

# THE BOOK OF FIRST CHRONICLES: AN OVERVIEW

## Tim Burroughs

**Thesis:** To gain a better understanding of 1 Chronicles and her place in the Books of History.

### **Introduction:**

1. The words of God through the inspired pen of the apostle Paul certainly carry a tremendous meaning.
  - a. “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope (Romans 15:4).
  - b. There are many valuable lessons to be learned from the Old Testament books of history.
  - c. The Book of First Chronicles is no exception.
2. The Books of First and Second Chronicles were originally one literary work
  - a. This one volume of history was divided into two separate books by the translators of the Septuagint.
  - b. This may have been done to provide the translators more room to work?
3. The title of the book in the Hebrew Bible means “The Daily Acts” or “Occurrences.”
  - a. The translators of the Septuagint title the works “The Things Omitted.”
  - b. This suggests that First and Second Chronicles were a supplement to the things found in the books of Samuel and Kings.
4. The purpose of the book of First Chronicles was to provide the basis for the restoration of Israel to the land of Canaan after seventy years of Babylonian captivity.
  - a. The land was divided by inheritance from ancestors (Numbers 26:51-56).

- b. The genealogies were preserved so that Israel could know the Christ when he came.
    - i. Jesus was to be descended from Abraham (Genesis 12:3), the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:10; Hebrews 7:14), and David (1 Chronicles 17:11-15; cf. 2 Samuel 7:12-16).
    - ii. Jesus met these genealogical demands (Matthew 1:1; Luke 1:30-33), thus the genealogies were vital to Old Testament Israel.
  - c. The Jewish genealogical records were destroyed when Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed A.D. 70.
  - d. No Israelite today can identify from which tribe he is.
    - i. The Jews cannot restore the rule of the lineage of David on this earth, the priesthood of the lineage of Aaron, or the inheritance of the tribes.
    - ii. Old Testament Israel cannot be restored (cf. Jeremiah 19:10-11).
5. Today we will discuss three points in studying the book of First Chronicles.
- a. Overview of the book of First Chronicles
  - b. Outline of the Book of First Chronicles
  - c. Observant Lessons from the Book of First Chronicles

## **I. OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK OF FIRST CHRONICLES**

### **A. The Author of the book**

1. The author of the book is unknown. Jewish tradition attributes the works to Ezra.
  - a. Adam Clark wrote concerning the authorship, “The Jews, and Christian interpreters in general, believe they were the work of Ezra assisted by the prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. That Ezra was the author is, on the whole, the most probable opinion. That he lived at the conclusion of the Babylonian captivity is well-known; and the Second Book of Chronicles

terminates at that period, barley reciting the decree of Cyrus to permit the return of the captivated Israelites to their homeland; which subject is immediately taken up in the book of Ezra, in which the operation of that decree is distinctly marked.”

b. F. C. Cook wrote, “The very close connection of style between Chronicles and Ezra makes it probable that they were composed at the same time, if not by the same person.”

2. One must understand that because the book does not distinctly identify the author does not mean First Chronicles does not belong in the Old Testament.
3. There is unity between the Old Testament and the New Testament.
  - a. God’s promise to David (1 Chronicles 17:13; Luke 1:33).
  - b. God’s promise regarding an everlasting kingdom (1 Chronicles 22:10; Hebrews 1:8)
  - c. Pilgrims and strangers (1 Chronicles 29:15; 1 Peter 2:11ff).
  - d. David’s death (1 Chronicles 29:28; Acts 2:29).

B. The Date of the Book.

1. The Book of First Chronicles was written after the Babylonian captivity.
  - a. The decree of Cyrus allowed Israel to return to their home land in 536 B.C.
  - b. First Chronicles was probably written during the latter part of the fifth century B.C. between 450 and 425.
  - c. A date after the Babylonian captivity is supported internally by the mention of the six generations following Zerubbabe (1 Chronicles 3:17-21) and of the Persian coins known as “darics” (1 Chronicles 29:7).
2. The book of First Chronicles covers a vast space of time in scripture.
  - a. The Genealogies and narrative span the period from Adam to the end of the life of David.
  - b. This is an estimated period of 3,500 years.

- C. To Whom was the Book Written?
1. First Chronicles was written to those returning from 70 years of Babylonian captivity.
  2. The book of First Chronicles is dedicated to the life of David.
    - a. It begins with the genealogy of the royal line of David
    - b. It ends with the reign of David as King.

II. **OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF FIRST CHRONICLES**

A. The Genealogies

1. Adam to Abraham 1:1-27
2. Abraham to Jacob 1:28-54
3. Jacob to David 2:1-55
4. David to the captivity 3:1-24
5. The Twelve Tribes 4:1-8:40
6. The Remnant 9:1-34
7. King Saul 9:35-44

B. The Rein of David

1. The rise of David to the Throne 10:1-12:40
2. The Ark of the Covenant 13:1-17:27
3. David's Victories 18:1-20:8
4. Preparation for the Temple 21:1-27:34
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### **III. OBSERVANT LESSONS FROM THE BOOK OF FIRST CHRONICLES**

#### **A. Jabez, A Honorable Man (1 Chronicles 4:9-10).**

1. The text says he “was more honorable than his brethren.”
  - a. There is no doubt that this man depended upon God with his life.
  - b. In his prayer, he never asked to be relieved of any burdens or responsibilities, only that God be with him.
  - c. Jabez knew that if God was going to be on his side, he would first have to be on God’s side.
2. The same is true for man today. If he expects God to be with him, he must first decide to be with God. (John 14:15; Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 15:58).

#### **B. Do Not Violate the Commands of God (1 Chronicles 13:9-10).**

1. In the passage under consideration, death was the end result in not following the commands of God.
2. Only the Levite priests were allowed to touch the Ark of the Covenant and they had to move it in a special way (Exodus 25:12-14).
3. The Commands of God were never considered in this matter.
4. Today man must adhere to the commands of God if He expects the sentence of life and not death.
  - a. Mark 16:16
  - b. Acts 2:38
  - c. Acts 22:16

**Conclusion:**

1. The Book of First Chronicles is a book of History that is overlooked many times by the average Bible student.
2. Because so much of the information is recorded in the book of Second Samuel, First Chronicles is ignored.
3. There are many examples of the people of that day following after the God of Heaven and these examples ought to be kept close to heart, but there are many who did not heed to the warnings of God and we need to keep them even closer as not to fall as they did.

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# II CHRONICLES

## Jerry L. Martin

### INTRODUCTION:

Talmudic tradition credits Ezra, and the similarity in the writing style between the books of Chronicles and Ezra seem to confirm this assumption. Regardless who the author is, 2 Chronicles sets forth the history of Israel related to their religious observances as God's covenant people. It begins with Solomon's wise request from God "a heart of understanding" rather than riches and honor. In this book, the author devotes his attention mostly to the kingdom of Judah, and the Kingdom of Israel is only mentioned when its affairs are closely related to those of Judah.

II Chronicles continues the history of the Davidic line with the reign of Solomon, emphasizing his construction of the temple in chapters one through nine. The remainder of the book traces the history of the southern kingdom of Judah from the reign of Rehoboam to the final destruction of Jerusalem and the exile of the people to Babylon. This book, like the first, reflects God's role in the history of His people and the interaction of their spiritual life with the political life of their nation. The kings are all evaluated according to their faithfulness to God. The reigns of the evil kings are summarized quickly, while the reigns of the godly kings, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joash, Hezekiah, and Josiah, are described in more detail. More attention is given in the Chronicles, as compared with counterpart sections in the books of Kings, to the work of the prophets in delivering the message of the Lord to the kings and the people alike. The activities of the prophets were emphasized at a time when prophecy was a great and operative force in the life of the nation. It was of first importance for the people to realize that the prophecies of

the pre-exile prophets had been fulfilled, and also that their restoration to the promised land had been prophesied just as fully as their exile. The impact of this was to help them interpret the Captivity as the means which God used to refine them from idolatry, so that He could still accomplish through them His saving purpose in selecting them as the Messianic nation.

**SIMPLE OUTLINE:**

**I. THE REIGN OF SOLOMON (1:1—9:31)**

**II. THE KINGS OF JUDAH (10:1—36:23)**

**DETAILED OUTLINE:**

**I. THE REIGN OF SOLOMON (1:1—9:31)**

- A. Solomon's sacrifices at Gibeon and his wise choice (1:1-1:17)
  - 1. One thousand burnt offerings at the tabernacle.
  - 2. Solomon asks for wisdom and is given other blessings as well
  - 3. The power and wealth of Solomon recounted
- B. The building of the Temple (2: 1-4:22)
  - 1. Preparations made and materials assembled for construction
  - 2. The location is on Mount Moriah at the threshing floor of Oman the Jebusite
  - 3. Detailed descriptions of the temple and its furnishings
- C. The Dedication of the Temple (5:1- 7:22)
  - 1. The ark moved into its new home
  - 2. The glory of the Lord fills the Temple

3. Solomon's dedication remarks and his prayer before the people
4. Great sacrifices offered and fire from heaven consumes them
5. Feast of tabernacles observed
6. God's appearance to Solomon giving him instructions promises,  
& warnings

D. Solomon's Fame & Prosperity (8:1-9:31)

1. A builder of cities
2. Visit from the Queen of Sheba
3. His riches and wisdom recounted
4. His death and burial

**II. THE REIGN OF REHOBOAM** (10: 1-12: 16)

A. His folly that led to the division of the kingdom (10:1-10:19)

B. The remainder of his reign over Judah (11:1-12: 16)

1. Forsakes God and leads the kingdom astray
2. Shishak, king of Egypt wars against him
3. His death and burial

**III. THE HISTORY OF THE KINGS OF JUDAH** (13: 1-36:23)

A. Reign of Abijah (13:1-13:22)

1. His defeat of Jeroboam
2. Israel punished at his hand because of idolatry

B. Reign Of Asa (14:1 - 16:14)

1. Peace in the kingdom for ten years
  - a. Asa follows God's way and reforms Israel

- b. More details shared of his reforms here than in Kings
  - c. Builds walled cities and fortifies the land
  - d. Assembles an army of 580,000 men
  - e. God prospers him because of his faithfulness
2. War with the Ethiopians
- a. Zerah of Ethiopia attacks Judah with an army of 1 million men and 300 chariots
  - b. Asa's beautiful prayer for God's deliverance (14:11)
  - c. Judah wins a great victory and utterly annihilates the Ethiopians
3. Twenty-five more years of peace
- a. The prophecy of Azariah the son of Obed - serve God and prosper, forsake Him and He will forsake you
  - b. The people make a covenant with God to seek Him with all their heart and all their soul
  - c. Asa destroys even the idol of his mother, queen Maachah
  - d. Asa's heart was perfect all his days
4. His alliance with Syria
- a. Brought about by Baasha's plan to build Ramah
  - b. Asa sues for peace with Benhadad king of Syria
  - c. Benhadad switches sides and attacks Israel
  - d. Hanani, the prophet, prophesies against Asa for not relying on the Lord as he had before
  - e. Key verse, 16:9



- f. Hanani imprisoned for his prophecy
- g. Foot disease for Asa
- h. Puts his trust in physicians, rather than the Lord
- i. His death and unusual funeral service

### C. Reign Of Jehoshaphat (17:1 - 21:1)

1. Another good and righteous king
  - a. His reforms are expressly stated by Chronicles
  - b. Goes farther than his father in destroying idolatry
  - c. Destroyed the high places and groves in Judah
  - d. Sent out prophets, priests, and Levites to teach the people the law of God
  - e. Because of this the fear of the Lord fell upon the heathen nations surrounding Judah and they sued for peace
  - f. Jehoshaphat assembles an army of 1,160,000 men
  - g. Enjoys prosperity and peace
2. His alliance with Ahab, king of Israel
  - a. Joined forces to attack Ramoth-gilead
  - b. Micaiah the prophet, a real man of God, stands up to the two kings to speak the truth without regard for his life
  - c. Ahab mortally wounded during the battle
  - d. Jehu, the son of Hanani, reproves Jehoshaphat for his alliance with wicked Ahab, but also commends him for his previous reforms
3. Jehoshaphat renews his efforts to seek God and do His will

- a. Sets up judges over the people and warns them to judge righteously
  - b. Warns the people to serve God with a perfect heart
  - c. Wins a great battle over the Moabites and Ammonites by the hand of the Lord
4. His last days
- a. Foolishly allies with Ahaziah of Israel
  - b. Death and burial

D. Reign Of Jehoram (21:1-21:20)

1. A wicked and treacherous king
2. Killed all his brothers and many of the princes of Israel
3. Married Athaliah the daughter of Ahab & Jezabel and was influenced by his in—  
laws to do evil
4. Elijah the prophet prophesies against him and God smote him with disease
5. No one lamented his death

E. Reign Of Ahaziah (Jehoahaz, Azariah) (22:1 - 22:9)

1. His mother served as his counselor to do evil
2. Slain by Jehu

F. Reign Of Queen Athaliah (22:10 - 23:21)

1. Tried to destroy all heirs to the throne but missed one - Joash, who was hidden by  
Jehoshabeath, the sister of Ahaziah and the wife of Jehoiada the priest
2. When Joash was seven, Jehoida anointed Joash king and ordered Athaliah slain,  
and the images of Baal destroyed

C. Reign of Joash (24:1 - 24:27)

1. Began reigning at age seven
2. A good king under the guidance of Jehoiada
3. Repaired the temple
4. Forsook God after the death of Jehoiada and served idols
5. Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, prophesied against Joash and the people, so Joash had him stoned
6. God sent the Syrians to punish Judah
7. Joash slain by conspiracy

#### H. Reign Of Amaziah (25:1- 25:28)

1. Served the Lord for a time but only half—heartedly
2. Made war against the Edomi
3. Turned completely away from God and began to worship idols
4. Challenged Joash, king of Israel to a fight but was defeated
5. Slain by conspiracy

#### I. Reign Of Uzziah (called Azariah in Kings) (26:1 - 26:23)

1. At first a good king who was successful in making war against the enemies of Judah
2. Fortified Jerusalem with cunning weaponry
3. His strength became his downfall when pride led him to presumptuously try to burn incense on the alter
4. Azariah the priest and 80 other priests bravely rebuked him for this trespass
5. Cod struck him with leprosy as punishment for his offense
6. Quarantined until the day of his death because of his leprosy

J. Reign Of Jotham (27:1 - 27:9)

1. A fair king who prospered because he prepared his ways before the Lord
2. Caused the enemies of Judah to pay tribute

K. Reign Of Ahaz (28:1 - 28:27)

1. A wicked and idolatrous king
2. Offered his children as burnt sacrifices
3. Oppressed by the Syrians and Israel as punishment
4. Instead of repenting built an idolatrous alter and ransacked the temple

L. Reign Of Hezekiah (29:1 - 32:33)

1. A good and righteous king
2. Chronicles gives an extended account of his reforms
  - a. Cleansed the temple and reinstated the worship of Cod
  - b. Proclaimed a solemn Passover
  - c. Destroyed idolatry and reestablished the Levites and priests to their religious service
  - d. Served God with all his heart and prospered
3. Sennacherib, king of Assyria makes the mistake of attacking Judah and railing against Cod
4. Hezekiah and Isaiah the prophet, pray for Cod's deliverance
5. God provides a great victory
6. Sennacherib returns to his home in defeat and is slain by his own children
7. Because of pride Hezekiah falls sick, but he repented and God granted him added

years

8. Again, falls victim to pride and reveals his wealth to the Babylonians - proves to be a great mistake

M. Reign Of Manasseh (33:1 - 33:20)

1. Began reigning at age 12, but did not follow in the footsteps of his father to rule righteously
2. He defiled the temple and caused Judah to sin worse than the heathen nations round about
3. Carried off into Babylonian captivity as punishment for his sin
4. Humbled himself and besought the Lord through repentance and prayer
5. The Lord restored him to his rule over Judah, where Manasseh ended his reign urging the people to serve only the Lord

N. Reign Of Amon (33:21 - 33:23)

1. Another idolatrous king
2. Slain by conspiracy after reigning only 2 years

O. Reign Of Josiah (34:1 - 35:1)

1. A good and righteous king who began reigning at age eight
2. Destroyed idolatry throughout the land
3. Ordered the temple repaired
4. The book of the law found in the clean-up
5. Josiah makes a covenant with Cod to keep Cod's law
6. Ordered the people to serve Cod according to all the words of the law
7. Kept the best Passover since the days of Samuel

8. Slain in a battle with Necho king of Egypt
9. Jeremiah, the prophet, and all the people lamented his death

P. Reign Of Jehoahaz (36:1 - 36:3)

1. Reigned only 3 months before being put down by Necho
2. His brother, Eliakim, made king and Jehoahaz carried off to slavery in Egypt

Q. Reign Of Jehoiakim (36:4 - 36:8)

1. Another wicked king
2. Carried off by Nebuchadnezzar into Babylonian captivity

R. Reign Of Jehoiachin (36:9 - 36:10)

1. Began reigning at age 8 and was already evil
2. Reigns only 3 months and 10 days before being carried away into Babylonian captivity

S. Reign of Zedekiah (36:11- 36:21)

1. The last of the wicked kings
2. Would not listen to the warnings of Jeremiah the prophet
3. During his reign, God sent numerous messengers to give the people one last chance to repent, but they mocked and despised the Word of God
4. Finally the wrath of God arose until there was no remedy
5. Jerusalem is laid waste and burned and the people are carried away into the final Babylonian captivity

T. Chronicles closes with the proclamation of Cyrus, king of *Persia*, that someone volunteer to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the house of God (36:22 - 36:23)

## **CONCLUSION:**

There are some inescapable lessons that should be learned when one reads through this great book.

1. Forgiveness from God is not without conditions. “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land” (2 Chron. 7:14).
2. Fighting against God is futile. “And, behold, God himself is with us for our captain, and his priests with sounding trumpets to cry alarm against you. O children of Israel, fight ye not against the LORD God of your fathers; for ye shall not prosper” (2 Chron. 13:12).
3. Failure to heed God’s warnings has serious consequences. “And he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; The LORD is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you. Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law” (2 Chron. 15:2, 3).
4. Family relations must never come before fidelity to God. “And also concerning Maachah the mother of Asa the king, he removed her from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove: and Asa cut down her idol, and stamped it, and burnt it at the brook Kidron” (2 Chron. 15:16).
5. Fence-straddlers are doomed to fail. “And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer

went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD” (2 Chron. 19:2).

6. Faithfulness to God’s commandments produces prosperity. “And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered” (2 Chron. 31:21).
7. Faithless rejection of God’s commandments promises punishment. “But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy” (2 Chron. 36:16).

[The material for this presentation was largely taken from class notes prepared by David McCain and Bible Class books prepared by Johnny Ramsey, and Paul Sain]



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## Jerry L. Martin

### INTRODUCTION:

Talmudic tradition credits Ezra, and the similarity in the writing style between the books of Chronicles and Ezra seem to confirm this assumption. Regardless who the author is, 2 Chronicles sets forth the history of Israel related to their religious observances as God's covenant people. It begins with Solomon's wise request from God "a heart of understanding" rather than riches and honor. In this book, the author devotes his attention mostly to the kingdom of Judah, and the Kingdom of Israel is only mentioned when its affairs are closely related to those of Judah.

II Chronicles continues the history of the Davidic line with the reign of Solomon, emphasizing his construction of the temple in chapters one through nine. The remainder of the book traces the history of the southern kingdom of Judah from the reign of Rehoboam to the final destruction of Jerusalem and the exile of the people to Babylon. This book, like the first, reflects God's role in the history of His people and the interaction of their spiritual life with the political life of their nation. The kings are all evaluated according to their faithfulness to God. The reigns of the evil kings are summarized quickly, while the reigns of the godly kings, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joash, Hezekiah, and Josiah, are described in more detail. More attention is given in the Chronicles, as compared with counterpart sections in the books of Kings, to the work of the prophets in delivering the message of the Lord to the kings and the people alike. The activities of the prophets were emphasized at a time when prophecy was a great and operative force in the life of the nation. It was of first importance for the people to realize that the prophecies of the pre-

exile prophets had been fulfilled, and also that their restoration to the promised land had been prophesied just as fully as their exile. The impact of this was to help them interpret the Captivity as the means which God used to refine them from idolatry, so that He could still accomplish through them His saving purpose in selecting them as the Messianic nation.

**SIMPLE OUTLINE:**

**I. THE REIGN OF SOLOMON (1:1—9:31)**

**II. THE KINGS OF JUDAH (10:1—36:23)**

**DETAILED OUTLINE:**

**I. THE REIGN OF SOLOMON (1:1—9:31)**

A. Solomon's sacrifices at Gibeon and his wise choice (1:1-1:17)

1. One thousand burnt offerings at the tabernacle.
2. Solomon asks for wisdom and is given other blessings as well
3. The power and wealth of Solomon recounted

B. The building of the Temple (2: 1-4:22)

1. Preparations made and materials assembled for construction
2. The location is on Mount Moriah at the threshing floor of Oman the Jebusite
3. Detailed descriptions of the temple and its furnishings

C. The Dedication of the Temple (5:1- 7:22)

1. The ark moved into its new home
2. The glory of the Lord fills the Temple
3. Solomon's dedication remarks and his prayer before the people

4. Great sacrifices offered and fire from heaven consumes them
5. Feast of tabernacles observed
6. God's appearance to Solomon giving him instructions promises,  
& warnings

D. Solomon's Fame & Prosperity (8:1-9:31)

1. A builder of cities
2. Visit from the Queen of Sheba
3. His riches and wisdom recounted
4. His death and burial

**II. THE REIGN OF REHOBOAM** (10: 1-12: 16)

A. His folly that led to the division of the kingdom (10:1-10:19)

B. The remainder of his reign over Judah (11:1-12: 16)

1. Forsakes God and leads the kingdom astray
2. Shishak, king of Egypt wars against him
3. His death and burial

**III. THE HISTORY OF THE KINGS OF JUDAH** (13: 1-36:23)

A. Reign of Abijah (13:1-13:22)

1. His defeat of Jeroboam
2. Israel punished at his hand because of idolatry

B. Reign Of Asa (14:1 - 16:14)

1. Peace in the kingdom for ten years
  - a. Asa follows God's way and reforms Israel
  - b. More details shared of his reforms here than in Kings

- c. Builds walled cities and fortifies the land
  - d. Assembles an army of 580,000 men
  - e. God prospers him because of his faithfulness
2. War with the Ethiopians
- a. Zerah of Ethiopia attacks Judah with an army of 1 million men and 300 chariots
  - b. Asa's beautiful prayer for God's deliverance (14:11)
  - c. Judah wins a great victory and utterly annihilates the Ethiopians
3. Twenty-five more years of peace
- a. The prophecy of Azariah the son of Obed - serve God and prosper, forsake Him and He will forsake you
  - b. The people make a covenant with God to seek Him with all their heart and all their soul
  - c. Asa destroys even the idol of his mother, queen Maachah
  - d. Asa's heart was perfect all his days
4. His alliance with Syria
- a. Brought about by Baasha's plan to build Ramah
  - b. Asa sues for peace with Benhadad king of Syria
  - c. Benhadad switches sides and attacks Israel
  - d. Hanani, the prophet, prophesies against Asa for not relying on the Lord as he had before
  - e. Key verse, 16:9
  - f. Hanani imprisoned for his prophecy

- g. Foot disease for Asa
- h. Puts his trust in physicians, rather than the Lord
- i. His death and unusual funeral service

### C. Reign Of Jehoshaphat (17:1 - 21:1)

1. Another good and righteous king
  - a. His reforms are expressly stated by Chronicles
  - b. Goes farther than his father in destroying idolatry
  - c. Destroyed the high places and groves in Judah
  - d. Sent out prophets, priests, and Levites to teach the people the law of God
  - e. Because of this the fear of the Lord fell upon the heathen nations surrounding Judah and they sued for peace
  - f. Jehoshaphat assembles an army of 1,160,000 men
  - g. Enjoys prosperity and peace
2. His alliance with Ahab, king of Israel
  - a. Joined forces to attack Ramoth-gilead
  - b. Micaiah the prophet, a real man of God, stands up to the two kings to speak the truth without regard for his life
  - c. Ahab mortally wounded during the battle
  - d. Jehu, the son of Hanani, reproves Jehoshaphat for his alliance with wicked Ahab, but also commends him for his previous reforms
3. Jehoshaphat renews his efforts to seek God and do His will
  - a. Sets up judges over the people and warns them to judge righteously

- b. Warns the people to serve God with a perfect heart
    - c. Wins a great battle over the Moabites and Ammonites by the hand of the Lord
  - 4. His last days
    - a. Foolishly allies with Ahaziah of Israel
    - b. Death and burial
- D. Reign Of Jehoram (21:1-21:20)
  - 1. A wicked and treacherous king
  - 2. Killed all his brothers and many of the princes of Israel
  - 3. Married Athaliah the daughter of Ahab & Jezabel and was influenced by his in—  
laws to do evil
  - 4. Elijah the prophet prophesies against him and God smote him with disease
  - 5. No one lamented his death
- E. Reign Of Ahaziah (Jehoahaz,Azariah) (22:1 - 22:9)
  - 1. His mother served as his counselor to do evil
  - 2. Slain by Jehu
- F. Reign Of Queen Athaliah (22:10 - 23:21)
  - 1. Tried to destroy all heirs to the throne but missed one - Joash, who was hidden by  
Jehoshabeath, the sister of Ahaziah and the wife of Jehoiada the priest
  - 2. When Joash was seven, Jehoida anointed Joash king and ordered Athaliah slain,  
and the images of Baal destroyed
- C. Reign of Joash (24:1 - 24:27)
  - 1. Began reigning at age seven

2. A good king under the guidance of Jehoiada
3. Repaired the temple
4. Forsook God after the death of Jehoiada and served idols
5. Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, prophesied against Joash and the people, so Joash had him stoned
6. God sent the Syrians to punish Judah
7. Joash slain by conspiracy

#### H. Reign Of Amaziah (25:1- 25:28)

1. Served the Lord for a time but only half—heartedly
2. Made war against the Edomi
3. Turned completely away from God and began to worship idols
4. Challenged Joash, king of Israel to a fight but was defeated
5. Slain by conspiracy

#### I. Reign Of Uzziah (called Azariah in Kings) (26:1 - 26:23)

1. At first a good king who was successful in making war against the enemies of Judah
2. Fortified Jerusalem with cunning weaponry
3. His strength became his downfall when pride led him to presumptuously try to burn incense on the alter
4. Azariah the priest and 80 other priests bravely rebuked him for this trespass
5. Cod struck him with leprosy as punishment for his offense
6. Quarantined until the day of his death because of his leprosy

J. Reign Of Jotham (27:1 - 27:9)

1. A fair king who prospered because he prepared his ways before the Lord
2. Caused the enemies of Judah to pay tribute

K. Reign Of Ahaz (28:1 - 28:27)

1. A wicked and idolatrous king
2. Offered his children as burnt sacrifices
3. Oppressed by the Syrians and Israel as punishment
4. Instead of repenting built an idolatrous alter and ransacked the temple

L. Reign Of Hezekiah (29:1 - 32:33)

1. A good and righteous king
2. Chronicles gives an extended account of his reforms
  - a. Cleansed the temple and reinstated the worship of Cod
  - b. Proclaimed a solemn Passover
  - c. Destroyed idolatry and reestablished the Levites and priests to their religious service
  - d. Served God with all his heart and prospered
3. Sennacherib, king of Assyria makes the mistake of attacking Judah and railing against Cod
4. Hezekiah and Isaiah the prophet, pray for Cod's deliverance
5. God provides a great victory
6. Sennacherib returns to his home in defeat and is slain by his own children
7. Because of pride Hezekiah falls sick, but he repented and God granted him added years



8. Again, falls victim to pride and reveals his wealth to the Babylonians - proves to be a great mistake

M. Reign Of Manasseh (33:1 - 33:20)

1. Began reigning at age 12, but did not follow in the footsteps of his father to rule righteously
2. He defiled the temple and caused Judah to sin worse than the heathen nations round about
3. Carried off into Babylonian captivity as punishment for his sin
4. Humbled himself and besought the Lord through repentance and prayer
5. The Lord restored him to his rule over Judah, where Manasseh ended his reign urging the people to serve only the Lord

N. Reign Of Amon (33:21 - 33:23)

1. Another idolatrous king
2. Slain by conspiracy after reigning only 2 years

O. Reign Of Josiah (34:1 - 35:1)

1. A good and righteous king who began reigning at age eight
2. Destroyed idolatry throughout the land
3. Ordered the temple repaired
4. The book of the law found in the clean-up
5. Josiah makes a covenant with Cod to keep Cod's law
6. Ordered the people to serve Cod according to all the words of the law
7. Kept the best Passover since the days of Samuel
8. Slain in a battle with Necho king of Egypt

9. Jeremiah, the prophet, and all the people lamented his death

P. Reign Of Jehoahaz (36:1 - 36:3)

1. Reigned only 3 months before being put down by Necho
2. His brother, Eliakim, made king and Jehoahaz carried off to slavery in Egypt

Q. Reign Of Jehoiakim (36:4 - 36:8)

1. Another wicked king
2. Carried off by Nebuchadnezzar into Babylonian captivity

R. Reign Of Jehoiachin (36:9 - 36:10)

1. Began reigning at age 8 and was already evil
2. Reigns only 3 months and 10 days before being carried away into Babylonian captivity

S. Reign of Zedekiah (36:11- 36:21)

1. The last of the wicked kings
2. Would not listen to the warnings of Jeremiah the prophet
3. During his reign, God sent numerous messengers to give the people one last chance to repent, but they mocked and despised the Word of God
4. Finally the wrath of God arose until there was no remedy
5. Jerusalem is laid waste and burned and the people are carried away into the final Babylonian captivity

T. Chronicles closes with the proclamation of Cyrus, king of *Persia*, that someone volunteer to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the house of God (36:22 - 36:23)

## **CONCLUSION:**

There are some inescapable lessons that should be learned when one reads through this great book.

