

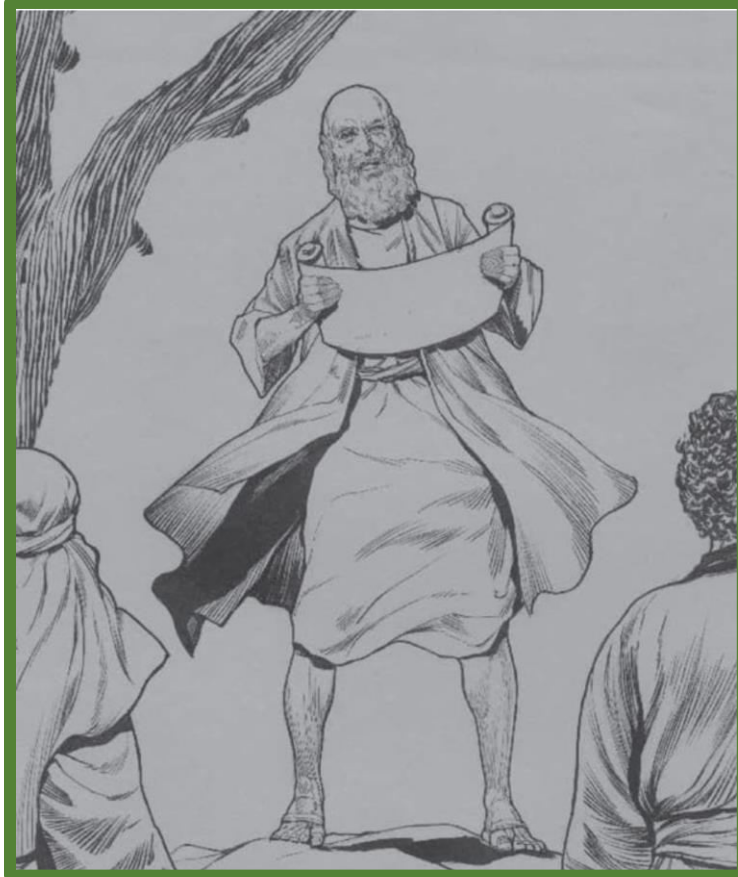
19 October 2025

People Choose Sin¹
How Can People Escape The Cycle Of Sin?
Lesson Text: Judges 2:10-19

Black History Article Below Daily Bible Reading

Aim for Change

We will: **RECOGNIZE** God gives us choices to follow Him or not; **REFLECT** on how human sinfulness leaves us in need of God's help; and **ASK** God to help us to obey Him.



Keep In Mind

And also, all that generation were gathered unto their fathers, and there arose another generation after them who knew not the Lord nor yet the works which He had done for Israel.. (Judges 2:10, 21CKJV)

¹ Banks, Melvin, Precepts for Living: Principles for Living in an Unhinged World (2025-2026) UMI (Urban Ministries, Inc.).

In Focus

Everyone at the office gambled, including those who announced their belief in God. Bets were taken for college games and professional games. Marcus' coworkers regularly picked numbers to play the lottery, yet they did not understand why he refused to participate. He kept thinking about how his father had lost their home as a kid because he had gambled away his savings. He thought about the example he wanted to set for his own son as a believer. The organizer of the gambling pools cornered Marcus, stating there was no harm in supporting his favorite sports team; besides, half of the money was going to the good cause of stocking the office refrigerator with snacks."

Marcus thanked his coworker for his invitation to gamble but decided to regularly donate money for the items he consumed from the office refrigerator instead. On some occasions, he also brought in items he purchased to add to the office's snack supply. Marcus did not judge what the other believers were doing. He simply established an example in the workplace for them to follow if they chose to.

Marcus felt that he should not gamble but instead live out his faith in the workplace. He did not force his beliefs on others, but he lived out what he believed was right.

Was Marcus making a godly choice or was he being too extreme? How does Marcus' actions demonstrate his witness as a believer in the workplace?

Lesson Text **Judges 2:10-19**

10 And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers, and there arose another generation after them who knew not the Lord nor yet the works which He had done for Israel.

11 And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served the Baalim.

12 And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, who brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, the gods of the people who were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the Lord to anger.

13 And they forsook the Lord and served Baal and Ashtaroth.

14 And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel; and He delivered them into the hands of despoilers who despoiled them, and He sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies.

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.

16 Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges, who delivered them out of the hand of those who despoiled them.

17 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.

18 And when the Lord raised them up judges, then the Lord was with the judge and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; for the Lord was moved to repent because of their groanings by reason of those who oppressed them and vexed them.

