesus!

The children of a king! It is within the reach of any who aspire to it. By the second birth we become the children of God, joint-heirs with Christ, and the Spirit witnesses to our sonship, teaching us to cry, Abba, Father. As children of the great King we should bear the sign of our high lineage in our bearing and walk.

Royalty of Demeanor. - There is an aristocratic bearing in the scions of noble houses among men. The head is lifted high, the mien is proud, the manner distant and reserved. But in the family of God, meekness and lowliness, humility and contriteness, are marks of family likeness. We walk as Jesus walked, of whom the Baptist said, "Behold the Lamb of God!"

Royalty of Dress. - The king is marked by the brilliant orders glittering on his breast. Purple and ermine become those who date their descent from a line of kings. But the emblem of our family is the cross; our color is scarlet; our insignia is the towel and basin that speak of lowly service.

Royalty of Occupation. - The earthly king does nothing servile. He is waited on with lowly obeisance. But they who are of the same family as Jesus are found performing the lowliest acts of service, in jails, hospitals, and slums. In this they follow closely on the steps of Him who went about doing good.

Their hearts inclined to follow Abimelech; for they said, He is our brother - Judges 9:3

Is not this the reason why God has set us in families? Had He so chosen, each of us might have been created alone as Adam was, and sent out with no special connection with others of our race. But instead, we are closely connected. It is very rarely that a man is so utterly bereaved as to be destitute of some relative.

Between a man and his brother there is a special tie. It may be truly said, in the case of brothers, that a doorway has been made through the walls which ordinarily part men, which may be bricked up or filled with debris; but the wall there will always be thinner than anywhere else, and some day the doorway may be opened for the passage of the messenger of peace. Men are always more inclined to follow the man of whom they can say, "He is our brother." Brotherhood, sisterhood, relationship of any kind, is therefore a very precious talent; and it becomes us solemnly to ask ourselves whether it has been put to use. Have you ever spoken or written to your brother or sister about Christ?

As soon as Andrew had found Jesus, he started off to find his own brother Simon; and Simon was glad to follow him because he was his brother. Had another tried, it is as likely as not that he would have repelled him. But what could he say to the man who had shared his childhood's sports, and had helped him haul in a net of fish many a time after a night of hard work?

This is the reason that Jesus has so strong a hold on human hearts. He is our brother, bone of our bone; not ashamed to call us brethren; and this constitutes a moving argument why we should be inclined to follow Him.

His soul was grieved for the misery of Israel - Judges 10:16

This is a very strong way of stating the pitifulness of God. It is applying to Him terms borrowed from our own experiences as men; and in no other way could we realize the tender love and compassion of our Heavenly Father. Israel's miseries were due to the sins with which their history was marked; but God's love brooded over them, longing to deliver.

This is the explanation of God's first words to Adam. - One of the versions substitutes for "Where art thou?" the words "Alas for thee!" as though God were treading the glades of Eden with a broken heart, grieved for the misery of His children.

This was the lament of God's Spirit throughout the Old Testament. - "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? Mine heart is turned within Me; My compassions are kindled together." "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself!" - He looked, and there was no man; He wondered that there was none to help, therefore His own arm brought salvation.

This led to the Incarnation and Passion of our Lord. - He looked, and there was no man; He wondered that there was none to help, therefore His own arm brought salvation.

This characterized our Lord's earthly life. - When He beheld the city, and foresaw all the evil that would accrue to it, He could not hold back His tears. "His soul was grieved." In all likelihood, you, my reader, may be suffering keenly the result of your own mistakes and sins in earlier life. The troubles that hem you in are the direct outcome of your having forsaken God. He could, and would, have saved you; but you made it impossible, because you withdrew yourself from His care. And now He grieves over you. If only you would forsake your sins and turn to Him, He would assuredly raise up a Jephthah for your help.

And Jephthah sent messengers unto the king of the children of Ammon - Judges 11:12

Jephthah's procedure was admirable in his quiet expostulation, before resorting to force in the defence of home and country against the aggression of Amalek. It was quite clear that Ammon had no right to the lands of which Israel, at God's command, had dispossessed the Amorites. "Thou doest me wrong to war against me." But before repelling the invasion, Jephthah did his best to show the unreasonableness of Ammon's pretext.

Thus our Lord expostulated with the servant that smote Him. "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou Me?"

It is in this way that we are to act still. "If thy brother sin against thee, go, show him his fault between thee and him alone: if he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother."

