

EAST CAMBRIDGE CHURCH OF CHRIST

“A first century church in the 21st century”

Bible Reading Plan

Week 15

- Judges 7-8; *Luke 22*
- Jdg 9-11; Ps 17; *Lk 23*
- Jdg 12-16; Ps 146; *Lk 24*
- Jdg 17-18; Ps 21; *Acts 1*
- Jdg 19-21; *Acts 2*

Leading Services

Announcements: Ron V.

Morning:

Song Leader: Tony Y.

Opening Prayer: Mike V.

Lord's Table: Zack V.

Asst By:

Closing Prayer: Larry L.

Evening:

Song Leader: Mike V.

Opening Prayer: Zack V.

Closing Prayer: Richard L.

Scripture Reading: Larry L.
(Matthew 9.14-26)

Sermons

AM: Two Bible Questions
PM: Burden Bearers



Bad Things

Loved ones, some of the frequent questions we get are, “If there is a God, why is there so much evil in the world? Why do we have children starving in Africa? Why are women raped and murdered by marauding men? Why are innocent people mowed down by a deranged madman?” These are legitimate questions, and demand a thoughtful and reasoned answer.

My old car had more than 300,000 miles on it; however, it always obeyed me. It always turned left or stopped at my simple command. It didn't argue back or refuse to move. But it was a machine, a robot. It had no choice. It only did what it was programmed to do. It did not love me, and did not even know who I was.

I have been blessed with four children. When they were young, they usually obeyed, but not always. However, if I had to make a choice between my children and my car, it really wouldn't require any thought. I would choose my children.

Continue on page 2

Bad things happen to good people

I had a relationship with my children. I loved them and they returned my love. The fact that they had a choice, and still responded to my directions is because they loved and respected me.

God could have created Adam and Eve as robots. He could have programmed into them whatever commands He wanted them to do, just as we may do a computer or some other machine. But God didn't want a bunch of robots running around performing His commands by the pushing of a button. He wanted a creation that He could love, and that would love and respect Him in return.

The only way God could have such a creation was for that creation to have free will—the freedom to choose. That was a risk we took when we brought children into the world. What would our children become? We had faith that they would make good choices through our guidance, but since they had freedom of choice, there was the risk they would go the other way. And thus it was with God's creation.

Sadly, through the centuries that have passed since Adam and Eve were created, and since Noah and Mrs. Noah started over, too many have made wrong choices. Please understand that the evil that is in the world is here because of Satan, not God. And we must suffer the consequences of the sin that is in the world. Yes, even the innocent suffer. One of the immutable laws in the universe is that of cause and effect, action, and consequences (Galatians 6:7-8). When we break the law, there are consequences to be borne. When a drunk gets behind the wheel of a car and runs down a little girl on her tricycle, the innocent suffers. When a deranged young man seeks revenge for his supposed mistreatment and kills 32 others, the innocent suffer.

We understand the law of action and consequences in civil law. Rob a bank and go to jail. When you break the laws of God and nature, there are consequences. Our task is to teach as many as possible to make the right decisions in life, i.e., to obey the Prince of Peace and thus overcome Satan. And we must remember that evil in the world is caused by Satan and the bad decisions he tempts men to make. But we must also remember that no matter what evil comes upon us, God will give us the strength to endure. "I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13).

- Samuel Matthews