19 And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that 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.

The People, Places, and Times

Bochim: The name (which means “weeping”) of the place where the angel rebuked the Israelites for breaking their covenant with God (Judges 2:5, NLT).

Baal: The deity of fertility storms and rains and thought to control vegetation and agriculture.

Ashtoreth: The name of the goddess the Israelites chose to worship instead of God. Ashtoreth was believed to be the mother goddess of love, war, and fertility. She was also known as Astarte or Ishtar (1 Kings 11:5–8).

Judges: Leaders selected by God to deliver and guide the Israelites to remain obedient to their covenant with God.

Background

The book of Judges begins with the success and failures of Israel's military campaigns in Canaan (the Promised Land). The new generation of Israelites, the generation that was in the land of Canaan after the death of Joshua, receives a sudden appearance from the angel of the Lord, who pronounces judgment on the new generation of chosen people for their disobedience and unfaithfulness. The Israelites' disobedience included not totally removing the Canaanites from the land. God noted their unfaithfulness to the Living God and their increasing propensity to worship other gods—their increasing propensity to be disobedient.

Evidence of God's anger is seen when God hands over the Israelites to their enemies. Yet God still shows His mercy and compassion toward His chosen people. He raises up judges to help deliver His people from their enemies and bring His chosen people back to a loving, covenant-keeping God.

In Depth

1. The Israelites' Unfaithfulness to God (Judges 2:10–14): The Israelites continued a pattern of abandoning their faith in the one true God, the One who led them out of Egypt. They did not learn from the mistakes of their parents and ancestors. God was the one who drowned Pharaoh's army in the Red Sea, the one who fought for their ancestors (Exodus 14:13–31, KJV), the one who made bitter waters sweet when they were thirsty (Exodus 15:22–25), and the one who fed their ancestors bread from heaven (manna) when they were hungry (Exodus 16:4–14). They violated the first two of the Ten Commandments: "I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:2–3).

Instead, they chased after other gods; they worshiped the Canaanite gods Baal and Ashtoreth. God called the Israelites' behavior evil, and He deemed what they had done as an abandonment of the one true God. Their disobedience of God's commandments stirred His anger with the Israelites results in judgment on them. God gives the Israelites over to the "marauders" (their enemies, Judges 2:14). He delivers them into the power and hands of their enemies and removes His divine defense from around them.

When Israel ignored God's boundaries and chose sin, they faced the consequences for their choices. Was God fair to do this? Why or why not?

2. God's Punishment of the Israelites and His Mercy (Judges 2:15–16): Every time the Israelites went out to battle their enemies, they lost. God's arms of protection were no

longer around them. In fact, before God's judgment against them when they went out to battle, it was the Lord Himself who fought against their enemies. They were no match for the omnipotent (all-powerful) God. But the Israelites' disobedience demanded judgment, and God judged His chosen people. The Lord was now moving against the Israelites because they chose to move against God's will. They changed sides in the battle, while God remained faithful. They had to suffer the consequences of their choices. They had to pay their own sin penalty.

How does it make you feel to imagine God moving against Israel's plans when they work against God's plans?

3. The Israelites' Cycle of Sin and God's Continued Mercy (Judges 2:17–19: Even though the Israelites broke their covenantal relationship with God, He remains faithful to them. Despite their disobedience to God's commands, He still loves them and shows them mercy and compassion. Because of this love, mercy, and compassion, the Word tells us He raises up judges who deliver the Israelites from their enemies. For a time, the judges return Israel to worshiping God. But over the long haul, God's chosen people do not listen to the judges and return to worshiping idols. The Children of Israel continue in a cycle of sin: **(1)** rebelling against the one "true God; **(2)** experiencing God's punishment which involves their enemies overrunning them; **(3)** crying out to God for deliverance after which He raises up a God-fearing judge to deliver the Israelites from their enemies; **(4)** remaining loyal to God until the appointed judge's death—they were loyal as long as they were near the appointed judge; **(5)** forgetting about their covenant with God after the judge's death; **(6)** again suffering punishment because God allows their enemies to overtake them; and **(7)** crying out yet again to God for deliverance. In essence, the Israelites allowed what appealed to their sensual nature and more short-range benefits to steal their affection for the one true God. They were drawn to worshiping gods who did not insist that the people be morally accountable for their behavior. In fact, not only were male and female prostitution allowed in idol worship, but it was also encouraged as a form of worship. Sometimes, we want what we want and want nothing to stand in our way of getting it. This kind of thinking and action can cause destruction. Following the one true God demands discipline and accountability. However, God feels compassion for the Israelites, hears their cries while they are oppressed, and provides judges who guide the Israelites back to worshiping the one true God. God's actions show that, indeed, He is a promise-keeping God. He delivers His children repeatedly when they choose sin and oppression. He is true to His Word.