1. Forgiveness from God is not without conditions. “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land” (2 Chron. 7:14).
2. Fighting against God is futile. “And, behold, God himself is with us for our captain, and his priests with sounding trumpets to cry alarm against you. O children of Israel, fight ye not against the LORD God of your fathers; for ye shall not prosper” (2 Chron. 13:12).
3. Failure to heed God’s warnings has serious consequences. “And he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; The LORD is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you. Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law” (2 Chron. 15:2, 3).
4. Family relations must never come before fidelity to God. “And also concerning Maachah the mother of Asa the king, he removed her from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove: and Asa cut down her idol, and stamped it, and burnt it at the brook Kidron” (2 Chron. 15:16).
5. Fence-straddlers are doomed to fail. “And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the

ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD” (2 Chron. 19:2).

6. Faithfulness to God’s commandments produces prosperity. “And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered” (2 Chron. 31:21).
7. Faithless rejection of God’s commandments promises punishment.  
“But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy” (2 Chron. 36:16).

[The material for this presentation was largely taken from class notes prepared by David McCain and Bible Class books prepared by Johnny Ramsey, and Paul Sain]

# The Book of 2 Kings

Todd Crayton

## INTRODUCTION:

1. The quote by Edmund Burke, "The only thing necessary for evil to triumph is for good men do nothing" is clearly illustrated in this time period in Israel's history.
  2. The record of the divided kingdom helps one to understand God's fulfillment of His promise to Abraham.
    - A. Those who were faithful to God in keeping his covenant were blessed.
    - B. God's just love demanded punishment for Israel's disobedience.
  3. The book of 2 Kings is a continuation from 1 Kings.
    - A. The Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Bible divides the book of Kings into two books.
    - B. It covers much of the chronology and major themes of the entire Old Testament.
      - a. United Kingdom
      - b. Divided Kingdom
      - c. Judah Alone
      - d. Babylonian Exile
- I. *AUTHORSHIP*
- A. Not specifically mentioned in the text.
  - B. It is assigned to Jeremiah by Jewish traditional theory.
  - C. Although it is not definitive that Jeremiah is the author, there is much similarity with his other writings.
    1. He quotes "The book of the words of Solomon", and "The book of the chronicle by the kings of Judah" (1 Kings 14:29, 15:7, 23).
    2. Jeremiah used available works of the prophets.
  - D. It is completely acceptable to designate Jeremiah as author so long as one accepts the divine authorship of the book---written by inspiration of God (Pledge).

1. One great reason for accepting the Bible as inspired is the unity of the writers= message.
  2. 1 & 2 Kings comprise the inspired record of Israel=s history.
  3. The book is inspired because Jesus referred to it. (Matthew 5:17, Luke 24:44).
- E. Background
1. Jeremiah=s father was Hilkiah (Jeremiah).
  2. Called to be a spokesman for God in the thirteenth year of Josiah.
  3. Prophet under the reign of Jehoiachin (same as Jeconiah/Coniah), Zedekiah, and Jehoiakim. (Holman)

## **II. KEY SCRIPTURES**

- A. 2 Kings 17:13-14 - God testified against Judah for her rebellious heart.
- B. 2 Kings 17:20 - Afflicted because of idolatry
- C. 2 Kings 17:22 - Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam
- D. 2 Kings 25:8-11 - Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem 586 B. C.

## **III. PURPOSE**

- A. Overall, the book of Kings is written to tell God=s people that obedience to the covenant of God was the only source of protection and refuge.
- B. The book covers the history of the Kings of Judah and Israel from the ascension of Solomon to the Babylonian Captivity.
- C. Accounts reign of Kings to the captivity of Zedekiah 895-562 B.C., (about 334 yrs.)
- D. God sent prophets to Israel, to call the people back to the law.

## **IV. OUTLINE**

Note: There are several outlines available in study Bibles and commentaries. This is an example of one outline of 2 Kings by Charles Pledge.

1. THE DIVIDED KINGDOM CONTINUED FROM 1 KINGS
  - a. The close of Elijah=s ministry and the beginning of Elisha=s, 1-2:25
  - b. The reign of Jehoram of Israel, 3:1-8:15
  - c. Jehoram and Ahaziah in Judah and Jehu in Israel, 8:16-10:36

- d. Hostilities between Judah and Israel resumed, 11:1-17:41
2. JUDAH from NORTHERN DESTRUCTION TO BABYLONIAN EXILE
- a. Hezekiah and Josiah 18:1-20:21
  - b. Manasseh and Amon 21
  - c. Josiah, 22:1- 23:30
  - d. Jehoahaz, 23:31
  - e. Jehoiakim, 23:36-24:7
  - f. Jehoiachin, 24: 8-17
  - g. Zedekiah, 24:18-25:26
  - h. Jehoiachin, 25: 27-30

**CONCLUSION:**

- A. Man can never escape the consequences of choice.
  - 1. Israel asked for God Amake us a king to judge us like all the other nations@ (1 Samuel 8:5)
  - 2. The kings which God allowed to reign did not always lead the people in the way of the Lord.
- B. The punishment for Israel was captivity.
  - 1. Babylonian exile for the Northern Kingdom.
  - 2. Assyrian captivity for the Southern Kingdom

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# THE BOOK OF RUTH

## Annette B. Cates

### INTRODUCTION:

One must never judge the importance of a book in the Bible by its length. This is true for the book of Ruth. It is an account of a family's struggle for security, of its sacrifice for the necessities of the family, of the tragedies it faced, and of selflessness, all of which culminate in the romance and marriage that brought one of only two Gentile women into the lineage of Jesus Christ.

### I. THE SETTING OF THE BOOK PROVIDES BACKGROUND INFORMATION.

- A. The author is unknown.
  - 1. He could have been Samuel, Ezra, Hezekiah, or some other person.
  - 2. Samuel is most likely the writer.
- B. The time period appears to be during the time of the judges.
  - 1. The book is placed between Judges and Samuel.
  - 2. During the period of the judges, Israel would rebel against God and God would punish, Israel would repent, and then Israel would recover.
- C. The setting begins in Bethlehem-Judah, moves to Moab, and returns to Bethlehem-Judah.
- D. The individuals involved are Elimelech, Naomi, Mahlon, Chilion, Ruth, Orpah, Boaz, and Obed.
- E. The key words are "kinsman" and "redeemer."
- F. The book of Ruth is an analogy of Christ and the church.

### II. FAMINE BROUGHT SUFFERING AND STARVATION TO THE LAND.

- A. Elimelech and his wife Naomi and their sons Mahlon and Chilion chose to migrate to Moab in order to escape the famine (1:1,2).
- B. The distance was only about thirty miles, but was like another world to them.

### III. AFTER SETTLING IN MOAB, MISFORTUNE PLAGUED THE FAMILY.

- A. Elimelech died (1:3).
  - 1. No indication is given in the text as to how much time had elapsed.
  - 2. No circumstances are given regarding his death.
- B. The sons married Moabitish women, Ruth and Orpah (1:4).
  - 1. This had to be a concern for Naomi.



2. Naomi worshipped God; Moabites were idolaters.
  3. The spiritual well-being of Mahlon and Chilion was at stake.
  4. Their backgrounds were entirely different, making problems likely.
- C. Some ten years later, Mahlon and Chilion died (1:4, 5).
- D. By this time, the famine in Bethlehem-Judah had abated.
1. Naomi decided to return home (1:6-18).
    - a. Ruth and Orpah accompanied her for a short distance.
    - b. Naomi pleaded with them to return to their families.
      - 1) Orpah kissed Naomi and, weeping, turned back.
      - 2) Ruth determined to go with Naomi.

#### **IV. NAOMI AND RUTH ARRIVED IN BETHLEHEM-JUDAH.**

- A. They were greeted with great excitement.
- B. Naomi begged not to be called by her given name, but by "Mara" instead.
1. "Mara" means "bitter" (1:19-22).
  2. Naomi felt she had gone out full and returned empty.
- C. Their arrival coincided with the beginning of the barley harvest.
1. Ruth went to a field to glean leftover grain in accordance with Leviticus 19.
  2. She "happened" to go to a field that belonged to Boaz, a near kinsman to Elimelech.
  3. Boaz noticed Ruth gleaning in his field.
    - a. He noted her industriousness.
    - b. He had learned of her kindness toward Naomi.
  4. He charged his workers not to harm her, to leave extra barley for her, and to allow her to reap with them (1:22-2:23).
- D. Naomi was excited by Boaz' encouragement of Ruth.
1. She knew he was a near kinsman, thus eligible to marry Ruth.
  2. Naomi told Ruth to take advantage of a custom that allowed a woman to make advances that would equal a proposal.
  3. Ruth was to slip into Boaz room after he had gone to bed and lay down at his feet.
  4. Upon learning that Ruth was there, he praised her kindness and restraint in not going after younger men (3:1-11).
- E. The way to marriage was not completely clear as Boaz was not the nearest kinsman.
1. Levirate law required that the deceased's nearest kin be given opportunity to redeem the widow as his wife (Deut. 25:5-10).
  2. To this end, Boaz went to the town gate where legal and business matters were handled, and where many witnesses would be present.

3. Boaz informed the near kinsman that Ruth was in Bethlehem.
  4. Before witnesses, the kinsman turned down the option to redeem Mahlon's estate and Boaz was free to do so.
- F. Boaz and Ruth were married and their union produced the grandfather of David, and Jesus Christ was born of their lineage (3:12-4:22).

**V. THE BOOK OF RUTH IS A HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF A REAL FAMILY.**

- A. We tend to think that the lives of the people of the Old and New Testaments have little application to us today.
- B. Except for cultural differences, they were like us.
1. They experienced joy and sorrow, hope and fear, hunger and satisfaction just as we do.
  2. They made good decisions; they made unwise decisions.
  3. Could I have done as well?
- C. Circumstances demand that we weigh advantages and disadvantages in making our decisions.
1. We must consider the physical needs of the family.
  2. At the same time, we must not overlook our spiritual needs.
- D. Some fault Elimelech and Naomi for moving to the idolatrous land of Moab.
1. They took a chance with their own souls and those of their sons.
    - a. The soul is worth far more than the whole world (Matt. 16:26).
    - b. They may have planned to return to Bethlehem-Judah as soon as was feasible.
    - c. They may have felt they could keep their family secure in God until such time as they could return.
    - d. Likely Israel was in a period of rebellion against God, thus they may have felt as safe leaving as they would have staying.
  2. The reality is that their sons married Moabitish women.
  3. Before moving to a new area, a family must first consider the situation of the church in the new community.
    - a. Ideally, there will be a strong congregation in the new location.
    - b. If not, they may have an opportunity to begin a new congregation in their own home and serve as unpaid missionaries.
  4. Children know when God is first in their family (Matt. 6:33).
- E. Ruth's decisions were courageous.
1. Could I have gone to a strange land, strange religion, strange customs, strange people, and with a mother-in-law?
  2. Naomi had probably treated Ruth and Orpah as daughters-in-love, not as foreign women whose only tie to her had been the legalities of marriage.
  3. How much had Ruth learned of the true God and of the necessity of

- following Him, not idolatry?
- F. Naomi must have been an ideal mother-in-law.
    - 1. The older woman should have the maturity, wisdom, and life-experiences to set the example before younger in-laws.
    - 2. It is the responsibility of the older to treat the younger with respect and welcome.

**VI. THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD IS EVIDENT IN THE BOOK OF RUTH.**

- A. This is evidenced by the fact that Ruth "happened" to glean in Boaz' field.
- B. God took care of Naomi and Ruth, and would continue to do so.

**CONCLUSION:**

The book of Ruth allows the reader to look down through the ages and see the ultimate outcome of the decisions one family made and the trials they faced along the way. The events occurred centuries ago, but provide learning points for today (Rom. 15:4). Let us place God first in our lives, and He will care for us (I Pet. 5:7).

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  - 1. "Mara" means "bitter" (1:19-22).
  - 2. Naomi felt she had gone out full and returned empty.
- C. Their arrival coincided with the beginning of the barley harvest.
  - 1. Ruth went to a field to glean leftover grain in accordance with Leviticus 19.
  - 2. She "happened" to go to a field that belonged to Boaz, a near kinsman to Elimelech.
  - 3. Boaz noticed Ruth gleaning in his field.
    - a. He noted her industriousness.
    - b. He had learned of her kindness toward Naomi.
  - 4. He charged his workers not to harm her, to leave extra barley for her, and to allow her to reap with them (1:22-2:23).
- D. Naomi was excited by Boaz' encouragement of Ruth.
  - 1. She knew he was a near kinsman, thus eligible to marry Ruth.
  - 2. Naomi told Ruth to take advantage of a custom that

allowed a woman to make advances that would equal a proposal.

3. Ruth was to slip into Boaz room after he had gone to bed and lay down at his feet.

4. Upon learning that Ruth was there, he praised her kindness and restraint in not going after younger men (3:1-11).

E. The way to marriage was not completely clear as Boaz was not the nearest kinsman.

1. Levirate law required that the deceased's nearest kin be given opportunity to redeem the widow as his wife (Deut. 25:5-10).

2. To this end, Boaz went to the town gate where legal and business matters were handled, and where many witnesses would be present.

3. Boaz informed the near kinsman that Ruth was in Bethlehem.

4. Before witnesses, the kinsman turned down the option to redeem Mahlon's estate and Boaz was free to do so.

F. Boaz and Ruth were married and their union produced the grandfather of David, and Jesus Christ was born of their lineage (3:12-4:22).

#### **V. THE BOOK OF RUTH IS A HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF A REAL FAMILY.**

A. We tend to think that the lives of the people of the Old and New Testaments have little application to us today.

B. Except for cultural differences, they were like us.

1. They experienced joy and sorrow, hope and fear, hunger and satisfaction just as we do.

2. They made good decisions; they made unwise decisions.

3. Could I have done as well?

C. Circumstances demand that we weigh advantages and disadvantages in making our decisions.

1. We must consider the physical needs of the family.

2. At the same time, we must not overlook our spiritual needs.

D. Some fault Elimelech and Naomi for moving to the idolatrous land of Moab.

1. They took a chance with their own souls and those of their sons.

a. The soul is worth far more than the whole world (Matt. 16:26).

b. They may have planned to return to Bethlehem-Judah as soon as was feasible.

c. They may have felt they could keep their family secure in God until such time as they could return.

d. Likely Israel was in a period of rebellion

against God, thus they may have felt as safe leaving as they would have staying.

2. The reality is that their sons married Moabitish women.

3. Before moving to a new area, a family must first consider the situation of the church in the new community.

a. Ideally, there will be a strong congregation in the new location.

b. If not, they may have an opportunity to begin a new congregation in their own home and serve as unpaid missionaries.

4. Children know when God is first in their family (Matt. 6:33).

E. Ruth's decisions were courageous.

1. Could I have gone to a strange land, strange religion, strange customs, strange people, and with a mother-in-law?

2. Naomi had probably treated Ruth and Orpah as daughters-in-love, not as foreign women whose only tie to her had been the legalities of marriage.

3. How much had Ruth learned of the true God and of the necessity of following Him, not idolatry?

F. Naomi must have been an ideal mother-in-law.

1. The older woman should have the maturity, wisdom, and life-experiences to set the example before younger in-laws.

2. It is the responsibility of the older to treat the younger with respect and welcome.

## **VI. THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD IS EVIDENT IN THE BOOK OF RUTH.**

A. This is evidenced by the fact that Ruth "happened" to glean in Boaz' field.

B. God took care of Naomi and Ruth, and would continue to do so.

## **CONCLUSION:**

The book of Ruth allows the reader to look down through the ages and see the ultimate outcome of the decisions one family made and the trials they faced along the way. The events occurred centuries ago, but provide learning points for today (Rom. 15:4). Let us place God first in our lives, and He will care for us (I Pet. 5:7).

# THE BOOK OF RUTH

## Annette B. Cates

We must never discount the importance of a book in the Bible because of its length. For example, "minor prophets" is an often misunderstood term. Many mistakenly assume that the word "minor" indicates lesser value to the reader. Not so--"minor" in this instance reflects the fact that these books are shorter than the books of the major prophets. The same principle is true for the Book of Ruth. Within a total of only eighty-five verses we find an account of a family's struggle for security, of its sacrifice for the necessities of the family, of the tragedies it faced, and of selflessness, all of which culminate in the romance and marriage that brought one of only two Gentile women into the lineage of Jesus Christ.

The author of the book of Ruth is unknown. Most seem to think it was Samuel, or Ezra, or Hezekiah, with Samuel being the one most likely to have written it. The only evidence is from the time period covered. The book fits easily between Judges and Samuel. Another consideration is that David is mentioned, but Solomon is not. The period during which the events begin is from one of famine in Bethlehem-Judah to recovery from that disaster. This is typical of the time of the judges when Israel alternately faced punishment from God for their rebellion against Him and God's sending a deliverer when they repented. The setting begins in Bethlehem-Judah, moves to Moab, and returns to Bethlehem-Judah. The individuals involved in this account are Elimelech, Naomi, Mahlon, Chilion, Ruth, Orpah, Boaz, and Obed. The key words of the book are "kinsman" and "redeemer." The book of Ruth is an analogy of Christ and the church.

Circumstances were dire in Bethlehem. Famine brought suffering and death from starvation. People were lacking in the necessities of life. In such times, families may have to face some hard decisions. Thus it was for the little family of Elimelech, Naomi, and their two sons, Mahlon and Chilion. They could remain in their homeland, in familiar surroundings, with family and friends, continuing to suffer, possibly to die. Or, they could flee to a strange land where food was still plentiful and they had hope of survival. They made the hard decision to migrate from Bethlehem-Judah to the land of Moab (1:1,2). The distance was only about thirty miles, but to them, with transportation and roads as they were at that time, it may as well have been around the world.

After having arrived in Moab, misfortune continued to plague this little family. The father, Elimelech, died, leaving Naomi a widow. The text gives no indication of how much time had elapsed, nor the circumstances of his death (1:3). Time passed and the two sons married Moabitish women, Ruth and Orpah (1:4). No doubt, this was an added burden for Naomi, as she was a worshipper of the true God and the Moabite people were idolaters. No matter how many good and positive qualities these girls may have had, this had to be a concern for Naomi, for the spiritual well-being of her sons was at stake. Further, she probably realized that the more a young couple has in common in their backgrounds, the easier it is to adjust to marriage. The family and religious environments of Mahlon, Chilion, Ruth, and Orpah were totally different, and this, no doubt, added to



Naomi's concerns.

About ten years after their marriages, Mahlon and Chilion died (1:4,5). Now Naomi was bereft of not only her husband, but her sons also. She learned that the famine in Bethlehem-Judah had abated and she decided to return home. She felt she had nothing left to keep her in Moab. As Naomi started down the road leaving Moab, both Ruth and Orpah accompanied her. However, after a short distance, Naomi encouraged the young women to return to their people. She kissed them, and they wept. Both said they would go on with Naomi, but she asked, "Why?" as there were no other sons to whom they could be married later. Orpah kissed Naomi again, then turned back to go home. By contrast, Ruth's reaction was different. Her decision was firm--she would go to Bethlehem-Judah with Naomi (1:6-18). She chose the higher road, not the easier one.

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...Naomi contrived a plan, which would have been in the highest degree improper had there not been, on the one hand, a peculiar Oriental custom in vogue, and, on the other, absolute reason for absolute confidence in the incorruptible purity of both Boaz and Ruth. The plan was for Ruth to take the position allowed her by the Levirate law.

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Some scholars fault Elimelech and Naomi for moving to the idolatrous land of Moab, so far ideologically from Bethlehem-Judah. Some go on to conjecture that the deaths of Elimelech, Mahlon, and Chilion were God's retribution for their having done so. [I disagree with this possibility. Nothing in the text would indicate such. An example of another family who left God's country for a heathen one is Lot and his family. In their case, they had warning to get out of Sodom before the city was destroyed (Gen. 19).] Such a decision as they made can be disastrous, for souls are at stake. The soul is of far more value than the body, thus must be given first priority. Jesus said, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? (Matt. 16:26). From a positive point of view, they may have planned to return to Bethlehem as soon as was feasible. They may have felt that they had enough strength or faith to keep their family secure in God until such time as they could

return. It would seem to me that they retained their faith as Ruth knew of Naomi's God (1:16). Also, the fact that Israel was in the midst of a famine indicates that even that land had gone into idolatry. "In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Jud. 17:6). Perhaps the Elimelech family reasoned, "What do we have to lose? Our sons can be lost to God at home as easily as in Moab." We do know that whatever plans they may have had, the reality is that their sons married Moabitish women. Many times, the non-follower of God will be receptive to the truth and obey, but more often it is otherwise and the non-believer is never converted and, instead draws the believer away from God.

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The book of Ruth is the history of a family that allows the reader to look down through the ages and see the ultimate outcome of the decisions they made and the trials they faced. It shows the triumph of good people over a world where idolatry and self-will are the rule. With only four chapters totaling eighty-five verses, it is among the shortest books of the Bible, yet it is one of the richest in meaning. The events occurred centuries ago, but provide learning points for us today. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15:4). Let us place God first in our lives, and He will care for us. "...He careth for you" (1 Pet. 5:7).

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be the grandfather of King David, placing her in the role of ancestress to the Saviour of the world, one of only two Gentile women in such a position. God knew He could use Ruth; can He use us?

The book of Ruth is the history of a family that allows the reader to look down through the ages and see the ultimate outcome of the decisions they made and the trials they faced. It shows the triumph of good people over a world where idolatry and self-will are the rule. With only four chapters totaling eighty-five verses, it is among the shortest books of the Bible, yet it is one of the richest in meaning. The events occurred centuries ago, but provide learning points for us today. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15:4). Let us place God first in our lives, and He will care for us. "...He careth for you" (1 Pet. 5:7).

# GOD=S PROVIDENCE AS SHOWN THROUGH THE FAITHFUL REMNANT

Billy Bland

## INTRODUCTION:

1) I appreciate the opportunity to be a part of **AStanding In The Gap@** Lectureship.

2) AProvidence@ is used only once in the Bible

(1) AAnd when he was called forth, Tertullus began to accuse [him], saying, Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence@(Acts 24:2).

(2) The same word that is translated Aprovidence@ is translated Aprovision@ in Romans 13:14 B ABut put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not **provision** for the flesh, to [fulfil] the lusts [thereof]@ (Rom. 13:14).

(3) The word Aprovidence@ is the idea of God preserving, caring and providing for His creation.

3) Providence does not rule out the freewill nor the free actions of mankind.

(1) The crucifixion of Christ is an example of men working their own wickedness, and yet, fulfilling God=s will.

(2) AYe men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it@ (Acts 2:22-24).

## I. GOD=S PLAN

1) God purposed and planned man=s redemption.

(1) The seed of woman would bruise the head of the serpent.

(2) AAnd I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel@ (Gen. 3:15)

2) Abraham=s seed would bless the world.

(1) God=s promise to Abraham B ANow the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed@ (Gen. 12:1-3).

(2) The Land promise - fulfilled. Cf. Joshua 21:43-45

(3) The nation promise- fulfilled - Israel became a great nation.

(4) The seed promised fulfilled in Christ B ANow to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ@ (Gal. 3:16).

3) The tribe of Judah would exist until the time of Christ B AThe sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him [shall] the gathering of the people [be]@ (Gen. 49:10).

4) For God=s plan to come to fruition, the Jews would have to endure Egypt=s rigorous captivity. Later, they would have to endure the Assyrian and the Babylonian captivities!

5) God planned for the Messiah to come through the nation of Israel and specifically the tribe of Judah and the lineage of David!

