

## August Sermon Series: Judges - *Light in a dark world*

Throughout August we will be exploring the theme: *Light in a dark world* from the **OT book of Judges**. As you read through this book, I hope you will see the hand of God at work bringing light to a world darkened by calamity and human wickedness.

The Book of Judges chronicles the life of God's people after the exodus from Egypt, seeking to inhabit the "promised land" after the death of Joshua.

**Pray:** "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness..." (2 Tim 3:16)

Lord, as I read this ancient text, open my eyes, my mind, and my heart to hear and understand what you are teaching me. In Jesus' name. Amen

**Read:** Judges 2:6 - 23

**Reflect:** The period of the Judges (about 1300 – 1050 BC) is time of social and spiritual decline. In Chapter 1, it seems to start well – the tribes of Israel begin to settle in the new land, victorious over those that God had justly judged for their wickedness – the Lord was with them (Ch 1 vv 4,19).

However it is not long before the people of Israel cease to drive out the wicked nations around them (Ch 1 vv 28 – 33 & Ch 2:1 - 4). Nevertheless, God would not abandon His people – He would continue to be faithful to His Covenant Promises (Ch 2:1 – 4).

But from Ch 2 onwards we witness the sad cycle of:

**Rebellion – Reckoning – Redemption – Restoration** Why is it so?

### 1. A Gradual Slide

The evils of

a) Forgetfulness:	2:10
The people forget who God was & what God had done for them	
b) Accommodation:	2:12 – 13
The people integrated pagan spiritual practices with their own.	
c) Disobedience:	2:12 – 13
The people disobeyed the explicit commands of God.	

### 2. A Great Salvation

But God had not forgotten them or His promises. Judges were raised up to deliver God's people from God's just judgement. 2:16 – 18  
However, sadly we see this redemption and restoration was short lived, and the cycle resumes. 2: 19 – 23

### 3. A Great Preventative - What can we do stop falling into the same traps?

a) Teach the truth! Let's hold fast to God's Word that we may know God's will and obey it.  
b) Be ruthless with sin! Let's take sin seriously and seek to avoid the temptation of accommodating the values of the world.  
c) Don't forget! Let us always remind ourselves of what God has done for us in Christ, and how great a salvation we have in Jesus.

**Pray:** Lord, thank You for Your faithfulness, keeping Your promise to redeem and restore. Help me to be always thankful for what You have done for me in Christ Jesus, Amen.



**Belrose Uniting Church**  
in the Assembly of Confessing Congregations  
of the Uniting Church in Australia  
Corner Forest Way and Morgan Road, Belrose

**We aim TO KNOW CHRIST AND TO MAKE HIM KNOWN**

*Sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ to the world since 1916.*

**GOOD NEWS WEEKLY**

**Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> August 2021**

**6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of**

**Covid Lockdown 3.0**

*Light in dark times*

In times of crises we get to see the best and the worst in humanity. It has been encouraging to hear of people being cared for while in isolation with care packages and supportive non-physical contact. **The news that the lock down will continue for another 4 week makes these acts of kindness and care even more important.** They are bright lights of love in dark and anxious times.

Unfortunately we also see the worst in people at such times. We hear of selfish behaviours on the part of those who refuse to adhere to health orders; who feel that their "freedoms" are more important than the health and safety of others; or who spread false information about vaccines to justify their own agenda.

I am reminded that, as followers of Jesus, that the "Law of Love" (*loving your neighbour as yourself, doing unto others as you would have them do unto you*) trumps all other "rights" or "freedoms". In these dark and anxious times, we are given opportunity to live out sacrificial love – putting the needs and welfare of others before ourselves – and in so doing, be the light and salt that Jesus commands us to be.

I pray that we all may have the strength and the grace to be lights to our community as we care for one another while patiently enduring the restrictions of this time. May God bless you and keep you safe.

*Ian Weeks*

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## August Mission of the Month: *Gyanankur English School*

is an independent Indian school for  
Preschool to Year 10 in Kesnand, a village near Pune in India, 4 hours'  
drive southeast of Mumbai.

The school has a Christian board to oversee it and many Christian teachers.  
Anne Weeks' friend Melinda Parker, who now lives in Sydney, is the  
Honorary Director & Anne helps out with administration.

Gyanankur's core values are:

1. Joy: School should be fun!
2. Service: not to be served, but to serve.
3. Transparency: lives and relationships marked by openness and honesty.
4. Dignity: everyone is treated with respect.

These are 4 counter-cultural values for India, where discrimination (based  
on one's colour or status), bribery & corruption are normal.

Since the Covid pandemic struck, the school has been closed but lessons  
and assemblies happen online. Despite all the challenges, all 42 Year 10  
students passed their exams and graduated.

**Please pray for the staff on reduced salaries and especially for the  
headmistress, whose husband recently died from Covid.**

### **Please keep giving!**

You are encouraged to make use of the electronic funds transfer option  
from your bank account to the Uniting Financial Services Congregation  
account using the following information:

**BUC Property Committee BSB 634-634 Acc 10000-1487**

**Thank you for your generous support for the work of the Gospel.**



**Congratulations to Georgie Rowe** (daughter of Jenny, grand-  
daughter of Betty Oates) and the Australian Women's Rowing 8  
Team – into the finals at the Tokyo Olympics!

**The Weekly Thursday Prayer Meetings** are open to anyone who wants to  
come. We share prayer points, read and reflect upon a Psalm, moving us to  
praise God & to pray. All welcome, even to sit and just listen.

**The physical weekly Prayer Meetings are in recess until covid  
lockdown restrictions are lifted, but all are welcome to join in  
the Zoom prayer gatherings.**

### **PLEASE PRAY FOR:**

- |                   |                 |                     |
|-------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| * Gordon Allan    | * Jen Dinning   | * Gordon Richardson |
| * John Bishop     | * David Keiller | * Sierk Dykman      |
| * Marcia Schnabel | * Matt Phillips |                     |

\* Those in our Church family and wider community who are in isolation as a  
result of the recent local covid outbreak

\* World: global covid crisis; refugees & the persecuted Church; our  
international mission partners (Bruce & Kathy, Edwardes Family)

\* Schools – for Scripture Classes at Mimosa (Mel Mottau) & Belrose (Ian  
Weeks) PS; and for Henri Simpson & his team at Davidson & The Forest  
High Schools.

\* Forest Kirk Congregation seeking a new Minister

\* Evangelistic opportunities to share the Gospel & vision for our future  
direction; pray for revival in our nation!

**Have a prayer request?** \* Email: [prayer.team@belrose.unitingchurch.org.au](mailto:prayer.team@belrose.unitingchurch.org.au)

\*Give to Rev. Ian or place a note in the prayer box near Church front door



**WHAT'S ON @ BUC – Update your 2021 diaries**  
**Property/room bookings to Denis Wall: [deniswall30@gmail.com](mailto:deniswall30@gmail.com)**  
Using the Church premises: Please turn off lights & air con, & lock up.

**All meetings at the Church are post-poned  
until the covid lockdown order is lifted.**