How can we avoid the cycle of sin that judges clearly point out?"

Liberating Lesson

As with the Israelites, God has given us the opportunity to live responsibly before Him in a covenantal relationship. He allowed Adam and Eve to choose to obey Him, He did the same for the Israelites, and He does the same for us today. As we look around at the suffering in our world, much of it is due to the fact that too many people have chosen sinfulness and selfishness instead of God's will. Too many who say they are believers have chosen to go their own way. We must always remember that our own way leads us down the path of sin and destruction."

Application for Activation

Take time this week to journal about what godly choices and self-seeking choices you have made that stand out to you. They can be minor or major in terms of impact. How can you receive God's deliverance to disrupt any destructive cycles this year? Write about what the cycle is and what the corrective choice needs to be for you to return to God's will for you in that area of your life.

Take Aways

Closing Prayer

Daily Bible Reading
Christian Season:
REGULAR
Season Color: Green



Monday: Numbers 5-7, Psalm 22:6-10

Tuesday: Numbers 8-10, Psalm 22:11-18

Wednesday: Numbers 11-13, Psalm 22:19-24

Thursday: Numbers 14-15, Psalm 22:25-31

Friday: Numbers 16-17, Psalm 23

Saturday: Numbers 18-20, Psalm 24:1-4

Sunday: Numbers 21-22, Psalm 24:5-10

NOT PART OF THE LESSON

Educational Purposes Only

Black History Began in Africa

Candace, Queen of Ethiopia²



And, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians.” Acts 8:27

Egypt plays the most prominent part in biblical history, other African nations mentioned in the Bible are mysterious, cloaked in long-forgotten names and civilizations. There were the nations of Lubim and Put (Libya), Mizraim (Egypt), Kush (Sudan and Ethiopia), and Sheba (Ethiopia and Eritrea in Africa, and across the Red Sea in Asia’s Yemen), among others.

Among the many rulers of these mysterious biblical realms is Candace, queen of Ethiopia. She is mentioned one time in the Bible, in Acts 8:27,

The word “Ethiopia” appears in the Bible about twenty times. This word, however, does not refer to a specific nation called Ethiopia. It comes from a Greek word that means “burnt skin,” any reference to this place in Scripture denotes the region in which lived dark-skinned peoples, south of Israel and Egypt. The Candace of Acts 8 ruled a nation called Nubia (or Kush) from its capital city of Meroe. Ruins of this ancient city are

² <https://beaconlights.org/sermons/candace-queen-of-ethiopia/>

located far south along the Nile River in the modern country called the Republic of Sudan.

Like the Pharaoh of Egypt and the Caesar of Rome, “Candace” was a title given to female rulers of Meroe. Candace comes from a Latin word that means “queen regent,” “queen mother,” or “royal woman.” The Candace mentioned in Acts name is Amantitere (ah-MON-ti-TARE-ee), and she ruled during the years AD 25–41.

Not much is known about Candace Amantitere, but we can learn about her rule in Meroe by what we know about the Ethiopian eunuch, probably her minister of finance based on Acts 8:27: *“Who had the charge of all her treasure.”* Let’s think about what the eunuch was doing when he appears on the scene in Acts. He just completed a 1500-mile journey north in a chariot to observe a Jewish holiday at the temple. He apparently traveled to Jerusalem to worship as a “God-fearer,” a Gentile who believed in the God of Israel but hadn’t taken part in any rituals to become an official Jew. This shows the worship of God taken root as far south as Nubia at some point in history. The eunuch rode in his own chariot (or carriage), read the Old Testament Scriptures from his own scroll, and conversed with Philip in Greek. Which shows under Amantitere’s rule, there existed wealth, higher education, and culture in the region of Nubia.

The Ethiopian eunuch left the biblical scene in Acts 8:39 with this description: *“And he went on his way rejoicing.”* Think of that long ride back to Meroe in his chariot, and all that time to think about what had just happened in Gaza. The gospel of Christ came to life for him! Just imagine the excitement that filled his heart and mind. He could share this good news with all his loved ones and the people of Candace Amantitere’s court. We can have faith that God used his testimony for the spread of the gospel in the royal palace, all around the city of Meroe, and throughout the country of Nubia.

As we think about the aftermath of the eunuch’s trip, let’s keep in mind the words of Isaiah 55:11: “So shall my word go forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.”