## **II. GOD=S PROVIDENCE**

1) It is reported that Frederick The Great, King of Prussia 1740 - 1786, demanded: AGive me in one word, a proof of the truth of the Bible,@ and the reply was Athe Jews.@

2) Israel came out of Egypt and entered into the promised land.

(1) Their surviving the tremendous, rigorous persecution of the Egyptians and coming out of Egypt and then conquering the nations in the land of Canaan, shows God=s great providence.

(2) They soon turned away from God and suffered again!

3) When giving the law to Israel, God pronounced blessings and curses upon Israel, depending on their obedience or disobedience to the covenant. Deut. 27 - 28

(1) If they turned away from God, they would be taken off their land and go into captivity. Deut. 28, 36, 41

A. The Northern ten tribes went into Assyrian captivity in 721 B.C.

B. The Southern tribes went into Babylonian captivity in 606.

(2) Israel would become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword. Deut. 28:37

3) In spite of their disobedience and punishment, a remnant would return. Deut. 30:1-3, Neh. 1:3

4) God never allowed them to be fully eliminated B ATherefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the LORD; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make [him] afraid. For I [am] with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished@ (Jer. 30:10-11).

5) God=s providence is seen when Athaliah attempted to destroy all the seed royal.

- (1) Athaliah purposed to destroy all the seed of David and make herself queen. 2 Kings 11.  
(2) However, when the seedline was being slain, Jehosheba hid Joash for a period of six years. The seed line was preserved!  
(3) After six years, Jehoiada, the priest presented Joash as the King! 2 Kings 11:12  
(4) When this happened, ironically, Athaliah cried Atreason, treason.@ 2 Kings 11:14  
(5) Wicked Athaliah is slain. 2 Kings 11:16  
(6) God preserved the seed line (cf. Gen 49:10).

6) Many years later, Haman purposed to kill all the Jews.

- (1) Israel had been taken into Babylon captivity, but then Babylon was taken over by the Medes & Persians.  
(2) During the Medo- Persian period, Esther, a Jew, becomes Queen. Esther 1  
(3) Haman, a man of pride, is raised to a high position. Esther 3:1  
(4) All bow to Haman, **except Mordecai**, who is a Jew and an uncle to Queen Esther. Esther 3:2  
(5) Haman wants to kill all the Jews because of Moredcai. Esther 3:8-10  
(6) King Ahasuerus gives the decree to kill all the Jews on a certain day.  
(7) This decree is irreversible (the law of the Medes and the Persians).  
(8) Mordecai appeals to Esther B AFor if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, [then] shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for [such] a time as this@(Esther 4:14).  
(9) Esther allowed entrance to the King, she plans a banquet and invites the King and Haman. Haman boasts about such, thinking of his Aimportance and prominence.@ Esther 5  
(10) On a sleepless night, King Ahaserus had the chronicles read to him and he learns that a plot to kill him had been averted by Mordecai. He plans to honor Mordecai.  
(11) He calls for Haman and asked what should the King do to the man whom he wants to honor. Haman thinks of himself and he states B ALet the royal apparel be brought which the king [useth] to wear, and the horse that the king rideth upon, and the crown royal which is set upon his head@ (Esther 6:8).  
(12) AThen the king said to Haman, Make haste, [and] take the apparel and the

horse, as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, that sitteth at the king's gate: let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken. Then took Haman the apparel and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and brought him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaimed before him, Thus shall it be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour. And Mordecai came again to the king's gate. But Haman hastened to his house mourning, and having his head covered@ (Esther 6:10-12).

(13) Esther had the banquet for the King and Haman. She requested that the King spare her and her people from those who purposed to destroy them. Esther 6:3

(14) The Kings asked who had purposed such a thing and she replied, Athis wicked Haman@ (Esther 7:6).

(15) The King in his anger walks out and when he comes back he sees Haman fallen upon the bed of Esther and he declares that Haman is to be hanged on the gallows that Haman had made for Mordecai. Esther 7:9

(16) The Jews are granted permission to defend themselves and are preserved. Esther 8

## **CONCLUSION:**

- 1) God preserved His people through a remnant.
- 2) None could alter the promise of God.
- 3) The seed line was preserved, the Messiah did come and accomplish the will of God (John 19:30).
- 4) ABut when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law@ (Gal. 4:4)
- 5) AKnown unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world@ (Acts 15:18).
- 6) God still watches over His people.
- 7) AFor the eyes of the Lord [are] over the righteous, and his ears [are open] unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord [is] against them that do evil@ (1Pet. 3:12).

# PRIDE: THE KINGLY KILLER

B. J. Clarke

## INTRODUCTION:

- A. From cover to cover the Bible clearly defines and describes the devastating nature and consequences of pride.
- B. It has oft been pointed out that the middle letter of the word *Asin* is the letter *A* and the middle letter of the word *Apride* is the letter *I*. Thus, sin is a matter of pride. It is the result of doing what I want to do rather than what God has told me to do/not do.
  - 1. God had clearly instructed Adam and Eve that if they ate of the forbidden fruit that they would surely die (Gen. 2:15-17).
  - 2. Nevertheless, when Eve saw that the tree was a tree to be desired to make one wise, the pride of life kicked into high gear and Eve and Adam did what they wanted to do rather than what God said to do.
  - 3. Of course, we all know the consequences of their actions. Pride was a killer.
- C. In fact, the deadly consequences of pride are noted in every section of the Scriptures (Psa. 101:5; Prov. 16:18; Dan. 4:37; Matt. 23:12; Jas. 4:6, 10).
- D. For the purposes of this lectureship our focus will be upon the deadly effects of pride as recorded in the books of history. Of course, there is more material than we can possibly cover in one outline, but we will explore some of the most prominent cases of pride in this portion of the Sacred writings.
- E. If you want proof that pride is a killer then...
  - I. *LOOK AT WHAT IT DID TO SAUL*
    - A. Saul considered himself so important that he could deliberately alter the will of God to suit his own purposes.
      - 1. He did this when he offered the burnt offering (1 Sam. 13:5-13).
      - 2. He did this when he spared king Agag of Amalek and would not utterly destroy the best of the sheep, the oxen, etc. (1 Sam. 15:3-23).
    - B. After David slew Goliath, the women chanted to each other in song, *Asaul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands* (1 Sam. 18:7).
      - 1. While it may have been inadvisable for the women to draw such a comparison, David had nothing to do with them saying it.
      - 2. Nevertheless, Saul was very wroth and *Aeyed David from that day forward* (1 Sam. 18:9).
      - 3. The rest of 1 Samuel chronicles the murderous intent of Saul toward David. In the end, *Saul's pride was a killer, not to David, but to Saul's own soul* (1 Sam. 15:17).

## II. *LOOK AT WHAT IT DID TO UZZIAH*

- A. Uzziah became king of Judah when he was sixteen years old (2 Chron. 26:3).
- B. His kingly career started very well.
  - 1. He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord (2 Chron. 26:4).
  - 2. He sought God...and as long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper (2 Chron. 26:5).
  - 3. A God helped him...and his name spread far abroad; for he was marvelously helped, till he was strong@ (2 Chron. 26:7, 15).
- C. A But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the Lord his God, and went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense@ (2 Chron. 26:16).
  - 1. Azariah and 80 other priests went in after him and confronted him about his presumptive deed. They explained to him that he was not authorized to burn incense and that he had trespassed (2 Chron. 26:18).
  - 2. Rather than humbly accepting their rebuke, he became wroth.
- D. His prideful anger did not serve him well. In the midst of his arrogant temper tantrum, God afflicted him with leprosy and he remained a leper unto the day of his death (2 Chron. 26:19-21). Uzziah discovered that pride is a killer.

## III. *LOOK AT WHAT IT DID TO HAMAN*

- A. Haman should have been a happy and contented man. King Ahasuerus promoted him A and set his seat above all the princes that were with him@ (Esth. 3:1).
- B. Haman strutted through the king=s gate and everyone bowed and revered him C everyone except for Mordecai (3:2).
- C. A And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath@ (3:5).
- D. Haman=s pride was so injured that he wasn=t content to mete out his vengeance upon Mordecai alone. He wasn=t going to rest until he had wiped out the entire race of Jews throughout the whole kingdom (3:6).
- E. He was willing to pay money to convince the king to sign a decree A to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish all Jews, both young and old, little children and women in one day, even upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar@ (3:9, 13).
- F. Haman got what he wanted and was walking on air!
  - 1. He was invited to a private banquet with the king and queen, and invited to

return the next day for another one (5:8).

2. Upon hearing this, he left Ajoyful and with a glad heart@Cuntil he saw Mordecai. Then he became indignant because Mordecai would not stand to honor him (5:9).
3. Haman wanted to go after Mordecai right then and there but he refrained himself (5:10).

G. He had more important things to deal withClike hurrying home and calling his friends and wife to come to his side.

1. When his friends arrived, it was time for the Haman show to begin.
2. He went on and on about how rich he was, how many children he had, how many promotions he had received, and how no one had been promoted to a higher position than he had (5:11).
3. Haman had saved the best for last. He made sure that his friends and family knew that he and he alone had been invited to a special banquet with the king and queen (5:12).
4. But even then, he whined to his cronies about how none of this cancelled out his pain of seeing Mordecai refuse to honor him.
5. His wife and friends couldn=t bear to see their hero hurting so much. So they said, AWhy don=t you get the king=s permission to hang him? But make sure you murder him before the banquet. That way you=ll be able to have a good time.@ Haman thought it was an excellent idea and so he commanded that the gallows be made immediately (5:14).

H. The next day Haman came strutting into the presence of the king so that he could get permission to hang Mordecai.

1. Haman was completely unaware that the king had just learned the night before that Mordecai had saved the king=s life in days gone by when he exposed an assassination plot against the king. Moreover, the king discovered that no reward had been given to Mordecai for this valuable intelligence (6:1-3).
2. Perhaps the king thought, AWell, I=ll just ask Haman. He is my top adviser. He=ll know what to do to really honor Mordecai.@

I. Thinking of Mordecai, the king saw Haman and asked, AWhat shall be done unto the man the king delighteth to honor?@

1. You can almost see Haman=s chest puff out as he hears these words.
2. He thought, ATo whom would he king delight to do honor more than to myself?@ (6:6).

J. Picturing himself as the recipient of this honor, Haman said to the king:

1. Put some of the royal apparel that you have actually worn upon him.
2. Put the man on your horse, and let him wear the royal crown upon his head.
3. Have one of your most noble princes lead this man by horseback and parade him through the city, shouting, AThus shall it be done to the man whom the



king delighteth to honor@ (6:9).

- K. I would love to have seen the look on Haman=s face when the king essentially said, AThat is a great idea. I tell you what. I choose you to be the noble prince that will lead this man through the streets proclaiming his greatness. So take the apparel and the horse and hurry on over to the king=s gate. When you get there, dress Mordecai the Jew in my clothing, put him on the horseback and then shout his praises as loud as you can as you parade him through the streets.@
- L. Talk about the color draining from your face! But Haman had no choice. As much as he hated Mordecai, if he rebelled against the king=s commandment it would have meant certain death. So he did as he was told (6:11).
- M. When the parade was over he raced home, weeping in shame and covering his head. As he was in the middle of relating his no-good, very bad day to his wife and friends, he was summoned to the banquet that Esther had prepared.
- N. Haman=s no-good, very bad day was about to get worse.
1. At the banquet Esther revealed to the king that someone had sold her and her people into a death sentence (7:1-4).
  2. Can you see Haman squirming and fidgeting as the king asks, AWho is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so?@ (7:5)?
  3. Can you see Haman looking for a place to hide as Esther replies, AThe adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman@ (7:6)?
- O. Fearing for his life, Haman watched the king storm out of the room into the palace garden. In a last ditch effort, Haman pleaded with Esther to talk the king out of killing him.
- P. When the king returned from the palace garden, Haman was lying on the bed where Esther was, still pleading for his life.
- Q. At this time, Harbonah, one of the king=s chamberlains informed the king that a gallows had been built the night before by Haman for the purpose of hanging Mordecai upon it. Then the king said, AHang him thereon@ (7:9) and so they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai (7:10).
- R. Haman=s unbridled pride appeared to be a killer for the Jewish people, but instead it turned out to be his own killer.

#### IV. *LOOK AT WHAT HUMILITY DID*

- A. For Hezekiah
1. Hezekiah started out humbly and God greatly blessed him Aso that he was magnified in the sight of all the nations@ (2 Chron. 32:23).
  2. Hezekiah became deathly ill, but God graciously spared his life (2 Chron.

32:24).

3. ABut Hezekiah rendered not again according unto the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up: therefore was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem@ (2 Chron. 32:25).
4. ANotwithstanding, Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the Lord came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah@ (2 Chron. 32:26).

B. For Manasseh

1. Manasseh was one of the wickedest men to ever live.
2. AHe did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, like unto the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel@ (2 Chr. 33:2).
3. He sacrificed his children in the fire in an attempt to appease the idol god Molech (2 Chr. 33:6; cf. Lev. 18:21; 20:2-5).
4. He Ashed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another@ (2 Kings 21:16).
5. ASo Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen, whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel@ (2 Chr. 33:9).
6. God tried to influence Manasseh and the people to repent by sending prophets unto them: AAnd the LORD spake to Manasseh, and to his people: but they would not hearken@ (2 Chr. 33:10).
7. When Manasseh did not respond to preaching, God resorted to sterner measures: AWherefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon@ (2 Chr. 33:11).
8. AAnd when he was in affliction, he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, And prayed unto him: and he was intreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD he was God@ (2 Chr. 33:12-13).
9. The genuineness of Manasseh=s repentance is seen in his actions upon returning to the throne.
  - a. AAnd he took away the strange gods, and the idol out of the house of the LORD, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of the LORD, and in Jerusalem, and cast them out of the city@ (2 Chr. 33:15).
  - b. AAnd he repaired the altar of the LORD, and sacrificed thereon peace offerings and thank offerings, and commanded Judah to serve the LORD God of Israel@ (2 Chr. 33:16).

C. For Josiah

1. When the book of the Law was found and Josiah discovered that portions of the Law had not been faithfully kept, Ahe rent his clothes@ (2 Chron.

- 34:14-19).
2. God told him, *ABecause thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou heardest his words against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, and humbledst thyself before me, and didst rend thy clothes and weep before me; I have even heard thee also, saith the Lord@ (2 Chron. 34:27).*
  3. As a reward, God promised Josiah that he would go to his grave in peace and not have to see all of the evil that would be brought upon Jerusalem (2 Chron. 34:28).

**CONCLUSION:**

- A. We have seen that pride is a killer, but humility is the key to life with God.
- B. One final passage from the books of history provides a good summary to this message. God declared, *AIf my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land@ (2 Chron. 7:14).*

# PROPHECIES AND THEIR FULFILLMENT AS REVEALED IN THE BOOKS OF HISTORY

## Bobby Liddell

### **INTRODUCTION:**

1. Our Lord said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Mat. 5:17-18).
  - a. Fulfillment of prophecy was absolutely necessary for the credibility of God's message.
  - b. Fulfillment was also necessary for the completion of God's plan for man's salvation (Gen. 3:15).
2. Thus, the God of the universe gave, through men, His prophecy to men (Heb. 1:1ff).
  - a. A prophet was one chosen to be so by God, had words from God put in his mouth, and was to speak only that which God commanded him (Deu. 18:18).
  - b. Thus, a true prophet (or man of God [1 Sam. 9:6], or Seer [1 Sam. 9:9]) spoke forth only that which was given him of God (Jer. 23:28; 2 Pet. 2:1).
  - c. Yet, evil men mocked, misused, persecuted, and slew God's spokesmen (Acts 7:52; 1 The. 2:15; Mat. 23:37), because, in their rebellion, they rejected the message from God and "despised his words" (2 Chr. 36:16).
3. Let us consider the following.
  - a. What is prophecy?
  - b. Fulfillment of prophecy proves the Bible came from God, not man.
  - c. A sample of prophecies, and their fulfillment, from the Books of History.
  - d. The "Schools of the Prophets."

### **DISCUSSION:**

#### **I. WHAT IS PROPHECY?**

A. Prophecy, by definition, is: that which is spoken forth, and that which is spoken forth, in true prophecy, is that which could not be known by man unless revealed by God; thus, whether predictive (foretelling), or declarative (forth-telling), and whether having to do with events past, present, or future, prophecy signifies the speaking forth of the will of God to man.

1. True prophecy is found only in the Bible, and has certain characteristics (all of which have been attacked by liberal critics), which, when understood, should heighten one's appreciation for God's inspired Word.

2. Bible prophecy often involves that which is remote as to time and place, even that which is nonexistent at the time of the prophecy (Dan. 2:44).

3. Bible prophecy is often very specific and detailed; whereas, with man, the more specific the prediction, the less likely is the possibility of its coming to pass, with God, accuracy is not accidental, nor is it incidental, but significant (Mic. 5:2; Zec. 11:12-13 and Mat. 26:13; 27:3-10).

4. Bible prophecy is often antithetical to human reasoning, for what man, on his own, would have predicted such contradictions to that which would accord with the

thinking of men, yet, which show the prophecies to be miraculously given from God (Isa. 53).

B. Liberal "higher critics" deny the element of prediction, or foretelling, in prophecy.

1. Their assumption is that a prophet was a man of "his own time" who spoke only to men "of his own time."

2. While, indeed, a prophet was a man who spoke to his contemporaries, that tells only half the story, for God's prophets spoke to men of their own time about those things which were of concern and significance, but they also spoke of those things which were future and which would be of concern and significance to all, from those then living, to those who would see the fulfillment of the prophecy, and to those who would live after that fulfillment and read the divine record of the prophecy and its fulfillment.

C. Contrary to other arguments of the "critics," Biblical prophecy was not:

1. Written after the fact (an argument which contradicts itself).

2. Ambiguous (though some prophecy is "veiled," none is ambiguous).

3. "Artificially" fulfilled (that is, by twisted and concocted stories).

4. Nor, a phenomenon common to all religions and peoples (the well-attested evidence of one single "prophecy" requiring miraculous revelation has never been found in any form of transmission in all the world-outside that found in the Bible).

## **II. FULFILLMENT OF PROPHECY PROVES THE BIBLE CAME FROM GOD, NOT MAN.**

A. Only the omniscient God has the power to know what the future holds.

1. Thus, His book has undeniable proof of its divine authorship.

2. No greater testimony can be found to attest to the divine revelation of the inspired Scriptures than the fulfillment of that which was miraculously foretold in prophecy, and "the scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35).

B. How else can one explain the following?

1. How the hundreds of prophecies,

2. Given over thousands of years,

3. Through men who lived in different times,

4. And who lived at different places,

5. Who spoke different languages,

6. And most of whom never met one another,

7. Could demonstrate such perfect agreement,

8. Except that "the prophets...have spoken in the name of the Lord" (Jam. 5:10)?

C. Were there prophecies in the Bible which should have been fulfilled, yet which have not been:

1. No right-thinking individual could have faith either in it, or in the One from whom it claims to be.

2. Therefore, the sure and final test of prophecy is its fulfillment (Deu. 18:22).

## **III. A SAMPLE OF PROPHECIES, AND THEIR FULFILLMENT, FROM THE BOOKS OF HISTORY.**

A. 2 Samuel 7.

1. Nathan, the prophet, informed David concerning the coming Christ and His kingdom (2 Sam. 7:12ff), and gave these important points: after David's death, his "seed" (Christ) would be set up, and His throne and kingdom would be established forever.

2. Peter declared the fulfillment of this prophecy, in Christ, on Pentecost day (Acts 2:25-36).

3. Note, especially, verse 30, and compare the following: Psalm 89:3-4; 110:1; 132:11.

B. 2 Samuel 12.

1. After David's sins involving Bathsheba, Nathan, the prophet, came to David with a parable to confront him, and in doing so told David the following.

a. The sword would never depart from his house (v. 10).

b. God would raise up evil against him out of his own house (v. 11).

c. God said to David, through Nathan, "I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun" (v. 11).

d. The child born to David and Bathsheba would die (v. 14).

2. These all came to pass, as David reaped what he had sown.

C. 1 Kings 11.

1. Ahijah, the prophet, foretold to Jeroboam the rending of the kingdom from the son of Solomon, and the giving of ten tribes to be under the rule of Jeroboam.

2. This prophecy was fulfilled as recorded in 1 Kings 11 (note especially verse 15).

D. 1 Kings 13.

1. The man of God (sometimes called the "young prophet"), prophesied against the altar of the Lord: "O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee" (v. 2).

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### **CONCLUSION:**

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them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into" (1 Pet. 1: 10-12).

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# PROPHECIES AND THEIR FULFILLMENT AS REVEALED IN THE BOOKS OF HISTORY

## Bobby Liddell

### **INTRODUCTION:**

1. Our Lord said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Mat. 5:17-18).
  - a. Fulfillment of prophecy was absolutely necessary for the credibility of God's message.
  - b. Fulfillment was also necessary for the completion of God's plan for man's salvation (Gen. 3:15).
2. Thus, the God of the universe gave, through men, His prophecy to men (Heb. 1:1ff).
  - a. A prophet was one chosen to be so by God, had words from God put in his mouth, and was to speak only that which God commanded him (Deu. 18:18).
  - b. Thus, a true prophet (or man of God [1 Sam. 9:6], or Seer [1 Sam. 9:9]) spoke forth only that which was given him of God (Jer. 23:28; 2 Pet. 2:1).
  - c. Yet, evil men mocked, misused, persecuted, and slew God's spokesmen (Acts 7:52; 1 The. 2:15; Mat. 23:37), because, in their rebellion, they rejected the message from God and "despised his words" (2 Chr. 36:16).
3. Let us consider the following.
  - a. What is prophecy?
  - b. Fulfillment of prophecy proves the Bible came from God, not man.
  - c. A sample of prophecies, and their fulfillment, from the Books of History.
  - d. The "Schools of the Prophets."

### **DISCUSSION:**

#### **I. WHAT IS PROPHECY?**

A. Prophecy, by definition, is: that which is spoken forth, and that which is spoken forth, in true prophecy, is that which could not be known by man unless revealed by God; thus, whether predictive (foretelling), or declarative (forth-telling), and whether having to do with events past, present, or future, prophecy signifies the speaking forth of the will of God to man.

1. True prophecy is found only in the Bible, and has certain characteristics (all of which have been attacked by liberal critics), which, when understood, should heighten one's appreciation for God's inspired Word.

2. Bible prophecy often involves that which is remote as to time and place, even that which is nonexistent at the time of the prophecy (Dan. 2:44).

3. Bible prophecy is often very specific and detailed; whereas, with man, the more specific the prediction, the less likely is the possibility of its coming to pass, with God, accuracy is not accidental, nor is it incidental, but significant (Mic. 5:2; Zec. 11:12-13 and Mat. 26:13; 27:3-10).

4. Bible prophecy is often antithetical to human reasoning, for what man, on his own, would have predicted such contradictions to that which would accord with the

thinking of men, yet, which show the prophecies to be miraculously given from God (Isa. 53).

B. Liberal "higher critics" deny the element of prediction, or foretelling, in prophecy.

1. Their assumption is that a prophet was a man of "his own time" who spoke only to men "of his own time."

2. While, indeed, a prophet was a man who spoke to his contemporaries, that tells only half the story, for God's prophets spoke to men of their own time about those things which were of concern and significance, but they also spoke of those things which were future and which would be of concern and significance to all, from those then living, to those who would see the fulfillment of the prophecy, and to those who would live after that fulfillment and read the divine record of the prophecy and its fulfillment.

C. Contrary to other arguments of the "critics," Biblical prophecy was not:

1. Written after the fact (an argument which contradicts itself).

2. Ambiguous (though some prophecy is "veiled," none is ambiguous).

3. "Artificially" fulfilled (that is, by twisted and concocted stories).

4. Nor, a phenomenon common to all religions and peoples (the well-attested evidence of one single "prophecy" requiring miraculous revelation has never been found in any form of transmission in all the world-outside that found in the Bible).

## **II. FULFILLMENT OF PROPHECY PROVES THE BIBLE CAME FROM GOD, NOT MAN.**

A. Only the omniscient God has the power to know what the future holds.

1. Thus, His book has undeniable proof of its divine authorship.

2. No greater testimony can be found to attest to the divine revelation of the inspired Scriptures than the fulfillment of that which was miraculously foretold in prophecy, and "the scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35).

B. How else can one explain the following?

1. How the hundreds of prophecies,

2. Given over thousands of years,

3. Through men who lived in different times,

4. And who lived at different places,

5. Who spoke different languages,

6. And most of whom never met one another,

7. Could demonstrate such perfect agreement,

8. Except that "the prophets...have spoken in the name of the Lord" (Jam. 5:10)?

C. Were there prophecies in the Bible which should have been fulfilled, yet which have not been:

1. No right-thinking individual could have faith either in it, or in the One from whom it claims to be.

2. Therefore, the sure and final test of prophecy is its fulfillment (Deu. 18:22).

## **III. A SAMPLE OF PROPHECIES, AND THEIR FULFILLMENT, FROM THE BOOKS OF HISTORY.**

A. 2 Samuel 7.

1. Nathan, the prophet, informed David concerning the coming Christ and His kingdom (2 Sam. 7:12ff), and gave these important points: after David's death, his "seed" (Christ) would be set up, and His throne and kingdom would be established forever.

2. Peter declared the fulfillment of this prophecy, in Christ, on Pentecost day (Acts 2:25-36).

3. Note, especially, verse 30, and compare the following: Psalm 89:3-4; 110:1; 132:11.

B. 2 Samuel 12.

1. After David's sins involving Bathsheba, Nathan, the prophet, came to David with a parable to confront him, and in doing so told David the following.

a. The sword would never depart from his house (v. 10).

b. God would raise up evil against him out of his own house (v. 11).

c. God said to David, through Nathan, "I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun" (v. 11).

d. The child born to David and Bathsheba would die (v. 14).

2. These all came to pass, as David reaped what he had sown.

C. 1 Kings 11.

1. Ahijah, the prophet, foretold to Jeroboam the rending of the kingdom from the son of Solomon, and the giving of ten tribes to be under the rule of Jeroboam.