In the Master's judgment, the wrongdoer injured himself much more than any one else; and therefore earnest words of expostulation were desirable to stay him from his own destruction.

How admirable it would be if we would act in such a spirit of meek conciliation! Then our cause might fairly be submitted to the Judge of all (Judges 11:27); and we should be strong in after-times to stand for the sacred rights of others.

There is no need to bribe God's help, as Jephthah did, by his rash promise. He will give gladly and freely out of His own heart of love the help and deliverance we need, if only our cause is rightly ordered before Him. "Who delivered, and doth deliver; He will yet deliver" (2Co 1:10). When we are right with our fellow men, we can confidently count on God's almighty helpfulness.

And he said, Sibboleth - Judges 12:6

It was only the omission of "h," but it meant the death of the man who missed it. One little letter, and the whole wonder and beauty of a human life was forfeited. It is only recently that the peace of an empire was

in jeopardy, because a full-stop was misplaced. This scene has become proverbial of those who exact compliance with some arbitrary test, before admitting their fellows into their sect or church. But how thankful we should be, that our admission to the privilege of the Kingdom of God does not depend upon our pronouncement; that the reality of the new-birth is not tested by the accuracy with which we utter the creed; that we shall not be excluded from the gates of the New Jerusalem because we fail in the utterance of an "h"!

Our acceptance with God does not depend on how much we believe. The woman who was healed had very inadequate notions of faith and Christ. She thought that His garment would communicate blessing, yet she was cured. The dying thief bad but a glimmering ray of knowledge of the majesty and power of Jesus, but he entered Paradise in His company. The prime necessity with us, is not faith in the sense of creed, but as standing for TRUST. It is not our belief about Christ, but our trust in Him; not our ability to answer the questions of the Catechism, but our coming to Him, and finding rest to our souls - this only is necessary to pass us across the fords of Jordan. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom 10:10).

If the Lord were pleased to kill us, He would not have received an offering - Judges 13:23

Manoah was a pessimist, given to dark foreboding, fond of anticipating misfortune. So soon as he realized that he had seen the face of God, he made sure that his wife and he would die. His wife, on the contrary, was prone to look on - the bright side of things, and she must have been an admirable help-meet. How much some of us owe to the temperament of those with whom we live? Many a time would Christian sit down to die, and succumb in the dark waters of the river, if it were not for Hopeful, who pierces the gloom, and beholds the light shining beyond the cloud.

Often enough Foreboding whispers, "We shall surely die." It is the voice of conscience, dreading the result of sin. It is the voice of mistrust, which fails to look beyond the hills for its help. It is the voice of human frailty. At such times let us look back and recount the blessings of the past. Did not God receive our burnt-offering? Did He not conspicuously answer our prayers? Did He not give His only begotten Son? Has He not led us by His right hand and holy arm? Has He not delivered us in seven troubles? Besides, has He not pledged Himself for the future? Has He not showed us "all these things"? It is impossible to believe that He will allow us to be overwhelmed.

His love in time past forbids me to think,

He'll leave me at last in trouble to sink.

Trust Him, O suffering saints, doing His will in the teeth of opposition and hate I Fear not the faces of men; be not dismayed before their threats - He is with you to deliver you. They may fight against you, but they shall not prevail; their proudest threats shall fail of their fulfillment.

Out of the eater came forth meat - Judges 14:14

Young lions roar at the saints. The lion of hell gives them no little trouble. Though he may not come upon the path of holiness - for no lion shall be there - yet he comes very near it. "He goeth about like a roaring line." Temptation may well be compared to the attack on Samson by the young lion of Timnath.

The lion's carcass, lying where Samson had rent and cast it, became the home of honey-bees. And as the hero went back to look at it in after-days, he obtained meat and sweetness.

How apt the parable! Every conquered temptation yields these two things - strength and sweetness. We are more than conquerors, not only vanquishing the foe, but dividing the spoils of victory.

It yields strength. - Each time we overcome sin, the strength of the temptation passes into our hearts; as the Indian warrior supposes that the might of each warrior whom he levels to the dust, enters into himself. To resist impatience, makes us more patient in proportion to the strength of the temptation we resist. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him."

It gives sweetness. - There is a new gentleness to those who have been tempted; a humility, a modesty, a consciousness of the presence of God, through whom the victory has been secured; a new zest for the Word of God. How sweet are thy words to my taste! sweeter than honey and the honeycomb. The life that is hid with Christ in God is full of sweetness and gentleness. "The fruit of the Spirit is gentleness."

