



Daily Verse and Comment

Judges 2:11-19

(11) Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served the Baals; (12) and they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt; and they followed other gods from *among* the gods of the people who *were* all around them, and they bowed down to them; and they provoked the LORD to anger. (13) They forsook the LORD and served Baal and the Ashtoreths. (14) And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel. So He delivered them into the hands of plunderers who despoiled them; and He sold them into the hands of their enemies all around, so that they could no longer stand before their enemies. (15) Wherever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for calamity, as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had sworn to them. And they were greatly distressed. (16) Nevertheless, the LORD raised up judges who delivered them out of the hand of those who plundered them. (17) Yet they would not listen to their judges, but they played the harlot with other gods, and bowed down to them. They turned quickly from the way in which their fathers walked, in obeying the commandments of the LORD; they did not do so. (18) And when the LORD raised up judges for them, 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 pity by their groaning because of those who oppressed them and harassed them. (19) And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that they reverted and behaved more corruptly than their fathers, by following other gods, to serve them and bow down to them. They did not cease from their own doings nor from their stubborn way.

New King James Version

[God](#) has endowed His creation with a self-adjusting mechanism that, unless altered by cataclysmic forces, brings things back to a state of equilibrium. For instance, the South recently endured four years of significant drought

until finally the skies darkened, the rains fell, gutters and drains filled, flashfloods came, creeks overflowed, and fender-benders increased. The drought was declared over, and the region is busily making up for the lack of precipitation. The natural balancing laws have worked again!

This is not only true over the short term but the long term as well. What environmentalists gloomily call "global warming" is nothing more than the planet's built-in mechanism to bring temperatures back to a mean. Several hundred years ago, the earth endured a "mini ice age," and since then, global temperatures have been rising ever so slightly to balance matters. We can expect these temperatures to rise and fall by a few tenths of a degree over our lifetimes, with more drastic changes of climate occurring only once or twice in a millennium.

This kind of equilibrium also occurs in other areas of nature. For example, in any ecosystem the ratio of predators to prey remains relatively constant. If in a bountiful year prey species multiply rapidly, predator births also increase. However, once the prey population declines to a point that it cannot support the large number of predators, competition increases and deaths of predators also increase, establishing equilibrium once again.

The law also functions among human activities, though the relationships may be harder to spot and substantiate. However, we can perhaps see this best in economic patterns. We have all heard of economic cycles or stock-market cycles. Generally, free markets are self-correcting. Booms are followed by busts, bulls by bears.

A nation also has a moral cycle that maintains equilibrium so that things infrequently get so bad that God must intervene directly and spectacularly. This may be most easily seen in God's record of the Israelites during the period of the judges. After Joshua died, a cycle began that lasted for about four hundred years, as described in [Judges 2:11-19](#).

This cycle of idolatry-subjection-deliverance-prosperity is still at work today, though it may be more difficult to see in our modern world. Were it not, mankind would never have lasted this long; he would have committed

genocide long ago. We can be thankful that God has included this self-correcting mechanism within His creation so that there is a promise of a brighter tomorrow.

However, a time is coming—and maybe soon—that the natural cycle will not be enough to bring humanity back to equilibrium. [Jesus Christ](#) will have to step into world affairs to stop mankind from killing all life on earth ([Matthew 24:21-22](#), 29-31). He warns us, "Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not expect Him" (verse 44). The question is, then, have we stepped outside the natural cycle of moral equilibrium and committed ourselves totally to righteousness?

— Richard T. Ritenbaugh

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