2. This prophecy was fulfilled as recorded in 1 Kings 11 (note especially verse 15).

D. 1 Kings 13.

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# Ezra

Chris Butler

## INTRODUCTION:

1. The books of Ezra, Esther and Nehemiah make up the last years of Old testament history, Nehemiah being the last book.
2. They cover collectively a period of about 100 years.
3. The book of Ezra covers the history of the first and second returns under Zerubbabel and Ezra.
4. The time period is from 536 when Zerubbabel led the first return to 458 when Ezra returned to help reform the people.
5. Under Zerubbabel=s leadership the temple was to be rebuilt. It had been destroyed some fifty years earlier in 586 when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem.
6. Under Ezra=s leadership the people were to be reformed.
7. The sole reason we are able to study this book is because of Israel=s transgression.
  - a. The Jews went into captivity because of their sins.
  - b. God told them this would happen. Read the entire chapter of Deut. 28; Lev. 26.
  - c. Prophets warned this captivity would come. Jer. 1:14-16; 2:20-20;
  - d. Let us not ever forget the seriousness of sin. Is. 59:1-2; Prov. 6:16
8. Outline of the Book. This outline is from two sources. The Outline Bible and Living Messages of the Old Testament.
  - a. The Restoration of the House of God. Ezra 1-6. Zerubbabel leads the first return in 536 B. C.
    - i. The Decree of Cyrus fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah. 1:1-4
    - ii. The Donations given to the Work. 1:6-11
    - iii. The Dedication to the Work. 1:5; 2:1-67
    - iv. The Desire to Worship. 3:1-13
    - v. The Disruption of the Work. 4-5
    - vi. The Discovery of the Writing of Cyrus. 6:1-22
  - b. The Reformation of the people. Ezra 7-10. Ezra leads the second return in 458 B.C.
    - i. The Preparation. 7:1-10
    - ii. The Cooperation. 7:11-28
    - iii. The Participation. 8:1-20
    - iv. The Supplication. 8:21-23
    - v. The Authorization. 8:24-30
    - vi. The Destination. 8:31-32
    - vii. The Presentation. 8:33-36
    - viii. The Transgression by the people. 9:1-15
    - ix. The Confession by the people. 10:1-44
9. A Time Line for the book is helpful in our study. (Denton Lectures. Ezra)
  - a. 586 B Babylon Carried Israel into captivity. 2 Chron. 36.

- b. 536 B Cyrus allow for the return of Israel under Zerubbabel and Ezra.
  - c. 535 B Rebuilding of the temple began. Ezra 4:4
  - d. 529 B Work on the temple ceased. Ezra 4:24
  - e. 520 B Haggai and Zechariah preach and encourage for the work to continue.
  - f. 516 B The work on the temple was completed. Ezra 6:15
  - g. 485 B Ahasuerus became King.
  - h. 483 B Vashti was disposed
  - i. 479 B Ahasuerus was defeated at Thermopylae and Salamis
  - j. 479 B Esther became queen
  - k. 474 B Esther through her great courage saved the nation.
  - l. 457 B Ezra returns
  - m. 444 B Nehemiah returns to rebuild the walls.
  - n. 432 B The marriage problem was solved. (Nehemiah Malachi)
10. This book is about restoration. The temple needed to be restored, the place of worship laid waste for fifty years. It needed to be built again.
  11. More importantly the hearts of the children of God needed to be restored. This is the primary mission of Ezra.
  12. Let us study together some of the great lessons from this book.

## DISCUSSION:

### I. *THE SERIOUSNESS OF SIN.*

- A. As we said in the introduction, the very reason we are able to study this book is because of sin.
  1. Notice the attitude of Israel toward the messenger of God. ABut they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy.@ (2 Chron. 36:16 )
  2. Israel knew they were not to have these other gods. (Ex. 20:1-5)
- B. Sin hardens the heart.
  1. They were so in love with the worlds ways that when God sent them a preacher they mocked him. (1 Jn. 2:15-17)
  2. They despised his words.
- C. Sin causes God to be angry. It brings His wrath.
  1. Time after time they heard the prophets, but would not repent.
  2. God is longsuffering, He is patient. He is compassionate. 2 Chron, 36:15.
  3. Lev. 10:1-2 God struck them dead. Why? SIN.
- D. Now is the time for grace and mercy of God.
  1. He wants all to be saved. (2 Pet. 3:9; 1 Tim. 2:4)
  2. Paul said now is the time. AFor he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.@ (2 Cor 6:2)

- E. When death comes my way, or the Lord returns there will be no grace, no mercy for those in sin.
1. The Lord will return in vengeance. (2 Thes. 1:6-9)
  2. Those that know not God and obey not the gospel will be punished.
  3. May we learn that sin is serious.

## II. *THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD.*

- A. Cyrus King of Persia plays a prominent role in the return of the Jews to Jerusalem.
1. We read twice statements about him and the decree that was made, and note, that decree was put in writing.
  2. 2 Chron. 36 closes with words about the captivity. And then we are introduced to Cyrus.
  3. 2 Chron. 36:22-23 and Ezra 1:1-2 are nearly identical.
  4. But this is not the first time we read of Cyrus.
- B. AThe most high ruleth in the kingdoms of men.@ (Dan. 4:17).
1. The Prophecy of Isaiah about Cyrus was about 173 (one has said) years prior to its fulfillment. (Isa. 44:28-45:1-2)
  2. Isaiah, before the captivity, before the rise of the Persian empire, and before their conquering Babylon, said that Cyrus would build the temple.
  3. This was even before the temple was destroyed.
  4. God through His providence worked through Babylon, Persia and kingdoms to follow to accomplish his purpose.
  5. God=s people had to return to His city, the place He had chosen.
  6. Why? As one man said, the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem, not Babylon.

## III. *THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD.*

- A. God=s word is His bond. What he says He will do.
1. God spoke through Jeremiah these words, AFor thus saith the Lord, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon *I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you,* in causing you to return to this place.@ (Jeremiah 29:10)
  2. When we turn to the first few pages of Ezra we see that God is true to His word.
  3. Just as we have seen, Persia is in power, Cyrus is king, and he allows the captives to return to build the house of the Lord.
  4. Not only are they allowed to return, but they are supplied greatly for this task.
  5. Cyrus send back the vessels of the temple that Nebuchadnezzar had taken to Babylon. (Ezra 1:7)



- B. God is no less faithful to His word today than He was then.
1. When He tells us that baptism saves us, that our sins are forgiven, washed away and blotted out that settles the matter. (Mk. 16:15-16; Eph 1:7; Acts 22:16; Acts 3:19)
  2. There is not a person alive that can change that.
  3. When God tells us He adds us upon our salvation to the one church, which is the body of Christ, we had better listen. (Acts 2:47; Mat. 16:18; Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18; 1 Cor.12:13)
  4. When God tells us that one day His Son will return in the air and there will be a judgement we better listen. 1 Thes. 4:14-18; Heb. 9:27; 2 Cor. 5:10; Jn. 12:48)
  5. God is faithful to His word. AHeaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.@ (Mat 24:35; 1 Pet. 1:25)

#### IV. *THE RESTORATION OF GOD=S HOUSE*

- A. Imagine how many sacrifices had been offered through the many years since the law was given to Moses at Sinai.
1. Hundreds, thousands one might say.
  2. Now for fifty years the temple laid destroyed.
  3. It needed to be built again.
  4. It was the place of worship.
  5. It was the place where God dwelt. (1 Kings 8:)
  6. It was the place where His name was. (1 Kings 8:29)
- B. The house of God today needs to be built.
1. The church is referred to as the house of God. (1 Tim. 3:16)
  2. Chris laid the foundation. (1 Cor. 3:11)
  3. We are the builders. (1 Cor. 3:10-15)
  4. God=s house is not made up of stone and wood like the temple was but it is made up of the souls of men. AYe also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.@ 1 Peter 2:5
- C. We must build with God=s approval. Col 3:17. AAuthority@
1. Cyrus knew that God wanted him to build the temple. Ezra 1:1-2
  2. Zerubbabel and those who returned went back with a purpose, they knew as well.
  3. God had said through Jeremiah that Israel would return. The plan originated with God. It was to be carried out as He directed.
  4. The church was His eternal purpose. (Eph. 3:10-11)
  5. Christ purchased the church and not man.
  6. We must do things His way.

V. *THE WORK OF GOD=S PEOPLE*

- A. Notice the words of Cyrus. A Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem.@ (Ezra 1:3)
1. AWho is there among you of all HIS people!@
  2. This work was for God=s people and His people alone.
  3. The Request to help. When the adversaries came, notice that they wanted to help in the work. (Ezra 4:2)
  4. The Response. A But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them, *Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel,* as king Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us.@ (Ezra 4:3 )
- B. The work of the Lord today, likewise is for His people.
1. The denominations say to us join in, and many do.
  2. Like Zerubbabel said many years ago, may we say today, Aye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God!!@
  3. We must be about our Father=s business.

VI. *THE EFFECT OF PREACHING.*

- A. The work of God=s enemies.
1. Because of the enemies of God the work on the temple had been stopped.
  2. These enemies went to a lot of trouble. They hired Acounsellers@. (Ezra 4:5)
  3. They caused the work of the temple to be stopped. (Ezra 4:24)
- B. The prophets Haggai and Zechariah are sent to encourage the people in the building of God=s temple.
1. AThey prophesied@
    - a. A prophet was one who spoke the word of the Lord.
    - b. He did so through means of the Holy Spirit. 1 Pet. 1:21 Amoved by the Holy Ghost.@
    - c. Heb. 1:1-2 Aspake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets.@
    - d. When we speak today, it had better be the words of the Lord.
    - e. Paul told Timothy to Apreach the word.@ (2 Tim. 4:2)
    - f. If I preach any thing other than the word of God I become accursed.
    - g. Haggai and Zechariah did not counsel them to reach out to their enemies and seek peace. They did not instruct them to seek help from their enemies.
    - h. They told Israel to rise and build.

2. In the name of the Lord.
  - a. Their preaching was by the authority of God.
    - (1) Haggai 1:1 The word of the Lord came to Haggai
    - (2) Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying
    - (3) We find references to Haggai's preaching being the word of God in verses, 3, 7, 9, 12, 13.
  - b. Do you think there was any confusion about whom the message was from?
    - (1) Look at verse 12 of Haggai 1. A...remnant of the people obeyed the voice of the Lord their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the Lord their God had sent him.
    - (2) God's word when it is preached in its truth is just as if the Lord were speaking directly to us.
  - c. Today we have authority to go and preach. (Mat. 28:18-20)
  - d. We have permission from the Lord to preach His word. We must simply Go.

C. Finally note the purpose of their preaching.

1. Paul said to Timothy, Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. (2 Tim. 4:2-3)
2. Zerubbabel and the leaders of the day needed to be rebuked. The Lord's house laid destroyed, the work had been stopped.
3. Haggai rebuked them sharply in chapter one.
4. They needed to be encouraged. This is another purpose of preaching. (Hag. 2:4-9)
5. Their preaching restored their faith in God's plan and purpose.
6. Paul said, And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. and I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. (1 Cor. 2:1-5)
7. Ezra does not tell us what the prophets said, but he tells us the result. Ezra 5:2 And then rose up.

VII. *THE CHARACTER OF EZRA*

- A. Preparing one's self to ...seek, do, and teach.
  1. Not preparing our hearts can cause us to fail. It is said about Rehoboam, "And he did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the LORD." (2 Chr 12:14)
  2. "Howbeit the high places were not taken away: for as yet the people had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers." (2 Chr 20:33)

- B. It can cause one to succeed.
1. "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." (2 Tim 2:21)
  2. "So Jotham became mighty, because he prepared his ways before the LORD his God." (2 Chr 27:6)
- C. Desire. Seek the Law Meaning to Aquire, make inquisition, [necro-] mancer, question, require, search, seek A
1. Seeking the law, the Lord requires denying self.
  2. Notice what Moses wrote, "And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the LORD, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring:" (Num 15:39-40)
  3. Pride will keep one from seeking the Lord. "The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts." (Psa 10:4)
- D. There is one thing we should seek. "One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple." (Psa 27:4)
1. Ezra determined to seek the law.
  2. It should be with all the heart, that we seek the Lord. "Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart." (Psa 119:2)
  3. Seeking God enables one to walk in Liberty. "And I will walk at liberty: for I seek thy precepts." (Psa 119:45)
  4. In seeking God we Magnify Him. "Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified." (Psa 40:16)
- E. Determination. Do the Law
1. Knowledge alone is insufficient.
  2. However Knowledge, with zeal is just what we need. (Rom. 10-1-2)
  3. Knowledge of God=s word will produce faith. Rom. 10:17
  4. Faith without works is dead, being alone. Jam. 2:
  5. Can faith save? Yes Jam. 2:14, but when? When faith is made perfect.
  6. Faith wrought with works. Jam. 2:22
  7. Wrought meaning to to be a fellow-worker, i.e. co-operate:--help (work) with, work (-er) together.
  8. "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." (James 1:22)"For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:" (James 1:23)

- F. Duty. Teach the Law, not only did Ezra prepare to seek and to do the law.
1. The people needed to be restored unto their God.
    - a. They had not separated themselves from the people of the lands.
    - b. They had intermarried. Mingled with the people of the land.
  2. First we see Ezra=s Sorrow. Ezra 9:3-15
    - a. The conditions of the people caused Ezra great sorrow.
    - b. Preachers, Christians, the conditions of our world ought to move us to our knees.
    - c. Ezra was humble in heart. You might say simple. He did not have a big head.
    - d. Greatness and fame sometimes makes the head big. A1 Sam. 15:17"
  3. Second we see the Solution. Ezra 10:1-5
    - a. AYet now there is hope@ the only hope for Israel at that time was to make the situation right.
    - b. They had to put away the wives they had taken.
    - c. You will remember John the baptizer was beheaded for preaching this.
    - d. Brethren we must have the courage to speak the truth even in these difficult situations.
  4. Third we see Ezra=s Stand.
    - a. He did not compromise the situation because of its great difficulties.
    - b. There were children involved, and he knew the difficulties involved.
  5. Third we see the Shaking. (Ezra 10:9)
    - a. The people sat in the streets trembling because of this matter.
    - b. Was there reason for trembling? Sure look at 10:14 Afierce wrath of our God@
    - c. Sin ought to cause us to tremble.
    - d. If we cannot tremble over our sin now, one day we will tremble as we stand before a just God to receive the rewards of our works.

**CONCLUSION:**

1. There are many valuable lessons from this great book, many we have not had space or time to include.
2. Truly they were written for our learning. (Rom. 15:4)
3. I hope this study will help us each in our growth and maturity in Christ.
4. May God bless us each with understanding and wisdom as we grow in the knowledge of Christ.

# DID THE TEN TRIBES OF THE NORTH RETURN?

Curtis A. Cates

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

- A. Central to the materialistic, man-made doctrine of premillennialism is the supposition that the 10 tribes of the Northern Kingdom, Israel, are to be restored to Jerusalem at the time of Christ=s so-called thousand-year reign.
  - 1. This is to be the beginning of Christ=s everlasting kingdom.
  - 2. Those who hold the theory try to use prophecies which clearly refer to Israel=s return from Babylonian captivity.
  - 3. They reject the idea that the Jews who returned included the 10 northern tribes.
  
- B. Another aspect of the restoration theory is the assertion that the land promises made to Abraham were not fulfilled.
  - 1. The nation will be restored, the temple will be rebuilt, and the Gentiles, with their wealth, will flow unto them.
  - 2. But, the land promise was conditional, dependent upon their continued obedience (Josh. 23:14-16; Exod. 19:5).
  - 3. All was fulfilled (Josh. 23:14-16).
  - 4. The very fact that they were warned not to become disobedient lest they A perish quickly from off the good land@ is undeniable evidence that the land promise had been granted (Josh. 23:16).

## **II. RESTORATION OF THE 10 TRIBES: BACKGROUND CONSIDERATIONS**

- A. In order to be restored from the nations where the Lord had scattered them, the captives would have to A return unto the Lord they God, and . . . obey his voice@ (Deut. 30:1-3).
  
- B. One should remember that the prophecies of the restoration make clear that only a

remnant would be restored.

1. AA remnant of them shall return@ (Isa. 10:22).
  2. AI will gather the remnant@ (Jer. 23:3).
  3. AA remnant shall be saved@ (Rom. 9:27).
  4. Because of the influence of sin and idolatry in their lives, only a remnant would be restored to Palestine, choosing to return to God.
  5. God even pleaded, AHo, ho, come forth and flee from the land of the north, said the Lord@ (Zech. 2:6,7).
  6. Most would not give heed.
- C. Some of all of the 10 tribes remained in Judah when the northern kingdom was taken into captivity.
1. Many of the 10 tribes joined the southern kingdom; in fact, many of the people were ambushed as they attempted to escape to Judah.
  2. They were motivated by both religious and economic reasons to do so (2 Chron. 11:1-17).
- D. Not all the people of the 10 tribes were taken to Assyria (Amos 5:1-3).
1. During Asa=s time, and we may say constantly, there was a gathering of people from all the 10 tribes who rallied to Judah.
  2. AAnd he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the strangers with them out of Ephraim@ (2 Chron. 15:9).
- E. The restoration of the 10 tribes was clearly prophesied.
1. Amos said that the captivity of Israel B the remnant B would return to Palestine and would rebuild the destroyed cities and live in them.
  2. Ezekiel prophesied also of this restoration (Ezek. 37:15-23).
- F. The evidence that the 10 tribes were restored to Palestine after the time of the Babylonian captivity is abundant!
1. AI will scatter you abroad among the nations: but if ye turn unto me, and

keep my commandments, and do them . . .yet will I gather them from thence . . .@ (Neh. 1:8-10).

2. Nehemiah affirmed that this prophecy was fulfilled in their returning from Babylon.
3. Cyrus the Persian, king of Medo-Persia, is named by Jehovah (Isa. 44 and 45); A\_I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the Lord of hosts@ (Isa. 45:4,13).
4. When one understands that the territory of Assyria, which carried Israel into captivity, was conquered by and became a part of the Babylonian Empire, he can understand why Ezekiel 3:1-5 refers to the AHouse of Israel@ being in captivity with Judah in Babylon.
5. Thus, the Ahouse of Israel@ would be brought back into Athe land of Israel.@
6. God said, AI will place you in your own land@ (Ezek. 37:11-14).
7. This would fulfill Jeremiah=s promise (Jer. 23:8).

### **III. RESTORATION OF THE 10 TRIBES: A MATTER OF HISTORY**

- A. During the reign of Cyrus, the restoration of Israel B the 10 tribes B as well as that of Judah took place.
  1. It is a clear matter of history. Ezra recorded what took place during the first year of Cyrus (Ezra 1:2,3).
  2. Verse 1 states that this fulfilled all the prophecies of Jeremiah relative to Israel=s restoration to their land (cf. Jer. 25:11-13; 2 Chron. 36:22).
  3. Every Jew on earth was included in the restoration proclamation (Ezra 1:4).
  4. Even their heathen neighbors B Gentiles B and even the government (Ezra 6:4,8) assisted the Jews financially as they returned.
  5. The Cyrus Cylinder quotes Cyrus thus, Aall the peoples I assembled and restored to their own dwelling places.@



6. If Cyrus= proclamation did not include the 10 tribes, they were not children of God nor were they in Cyrus= realm, which included Assyria (2 Kings 18:9-11) B thus, God=s word and Cyrus= record are in error!
- B. Ezra recorded that all 12 tribes returned (Ezra 2:2).
1. One notes that 11 were named; a parallel description in Nehemiah 7:7 named 12.
- C. Ezra revealed that all of the tribes resettled their own native land (Ezra 2:70).
1. The law governing the inheritance in Leviticus 25:13-25 stated specifically that the land Ashall not be sold for ever@ but must be inherited only through family estate.
  2. Jeremiah affirmed they would return Aevery man to his heritage, and every man to this land@ (Jer. 12:14,15).
  3. Since Herod the Great and the destruction of Jerusalem (A.D. 70) caused the genealogies to be destroyed, God made clear the fact that the prophecies were fulfilled at the time of Ezra, and that the 10 tribes are not yet to be restored. Such would be impossible!
  4. Israel could remember their cities, but what about after no less that 2,500 years (cf. 1 Chron. 9:1-3)?
- D. The 10 tribes joined in with Judah in worshiping God (Ezra 3:1,2).
- E. Sacrifices were made in Jerusalem for each of the 12 tribes (Ezek. 47:13,14).
1. AAnd the children of Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity . . .offered . . .for a sin offering for all of Israel@ (Ezra 6:16,17).
- F. During the second commission to return, the king, Artaxerxes, told Ezra the scribe, AI make a decree, that all they of the people of Israel, and of his priests and Levites, in my realm, which are minded of their own freewill to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee (Ezra 7:13).
1. AThere went up some of the children of Israel@ (Ezra 7:7).
  2. This number thus included representatives of those who had been carried to Assyria in 721 B.C., the 10 tribes.

- G. All of the tribes were recognized in Israel.
1. Watch ye, and keep them, until ye weigh them before the chief of the priests and the Levites, and chief of the fathers of Israel, at Jerusalem, in the chambers of the house of the Lord@ (Ezra 8:29; cf. 9:1).
  2. Further, Ezra calls God=s people AJews@ eight times and AIsrael@ 22 times, speaking of Aall Israel.@
  3. One does wonder how Ephraim and Manasseh were in Jerusalem if the 10 tribes were lost (1 Chron. 9:-3).

**IV. RESTORATION OF THE 10 TRIBES: FULFILLED PROPHECY**

- A. Among the principles which must be respected in understanding Biblical prophecy are the following.
1. If an inspired writer states that a particular prophecy is fulfilled in a particular manner, then it is fulfilled that way.
  2. If an inspired writer states that certain events have already been fulfilled, then no person has a right to insist on a later fulfillment.
  3. No person can postpone a prophecy=s fulfillment, referring it to some circumstances foreign to the originally intended fulfillment.
- B. The return of the 10 tribes, as mentioned above, was imperative in light of many prophecies.
1. Ezekiel pictured the return of all Israel from bondage (Ezek. 37:11,12); the rejoicing would be similar to being raised from the dead.
  2. Ezekiel pictured the destiny of Israel and of Judah as being inseparably linked or joined (Ezek. 37:15-19).
  3. God would unify them (Ezek. 37:21,22,24; cf. Zech. 8:13; 10:6; Jer. 3:18).
  4. Numerous New Testament passages, including John 10:11,16, prove that the return joined Judah and Israel, in preparation for Christ to rule over them (Acts 2).
3. AThus saith the Lord God: This shall be the border, whereby ye shall inherit the land according to the twelve tribes of Israel: Joseph shall have two portions@ (Ezek. 47:13), fulfilled through the return at the time of Cyrus, else the 10 tribes are not a part of Aall his

people@ B the Atwelve tribes.@

4. Jeremiah prophesied that the Lord would Amake a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah@ (Jer. 31:31-36); Paul proved conclusively that the prophecy of Jeremiah had been fulfilled (Hebrews 8:8-10); since the ordinances had departed (Heb. 9; Col. 2:14-16; Rom. 7:1-4), then Israel had also ceased as a nation forever.
5. Isaiah prophesied that after a branch would rise out of Jesse=s roots and bear fruit, Athe wolf also shall dwell with the lamb@ at the same time would God Arecover the remnant of his people@; The Gentiles would also seek the Lord, as well as Athe outcasts of Israel and . . .the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth@ (Isa. 11:1-12), literally fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost of Acts 2.
6. Preparation was made for the kingdom=s beginning in Acts 2 by Christ=s having sent the apostles to Ago rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,@ not to the Samaritans or the Gentiles (Matt. 10:5,6); the 12 tribes were in Judea; AI am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house@ (Matt. 15:24f.). [Unless Christ was able to go to those Alost sheep of the house of Israel,@ his mission was a failure! Did he spend more than three years of ministry among the wrong people? ]
7. In writing to the Jews of the Dispersion, James addressed all 12 tribes (James 1:1); how did Anna, a prophetess and descendant of Asher, come to be in Jerusalem (Luke 2: 36ff)? How was Paul expected to carry the Ahope of the promise made of God unto our fathers; unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night hope to come@ (Acts 26:6-8; cf. 26:22,23; 28:20-28)?
8. Hosea prophesied that the children of Judah and the children of Israel would be gathered together under one head (Hosea 1:10,11). Paul stated that this prophecy had been fulfilled in the church, the AIsrael of God@ (Rom. 9:24-27; Gal. 6:16).

## **V. CONCLUSION**

- A. The Alost 10 tribes@ theory is but a figment of some men=s imaginations, is totally destitute of evidence and is but a perversion.
- B. All 12 tribes were present on Pentecost; many from each tribe, both in Palestine and among the Diaspora, became Christians.
- C. The Old Testament prophecies did not fail, neither were they postponed, which is tantamount to failing; everything has gone according to God=s infallible and immutable plan and promise (Heb. 6:13-20; Acts 2:22-24; 4:27,28).

- D. The so-called Amystery parenthesis@ is a renegade doctrine, which strikes at the very nature of God.
  
- E. AFor ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise@ (Gal. 3:26-29).

# THE REFUGE CITIES

## Daniel F. Cates

**TEXT:** Num. 35:10-34; Deut. 19:1-13; Josh. 20:1-9.

### **INTRODUCTION:**

- 1 Overview of the texts.
  - a. Num. 35:10-34.
    - (1). Provision for the cities of refuge (Num. 35:10-13).
    - (2). Placement of the cities of refuge (Num. 35:14).
    - (3). Persons involved with the cities of refuge.
      - (a). The children of Israel, strangers, and sojourners (Num. 35:15).
      - (b). Man slaughterers.
        - [1]. Protected (Num. 35:15,22-23,32).
        - [2]. Unprotected (Num. 35:26-28).
      - (c). Murderers (Num. 35:16-21,30-31).
      - (d). Avengers (Num. 35:19,27).
      - (e). The congregation (Num. 35:24-26).
      - (f). The high priest (Num. 35:28).
    - (4). Permanence of the cities of refuge (Num. 35:29).
    - (5). Purpose of the cities of refuge (Num. 35:33-34).
  - b. Deut. 19:1-13.
    - (1). Provision for the cities of refuge (Deut. 19:1-2,7-10).
    - (2). Paths to the cities of refuge (Deut. 19:3).
    - (3). Persons involved with the cities of refuge.
      - (a). Man slaughterers (Deut. 19:4-6).
      - (b). Murderers (Deut. 19:11-13).
      - (c). Avengers (Deut. 19:6,12).
      - (d). The elders (Deut. 19:12).
    - (4). Purpose of the cities of refuge (Deut. 19:13).
  - c. Josh. 20:1-9.
    - (1). Provision for the cities of refuge (Josh. 20:1-2).
    - (2). Persons involved with the cities of refuge.
      - (a). Man slaughterers (Josh. 20:3-6,9).
      - (b). Avengers (Josh. 20:3,5,9).
      - (b). The elders (Josh. 20:4).
      - (d). The congregation (Josh. 20:6,9).
      - (e). The high priest (Josh. 20:6).
      - (f). The children of Israel and strangers (Josh. 20:9).
    - (3). Places of the cities of refuge (Josh. 20:7-9).
2. Plan of the study.
  - a. To understand the purpose of refuge.
  - b. To observe the places of refuge.

- c. To appreciate the perfection of refuge.