And now shall I die for thirst? - Judges 15:18

It had been a great victory. With the jawbone of an ass Samson had smitten a thousand men. But he knew where to attribute the glory. It was not he, but the Spirit of the Lord which had come mightily upon him. This is distinctly recognized when he called unto God, and said, "Thou hast given this great deliverance by my hand." It was because he had been expending his strength for God, had been, so to speak, burned up by the Divine fire, that he was able to claim God's interposition for his thirst.

This is the great law of prayer. We have no right to count on God in the agony of a crisis, unless we have been walking in fellowship with Him previously, or are exhausted in fighting His battles. There is nothing that we may not claim of Him when we are living in the current of His life, or when we are exhausted in His service. "Thou hast given this great deliverance by the hand of thy servant; and now shall I die for thirst?"

God's springs burst out in unlikely spots. He is never at a loss. If there is no natural spring, He can create one. If all around the mighty rocks reflect the sultry heat, and our spirit seems on the point of exhaustion, then in the wilderness He will cause streams to break out. Be of good courage, fainting warrior! The God who made thee, and has used thee, knows thy frame, and what thou needest before thou askest. Hereafter the place shall be known as "the spring of him that called!" He can cause the refreshing stream to pour forth from the flinty rock; He can turn the bitter water sweet for thee to drink thereof; He quenches thy soul-thirst with the water of life.

He wist not that the Lord was departed from him - Judges 16:20

Beware of unconscious deterioration! Grey hairs may be here and there upon us without our knowing it. The Lord may be gone out on feet so noiseless, that we are not aware that His Spirit has glided along the corridor, and through the doorway, whispering, Let us depart.

Deterioration is unconscious because it is so gradual. The rot that sets in on autumn fruit is very gradual. The damp that silences the violin or piano does its work almost imperceptibly. Satan is too knowing to plunge us into some outrageous sin at a bound. He has sappers and miners engaged long before the explosion, in hollowing subterranean passages through the soul, and filling them with explosives.

Spiritual declension blunts our sensibility. The first act of the burglar is to gag the voice that might alarm, and poison the watch-dog. So, sin blinds our eyes, and dulls our keen alertness to the presence of evil. Thus, the stages of our relapse are obvious to all eyes but our own. We are drugged as we are being carried off captives.

The progress of evil within us is a matter of unconsciousness, largely because we are quick to discover reasons to justify our decadence. We gloze over the real state of affairs. We call sins by other names. We insist on considerations which in our eyes appear to justify our conduct. We still attend to our religious duties, and try to persuade ourselves that it is with us as in times past. To avoid deterioration we must ever watch and pray, and realize that we are the temple of the Holy Ghost. Then shall the peace of God as a sentry guard our hearts and our thoughts in Christ Jesus.

Dwell with me, and be unto me a priest - Judges 17:10

Men crave for a priest. In every age of the world's history, where there has been a tent indicating the presence of human life, there has been an altar indicating man's consciousness of God, and a priest suggesting his consciousness of unworthiness to enter into the Divine presence. Man has perpetually taken one of his fellows whose character seemed less blemished than that of others, and after setting him apart with special rites from the ordinary engagements of life, has promised him maintenance and honor, if only he will act as priest. Be my priest; say for me to God what I cannot say. The sacrifices offered by thy hands are more likely to avail with Him than those rendered by mine.

(1) Let us beware of the religion which ignores man's craving for a priest. - The world abounds with attempts at religious systems, from which the conception of the priest is eliminated. These reduce the worship of God to a system of high-thinking, but fail to deal with man's consciousness of sin, and his yearning for a settled basis of peace.

(2) Let us remember that all human priests must ultimately fail. - God has put them all aside, setting up the priesthood of the blessed Lord. "We have such a High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man." Stars are needless when the sun has arisen. The human priesthood is rendered unnecessary since the Son of God has passed into the heavens to be a priest after the order of Melchizedek. No one has a right to pose as priest to others, except in the sense that all Christians are such.

Ye have taken away my gods, and the priest - Judges 18:24

Whatever can be taken from us has the mark and signature of man upon it. Since the Jewish priests were not permitted to continue, by reason of death, it was evident that they were men at the best; and nothing that man makes is adequate to supply the immortal cravings of the soul which, having come from God, craves for God.

