

An Antidote for Apathy

I. The Lull before the Storm vv.1-5

A. Judges

- 1) Tola- Judge for 23 years
- 2) Jair the Gileadite – Judge for 22 years

Spiritual neutrality was evident; decline was impending!

B. Peace reigned

- 1) There was peace & prosperity but no taking advantage of the time to develop their walk and it led them back to idolatry.
- 2) Essence of Idolatry- Enjoying God's gifts but not being thankful to the Giver.

Peace led to Prosperity
Prosperity led to Neutrality
Neutrality led to Idolatry
Idolatry led to Apathy

II. The Lashing of the Storm vv.6-16

A. Recurring Habits of Sin v.6

- 1) It happened again!
- 2) Obedience brought blessings; disobedience brought discipline.

B. Immediate and Powerful Punishment vv.7-9

- 1) Sin followed by penalty
- 2) The punishment lasts for as long as we stay unrepentant

C. God answers the hardened transgressors vv.10-14

- 1) No true repentance; no true relief. v.10
- 2) Aim of discipline is to awaken repentance v. 11-13
- 3) Confession is not repentance, repentance produces change
- 4) The greatest judgement God can send to his people is to let them have their own way and not interfere

D) The Reality of Repentance vv. 15-16

- 1) Heartfelt sorrow plus confession of sin
- 2) Absolute yielding of self to God
- 3) Forsaking sin that has deceived and destroyed
- 4) Serve the Lord with renewed zeal and passion

Conclusion

- 1) Progression of downward cycle in this chapter:
lack of gratitude → lack of submission → lack of repentance.
- 2) Prosperity is a time for preparation and action not neutrality
- 3) A neutral mindset results in apathy! We cannot remain neutral and be growing spiritually.
- 4) Comfortable living needs to be tempered by disciplined activity.