## **I. THE PURPOSE OF REFUGE.**

### A. Accidents and the avengers.

- 1. The accidents: Manslayer or murderer?
  - a. Manslayer: Freed from guilt.
    - (1). The one who had killed another by accident--that is, without premeditation, anger, or any ill-will--was not worthy of death.
  - b. Murderer: Faced by revenge.
    - (1). The one who killed in cold blood--not as the manslayer--was guilty and worthy of death.
- 2. The avengers: Licensed to kill the guilty.
  - a. Blood for blood (Gen. 9:6, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.").
  - b. The law of retaliation; i.e., *lex talionis* (Lev. 24:19-20, 24:17; Deut. 19:19-21).
  - c. For one of the best studies on the refuge cities, and particularly this point, see Guy N. Woods, "The Cities of Refuge," in *Gospel Advocate*, Vol. 89, No. 22, May 29, 1947, pp. 369,376.

### B. Judgments and justice.

- 1. Trial by jury: The congregation.
- 2. Verdicts and sentences.
  - a. The guilty who is turned over to the avenger.
  - b. The innocent who leaves early and risks meeting the avenger (a picture of this is found in Joab's killing of Abner [II Sam. 2,3]).
  - c. The innocent who remains until the death of the high priest.

## **II. THE PLACES OF REFUGE.**

### A. The characteristics of the cities.

- 1. Refuge had been prophesied and refuge cities promised.
  - a. Prophesied in Exo. 21:13.
  - b. Promised in Num. 35:10-34 and Deut. 19:1-13.
- 2. A refuge city was no more than a half day journey from any spot in the promised land (Woods).
- 3. Guy N. Woods wrote, "The roads were kept open and in a good condition always; and where two or more roads met, posts were erected carrying a sign in large letters with the Hebrew word, MEKLAT (refuge), and pointing in the proper direction."
- 4. There were only six cities set apart; there was no other refuge.

### B. The locations of the cities.

- 1. Three east of the Jordan (from North to South).
  - a. Golan (Josh. 21:27).
  - b. Ramoth (Josh. 21:38).
  - c. Bezer (Josh. 21:36).

2. Three west of the Jordan (from North to South).
  - a. Kedesh (Josh. 21:32).
  - b. Shechem (Josh. 21:21; 1Ch. 6:67).
  - c. Hebron (Josh. 21:13; 1Ch. 6:57).

### **III. THE PERFECTION OF REFUGE.**

- A. Found in the names of the cities.
  1. Golan:
    - a. Circle (though other definitions such as passage and joy have been suggested).
    - b. This calls to mind completion.
  2. Ramoth:
    - a. Height (each of these cities were on a prominence).
    - b. This calls to mind exaltation.
  3. Bezer:
    - a. Fortress (each of these cities, of necessity, would have to be fortified strongholds).
    - b. This calls to mind security.
  4. Kedesh:
    - a. Holy (each refuge city was separated [Deut. 19:7], but as this one was located in Galilee, it was certainly set apart!).
    - b. This calls to mind sinlessness.
  5. Shechem:
    - a. Shoulder (this is where Abram first shouldered his God-given responsibility in the promised land, and where he erected the land's first altar to the true God [Gen. 12:6-7]).
    - b. This calls to mind strength.
  6. Hebron:
    - a. Alliance (this, also known as Mamre or Kirjath-Arba, is where God's first covenant family members were buried [Gen. 49:29-31]).
    - b. This calls to mind unity.
- B. Found in the safety of the Christ and His church.
  1. Characteristics of the church.
    - a. Regarding her eternal existence.
      - (1). As Jesus was slain from the beginning (Rev. 13:8), the location of salvation was ordered from the beginning (Eph. 1:4; Mat. 25:34).
      - (2). The church had been prophesied (Isa. 2:2-3; Dan. 2:44) and promised (Mat. 16:18).
    - b. Regarding her identifying marks.
      - (1). The way of salvation is clearly marked in God's Word (II Pet. 1:3; II Tim. 3:16-17; cf., Acts 2:21; Mark 16:16; II Cor. 7:10; Rom. 10:10; I Pet. 3:21; II Tim. 4:7-8).

- (2). The church is clearly marked.
  - (a). She has one head (Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18).
  - (b). She follows one book (Gal. 1:6-12).
  - (c). She worships one way (John 4:24).
- c. Regarding her proximity.
  - 1. Paul said of Jesus, ". . . he be not far from every one of us" (Acts 17:27).
  - 2. We can be subjects of a kingdom which has already been established (Col. 1:13).
- d. Regarding her exclusiveness.
  - 1. All have the ability to become Christians (John 3:16; Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:10-11).
  - 2. None will become Christians and be saved through any other means (Acts 4:12).
- f. Regarding her enemy.
  - 1. We do not have a righteous avenger; we have an avenger nonetheless.
  - 2. Satan "your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (I Pet. 5:8).
- g. Regarding possible apostasy.
  - 1. The Branch (the Christian) must abide in the Vine (Christ) (John 15:4-7).
  - 2. One can fall from the state of grace (salvation) (Gal. 5:4).
  - 3. One's latter end can be worse than his beginning (II Pet. 2:20-22).
- h. Regarding her High Priest: Jesus.
  - 1. This High Priest was made after the order of Melchizedec (Heb. 6:20).
  - 2. This High Priest dies, arose, and lives for evermore (Rev. 1:18).
  - 3. With His death came our cleansing (Rom. 6:3).
  - 4. With His resurrection came our hope (Rom. 6:4; I Cor. 15:20).
- i. Regarding her holiness.
  - 1. Like heaven, "there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev. 21:27).
- 2. The cities and the church (Gal. 3:27, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.").
  - a. Golan: Circle: The Christian is perfect in Christ (Col. 1:28; I Pet. 5:10; Heb. 13:20-21; cf. II Tim. 3:16-17).



- b. Ramoth: Height: The Christian is exalted through Christ (I Pet. 5:6; Jam. 4:10; Mat. 18:4).
  - c. Bezer: Fortress: The Christian has security with Christ (Psa. 18:2, 62:2; II Sam. 22:3; Mat. 7:24-27).
  - d. Kedesh: Holy: The Christian is cleansed by Jesus' blood (Zec. 13:1; I John 1:7; I Cor. 6:11; Eph. 1:7; I Pet. 1:19).
  - e. Shechem: Shoulder: The Christian is strengthened by Jesus (Phil. 4:13; II Cor. 3:5; Eph. 6:10; Col. 1:11; cf., John 15:7).
  - f. Hebron: Alliance: The Christian is united with his brethren in Christ (Eph. 4:13-16; I John 1:3-7; cf. Amos 3:3; Acts 2:42).
3. We sing a song penned in 1857 by Mary S. B. Dana (1810-1883).
- a. Historically, this song was notable for accompanying funeral processions in New Orleans; today, we infrequently sing this song in various circumstances.
  - b. The song itself is directly based upon several Biblical pictures such as the safety found in trusting in the Lord (Psalm 11:1, "In the LORD put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee *as* a bird to your mountain?") and the one which is found in our study this evening: Refuge from the avenger (Deut. 19:6, "Lest the avenger of the blood pursue the slayer, while his heart is hot, and overtake him, because the way is long, and slay him; whereas he *was* not worthy of death, inasmuch as he hated him not in time past.").
  - c. The song is "Flee as a Bird," and it is fitting that we at least note its connection to this study.

"Flee as a bird to your mountain,  
 Thou who art weary of sin;  
 Go to the clear flowing fountain  
 Where you may wash and be clean.  
 Fly for th' avenger is near thee;  
 Call, and the Savior will hear thee;  
 He on his bosom will bear thee,  
 O thou who art weary of sin,  
 O thou who art weary of sin.

"He will protect thee forever,  
 Wipe ev-ry falling tear;  
 He will forsake thee, O never,  
 Sheltered so tenderly there.  
 Haste, then, the hours are flying,  
 Spend not the moments in sighing,  
 Cease from your sorrow and crying:

The Savior will wipe ev-ry tear,  
The Savior will wipe ev-ry tear."

**CONCLUSION:**

1. Is it not great that one today has a place of refuge?
2. Paul equated fleeing for refuge with laying hold upon hope (Heb. 6:18).
3. "God *is* our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Psalm 46:1); therefore, let us flee to Him and remain in Him that our salvation may be sure (II Pet. 1:10).

# THE REFUGE CITIES

## Daniel F. Cates

**TEXT:** Num. 35:10-34; Deut. 19:1-13; Josh. 20:1-9.

### **INTRODUCTION:**

- 1 Overview of the texts.
  - a. Num. 35:10-34.
    - (1). Provision for the cities of refuge (Num. 35:10-13).
    - (2). Placement of the cities of refuge (Num. 35:14).
    - (3). Persons involved with the cities of refuge.
      - (a). The children of Israel, strangers, and sojourners (Num. 35:15).
      - (b). Man slaughterers.
        - [1]. Protected (Num. 35:15,22-23,32).
        - [2]. Unprotected (Num. 35:26-28).
      - (c). Murderers (Num. 35:16-21,30-31).
      - (d). Avengers (Num. 35:19,27).
      - (e). The congregation (Num. 35:24-26).
      - (f). The high priest (Num. 35:28).
    - (4). Permanence of the cities of refuge (Num. 35:29).
    - (5). Purpose of the cities of refuge (Num. 35:33-34).
  - b. Deut. 19:1-13.
    - (1). Provision for the cities of refuge (Deut. 19:1-2,7-10).
    - (2). Paths to the cities of refuge (Deut. 19:3).
    - (3). Persons involved with the cities of refuge.
      - (a). Man slaughterers (Deut. 19:4-6).
      - (b). Murderers (Deut. 19:11-13).
      - (c). Avengers (Deut. 19:6,12).
      - (d). The elders (Deut. 19:12).
    - (4). Purpose of the cities of refuge (Deut. 19:13).
  - c. Josh. 20:1-9.
    - (1). Provision for the cities of refuge (Josh. 20:1-2).
    - (2). Persons involved with the cities of refuge.
      - (a). Man slaughterers (Josh. 20:3-6,9).
      - (b). Avengers (Josh. 20:3,5,9).
      - (b). The elders (Josh. 20:4).
      - (d). The congregation (Josh. 20:6,9).
      - (e). The high priest (Josh. 20:6).
      - (f). The children of Israel and strangers (Josh. 20:9).
    - (3). Places of the cities of refuge (Josh. 20:7-9).
2. Plan of the study.
  - a. To understand the purpose of refuge.
  - b. To observe the places of refuge.
  - c. To appreciate the perfection of refuge.

## **I. THE PURPOSE OF REFUGE.**

- A. Accidents and the avengers.
  - 1. The accidents: Manslayer or murderer?
    - a. Manslayer: Freed from guilt.
      - (1). The one who had killed another by accident--that is, without premeditation, anger, or any ill-will--was not worthy of death.
    - b. Murderer: Faced by revenge.
      - (1). The one who killed in cold blood--not as the manslayer--was guilty and worthy of death.
  - 2. The avengers: Licensed to kill the guilty.
    - a. Blood for blood (Gen. 9:6, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.").
    - b. The law of retaliation; i.e., *lex talionis* (Lev. 24:19-20, 24:17; Deut. 19:19-21).
    - c. For one of the best studies on the refuge cities, and particularly this point, see Guy N. Woods, "The Cities of Refuge," in *Gospel Advocate*, Vol. 89, No. 22, May 29, 1947, pp. 369,376.
- B. Judgments and justice.
  - 1. Trial by jury: The congregation.
  - 2. Verdicts and sentences.
    - a. The guilty who is turned over to the avenger.
    - b. The innocent who leaves early and risks meeting the avenger (a picture of this is found in Joab's killing of Abner [II Sam. 2,3]).
    - c. The innocent who remains until the death of the high priest.

## **II. THE PLACES OF REFUGE.**

- A. The characteristics of the cities.
  - 1. Refuge had been prophesied and refuge cities promised.
    - a. Prophesied in Exo. 21:13.
    - b. Promised in Num. 35:10-34 and Deut. 19:1-13.
  - 2. A refuge city was no more than a half day journey from any spot in the promised land (Woods).
  - 3. Guy N. Woods wrote, "The roads were kept open and in a good condition always; and where two or more roads met, posts were erected carrying a sign in large letters with the Hebrew word, MEKLAT (refuge), and pointing in the proper direction."
  - 4. There were only six cities set apart; there was no other refuge.
- B. The locations of the cities.
  - 1. Three east of the Jordan (from North to South).
    - a. Golan (Josh. 21:27).
    - b. Ramoth (Josh. 21:38).
    - c. Bezer (Josh. 21:36).
  - 2. Three west of the Jordan (from North to South).
    - a. Kedesh (Josh. 21:32).

- b. Shechem (Josh. 21:21; 1Ch. 6:67).
- c. Hebron (Josh. 21:13; 1Ch. 6:57).

### **III. THE PERFECTION OF REFUGE.**

- A. Found in the names of the cities.
  - 1. Golan:
    - a. Circle (though other definitions such as passage and joy have been suggested).
    - b. This calls to mind completion.
  - 2. Ramoth:
    - a. Height (each of these cities were on a prominence).
    - b. This calls to mind exaltation.
  - 3. Bezer:
    - a. Fortress (each of these cities, of necessity, would have to be fortified strongholds).
    - b. This calls to mind security.
  - 4. Kedesh:
    - a. Holy (each refuge city was separated [Deut. 19:7], but as this one was located in Galilee, it was certainly set apart!).
    - b. This calls to mind sinlessness.
  - 5. Shechem:
    - a. Shoulder (this is where Abram first shouldered his God-given responsibility in the promised land, and where he erected the land's first altar to the true God [Gen. 12:6-7]).
    - b. This calls to mind strength.
  - 6. Hebron:
    - a. Alliance (this, also known as Mamre or Kirjath-Arba, is where God's first covenant family members were buried [Gen. 49:29-31]).
    - b. This calls to mind unity.
- B. Found in the safety of the Christ and His church.
  - 1. Characteristics of the church.
    - a. Regarding her eternal existence.
      - (1). As Jesus was slain from the beginning (Rev. 13:8), the location of salvation was ordered from the beginning (Eph. 1:4; Mat. 25:34).
      - (2). The church had been prophesied (Isa. 2:2-3; Dan. 2:44) and promised (Mat. 16:18).
    - b. Regarding her identifying marks.
      - (1). The way of salvation is clearly marked in God's Word (II Pet. 1:3; II Tim. 3:16-17; cf., Acts 2:21; Mark 16:16; II Cor. 7:10; Rom. 10:10; I Pet. 3:21; II Tim. 4:7-8).
      - (2). The church is clearly marked.
        - (a). She has one head (Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18).
        - (b). She follows one book (Gal. 1:6-12).

- (c). She worships one way (John 4:24).
- c. Regarding her proximity.
    1. Paul said of Jesus, ". . . he be not far from every one of us" (Acts 17:27).
    2. We can be subjects of a kingdom which has already been established (Col. 1:13).
  - d. Regarding her exclusiveness.
    1. All have the ability to become Christians (John 3:16; Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:10-11).
    2. None will become Christians and be saved through any other means (Acts 4:12).
  - f. Regarding her enemy.
    1. We do not have a righteous avenger; we have an avenger nonetheless.
    2. Satan "your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (I Pet. 5:8).
  - g. Regarding possible apostasy.
    1. The Branch (the Christian) must abide in the Vine (Christ) (John 15:4-7).
    2. One can fall from the state of grace (salvation) (Gal. 5:4).
    3. One's latter end can be worse than his beginning (II Pet. 2:20-22).
  - h. Regarding her High Priest: Jesus.
    1. This High Priest was made after the order of Melchizedec (Heb. 6:20).
    2. This High Priest dies, arose, and lives for evermore (Rev. 1:18).
    3. With His death came our cleansing (Rom. 6:3).
    4. With His resurrection came our hope (Rom. 6:4; I Cor. 15:20).
  - i. Regarding her holiness.
    1. Like heaven, "there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev. 21:27).
2. The cities and the church (Gal. 3:27, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.").
    - a. Golan: Circle: The Christian is perfect in Christ (Col. 1:28; I Pet. 5:10; Heb. 13:20-21; cf. II Tim. 3:16-17).
    - b. Ramoth: Height: The Christian is exalted through Christ (I Pet. 5:6; Jam. 4:10; Mat. 18:4).
    - c. Bezer: Fortress: The Christian has security with Christ (Psa. 18:2, 62:2; II Sam. 22:3; Mat. 7:24-27).

- d. Kedesh: Holy: The Christian is cleansed by Jesus' blood (Zec. 13:1; I John 1:7; I Cor. 6:11; Eph. 1:7; I Pet. 1:19).
  - e. Shechem: Shoulder: The Christian is strengthened by Jesus (Phil. 4:13; II Cor. 3:5; Eph. 6:10; Col. 1:11; cf., John 15:7).
  - f. Hebron: Alliance: The Christian is united with his brethren in Christ (Eph. 4:13-16; I John 1:3-7; cf. Amos 3:3; Acts 2:42).
3. We sing a song penned in 1857 by Mary S. B. Dana (1810-1883).
- a. Historically, this song was notable for accompanying funeral processions in New Orleans; today, we infrequently sing this song in various circumstances.
  - b. The song itself is directly based upon several Biblical pictures such as the safety found in trusting in the Lord (Psalm 11:1, "In the LORD put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?") and the one which is found in our study this evening: Refuge from the avenger (Deut. 19:6, "Lest the avenger of the blood pursue the slayer, while his heart is hot, and overtake him, because the way is long, and slay him; whereas he *was* not worthy of death, inasmuch as he hated him not in time past.").
  - c. The song is "Flee as a Bird," and it is fitting that we at least note its connection to this study.

"Flee as a bird to your mountain,  
 Thou who art weary of sin;  
 Go to the clear flowing fountain  
 Where you may wash and be clean.  
 Fly for th' avenger is near thee;  
 Call, and the Savior will hear thee;  
 He on his bosom will bear thee,  
 O thou who art weary of sin,  
 O thou who art weary of sin.

"He will protect thee forever,  
 Wipe ev-ry falling tear;  
 He will forsake thee, O never,  
 Sheltered so tenderly there.  
 Haste, then, the hours are flying,  
 Spend not the moments in sighing,  
 Cease from your sorrow and crying:  
 The Savior will wipe ev-ry tear,  
 The Savior will wipe ev-ry tear."

**CONCLUSION:**

1. Is it not great that one today has a place of refuge?

2. Paul equated fleeing for refuge with laying hold upon hope (Heb. 6:18).
3. "God *is* our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Psalm 46:1); therefore, let us flee to Him and remain in Him that our salvation may be sure (II Pet. 1:10).



# 2 SAMUEL: THE BOOK OF DAVID=S REIGN

Dave Leonard

## INTRODUCTION:

AIIn those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes@ (Judges 21:25). Any observation we make of an introductory statement of 1 or 2 Samuel must be made in light of the terrible attitude toward authority manifested by Israel.

The United Kingdom of Israel began in a rejection of God and His authority. Samuel reminded Israel that they already had a leader, the Lord God in heaven (1 Samuel 12:12). God never wanted Israel to have an earthly king, and yet, he knew the hearts of men so well that he foresaw this thought and action of rebellion (Deuteronomy 17:14-20). From beginning to end, the kingdom of Israel served as an illustration of man=s attitude of discontent with God=s way and his determination to have his own way.

Body:

## I. AUTHORSHIP AND SETTING.

- A. The author and date of writing are unknown; it bears the name of Samuel because of his place and influence during this period.
  - 1. Much of these two books were written by the prophet whose name the books bear, Samuel.
    - a. But not all of it could be authored by him, for it records his death and some subsequent events.
    - b. I Chronicles 29:29-30 provides the information for us that the material in this time of Israel's history was recorded by Samuel, and the prophets Nathan and Gad who followed him.
  - 2. Samuel was Judge, Prophet and Priest.
    - a. He was a Levite, a descendant of Kohath (1 Chronicles 6:26, 33), and was dedicated to the Lord from his infancy (thus he belonged to God and God's use).
    - b. Geographically he was an Ephraimite.
- B. This book covers the time of David=s reign (1055-1015 B.C.).
  - 1. The parallel of this history is found in 1 Chronicles 11-29.
  - 2. 1 and 2 Samuel, coupled with 1 and 2 Kings tell the story of the monarchy of Israel from its foundation to its fall.

## II. BACKGROUND.

- A. The Books of Samuel record the transition from a theocracy to a monarchy, and the establishment of the monarchy.
  - 1. The story begins in the closing days of the Judges and leaves

us with the aged David securely enthroned as king over Israel and Judah.

2. The prominent characters of 1 Samuel are:
    - a. Samuel - the last of the judges (1-8).
    - b. Saul - the first of the kings (8-15).
  - c. David - the anointed successor (16-31).
  3. The book of 2 Samuel is the ABook of David=s Reign.
    - a. It opens with David reigning in Judah immediately after Saul=s death.
    - b. The book closes just before David=s death when he was Aold and stricken in years@ (1 Kings 1:1).
- B. 1 Samuel 13 is the first recording of the announcement that David would succeed Saul.
1. This is the instance when Saul was to wait for Samuel in order to offer sacrifice; when he was pressured by the Philistines, Saul offered sacrifice himself, which was the work of the priests.
  2. V. 14 records God=s judgment on Saul and his reign as king.
3. Saul is informed that someone else would take his throne.
4. 1 Samuel 15 records Saul=s disobedience to God=s command in the destruction of the Amalekites.
  5. In 1 Samuel 16 we read of David=s anointing by Samuel at God=s command.
- C. The remainder of 1 Samuel records the history surrounding the further reign of Saul. We read of...
1. The great love between David and Jonathan (18).
  2. Saul=s pursuing of David to take his life (19).
  3. Jonathan=s covenant with David (20).
  4. David=s flight from Saul (21-24).
  5. The death of Samuel (25).
  6. Further pursuing of David by Saul (26-30).
  7. The death of Saul and his three sons, Jonathan, Abinadab and Melchishua.

### **III. OUTLINE OF THE BOOK.**

- A. The commencement of David=s reign as king of Judah (1-4).
  1. News of Saul=s death and the anointing of David as king of Judah (1-2).
  2. David reigns over this southern tribe from Hebron; Ishbosheth reigns over rest of tribes from Mahanaim (2).
  3. The other tribes adhered to the house of Saul (3-4).
    - a. David advances and Ishbosheth declines. Abner goes to David and is murdered by Joab (3).
    - b. The murder of Ishbosheth and punishment of the murderers (4).
- B. David=s promotion to be king over all Israel (5-10).
  1. David anointed king over all Israel; capital is moved to

Jerusalem; two victories over the Philistines (5).

2. The recovery of the ark; it is moved to Jerusalem (6).
3. David's plan to build a temple and the great Messianic promise (7).
4. David enjoys the victorious extension of his influence over neighboring nations (8-10).
  - a. Defeat of the Philistines (8:1).
  - b. Defeat of the king of Zobah (8:3).
  - c. Defeat of the Syrians of Damascus (8:5-6).
  - d. David's kindness toward Mephibosheth (9).
  - e. War with the Ammonites and Syrians (10).

C. David's reign in its decline (11-20).

1. David's adultery and murder of Uriah (11).
2. David's repentance at Nathan's rebuke (12).
3. Problems among the children of David (13-14).
  - a. Amnon's forcible incest with Tamar; Absalom slays Amnon (13).
  - b. Absalom's return and reconciliation to the king (14).
4. The rebellion of Absalom and flight of David (15-16).
5. Absalom's defeat and death (17-18).
6. David restored to the throne; Israel and Judah quarrel about the restoration of the king (19).
7. Sheba's rebellion and death (20).

D. David's last battles and the conclusion of his reign (21-24).

1. Three years of famine throughout Israel; heroic acts performed in the wars with the Philistines (21).
2. David's psalm of thanksgiving for victory over all his enemies; David's last words (22-23).
3. Heroes who helped make David king (23)
4. Numbering of the people and pestilence (24).

#### **IV. LESSONS FROM 2 SAMUEL.**

A. Honesty and faithfulness of the Scriptures.

1. This book records further revelation of God's plan to redeem man through the lineage of David (7).
2. It also records some of his darkest, rebellious moments (11).

B. Prosperity and ease often precede a fall (see David's situation leading up to his sin with Bathsheba, 8-11).

C. Sin often leads to more sin (11).

1. Which reminds me of a sermon outline that I have heard from several preachers, so I do not know the origin.

2. The Consequences of Sin:

- a. Sin takes you further than you intended to go.
- b. Sin keeps you longer than you intended to stay.
- c. Sin costs you more than you intended to pay.

D. The weakness of the flesh (yielding to temptation).

E. Sin has both physical and spiritual consequences (see the results of David=s sin with Bathsheeba, 12-20).

F. From David we see a shining example of the proper attitude in dealing with one=s own sins (12).

G. In David we see something fo how God providentially cares for those whose hearts are set on Him and doing His will.

H. God rules in the kingdoms of men (cf. Dan. 4:17).

I. From the time of Israel=s civil war between the generals, Joab and Abner, we learn a lesson about the folly of division and rivalry among brethren - a house divided against itself cannot stand).

J. The importance of consecration and devotion to God=s service.

# THE SIN OF PARTIAL OBEDIENCE

## Derrick Coble

**THESIS:** To reveal that partial obedience is no obedience at all.

**TEXT:** 1 Samuel 15; Ecclesiastes 12:13

### **INTRODUCTION:**

- A There are standards of authority in life in which we cannot deny.
- 1) When we see a red traffic light we understand the standard of authority (the law) says to stop.
  - 2) When we receive a bill in the mail for the electricity that we have used in a month we understand that the standard of authority (the law) says we must pay that bill.
  - 3) When we are walking in the woods and we see a sign that reads, “No Trespassing” we understand that the standard of authority (the law) says we cannot set foot on that property.
- B So, we recognize a standard of authority in all earthly matters.
- C Now, what about spiritual matters?
- 1) Is there a standard of authority in which we cannot deny relative to what we do in the name of religion?
  - 2) Yes! That standard is the Word of God.
  - 3) God’s standard is our rule—that by which we should walk.
    - a) (2Co 10:13) But we will not boast of things without *our* measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you.
    - b) (Gal 6:16) And as many as walk according to this rule, peace *be* on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.
    - c) (Phi 3:16) Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.
- D Too many people want to deny God’s standard.
- 1) When atheists scream, “There is no God” what they are really saying is, “We do not want any standard of authority in our lives.”
  - 2) When denominations say, “It doesn’t really matter what we do in the name of religion as long as we are sincere” what they are really saying is, “God has given us a subjective standard and no one has a right to bind that upon us.”
  - 3) When member of the Lord’s church say, “We must follow all the commandments of God because all of His Word is truth (John 17:17)” and then we go out and live like the world from Monday to Saturday, what we are really saying is, “God has given us an objective standard and I don’t care.”
- E The fact of the matter is we have a standard in which we cannot deny.
- 1) It is a standard that will transform our lives when wholly followed (Rom. 12:1,2).
  - 2) It is a standard that defines sin as the transgression of the law (1 John 3:4).
  - 3) It is a standard that will judge all of us in the last day (John 12:48).
- F It is a standard that demands obedience and anything less than obedience is disobedience which is sin (Rom. 5:19).