Change cannot take away our High Priest. - All around us is in a state of flux. No two days in the most brilliant summer are quite the same. The hues are deepening toward autumnal decay. But He continueth ever, and hath an unchangeable priesthood. All that He was years ago, He is still, and will be. What to our forefathers, that to us - " the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever."

The concerns of other souls cannot take Him away. - It is not difficult to conceive of the attention of a human priest being diverted from those who once claimed all his help, to fresh interests and younger generations. But, however many they be who flock as doves to the windows of Christ's mercy, they will never be able to divert an atom of His love and sympathy from us.

Sins and failure cannot rob us of Him. - Indeed, they make Him nearer, dearer, more absolutely necessary. The bands of Danites left Micah wailing: when he wanted the comfort of his priest most, lo, he was gone; but neither principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, can separate us from Him who ever liveth to make intercession. "Having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith."

And it came to pass in those days when there was no king in Israel - Judges 19:1

It will be sufficient to ponder these words, which occur four times in this book, without reading further in this terrible chapter, which shows the depths of depravity to which man may sink apart from the grace of God. Where Christ is not enthroned as King, drunkenness, impurity, cruelty, selfishness, are supreme, and pursue their ravages unchecked. How different where He reigns in righteousness, and where His will is done as it is done in heaven!

The Book of Judges depicts the state of the heart which has not admitted the Kingship of our Saviour. Where there is no recognition of this, and a man does as he likes, then the heart breeds all manner of uncleanness; and sin when it is finished bringeth forth death.

In connection with the present marvellous movement afoot in our colleges, five hundred Japanese students met recently under the motto, "Make Jesus King." Oh that this might be our life-motto! We must crown Him lord of all.

Let young men and women, who may read these words, specially ponder this suggestion. Perpetual failure in life indicates failure in consecration. If you are continually broken in upon by raids of evil, it is certain that you have never enthroned the Son of God. He is never Saviour in the fullness of His power till He is acknowledged King. Directly the coronation has taken place, He assumes the responsibility of putting down all rule, authority, and power; overcoming the evils that had held sway; and bringing every ' thought into captivity. Such are the warnings and appeals of this chapter and the next. "Make Jesus King."

And put away evil from Israel - Judges 20:13

The earnestness and promptness with which Israel dealt with and put away this evil thing were very commendable. They had gathered from all the land, even from Gilead beyond the Jordan. They were knit together in a perfect unity of feeling and action. They resolved to subordinate all things beside to the excision of this evil.

So must it be in the Church. The Lord Himself took Ananias and Sapphira out of the infant Church; and the Apostle very earnestly besought and commanded the Corinthians to put away from among them the wicked person, who had committed a sin that would not be named among the Gentiles. "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1Co 5:7-8).

At the close of this age God will send forth His angels, to sever the wicked from among the just, and to cast them into the furnace of fire.

In our own life it is impossible altogether to avoid contact with such people. Indeed, to do so, as the Apostle says truly, we must go out of the world. But we can abstain from their friendship and company. It is an altogether different thing to have dealings with a worldly man in business, and to admit him into bosom fellowship and comradeship in our leisure hours. The first is permissible, but not the second; else our companions will seduce us from our loyalty to God. Beware of taking on the color of the ground on which you lie. "I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil."

We have sworn by the Lord - Judges 21:7

Amid the gross evils of this time, the people of Israel were very tenacious of their vows, which had been ratified in the presence of God, and under the solemn sanctions of the Tabernacle. Because they had sworn not to give their daughters in marriage to Benjamin, they had to devise an expedient to obtain wives for the six hundred who had escaped massacre, that the tribe should not become extinct.

The same spirit was manifested by Jephthah, when he said, "I have opened my mouth to the Lord; I cannot go back." No doubt there was the implied conviction that God would avenge the violation of an oath solemnly taken in His name.

What new emphasis is added by this conception to the words of the Epistle to the Hebrews: "God, willing to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath." Since He could swear by no greater, He swore by Himself, that He would bless and multiply Abraham and his seed. If then you are of the faith of faithful Abraham, you have the right to claim the fulfillment of God's promise in this double aspect: He will bless and multiply. And it is impossible for Him to alter or fail in the word He hath spoken.

The Psalmist said that God's statutes; i. e., the things which He established, were His songs. Surely we have every reason to sing, who know that the covenant of God's love is as steadfast as His throne. Let us turn His statutes into songs. He has given us exceeding great and precious promises; and we can rejoice that "All the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us." "The word of the Lord endureth forever."

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/fb-meyer/our-daily-homily-judges/>

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