- 1) God has declared it.
- 2) Man has demonstrated it.
- 3) God will discipline it.

DISCUSSION:

**I THE SIN OF PARTIAL OBEDIENCE AS DEMANDED BY GOD**

- A) God allows no room for man to partially obey His commands.
- 1) His commands are authoritative and he demands full compliance in every part of those commands.
  - 2) (Ecc 12:13) Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man.
    - (a) Our very purpose in life is to respect and obey the commands of God.
    - (b) When one does this, he is living in the fear of God and practicing good things as a result.
  - 3) Matthew 7:21-26
    - (a) Those who hear and do the sayings of God are the only ones who will be saved.
    - (b) What happens when we only hear and never do being partially obedient (James 1:22-25)?
  - 4) John 14:15; 24
    - (a) “I love God but I am just too tired to attend all the worship services and Bible study on Wednesday night”
      - (i) We don’t love him or else we would follow His command to assemble (Hebrews 10:25).
    - (b) “I love God but I don’t see why baptism is such a big deal”
      - (i) We don’t love him or else we would see that baptism is a work of obedience that must be followed (Acts 2:38; Acts 10:48).
- B) When God gives a command He is declaring to us that full obedience is required and if we fall short of full obedience then He has declared it to be sin.
- 1) Acts 5:29 “We ought to obey God rather than men”
  - 2) (Rom 6:16) Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? (Rom 6:17) But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. (Rom 6:18) Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.
- C) Men still want to think for themselves and direct their own steps even though it is impossible (Jer. 10:23).
- 1) Partial obedience based on how many years we have practiced something is sin.
    - (a) (Jdg 2:11) And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim:
    - (b) God raised up judges who delivered them out of the hand of their enemies and as soon as the judge was dead they went back to their false gods (Judg. 2:18,19).
  - 2) Partial obedience based on what is popular is sin.
    - (a) Samuel was old and made his sons Joel and Abiah judges over Israel but they perverted judgment (1Sa 8:5) And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.
  - 3) Partial obedience based on opinion is sin.

- (a) 2 Kings 5:10-12
- (b) Elisha sent a messenger to Naaman telling him to wash in the Jordan seven times.
- (c) (2Ki 5:11) “But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not Arbana and Pharphar rivers of Damascus better than all the waters of Israel?”
- 4) Partial obedience based on the silence of the Scriptures is sin.
  - (a) How many times have we heard someone say, “The Bible doesn’t say not to” as a basis for authority?
  - (b) If we use this for our basis of authority in religion then we are free to do anything (bring out the circus entertainers—doesn’t say not to—bring out the milk and cookies with the bread and fruit of the vine—doesn’t say not to)
  - (c) We must be obedient to what the Bible says and gain our authority from what has been revealed.
  - (d) There is no authority in silence!
- D) God has declared and demanded full obedience to His Word—anything else is sin.

## **II THE SIN OF PARTIAL OBEDIENCE AS DEMONSTRATED BY MAN**

- A) Example: If I hired you to paint my house blue and you painted the front of the house blue and the back of the house orange what would be the problem?
  - 1) The problem is that you have disobeyed my command.
  - 2) “But you didn’t say not to paint the back of the house orange”
  - 3) It doesn’t matter what I did not say—your authority was in what I commanded you to do.
- B) I suppose if we could obey God in this way it would have made a lot of people happy in the history of the Old Testament and it would make a lot of people happy today.
- C) We have examples of within the Old Testament and New Testament of people who tried to get by with partial obedience but it did not work.
  - 1) Achan
    - (a) In fighting the battle of Jericho the children of Israel were strictly instructed by the Lord not to take any of the spoil in the city (Jos 6:18) And ye, in any wise keep *yourselves* from the accursed thing, lest ye make *yourselves* accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it. (Jos 6:19) But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, *are* consecrated unto the LORD: they shall come into the treasury of the LORD.
    - (b) They obeyed God in fighting the battle just as he commanded them yet one man only partially obeyed (Joshua 7:1).
    - (c) Because of Achan’s partial obedience wrath fell on the congregation of Israel (Josh. 7:21-26; 22:20)
  - 2) Saul
    - (a) 1 Sam. 15:3-9
    - (b) Saul did not utterly destroy the Amalekites, but he spared king Agag.
    - (c) Saul told Samuel he had performed the commandment of the Lord (1 Sam. 15:13).
    - (d) Because of his partial obedience Saul said, “I have sinned” (1 Sam. 15:24).
  - 3) David

- (a) On one occasion Ahimelech asked, “Who is so faithful among all thy servants as David” (1 Sam. 22:14) but even though David was faithful in many things he still was a man who committed sin.
  - (b) God did not want his people numbered but Satan stood up against Israel and provoked David to number them (1 Chron. 21:1).
  - (c) Because of this, God’s anger was kindled against Israel (2 Sam. 24:1).
  - (d) David realized he sinned in partial obedience to God (2Sa 24:10) And David’s heart smote him after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the LORD, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.
- 4) Uzza
- (a) The tribe of Levi was supposed to bear the ark of the covenant before the people of God while they went on their journeys (Deut. 10:8).
  - (b) When David and all of Israel went to Kirjathjearim to bring the ark of God up from that place they carried the ark in a new cart and Uzza and Ahio drove the cart (1 Chron. 13:7).
  - (c) They were partially obedient because they were bringing the ark with them but not fully obedient because they tribe of Levi was supposed to bear the ark.
  - (d) Therefore, when Uzza put forth his hand to steady the ark (1Ch 13:10) And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, because he put his hand to the ark: and there he died before God.
- 5) Rich Young Ruler
- (a) Mark 10:16-23
  - (b) He observed all the commandments of God but he lacked one thing.
  - (c) The one thing he lacked caused him to partially obey God and go away sorrowful in disobedience.
- D) What about men today?
- 1) Men who want to wear the name of Christ but follow denominational teaching (1 Cor. 1:10-13)
  - 2) Men who want to be saved by grace but not by works (Eph. 2:8,9; James 2:24).
  - 3) Men who talk the talk of the light of the world (John 1:9) but they walk the walk of the darkness of the world (1 John 1:6).
  - 4) Men who want to keep the spirit of the law and not keep the letter of the law (Rom. 8:2; James 1:25; Heb. 10:28,29).

### **III THE SIN OF PARTIAL OBEDIENCE AS DISCIPLINED BY GOD**

- A) Remember since partial obedience is no obedience at all, God will discipline us for not obeying his commands.
- B) Peter asked the question, “What shall be the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God?” (1 Peter 4:17)
- C) The answer to that question is simple—the wrath of God will come upon them.
  - 1) What happens when our children disobey? We punish them.
  - 2) Naturally God will do the same.
    - (a) (Col 3:5) Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is



idolatry: (Col 3:6) For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience.

- (b) Paul said, "Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children" (Eph. 5:1).
  - (i) Why? Because vain men will try to deceive us into thinking that the unclean shall inherit the kingdom of God.
  - (ii) (Eph 5:6) Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.
- 3) But, we are talking about specific sins being punished by God.
- D) What about those who become so close in obeying the Gospel of Christ?
  - 1) What about those who are almost obedient but maybe they have not completed one final step of salvation or what about those who used to be obedient but now they are just partially obedient.
  - 2) Those people will be punished just the same.
    - (a) Those who used to be fully obedient will be punished by men who make them ashamed.
      - (i) (2Th 3:6) Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.
      - (ii) (2Th 3:14) And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.
    - (b) Those who used to be fully obedient will be punished more severely by the Father for turning from the way of righteousness (2 Peter 2:20-22).
    - (c) Those who have not ever surrendered themselves in full obedience to the Gospel will be punished forever by the Almighty God (2Th 1:8) In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:
- E) Some will say, "It is not fair, I haven't had enough time to fully obey God."
  - 1) "Who did hinder you that you should not obey the truth" (Gal. 5:7)?
  - 2) "Now is the day of Salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2).

### **CONCLUSION:**

- A Partial obedience to God will never avail in life.
- B Only when we are fully obedient to the commands of God do we know that we are saved and it all hinges on one little word—if.
  - 1) (1Jo 2:3) And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.
  - 2) (Joh 15:10) If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.
- C Obedience never comes from those who say and do not and those who do not count the cost (Luke 9:59-62).
- D Partial obedience is sin.
  - 1) God has demanded it.
  - 2) Man has demonstrated it.
  - 3) God will discipline it.
- E Will you obey?

# THE SIN OF PARTIAL OBEDIENCE

## Derrick Coble

**THESIS:** To reveal that partial obedience is no obedience at all.

**TEXT:** 1 Samuel 15; Ecclesiastes 12:13

### **INTRODUCTION:**

- A There are standards of authority in life in which we cannot deny.
- 1) When we see a red traffic light we understand the standard of authority (the law) says to stop.
  - 2) When we receive a bill in the mail for the electricity that we have used in a month we understand that the standard of authority (the law) says we must pay that bill.
  - 3) When we are walking in the woods and we see a sign that reads, “No Trespassing” we understand that the standard of authority (the law) says we cannot set foot on that property.
- B So, we recognize a standard of authority in all earthly matters.
- C Now, what about spiritual matters?
- 1) Is there a standard of authority in which we cannot deny relative to what we do in the name of religion?
  - 2) Yes! That standard is the Word of God.
  - 3) God’s standard is our rule—that by which we should walk.
    - a) (2Co 10:13) But we will not boast of things without *our* measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you.
    - b) (Gal 6:16) And as many as walk according to this rule, peace *be* on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.
    - c) (Phi 3:16) Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.
- D Too many people want to deny God’s standard.
- 1) When atheists scream, “There is no God” what they are really saying is, “We do not want any standard of authority in our lives.”
  - 2) When denominations say, “It doesn’t really matter what we do in the name of religion as long as we are sincere” what they are really saying is, “God has given us a subjective standard and no one has a right to bind that upon us.”
  - 3) When member of the Lord’s church say, “We must follow all the commandments of God because all of His Word is truth (John 17:17)” and then we go out and live like the world from Monday to Saturday, what we are really saying is, “God has given us an objective standard and I don’t care.”
- E The fact of the matter is we have a standard in which we cannot deny.
- 1) It is a standard that will transform our lives when wholly followed (Rom. 12:1,2).
  - 2) It is a standard that defines sin as the transgression of the law (1 John 3:4).
  - 3) It is a standard that will judge all of us in the last day (John 12:48).
- F It is a standard that demands obedience and anything less than obedience is disobedience which is sin (Rom. 5:19).

- 1) God has declared it.
- 2) Man has demonstrated it.
- 3) God will discipline it.

DISCUSSION:

**I THE SIN OF PARTIAL OBEDIENCE AS DEMANDED BY GOD**

- A) God allows no room for man to partially obey His commands.
- 1) His commands are authoritative and he demands full compliance in every part of those commands.
  - 2) (Ecc 12:13) Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man.
    - (a) Our very purpose in life is to respect and obey the commands of God.
    - (b) When one does this, he is living in the fear of God and practicing good things as a result.
  - 3) Matthew 7:21-26
    - (a) Those who hear and do the sayings of God are the only ones who will be saved.
    - (b) What happens when we only hear and never do being partially obedient (James 1:22-25)?
  - 4) John 14:15; 24
    - (a) “I love God but I am just too tired to attend all the worship services and Bible study on Wednesday night”
      - (i) We don’t love him or else we would follow His command to assemble (Hebrews 10:25).
    - (b) “I love God but I don’t see why baptism is such a big deal”
      - (i) We don’t love him or else we would see that baptism is a work of obedience that must be followed (Acts 2:38; Acts 10:48).
- B) When God gives a command He is declaring to us that full obedience is required and if we fall short of full obedience then He has declared it to be sin.
- 1) Acts 5:29 “We ought to obey God rather than men”
  - 2) (Rom 6:16) Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? (Rom 6:17) But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. (Rom 6:18) Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.
- C) Men still want to think for themselves and direct their own steps even though it is impossible (Jer. 10:23).
- 1) Partial obedience based on how many years we have practiced something is sin.
    - (a) (Jdg 2:11) And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim:
    - (b) God raised up judges who delivered them out of the hand of their enemies and as soon as the judge was dead they went back to their false gods (Judg. 2:18,19).
  - 2) Partial obedience based on what is popular is sin.
    - (a) Samuel was old and made his sons Joel and Abiah judges over Israel but they perverted judgment (1Sa 8:5) And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.
  - 3) Partial obedience based on opinion is sin.

- (a) 2 Kings 5:10-12
- (b) Elisha sent a messenger to Naaman telling him to wash in the Jordan seven times.
- (c) (2Ki 5:11) “But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not Arbana and Pharphar rivers of Damascus better than all the waters of Israel?”
- 4) Partial obedience based on the silence of the Scriptures is sin.
  - (a) How many times have we heard someone say, “The Bible doesn’t say not to” as a basis for authority?
  - (b) If we use this for our basis of authority in religion then we are free to do anything (bring out the circus entertainers—doesn’t say not to—bring out the milk and cookies with the bread and fruit of the vine—doesn’t say not to)
  - (c) We must be obedient to what the Bible says and gain our authority from what has been revealed.
  - (d) There is no authority in silence!
- D) God has declared and demanded full obedience to His Word—anything else is sin.

## **II THE SIN OF PARTIAL OBEDIENCE AS DEMONSTRATED BY MAN**

- A) Example: If I hired you to paint my house blue and you painted the front of the house blue and the back of the house orange what would be the problem?
  - 1) The problem is that you have disobeyed my command.
  - 2) “But you didn’t say not to paint the back of the house orange”
  - 3) It doesn’t matter what I did not say—your authority was in what I commanded you to do.
- B) I suppose if we could obey God in this way it would have made a lot of people happy in the history of the Old Testament and it would make a lot of people happy today.
- C) We have examples of within the Old Testament and New Testament of people who tried to get by with partial obedience but it did not work.
  - 1) Achan
    - (a) In fighting the battle of Jericho the children of Israel were strictly instructed by the Lord not to take any of the spoil in the city (Jos 6:18) And ye, in any wise keep *yourselves* from the accursed thing, lest ye make *yourselves* accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it. (Jos 6:19) But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, *are* consecrated unto the LORD: they shall come into the treasury of the LORD.
    - (b) They obeyed God in fighting the battle just as he commanded them yet one man only partially obeyed (Joshua 7:1).
    - (c) Because of Achan’s partial obedience wrath fell on the congregation of Israel (Josh. 7:21-26; 22:20)
  - 2) Saul
    - (a) 1 Sam. 15:3-9
    - (b) Saul did not utterly destroy the Amalekites, but he spared king Agag.
    - (c) Saul told Samuel he had performed the commandment of the Lord (1 Sam. 15:13).
    - (d) Because of his partial obedience Saul said, “I have sinned” (1 Sam. 15:24).
  - 3) David

- (a) On one occasion Ahimelech asked, “Who is so faithful among all thy servants as David” (1 Sam. 22:14) but even though David was faithful in many things he still was a man who committed sin.
  - (b) God did not want his people numbered but Satan stood up against Israel and provoked David to number them (1 Chron. 21:1).
  - (c) Because of this, God’s anger was kindled against Israel (2 Sam. 24:1).
  - (d) David realized he sinned in partial obedience to God (2Sa 24:10) And David’s heart smote him after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the LORD, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.
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- (a) The tribe of Levi was supposed to bear the ark of the covenant before the people of God while they went on their journeys (Deut. 10:8).
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# NEHEMIAH

## Garland Elkins

- I. Nehemiah's grief (1: 1-4).
- II. Nehemiah's prayer (1:5-11).
- III. Nehemiah's success (1: 11b - 2:11).
- IV. Nehemiah's earnest work (2:12 - 4:14).
- V. Bitter opposition to Nehemiah (4:15 - 6:19).
- VI. Nehemiah's final success (7:1 - 13:30).

### AN EXPANDED OUTLINE OF NEHEMIAH

- I. Nehemiah's grief (1:1-4).
  - A. The previous life of Nehemiah.
  - B. Hanani's report.
  - C. Tears for Jerusalem.
  - D. Love for brethren and country.
- II. Nehemiah's prayer (1:5-11).
  - A. Communication with God.
  - B. Confessing to God.
  - C. Pleading the promises.
  - D. Urging desires.
  - E. Instant in prayer.
- III. Nehemiah's success (1:11b-2:11).
  - A. The sad cupbearer.
  - B. The prayerful petition.
  - C. The petition granted.
  - D. The journey to Jerusalem.
- IV. Nehemiah's earnest work (2:12-4:14).
  - A. Nehemiah's midnight ride.
  - B. "Let us build."
  - C. Division of labor.
  - D. "A mind to work."

- V. Bitter opposition to Nehemiah (4:15-6:19).
  - A. Grieved at the good being accomplished.
  - B. The weapon of ridicule.
  - C. The weapon of conspiracy.
  - D. The weapon of treason.
  - E. The weapon of threats.
  - F. Enemies of the good.
- VI. Nehemiah's final success (chapters 7:1-13:30).
  - A. Watching and working.
  - B. Shaming the usurers.
  - C. Nehemiah's generous example.
  - D. Nehemiah's bold persistency.
  - E. "So the wall was finished."
  - F. The secret of success.

### THE BASIC MESSAGE OF NEHEMIAH AND HOW IT LIVES FOR MEN TODAY

#### **God's Great Promise**

The purpose of the twenty-ninth chapter of Jeremiah was to assure the exiles in Babylon that in spite of the false prophets who were foretelling a speedy return, they would remain in captivity seventy years. But they were not to despair, for at the end of the seventy years the nation would be restored to its own land (Jer. 29:10-14).

Zerubbabelled the first group with the intention of restoring the city and the temple. About twelve years before the time Nehemiah went to Jerusalem Ezra had led a second group to the city. They did not accept an escort, though the king offered it and they were carrying with them gold and silver in tremendous amounts. Nehemiah was the third to return, and his purpose was to build the wall about the city and to accomplish certain reforms. His role of governor for about thirteen years was productive of much improvement, socially, financially, politically and especially spiritually.

#### **Love for His Brethren**

Nehemiah might have remained in a position of ease and affluence in the court of the king, but he was willing to give up a comfortable and responsible position for the higher call of duty. The city was not safe from attack of enemies and many of the Jews in Jerusalem were in worse condition than those in captivity. His love for his people was so great that when he learned of their



pitiful plight he was overwhelmed with grief: "And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven" (Neh. 1:4). Nehemiah was one of the greatest Old Testament characters. When he is considered in the light of achievement, few equal him. Like Christ, he was concerned for his people (Matt. 23:37). Paul showed the same deep compassion for his countrymen (Rom. 9: 1-5; 10: 1-3; 2 Cor. 12: 15).

### **Nehemiah: An Example of a Man "Instant in Prayer"**

His prayer has many of the characteristics of a model one (Neh. 1:5- 11). It shows a keen awareness of the sins of his people and a clear perception of God's goodness toward them and likewise his hatred of their sins. The prayer consists of the invocation, confession, pleading God's promises, and urging petitions. Specifically, the prayer was concerned with intercession.

In many respects it is almost identical with the prayer of Daniel (Dan. 9:4-19). The opening verses of the two prayers are almost word for word the same. Paul often prayed for his people and acknowledged their situation (Rom. 10:1-3).

He dwelt on the majesty and might of God. He emphasized God's mercy and that he was a covenant-keeping God. He approached God in prayer with a childlike faith, trusting God to hear him. We must ask according to God's will (1 John 5: 14), with a complete confidence that if we do this our prayers will be heard (James 1:5; James 5:16). His eyes and ears are always open to his children (1 Pet. 3:10-12). Proper prayer is always characterized by true humility (1 Chron. 7: 14; 1 Pet. 5:5,6). We should pray daily and many times each day (Dan. 6:10; Luke 18:1). We must pray with a willingness to put away sin, to forgive and to be forgiven (Matt. 5:23; 6: 12-14). Regardless of how long we have been praying and how much we may think we know about prayer, we need to continue to study his word and thus seek to pray in an acceptable fashion.

We are to pray to God (Eph. 5:20). Some religious people pray to Mary, and others to Jesus or the Holy Spirit, and some pray in the name of the Father instead of the Son (John 14:13; 16:24; Eph. 2: 18). It is vain to request God to do things for us in answer to prayer while we will not obey him (Prov. 28:9; 1 John 3:23). Jesus left us an example of obedience in prayer when he prayed in the garden of Gethsemane: "And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matt. 26:39).

Scriptural prayer is a matter of longing desire, not of hours and days; it

continues as long as the desire continues and is not satisfied. Prayer to please God must not be limited to self but must also seek with eager earnestness the welfare of others (John 17:20,21). Confession is a true element of prayer. We need to review our past and confess the sins of which we have been guilty. Thus we shall see ourselves as we are and come to better understand our great need of God, and therefore approach him humbly. Nehemiah did not say, "We do not deserve this punishment, help us bear this undeserved suffering. " The inspired John instructs Christians, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1 :9). The Hebrew writer gives all who sin great encouragement to obey the Lord when he quotes the Lord as saying, "For I will be merciful to their iniquities, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. 8: 12).

### **Nehemiah's Midnight Ride and Survey**

After Nehemiah's arrival from Persia, he rested for three days (Neh. 2:11). He had told no one of his plans, but prudently wished first to see the "lay of the land." Desiring to obtain first-hand information, he arose in the night and with only a few trusted attendants, and with only the animal on which he himself rode, he passed around the ruined wall, noting how much work would need to be done in order to restore it and its various gates. His account is condensed but . it does give invaluable information regarding the outline and extent of the wall at that time, the names and positions of the various gates and other features.

Nehemiah had come to Jerusalem in order to rebuild those walls, but he showed great wisdom by discovering their real condition and how much work would need to be done on them before he began to discuss his plans with anyone. He could then proceed according to knowledge. He could anticipate objections and be prepared to meet them. Many excellent projects in religious and secular matters have failed because those who advocate them have been too hasty and poorly informed.

### **Nehemiah: a Great Leader**

Wise leaders enlist the cooperation of others. So Nehemiah next called a meeting of the Jewish leaders, including the priests, the secular authorities, the heads of families and representative workers. He gave them an account of God's providential protection which had brought him to Jerusalem, by no means forgetting the favor of the king. He pictured the desolate condition of the once powerful and highly favored city, a pitiful condition which brought upon it the reproach of all who beheld. So fervent was Nehemiah's eloquence and so

cogent his logic that the assembly responded and said, "Let us rise up and build" (Neh. 2:18). Nehemiah is an example of what one person of faith, courage and enthusiasm can do to motivate many persons.

A good leader also knows how to apportion work so as to have everyone working. Chapter three, though it at first seems to be a mere list of hard names, is a most interesting chapter. Among other things, it makes clear what a great leader Nehemiah was in the entire procedure

### **The Mind to Work**

One of the greatest reasons that the wall was built is stated in these words: "So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work" (Neh. 4:6). This was done in spite of enemy scorn, with reliance upon God for protection. They went on with the work. From the human side, that is the secret of success in most undertakings. We can do anything that is reasonably possible if we are determined to do it. Without the mind to do it, even easy tasks are left unfinished. Under difficult circumstances nothing less than careful preparation, diligent precautions against opposition, and a strong determination to do the work would have been successful. This applies to all Christians and their work for the Lord in His church (Acts 20:17-32; Phil. 3:18,19; Gal. 2:3-5). *A truly great leader will oppose and correct from within God's people as well as without.* Many enemies of God's people had crept insidiously among them and were well along toward undermining their very foundations.

### **Errors Opposed and Corrected from Within**

*First*, the purity of the race was in the process of being deteriorated by the ties of marriage, friendships and commercial ties. The result was always to lead Israel astray. The separation of the Jews from the surrounding heathen by food, circumcision and various customs was essential to the purity of the nation. Though these same restrictions do not apply to Christians, nevertheless, the principle applies in that we are to be separated from the world (2 Cor. 6:14-18; 1 John 2: 15-17), we are not to bid error of any type Godspeed (Rom. 16:17,18; 2 John 9-11), and we cannot tolerate immorality among God's people (Matt. 19:9; Gal. 5:19-21; Rev. 21:8).

*Second*, the high priest Eliashib himself desecrated the temple by fitting one of the temple chambers as a dwelling place for Tobiah, the Ammonite, who was allied by marriage to him (Neh. 13:4,5). Nehemiah with great indignation

drove Tobiah out of the temple, and restored it to its proper uses. Our Lord twice cleansed the temple. Once near the beginning of his ministry (John. 2: 13-17) and once near the close (Matt. 21: 12, 13). This expulsion of evil from the temple is typical of God's demand upon the church to purify itself (I Cor. 5: 1-13).

*Third*, the tithes for the support of the priests and of the temple worship were withheld, or the poorest of their flocks and herds had been brought for sacrifice, the blind, the torn of wild beasts, the sick, those of little or no use for themselves (Neh. 13:10; Mal. 1:7,8; 3:8-10). Thus they dishonored God, and robbed him of his due, and the penalty had fallen upon them. The priests and Levites had been compelled to go to their homes and earn their living, since the people refused to support them in their religious work; and this resulted in the temple services being neglected.

When Nehemiah perceived this state of things, he said, "Then contended I with the rulers, and said, Why is the house of God forsaken? And I gathered them together, and set them in their place" (Neh. 13:11).

### **The Book of Nehemiah Makes Clear That Seventh-Day Adventism Is False**

Adventists proceed upon the totally false premise that God commanded the observance of the sabbath day even from creation. Moses wrote Genesis many centuries after the creation. It is true that ". . . God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made" (Gen. 2:3). Adventists often cite this verse with an attitude of triumph. Nehemiah both knew this passage and believed it, yet he sounded the death knell to the Adventist error when he affirms that no man even knew about the sabbath until the Jews came to Mount Sinai. "Thou camest down also upon Mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments: *And madest known unto them thy holy sabbath*, and commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant" (Neh. 9:13,14--emphasis mine, G.E.).

Adventists think that their strongest argument is their contention that there were two laws given to Israel at Mount Sinai, one called the "law of God," which they call the moral law, "the ten commandments," and another law called the "law of Moses" or the "ceremonial law." They further argue that the first was to last forever, while the latter ended at the cross. Their argument is utterly false, and once their fallacies on their so-called two law theory are exposed, Seventh-Day Adventism falls on its own weight. In Romans 7:4,6,7 we learn that they were dead to the law; were delivered from the law

by the body of Christ, which refers to the same event of Colossians 2: 14 and Ephesians 2: 13-16, the cross of Christ.

What law was Paul referring to in Romans, chapter seven? He identifies it beyond question in verse 7, "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." So the law to which they had become dead by the cross, from which they had been delivered, according to Paul in this passage, was the law that said, "Thou shalt not covet." This definitely proves that "the law" refers to the ten commandments, and also that the ten commandments, along with all parts of the law, were nailed to the cross; to it they were dead, and from it they were delivered!

In Exodus 20 through Exodus 23:33 are recorded the words spoken by the Lord to Moses. In these chapters there is no such division as the "law of God," the "law of Moses" and the "law." In Exodus chapter 24 we have the identification of these words as given by the Lord: "And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord and all the judgments" (Ex. 24:3). In Exodus 24:7 we read, "And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people." In Exodus 24:8 we read, "And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words." In these words, written by Moses, called the *book of the covenant*, (not covenants) one book; we have *both* the ten commandments and the ceremonies of the law.

We read in Nehemiah 8:5, "And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people." What book did he open?-"The book of the law of Moses" (Neh.8: 1). In verse 7 he names thirteen teachers and the Levites, saying they "caused the people to understand the law." So we note that what they read was called both the "book of the law of Moses" and also "the law." Now to forever destroy every argument that the Adventists can make in an effort to teach their two-law theory let us read Nehemiah 8:8, "So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading." And when Israel had gathered before Ezra it is said, "And they found written in the law which the Lord had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month" (Neh. 8: 14). So the "law of God," the "law of Moses" and the "law" refer to the same thing and the Adventists are wrong. Further, God gave "the law of Moses" (Ezra 7:6) and Moses gave "God's law" (Neh. 10:29). God gave "the book of the law of Moses" (Neh. 8: 1). Moses gave the "book of the law of the Lord" (2 Chron. 34: 14). Adventists contend that the law of Moses refers to all of the Old Testament

law except the ten commandments. Jesus did not hold such a view for he declared, "Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother" (Mark 7: 10). But this is one of the ten commandments. Again, "Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you doeth the law? Why seek ye to kill me?" (John 7: 19). In this passage Jesus referred to the law against murder and says Moses gave it.

Also note Jesus' statement in Matthew 22:35-40, "And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question, trying him: Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law? And he said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments the whole law hangeth, and the prophets." The two commandments cited here by Jesus are not mentioned in the ten commandments at all. But Jesus said that they are the greatest in the law. *If the Adventists were right, they would have Jesus naming and locating the two greatest commandments in what they call the law of Moses, and further. as per their theory they would have them taken away! Can anyone believe such error?*

The sabbath was given to Israel only (Deut. 5:1-5"; Ex. 31:13). The ten commandments, which Paul calls, "the ministration of death, written and engraven on stones," were done away (2 Cor. 3:7-11). The sabbath ended or was blotted out at the cross (Amos 8:5; Mark 15:33; Col. 2:14-16). Christians are not under the law (Rom. 6: 14; Gal. 5: 18). Note also: (a) We are dead to the law (Rom. 7:4), (b) We are delivered from the law (Rom. 7:6), (c) Christ is the end of the law (Rom. 10:4). (d) "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ. . . we are no longer under a schoolmaster" (Gal. 3:24,25). (e) "The law" has been abolished (Eph. 2: 15). The Lord made a covenant with the children of Israel when he brought them out of the land of Egypt, and gave them the ten commandments (I Kings 8:21). The covenant which Jehovah made with Israel when he brought them out of Egypt was in the ark (I Kings 8:9). Jeremiah predicted that the covenant would be abrogated, and the Hebrew writer affirms that it happened (Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:7-9).

Even if the Adventists were right in their contention that the sabbath is binding, they would be wrong in that they themselves do not keep it! The Jews were not merely commanded to keep the sabbath day, but to keep it "holy" (Ex. 20:8; Neh. 13: 17; Isa. 56:2; Ezek. 22:8). This included burnt offerings, animal sacrifices and drink offerings (Num. 28:9,10). Likewise they would be compelled to kill everyone of their people who dared to work on that day! (Ex. 35:2).

## Devices of Satan

Satan is a dangerous adversary. He is cunning, depraved and an active enemy: Therefore, we as Christians should "be sober~ be watchful: your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom withstand stedfast in your faith, knowing that the same sufferings are accomplished in your brethren who are in the world" (I Pet. 5:8,9).

Satan has many devices. Fortunate are we that we can know these devices. "That no advantage may be gained over us by Satan: for we are not ignorant of his devices" (2 Cor. 2: 11). To be forewarned is to be forearmed. We are taught to "Be subject therefore unto God; but resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye doubleminded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall exalt you" (James 4:7-10). In principle Nehemiah met all of these devices and overcame them. Remember these were written for our learning (Rom. 15:4). Let us study Satan's devices.

*The device of ridicule (Neh. 4: 1-3).* This is a common device of evil and cowardly men. Though the Lord's work may have long been trodden down, when it begins to again make progress the devil and his followers are always made unhappy by the good being accomplished. Thus we learn that when Sanballat observed the situation, he assembled his leaders and armed force and addressed them: "But it came to pass, that when Sanballat heard that we builded the wall, he was wroth, and took great indignation, and mocked the Jews. And he spake before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, What do these feeble Jews? will they fortify themselves? will they sacrifice? will they make an end in a day? will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned?" (Neh. 4: 1-2).

The weapon of ridicule can be both cruel and effective. Faithful brethren have, in years past, so effectively exposed the multitudinous errors of denominationalism that the various sects, unable as they were to answer the truth, have often engaged in ridicule of Christians. They often referred to the church of Christ as "The Campbellite Church." I can state from first-hand experience that preachers, teachers, fellow-students, neighbors and workers often resorted to ridicule as an effective method of impeding the progress of

the Lord's church. In reference to the Lord's work many have "made light of it" (Matt. 22:5). Enemies of the church have laughed God's people to scorn as they pointed out their lack of wealth, numbers and education just as Sanballat and Tobiah began to laugh when Nehemiah talked about what he and his fellow-worker intended to do. This was and is done to paralyze the courage of the workers. This would be easily done if one is not confident that God is on his side (Rom. 8:35-39).

*The device of conspiracy and intimidation (Neh. 4:7,8).* When ridicule and scorn failed to frighten the Jews to the point that they would cease their work, then the Samaritans, Arabians, Ammonites and the Philistines formed a coalition. They had their differences but all of them could be temporarily ignored if they could but prevent the building of the wall. Modern denominations (both Catholic and Protestant) have their differences, but they often readily ignore them in order to oppose the church of Christ. Through the years when faithful and able brethren have met the Goliaths of denominationalism, the sects have compiled a solidarity of conspiracy to fight against God's people.

Nehemiah's defense was twofold. (1) He appealed to God for divine protection. (2) He set a watch against them day and night (Neh. 4:9). Since the work he was doing was for God and God's people, he could consistently pray to God for such protection. Again it is noteworthy that Nehemiah depended upon God in all emergencies. He always laid the case before God and he did so first "and immediately. Prayer and work were his methods of approach. Nothing can equal this plan. Having prayed, he set a watch day and night. This was the next step in preparation to repel an" actual attack. Christians would do well to " remember Nehemiah's approach to the tactics of Satan.

*The device of compromise (Neh. 6:1-4).* The third attempt of Sanballat, Tobiah and Geshem to destroy the work of God was to propose a "union meeting. " Having failed to" thwart the building of the wall by ridicule and a threat to actual physical fighting, they then used the most potentially dangerous of all of Satan's weapons, *compromise*.

When the Lord's church was small in numbers, wealth and education, the false religions often laughed at the saints. If this did not succeed in given cases, denominationalists often challenged brethren to debate. Invariably when these debates were conducted by faithful and able "brethren, the truth prevailed and denominationalism was exposed and put to flight. Then what? The various denominations began to invite our brethren, ". . . saying, Come, let



us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono" (Neh. 6:2). *And the shame of it is that many brethren have compromised with error.* We should be wise along with Nehemiah and realize "But they thought to do me mischief" (Neh. 6:2). When Christians are invited to come down to the plain of "Ono," they should reply *No!* Nehemiah's classic reply should ever be our reply, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?" (Neh. 6:3).

Compromising brethren can attend an ecumenical meeting and feel perfectly at home. Having attended that type meeting, and having spoken, when I presented the truth and opposed the error of those false teachers, in every case they not only became angry and unkind, but also walked out!

*The device of a false report and slander* (Neh. 6:5-9). This was and is one of Satan's most dangerous weapons. Multitudes have fallen prey to this weapon. The design of this device is to make us "afraid" (Neh. 6:9).

*A .fifth device was to use a false prophet to forecast evil for God's people unless they compromised with their enemies* (Neh. 6:10-13). Satan uses his ministers to accomplish the same end presently. Paul said, "For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, fashioning themselves into apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for even Satan fashioneth himself into an angel of light. It is no great thing therefore if his ministers also fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (1 Cor. 11:13-15).

### **Teaching the Word of God**

Our attitude toward the Lord and His word should be, "Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end" (Psalms 119:33).

In Nehemiah chapter 8 we learn much concerning the respectful attitude toward God and His word. "And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel" (Neh. 8: 1). In ancient times this month had begun a new year, so that it was especially suited to a new start in life such as was made during the events of the book of Nehemiah.

It is noteworthy that the people asked Ezra to bring" the book of the law. " They were hungering and thirsting after righteousness (Matt. 5:6). "And

Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month" (Neh. 8:2). Ezra was a priest, descended from the high priest of the time of Zedekiah; but he was also' a scribe, and both titles are often given him (Neh. 8:9). This is the first mention of him in the book of Nehemiah. If he were in Jerusalem during the months preceding, he had stepped aside, leaving the preeminence to Nehemiah, the man of action. Since peaceful days had come, the man of thought stepped to the front. In the old law as well as in the new law, the truth was understandable (Eph. 3:4; 5: 17).

We learn in Nehemiah 8:4 that Ezra stood upon a wooden pulpit, so high that he could easily be seen and heard by all, and so broad that six men stood there with him on his right and seven men on his left, fourteen in all. He began as soon as it was light enough, and read on (he and his assistants-verse 7) till noon, that is, for six hours or more. Ezra's sermon was long, very long-from dawn till noon-yet no one seems to have gotten tired. The example of these people and the noble Bereans are worthy of our imitation (Acts 17: 11,12).

Unless the soul is at attention, all our Bible reading and Bible study is valueless. Of these people it is stated, ". . . and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law" (Neh. 8:3).

They also manifested reverence for the word of God in this event. "And' Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people;) and when he opened it, all the people stood up" (Neh. 8:5). We are to love and reverence the Bible as the unfailing guide to our Father in heaven.

The blessings of Bible study are made clear in this story. The people understood the law. Ezra was a good preacher, and along with his helpers enlightened the people. "So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading" (Neh. 8:8). Conviction of sin follows the reading and understanding of God's word. When our lives are examined in the light of God's word and His righteousness, our lives are seen to be imperfect and we see how crooked they are. The first aim of correct religious teaching is to make persons see themselves as they are, in all their sinfulness and their great need of a Saviour. These people mourned as did King Josiah when the book of the law was discovered in the temple (2 Kings 22:11,19).

Nehemiah and Ezra did not think it proper that the day of praise should

be marred by their sorrow, even though it was Godly sorrow over their sins. We can control our feelings. "Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength" (Neh. 8: 10). In hope and joy we are more likely to succeed, . while a dejected and sorrowful heart often insures the failure which it dreads. This does not mean that they ceased to be sorry for their sins, but that for the present they refrained from the outward expression of their sorrow.

The day after Ezra's Bible study, the leaders of the people assembled for further instruction in the word of God, and on that day they heard the commands for the observance of the harvest festival. In glad obedience an obedience that had not been fully rendered since the days of Joshua-they fully followed the instructions.

Every day through the eight days of the feast Ezra read from the book of the law. This is an excellent example of rightly dividing the word of truth and joyfully obeying it.

The Bible furnishes us unto every good work (2 Tim. 3: 16,17) and contains all things that pertain unto life and godliness (2 Pet. I :3). Someone has well said, "The Bible will comfort us in sorrow, guide us in perplexity, strengthen us in our weakness, encourage us in times of doubt and failure and fear. The Bible will bring our Saviour near, will quicken our faith, inspire our prayers. The Bible is an unfailing friend and ever-wise companion. Its treasures are inexhaustible, its wisdom never fails. Happy indeed is the soul that rests upon Holy Writ.@

# I KINGS

Gary McDade

## INTRODUCTION:

I Kings is the sixth book among the twelve historical books of the Old Testament. In antiquity *The Book of the Kings* was the same as what we now recognize as I and II Samuel and I and II Kings. That is why the title in most Bibles for I Kings adds a commonly called the third book of the kings. Incidentally, the Septuagint refers to I and II Samuel and I and II Kings as I-IV Kingdoms. Gleason L. Archer, Jr., informs that the Hebrew Bible [the Bomberg edition of 1517] seems to have regarded the two volumes of Samuel as a single book. The same was true of 1 and 2 Kings (Archer, 282). The inspired author is not named. *Baba Bathra 15a* pointed to Jeremiah as the author primarily since the book of Jeremiah 39-42, 52 and II Kings 24-25 contain parallel historical reference to the fall of Jerusalem. [Note: The *Baba Bathra* constitute sections within the Babylonian Talmud which is later and more voluminous than the Palestinian Talmud, 3rd to 5th century AD. The Talmud is the case law or commentary of the rabbis on the Old Testament Law known by them as the *Torah*.] The approximate time covered in the book is 970 to 848 BC. I Kings begins with the reign of King Solomon (970 BC) and concludes with the reigns of Ahaziah King of Israel (852 BC) and Jehoshaphat King of Judah (848 BC). The shifting reference by the author to the chronicles of the kings of Israel and the chronicles of the kings of Judah flows much smoother for the reader when the following chart is kept in mind.

## KINGS OF ISRAEL

### The United Kingdom

Saul reigned 40 years (Acts 13:21)	1050-1010
David reigned 40 years (II Samuel 5:4)	1010-970
Solomon reigned 40 years (I Kings 11:22)	970-930

### The Divided Kingdom

The kingdom lasted 120 years before dividing

10 Tribes formed the Northern Kingdom called Israel

Judah and Benjamin formed the Southern Kingdom called Judah

#### Kings of Israel

Jeroboam	930-910
Nadab	910-909
Baasha	909-886
Elah	886-885
Zimri	885
Omri	885-874

#### Kings of Judah

Rehoboam	931-913
Abijah	913-910
Asa	910-869

Ahab	874-853	Jehoshaphat	872-848
Ahaziah	853-852	Jehoram	848-841
Jehoram	852-841	Ahaziah	841
Jehu	841-814	Athaliah	841-835
Jehoahaz	814-798	Joash	835-796
Jehoash	798-782	Amaziah	796-767
Jeroboam II	793-753	Uzziah	790-739
Zechariah	753-752	Jotham	751-736
Shallum	752		
Menahem	752-742		
Pekahiah	742-740	Ahaz	742-728
Pekah	740-732		
Hoshea	732-721	Hezekiah	728-697
		Manasseh	697-642
		Amon	642-640
		Josiah	640-609
		Jehoahaz	609-608
		Jehoiakim	608-597
		Jehoiachin	597-586
		Zedekiah	597-586

## AN OUTLINE OF I KINGS

- I. The United Kingdom (1:1-11:43).
- II. The Divided Kingdom (12:1-22:53).

- I. The United Kingdom (1:1-11:43).
  - A. Solomon Becomes King (1:1-2:46).
  - B. Solomon Takes the United Kingdom to Its Zenith (3:1-10:29).
  - C. Solomon's Wives Turned His Heart Away From God (11:1-43).
- II. The Divided Kingdom (12:1-22:53).
  - A. The Kingdom Divides (12:1-33).
  - B. The Courageous Prophet Who Believed a Lie (13:1-32).
  - C. The Reigns of Rehoboam, Abijah, and Asa Over Judah (13:33-15:24).
  - D. The Reigns of Jeroboam, Nadab, Baasha, Elah, and Zimri Over Israel (15:25-16:28).
  - E. The Reign of Ahab Over Israel (16:29-22:40).
  - F. The Reign of Jehoshaphat Over Judah (22:41-50).
  - G. The Reign of Ahaziah Over Israel (22:51-53).

## KING SOLOMON

- I. The **WISDOM** of King Solomon (I Kings 3:16-28; 4:29-34).
- II. The **WORK** of King Solomon (I Kings 6-7; 9:15, 24; Acts 7:47).

- III. The **WORSHIP** of King Solomon (I Kings 8; 9:25).
- IV. The **WONDER** of King Solomon (I Kings 10:1-10; I Chron. 29:23; Matt. 6:29; 12:42).
- V. The **WRITINGS** of King Solomon (I Kings 4:32; Proverbs; Ecclesiastes; Song of Solomon).
- VI. The **WOMEN** of King Solomon (I Kings 11:1-13).
- VII. The **WOES** of King Solomon (Ecclesiastes 1:12-18; 2:1-3, 2:4-17, 2:18-23; 3:1-22; 4:1-16; 5:1-7, 5:8-20; 6:1-12; 12:9-14).

**THE DARING OF THE YOUNG PROPHET,  
THE DECEPTION OF THE OLD PROPHET,  
AND THE DEATH OF THE YOUNG PROPHET**  
(I Kings 13:1-32)

- I. The **INDITEMENT** of Jeroboam=s Altar at Bethel (I Kings 13:1-5).
- II. The **INTREATING** of the Lord for Jeroboam (I Kings 13:6).
- III. The **INVITATION** of Jeroboam to the Young Prophet (I Kings 13:7-10).
- IV. The **INTERCEPTION** of the Young Prophet by the Old Prophet (I Kings 13:11-14).
- V. The **INVITATION** of the Old Prophet to the Young Prophet (I Kings 13:15-17).
- VI. The **INFERNAL** Lie of the Old Prophet (I Kings 13:18).
- VII. The **INTERRUPTION** of the Old Prophet (I Kings 13:19-22).
- VIII. The **INJURY** to the Young Prophet (I Kings 13:23-28).
- IX. The **INTERMENT** of the Young Prophet (I Kings 13:29-32).

**ELIJAH THE TISHBITE**  
(I Kings 18:46; 19:19; II Kings 1:8)

- I. The **TIMES** of Elijah the Tishbite (I Kings 16:29-33).
- II. The **TROUBLES** of Elijah the Tishbite (I Kings 17-18).
- III. The **TESTING** of Elijah the Tishbite (I Kings 19:1-18; I Kings 21; II Kings 9).
- IV. The **TEMPERAMENT** of Elijah the Tishbite (I Kings 18:23-24; II Kings 1:9-15; II Kings 2:11).
- V. The **TRANSITION** of Elijah the Tishbite (I Kings 19:15-18; II Kings 2:9-15).
- VI. The **TRANSLATION** of Elijah the Tishbite (II Kings 2:11; Gen. 5:24).
- VII. The **TRANSFIGURATION** and Elijah the Tishbite (Malachi 4:5-6; Matt. 3:4; 11:14; 17:1-8).

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# ESTHER -- A WOMAN FOR ALL SEASONS

Irene C. Taylor

## INTRODUCTION:

1 Paul informs us in Romans 15:4 that "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning.. ."

2 In the book of Esther, we find the portrait of a real **lady**. The example she set in facing crucial situations is one which can inspire us to face life's problems with grace and courage.

3 Many are the lessons we can learn from a study of this book.

## I A MODEL OF MODESTY

A Modesty, fully defined is, " ... behaving, dressing, speaking, etc. in a way that is considered proper or decorous; decent ... quiet and humble in appearance, style, etc.; not pretentious..." (Webster's New World College Dictionary, 1997, p. 871).

1 Vashti, her predecessor, exemplified modesty (1:10-12).

2 Esther, also, exemplified modesty in conduct in her preparation to appear as a candidate for queen (2:15).

B By her modest conduct she obtained respect and favour.

1 Our modest conduct will bring approval from God and respect from associates, especially those of the opposite sex.

## II ESTHER IS CHOSEN QUEEN

A She accepts the wisdom and guidance of Mordecai, the cousin who reared her (2:7,10).

1 She does not reveal her kindred or her people at this time (2:20).

B She won the love of the king as well as his confidence (2:17).

C Though the name of God is not found in the book of Esther, His hand of providence is seen throughout its pages.

1 She was willing to do what was right in all situations.

2 Her sterling character prepared her to arise and take a stand when needed.

## III PRIDE VS. HUMILITY (CHAPTER 3)

A Esther maintained an attitude of quiet grace and humility.

1 She required no special homage be paid her as queen.

B Haman, on the other hand, displayed an attitude of pride and arrogance.

1 He manipulated the king into issuing command that all the king's servants bow down to him (Haman).

2 Mordecai refused to do him reverence.

3 Haman's pride seethed within him and he plotted revenge.

4 He convinced the king to make a law that all Jews be destroyed.

- a He is given the king's ring to seal the law.
- b Haman sent a letter to all the provinces to kill all Jews, both young and old.
- c Such showed the depth of Haman's pride, all because one man refused to pay him reverence!

#### **IV FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS**

- A Mordecai sent word to Esther of Haman's wicked plan.
  - 1 He instructed her to go before the king and expose Haman.
  - 2 Esther exemplified great courage in going, unbidden, before the king.
    - a She is extended the king IS scepter and granted audience.
  
- B She wisely does not reveal her request right off.
  - 1 Instead of demanding immediate action, she invites the king and Haman to two banquets (5:8,12).
  - 2 At the second banquet she makes request for her OVID life and that of her people.
    - a She reveals Haman as the adversary.
    - b Haman is hanged on the gallows he prepared for Mordecai.
  
- C Provision is made for the Jews to defend themselves (Chapter 9).
  - a Haman's law could not be revoked; new provisions had to be made.

#### **V LESSONS TO BE LEARNED**

- A We need to keep our character pure and be ready to serve when and where needed.
- B We need to retain an attitude of humility. Pride is destructive (prov. 11:2; 16:18).
- C We need to maintain a life of modesty no matter the pressure to do otherwise.
- D We need to be willing to respect and heed the counsel of our godly elderly.
- E We need to act courageously even if it places our own life in danger (4:16).
- F We need to follow the pattern of Mordecai. He saved the king's life with no fanfare or thought of reward. Yet when the deed was discovered he received reward (6:1-11; 10:3; Provo 27:2)
- G We are not to be ruled by pride (prov. 11:2; 16:18; 29:23) ...
- H There is always a way to do right if we are willing to seek it (1 Cor. 10:13).
- I When God opens a door will we be ready to enter? (4:14).
- J We should be ready to reach out to the lost and save them with the courage of Esther!



**CONCLUSION:**

**1** In view of the problems plaguing the Lord's Cause today, are we ready to step up and be counted "for such a time as this?"

# FIRST SAMUEL: AN OVERVIEW

Jason Hilburn

**TEXT:** The entire book of First Samuel.

**THESIS:** To give the reader a better understanding of First Samuel.

## **INTRODUCTION:**

1. In a time defined by wars – seemingly constant battles between neighboring nations, men chose from among themselves those who were brave and strong to lead their armies into battle against the neighboring foes.
  - a. God’s people were involved in many of these battles, yet they had forgotten their true Deliverer: *“In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes”* (Judges 21:25).
  - b. God had provided His people with judges to conquer their enemies for many years; however, that era was about to cease.
    - 1) Under God’s oversight, Samuel had judged Israel well, but now God’s people were seeking an earthly king.
    - 2) This people who had been set apart by God chose to be *“like all the nations,”* and God allowed them to do so.
    - 3) Just as the nations of earth sought mighty men to rule over them, Israel chose the same.
  - c. One named Saul was allowed to rise as Israel’s first king, but along the way he had also risen in pride and presumption.
  - d. As Saul had ascended in his own eyes, he had descended in the eyes of God.
2. The First Book of Samuel contains the record of Samuel’s life and the rise and fall of Saul.
  - a. In the midst of this divine account we learn of an unlikely hero – one at whom the world would have laughed, but one upon whom the Lord had favor.
  - b. He was a young man after God’s own heart.
  - c. He was the son of Jesse – the young shepherd named David.

## **DISCUSSION:**

### **I. THE NAME OF THE BOOK**

- A. Why are the books that we call First and Second Samuel named after Samuel?
  1. Samuel was the great man of God on whom the opening chapters focus.
  2. Notice some of the great works of Samuel recorded in the book:
    - a. He judged very effectively.
    - b. He interceded for the people.
    - c. He proclaimed the Word of the Lord faithfully.
    - d. He helped to bring in the age of the monarchy.
    - e. He inaugurated the schools of the prophets.
    - f. He was a type of Christ, being a prophet, priest, and judge.
  3. Samuel has been called the greatest servant of God during the period spanning from Moses to David.

4. Notice the manner in which the Lord specifically mentioned Moses and Samuel together: *“Then said the Lord unto me, Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people: cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth”* (Jeremiah 15:1).
  5. Samuel is also mentioned in other passages, such as Hebrews 11, which is often called the “Faith Hall of Fame.” *“And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets”* (Hebrews 11:32).
  6. Samuel was also the one who anointed both Saul and David, with whom the majority of the text in First Samuel deals.
- B. These two books were originally one book.
1. The Hebrew manuscripts placed both of these books together in one book called “Samuel.”
  2. The Septuagint translators divided the book into two sections.
    - a. The Septuagint was a Greek translation, and the Greek text requires more space than Hebrew.
    - b. The scrolls used were too small to place the entire Greek translation onto one scroll; therefore, the book of Samuel was divided.
    - c. The division between the two books was placed after the recording of Saul’s death, and we still have the books divided today.
  3. The Septuagint called the two books the “First and Second Books of the Kingdoms.”
    - a. The Latin Vulgate kept the division and called the books the “First and Second Books of the Kings.”
    - b. Our English translations list them as the “First and Second Books of Samuel.”

## **II. AUTHORSHIP AND DATE OF WRITING**

- A. The author of the First Book of Samuel is God.
- B. The identity of the inspired writer is uncertain.
1. The Jewish Talmud assigns penmanship to Samuel (Baba Bathra 14b); however, it is not likely that Samuel wrote the entire volume.
  2. Samuel’s death is recorded in the twenty-fifth chapter of First Samuel, and there are approximately forty-five years of history recorded after this event.
  3. It is more likely that the first twenty-four chapters were written by Samuel, and the rest were written by Nathan and Gad.
  4. This view is based on what we read in 1 Chronicles 29:29: *“Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer.”*
  5. This verse seems to indicate that these three prophets (Samuel, Nathan, and Gad) were inspired to record this part of history.
  6. If this is the case, then we have the First and Second Books of Samuel today thanks to God and three inspired penmen.

7. We know that Samuel recorded events that occurred during his lifetime, because we read that “*Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord*” (1 Samuel 10:25).
8. The section of Scriptures written by Samuel might include events of his own life, most of Saul’s history, and the earlier part of David’s career.
9. The other two proposed writers, the prophets Nathan and Gad, were contemporaries with David.
  - a. Nathan is mentioned in 12 verses of Second Samuel, and was a prominent counselor who took part in the coronation of Solomon.
  - b. Gad is mentioned in First and Second Samuel as one who provided guidance to David (1 Samuel 22:5; 2 Samuel 24:11-19).

C. It is difficult to ascertain the date of writing for the book.

1. The words of 1 Samuel 27:6 cause many to believe that the book was written after the kingdom was divided: “*Then Achish gave him Ziklag that day: wherefore Ziklag pertaineth unto the kings of Judah unto this day.*”
  - a. Pulpit Commentary states, “the compiler must have lived at some period between the reign of Rehoboam and the upgrowth of the strong disapproval of worship anywhere except at Jerusalem. The reign of Jehoshaphat is a not improbable era, for “*the high places were not taken away*” (2 Chr. 20:33), though idolatry was sternly repressed.”
  - b. The inspired writer does not mention the fall of the ten tribes, so many believe that the date was between 930 and 722 B.C.
2. Others believe that it was written earlier, stating that 1 Samuel 27:6 could have been applied to the time of Solomon’s reign.

### **III. HISTORICAL SETTING AND PURPOSE OF THE BOOK**

- A. First Samuel continues at the point where Judges ended: “*In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes*” (Judges 21:25).
  1. First Samuel reveals a different attitude among God’s people.
  2. There had been a lack of respect for authority, and an outlook of doom and despair, but there was now a ray of light in the man named Samuel.
- B. The book covers the period from the birth of Samuel to the death of Saul.
  1. Interwoven within the pages of this text are the lives of three men – Samuel, Saul, and David.
  2. Each of these men played a different role during this crucial transition from the dark time of the judges to the “glory days” of Israel.
- C. One of the purposes of First Samuel was to record this link between the age of judges and the age of kings.
  1. With various types of leadership displayed in this book (prophets, priests, judges, kings), one learns that the success of any of these is ultimately dependent on the person’s devotion to God.

2. The book points out that this earthly monarchy was demanded by men; however, God still used this to His own glory, and to the saving of man.
3. God had foretold that the people would demand a king to be like all the nations:
 

*“When thou art come unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me; Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the Lord thy God shall choose...”* (Deuteronomy 17:14, 15; cf. Genesis 49:10).
4. In First Samuel one notices that God’s supreme sovereignty is shown in His prerogative to establish and dethrone kings.
5. Saul was the first king in the transition from a theocracy to an earthly monarchy; however, David can be considered the first “theocratic king,” because this man after God’s own heart allowed God to rule through him.
6. The Davidic line would ultimately bring about the Messiah, King of kings:
 

*“...the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords”* (1 Timothy 6:15).
7. First Samuel is therefore a record of these great changes that were taking place during this important period of Old Testament history.

D. First Samuel is also a great display of the critical role that prophets had in guiding kings and the people of Israel through the Word of God.

1. The words of Samuel had great impact (chapters 7, 12, 13, 15).
2. The prophet Gad influenced David in a positive manner, quite possibly saving his life (22:5).
3. This can be seen further in Second Samuel.

E. It should be stated that this inspired book was written for our learning and admonition.

1. One of the greatest lessons to be gleaned from this book is that God does not tolerate disobedience.
2. We should apply this and the other lessons found therein to our own lives.
3. *“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope”* (Romans 15:4)
4. *“Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come”* (1 Corinthians 10:11).

#### **IV. A SIMPLE OUTLINE OF FIRST SAMUEL**

- A. The birth of Samuel and his early service (1:1-7:17).
- B. King Saul, the answer to the people’s demand (8:1-15:35).
- C. Saul and David (16:1-31:13).

#### **V. AN EXPANDED OUTLINE OF FIRST SAMUEL**

- A. **The birth of Samuel: an answered prayer** (1:1-2:11).
  1. Hannah’s request and vow (1:1-18).
  2. Samuel is born (1:19-28).

3. Hannah's praise of the Lord (2:1-10).
4. Samuel begins his service with Eli (2:11).

**B. Corruption in the priesthood (2:12-3:21).**

1. The sons of Eli are sons of Belial (2:12-36).
2. Samuel becomes a prophet and proclaims the Word against Eli's house (3:1-21).

**C. Israel versus the Philistines (4:1-8:3).**

1. The ark in the hands of the Philistines (4:1-6:12).
2. The ark is returned to Israel (6:13-7:2).
3. Samuel tells them to put away their idols (7:3-14).
4. Samuel continues to judge, and his corrupt sons become judges (7:15-8:3).

**D. Institution of the monarchy (8:4-12:25).**

1. Israel demands a king (8:4, 5).
2. The Lord tells Samuel to listen to them, but warn them (8:6-9).
3. Samuel warns them about their request (8:10-22).
4. Saul providentially meets Samuel (9:1-27).
5. Saul is anointed and prophesies (10:1-16).
6. Samuel presents Saul to the people (10:17-27).
7. Saul defeats the Ammonites (11:1-15).
8. Samuel warns Israel to fear the Lord and serve Him (12:1-25).

**E. King Saul versus the Philistines (13:1-14:52).**

1. Jonathan defeats Philistine garrison at Geba (13:1-4).
2. Saul disobeys and is rebuked (13:5-23).
3. Saul's foolish curse; Jonathan prevails over Philistines (14:1-46).
4. Victories of Israel (14:47-52).

**F. The rise of David (15:1-18:30).**

1. Saul is rejected because of his disobedience (15:1-35).
2. David is anointed (16:1-13).
3. David in Saul's court (16:14-23).
4. David defeats Goliath and delivers Israel (17:1-54).
5. David and Jonathan (17:55-18:5).
6. David gains support (18:6-30).

**G. David flees from Saul (19:1-28:2).**

1. Saul begins to seek David's life (19:1).
2. David warned by Jonathan and Michal to flee (19:2-11).
3. David begins his flight by going to Samuel in Ramah (19:12-18).
4. Saul and his messengers seek David and prophesy (19:19-24).
5. David and Jonathan mourn because of Saul's evil plans (20:1-42).
6. David partakes of the hallowed bread at Nob (21:1-9).
7. David flees to Gath, Adullam, Mizpeh, and the forest of Horeth (21:10-22:1-5).

8. Saul kills the priests of Nob (22:6-23).
9. David flees to Keilah and the wildernesses of Ziph, Maon, and Engedi (23:1-29).
10. David spares Saul (24:1-22).
11. David spares Nabal, and later marries Abigail and Ahinoam (25:1-44).
12. David spares Saul again (26:1-25).
13. David goes to the Philistines (27:1-28:2).

**H. Saul's final days** (28:3-31:13).

1. Saul consults the witch of Endor (28:3-25).
2. David dismissed by Achish (29:1-11).
3. Amalekites raid Ziklag; David retaliates and recovers all (30:1-31).
4. The final battle at Mount Gilboa; Saul and Jonathan die (31:1-13).

**VI. GOD'S KING VERSUS MAN'S KING**

(Wilson and Taylor list the following contrasts between David and Saul):

- A. **David was God's kind of king** (1 Samuel 16:13); **Saul was man's kind of king** (1 Samuel 10:23, 24).
- B. **David was a man after God's heart** (1 Samuel 13:14); **Saul was a man after the people's praise** (1 Samuel 18:6-8).
- C. **David's kingship was eternal** (through Jesus, 2 Samuel 7:29); **Saul's kingship was rejected** (1 Samuel 15:23).
- D. **David was kind and benevolent** (2 Samuel 9; 1 Chronicles 19:2); **Saul was cruel** (1 Samuel 20:20-34; 22:11-19).
- E. **David was forgiving** (1 Samuel 26); **Saul was unforgiving** (1 Samuel 14:44; 18:9).
- F. **David repented** (2 Samuel 12:13; 24:10); **When confronted, Saul lied** (1 Samuel 15:10-31).
- G. **David was courageous** (1 Samuel 17; 1 Chronicles 18); **Saul was fearful** (1 Samuel 17:11; 18:12).
- H. **David was at peace with God** (Psalm 4:8; 37:11); **Saul was separated from God** (1 Samuel 16:14).

**VII. THE MESSIAH AND FIRST SAMUEL**

- A. Samuel was a type of Christ (Hebrews 1:1-3; John 5:22).
  1. Samuel was a prophet: "*And all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord*" (1 Samuel 3:20).
  2. He was a priest: "*And Samuel took a sucking lamb, and offered it for a burnt offering wholly unto the Lord: and Samuel cried unto the Lord for Israel: and the Lord heard him*" (1 Samuel 7:9).

3. He was a judge: *“And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life”* (1 Samuel 7:15).

B. David was a type of Christ.

1. David was born in Bethlehem, later called the city of David: *“And the Lord said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons”* (1 Samuel 16:1; cf. Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:1; Luke 2:4).
2. He was a shepherd: *“And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep...”* (1 Samuel 17:34; cf. John 10:11-18).
3. He was a man after God's own heart who became Israel's greatest king: *“So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and king David made a league with them in Hebron before the Lord: and they anointed David king over Israel”* (2 Samuel 5:3; cf. 1 Samuel 13:14; Revelation 17:14).
4. He wrote Messianic psalms of rejection and perils (Psalm 22).
5. In the New Testament we find explicit links between David and Christ.
  - a. *“Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh”* (Romans 1:3).
  - b. *“I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star”* (Revelation 22:16).

C. Hannah prophesied of *“His anointed.”*

1. *“The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the Lord shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed”* (1 Samuel 2:10).
2. The very word *“Messiah”* means “anointed one,” and *“Messiah”* is the Hebrew word used here.
3. This seems to be a reference to God's chosen king – possibly David (but ultimately Christ, the anointed one, the Messiah, King of kings).

D. Christ Himself alluded to Scriptures found within First Samuel:

1. His allusion to 1 Samuel 21:6 is recorded in Matthew 12:3, 4.
  - a. *“So the priest gave him hallowed bread: for there was no bread there but the shewbread, that was taken from before the Lord, to put hot bread in the day when it was taken away”* (1 Samuel 21:6).
  - b. *“But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him; How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests?”* (Matthew 12:3-4).
2. His allusion to 1 Samuel 16:7 is recorded in Luke 16:15.
  - a. *“But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord*



*seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7).*

- b. *“And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God” (Luke 16:15).*

**VIII. KEY VERSES** – (8:4-7; 12:24, 25; 13:13, 14; 15:22, 23).

**IX. KEY PLACES**

- A. **Ramathaim-zophim, or Ramah** (1:1; 2:11; 7:17; 8:4; 19:18; 25:1, etc.)
- B. **Shiloh** (1:3, 24; 3:21; 4:3, etc.)
- C. **Ebenezer** (4:1; 5:1; 7:12)
- D. **Ashdod** (5:1-7; 6:17)
- E. **Kirjath-jearim** (6:21; 7:1, 2)
- F. **Mizpeh** (7:5-16; 10:17)
- G. **Gilgal** (7:16; 10:8; 11:15; 13:7-12; 15:22, etc.)
- H. **The Valley of Elah** (17)
- I. **Nob** (21:1-9)
- J. **Keilah** (23:1-13)
- K. **The Wilderness** (23:14-26:25)
- L. **Gath** (5:8, 17:4; 21:1; 27:3; etc.)
- M. **Ziklag** (27:5-12; 30:1-31)
- N. **Mount Gilboa** (28:4 – 31:12)

**X. VARIOUS PEOPLE RECORDED IN THE BOOK**

- A. **Abiah** – “*worshiper of the Father,*” a corrupt judge, a son of Samuel (8:2).
- B. **Abiathar** – “*father of abundance; liberal,*” son of Ahimelech (22:20-23, etc.).
- C. **Abigail** – “*source of joy,*” wife of Nabal, then wife of David (25:3-42; 27:3; 30:5).
- D. **Abishai** – “*father of a gift, or source of a gift,*” brother of Joab and Asahel (26:6-9).
- E. **Achish** – “*angry,*” Philistine king of Gath (21:10-15; 27:2-29:11).
- F. **Agag** – “*flame*” or “*violent,*” king of the Amalekites (15:8-33).
- G. **Ahimelech** – “*brother of the king,*” a priest in Nob (21:1-22:18).
- H. **Ahinoam** – “*pleasant,*” one of David’s wives (14:50; 25:43; 27:3; 30:5).
- I. **Belial, sons of** – “*worthless men,*” those who commit wickedness (1:16; 2:12, etc.).
- J. **Dagon** – “*fish,*” god of the Philistines (5:2-7).
- K. **David** – “*affectionate or beloved,*” shepherd, son of Jesse, a man after God’s own heart (16:12ff).
- L. **Doeg** – “*fearful; anxious,*” an Edomite who served Saul (21:7; 22:9-22).
- M. **Eli** – “*the offering or lifting up; ascent,*” a judge and high priest in Shiloh, with whom Samuel served (1:3; 2:11, 3:13, 4:15-18, etc.).
- N. **Elkanah** – “*whom God has gotten,*” husband of Hannah, father of Samuel (1:1, 20, etc.).
- O. **Gad** – “*fortune,*” a prophet who warned David to flee to Judah (22:5).
- P. **Goliath** – “*great; stout,*” giant champion of the Philistines (17:4-57).
- Q. **Hannah** – “*graciousness,*” wife of Elkanah, mother of Samuel (1:2-2:10; 2:19-21).
- R. **Hophni** – “*pugilist,*” corrupt priest, son of Eli (1:3; 2:34; 4:4, 11, 17).
- S. **Ichabod** – “*where is the glory?,*” son of Phinehas, born after his father’s death, and

after the ark was taken by the Philistines (4:19-22).

- T. **Joel** – “*Jehovah is God,*” a corrupt judge, a son of Samuel (8:2).
- U. **Jonathan** – “*given of God,*” son of Saul, loyal to David (14:1-46; 18:1-4; 31:2, etc.).
- V. **Michal** – “*a small stream,*” daughter of Saul, wife of David (18:27; 19:11; 25:44, etc.).
- W. **Nabal** – “*foolish,*” refused to help David, husband of Abigail (25:2-39).
- X. **Peninnah** – “*pearl*” or “*coral,*” wife of Elkanah, adversary to Hannah (1:2, 4).
- Y. **Phinehas** – “*mouth of brass,*” corrupt priest, son of Eli (1:3; 2:34; 4:4, 11, 17).
- Z. **Samuel** – “*asked of God,*” judge of Israel, prophet, and priest (1:20ff).
- AA. **Saul** – “*desired,*” first king of Israel’s earthly monarchy (9:1ff).

#### **XI. NOTEWORTHY “FIRSTS” IN THE BOOK**

- A. First time the title “*Lord of hosts*” is recorded (1:3; later found in 234 other verses of God’s Word).
- B. First time the phrase “*God save the king*” is recorded (10:24; cf. 2 Samuel 16:16; 2 Kings 11:12; 2 Chronicles 23:11).
- C. First time “*His anointed*” recorded as a probable reference to Christ, the Messiah (2:10)
- D. First time there is an allusion to the “schools of the prophets” (10:5-12; cf. 19:18-24).
- E. The familiar terms “*Ichabod*” (4:21) and “*Ebenezer*” (7:12) originated in this book.

#### **XII. LESSONS FROM THIS TEXT**

- A. The Word of the Lord should be precious to us: “*...the word of the Lord was precious in those days...*” (3:1).
- B. Prayer works – God provides! (Hannah’s prayer, 1:10-20; cf. James 5:16).
- C. Parents should desire to see their children serving the Lord (1:11, 28).
- D. God desired faithful priests in Samuel’s day, and He still desires faithful priests today! (2:12-17; 3:11-14; 1 Peter 2:9).
- E. We should be servants who are receptive to what our Master is telling us through His Word: “*...Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth*” (3:10).
- F. God desires us to rear our children properly – we should know how to train and restrain: “*For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not*” (3:13).
- G. We should trust more in the unseen God than things which are seen.
  - 1. The people seemed to put more faith into the ark of the covenant than they did in

God Himself: *“Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of Shiloh unto us, that, when it cometh among us, it may save us out of the hand of our enemies”* (4:3).

2. The unseen Ruler should have been preferred over any earthly king (8:4-7).
3. David trusted in the power of the unseen God more than earthly weapons and might, as shown in his defeat of Goliath (chapter 17).

H. Man-made “gods” cannot stand before the true living God (5:1-7).

I. *“Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people”* (Proverbs 14:34).

1. God’s people had to learn to put away their idols to be successful against their enemies.
2. *“And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines”* (7:3).

J. We should not place any person over God (8:4-7).

K. It is often unwise to be *“like all the nations”* (8:4-20); we should be that *“holy nation”* and *“peculiar people”* that God desires (1 Peter 2:9).

L. The details of God’s Word are important (10:8; 13:8-14; 15:3-24).

M. Remember the Lord and all that He has done for us: *“...Consider how great things he hath done for you”* (12:24).

N. Remember also the severity of God toward those who love wickedness rather than righteousness: *“But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed...”* (12:25; cf. Romans 11:22; Hebrews 10:31, 12:29).

O. We should not presume to do what God has not authorized (13:9-14; cf. Colossians 3:17).

P. No person on earth (not even a king) is above God’s commands (13:9-14; 15:22, 23).

Q. Partial obedience equals disobedience and rebellion (15:3-24).

R. God desires faithful obedience more than outward acts of worship (15:22, 23).

S. God does not lie and has no need to repent: *“And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man, that he should repent”* (15:29; cf. Titus 1:2).

T. God’s preacher often has to bring unpleasant words to the people, as shown in the example of Samuel:

1. Eli, the man with whom Samuel had lived since early childhood, was to be told that his family would be punished for iniquity: *“For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his*

*sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not” (3:13); “And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him...” (3:18).*

2. Samuel told God’s people to put away their idols: “...*put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only...*” (7:3).
3. Samuel told them they would regret their decision to have a king (8:10-18).
4. Samuel told them that if they chose to be wicked, they would be consumed: “*But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king*” (12:25).
5. Samuel told Saul that he had behaved foolishly: “*And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly...*” (13:13).
6. Samuel told Saul that his reign would cease and that he would be replaced: “*But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee*” (13:14); “*And Samuel said unto him, The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou*” (15:28).
7. Samuel told Saul that Saul had sinned (15:16-31).

U. A faithful preacher has the responsibility to declare all the counsel of God: “*And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him...*” (3:18; cf. Psalm 119:160; Acts 20:27).

V. Those who are “little in their own sight” shall be exalted: “*And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee king over Israel?*” (15:17; cf. Luke 14:11).

W. God sees the inward man: “*But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart*” (16:7).

X. The Philistines were resisted in the Valley of Elah and they fled (17:51); if we resist our enemy, he will flee also (James 4:7).

Y. With various types of leadership displayed in First Samuel (prophets, priests, judges, kings), one learns that the success of any person is ultimately dependent on his devotion to God.

Z. “*Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall*” (Proverbs 16:18).

1. Notice the pride of Goliath (17:8-10, 43), and the fall of Goliath (17:49-51).
2. Notice the pride of Saul (15:17; 18:7-9), and the fall of Saul (13:13, 14; 15:28; 31:1-13).

AA. It is difficult to break fellowship with those we love who turn their backs on God: “*It*

*repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the Lord all night” (15:11); “And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death: nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul...” (15:35).*

BB. A true friend is to be cherished: “...*the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul” (18:1; cf. 2 Samuel 1:26).*

CC. “*Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?” (Proverbs 27:4) – Envy is a horrible sin, and David could not stand before Saul’s envy (18:7-9; cf. James 3:14-16).*

DD. We are to have respect for government leaders, because they are in their positions by the power of God: “...*The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the Lord’s anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord” (24:6; cf. 26:9-11; Romans 13:1-7; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13-17; 2 Peter 2:10, 11; Jude 8).*

EE. Our sins affect others (Saul’s sins ultimately resulted in the deaths of many, 31:1-6; and later in David’s life his sins would affect others).

### **CONCLUSION:**

1. First Samuel is a treasure chest of truths and lessons from God, and it gives us a glimpse of a very important period in the history of God’s people.
2. The book is so rich that anyone who loves God and His Word will thoroughly enjoy the time spent studying this book.

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# FIRST SAMUEL: AN OVERVIEW

Jason Hilburn

**TEXT:** The entire book of First Samuel.

**THESIS:** To give the reader a better understanding of First Samuel.

## **INTRODUCTION:**

1. In a time defined by wars – seemingly constant battles between neighboring nations, men chose from among themselves those who were brave and strong to lead their armies into battle against the neighboring foes.
  - a. God’s people were involved in many of these battles, yet they had forgotten their true Deliverer: *“In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes”* (Judges 21:25).
  - b. God had provided His people with judges to conquer their enemies for many years; however, that era was about to cease.
    - 1) Under God’s oversight, Samuel had judged Israel well, but now God’s people were seeking an earthly king.
    - 2) This people who had been set apart by God chose to be *“like all the nations,”* and God allowed them to do so.
    - 3) Just as the nations of earth sought mighty men to rule over them, Israel chose the same.
  - c. One named Saul was allowed to rise as Israel’s first king, but along the way he had also risen in pride and presumption.
  - d. As Saul had ascended in his own eyes, he had descended in the eyes of God.
2. The First Book of Samuel contains the record of Samuel’s life and the rise and fall of Saul.
  - a. In the midst of this divine account we learn of an unlikely hero – one at whom the world would have laughed, but one upon whom the Lord had favor.
  - b. He was a young man after God’s own heart.
  - c. He was the son of Jesse – the young shepherd named David.

## **DISCUSSION:**

### **I. THE NAME OF THE BOOK**

- A. Why are the books that we call First and Second Samuel named after Samuel?
  1. Samuel was the great man of God on whom the opening chapters focus.
  2. Notice some of the great works of Samuel recorded in the book:
    - a. He judged very effectively.
    - b. He interceded for the people.
    - c. He proclaimed the Word of the Lord faithfully.
    - d. He helped to bring in the age of the monarchy.
    - e. He inaugurated the schools of the prophets.
    - f. He was a type of Christ, being a prophet, priest, and judge.
  3. Samuel has been called the greatest servant of God during the period spanning from Moses to David.

4. Notice the manner in which the Lord specifically mentioned Moses and Samuel together: *“Then said the Lord unto me, Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people: cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth”* (Jeremiah 15:1).
  5. Samuel is also mentioned in other passages, such as Hebrews 11, which is often called the “Faith Hall of Fame.” *“And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets”* (Hebrews 11:32).
  6. Samuel was also the one who anointed both Saul and David, with whom the majority of the text in First Samuel deals.
- B. These two books were originally one book.
1. The Hebrew manuscripts placed both of these books together in one book called “Samuel.”
  2. The Septuagint translators divided the book into two sections.
    - a. The Septuagint was a Greek translation, and the Greek text requires more space than Hebrew.
    - b. The scrolls used were too small to place the entire Greek translation onto one scroll; therefore, the book of Samuel was divided.
    - c. The division between the two books was placed after the recording of Saul’s death, and we still have the books divided today.
  3. The Septuagint called the two books the “First and Second Books of the Kingdoms.”
    - a. The Latin Vulgate kept the division and called the books the “First and Second Books of the Kings.”
    - b. Our English translations list them as the “First and Second Books of Samuel.”

## **II. AUTHORSHIP AND DATE OF WRITING**

- A. The author of the First Book of Samuel is God.
- B. The identity of the inspired writer is uncertain.
1. The Jewish Talmud assigns penmanship to Samuel (Baba Bathra 14b); however, it is not likely that Samuel wrote the entire volume.
  2. Samuel’s death is recorded in the twenty-fifth chapter of First Samuel, and there are approximately forty-five years of history recorded after this event.
  3. It is more likely that the first twenty-four chapters were written by Samuel, and the rest were written by Nathan and Gad.
  4. This view is based on what we read in 1 Chronicles 29:29: *“Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer.”*
  5. This verse seems to indicate that these three prophets (Samuel, Nathan, and Gad) were inspired to record this part of history.
  6. If this is the case, then we have the First and Second Books of Samuel today thanks to God and three inspired penmen.



7. We know that Samuel recorded events that occurred during his lifetime, because we read that “*Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord*” (1 Samuel 10:25).
8. The section of Scriptures written by Samuel might include events of his own life, most of Saul’s history, and the earlier part of David’s career.
9. The other two proposed writers, the prophets Nathan and Gad, were contemporaries with David.
  - a. Nathan is mentioned in 12 verses of Second Samuel, and was a prominent counselor who took part in the coronation of Solomon.
  - b. Gad is mentioned in First and Second Samuel as one who provided guidance to David (1 Samuel 22:5; 2 Samuel 24:11-19).

C. It is difficult to ascertain the date of writing for the book.

1. The words of 1 Samuel 27:6 cause many to believe that the book was written after the kingdom was divided: “*Then Achish gave him Ziklag that day: wherefore Ziklag pertaineth unto the kings of Judah unto this day.*”
  - a. Pulpit Commentary states, “the compiler must have lived at some period between the reign of Rehoboam and the upgrowth of the strong disapproval of worship anywhere except at Jerusalem. The reign of Jehoshaphat is a not improbable era, for “*the high places were not taken away*” (2 Chr. 20:33), though idolatry was sternly repressed.”
  - b. The inspired writer does not mention the fall of the ten tribes, so many believe that the date was between 930 and 722 B.C.
2. Others believe that it was written earlier, stating that 1 Samuel 27:6 could have been applied to the time of Solomon’s reign.

### **III. HISTORICAL SETTING AND PURPOSE OF THE BOOK**

- A. First Samuel continues at the point where Judges ended: “*In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes*” (Judges 21:25).
  1. First Samuel reveals a different attitude among God’s people.
  2. There had been a lack of respect for authority, and an outlook of doom and despair, but there was now a ray of light in the man named Samuel.
- B. The book covers the period from the birth of Samuel to the death of Saul.
  1. Interwoven within the pages of this text are the lives of three men – Samuel, Saul, and David.
  2. Each of these men played a different role during this crucial transition from the dark time of the judges to the “glory days” of Israel.
- C. One of the purposes of First Samuel was to record this link between the age of judges and the age of kings.
  1. With various types of leadership displayed in this book (prophets, priests, judges, kings), one learns that the success of any of these is ultimately dependent on the person’s devotion to God.

2. The book points out that this earthly monarchy was demanded by men; however, God still used this to His own glory, and to the saving of man.
3. God had foretold that the people would demand a king to be like all the nations:
 

*“When thou art come unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me; Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the Lord thy God shall choose...”* (Deuteronomy 17:14, 15; cf. Genesis 49:10).
4. In First Samuel one notices that God’s supreme sovereignty is shown in His prerogative to establish and dethrone kings.
5. Saul was the first king in the transition from a theocracy to an earthly monarchy; however, David can be considered the first “theocratic king,” because this man after God’s own heart allowed God to rule through him.
6. The Davidic line would ultimately bring about the Messiah, King of kings:
 

*“...the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords”* (1 Timothy 6:15).
7. First Samuel is therefore a record of these great changes that were taking place during this important period of Old Testament history.

D. First Samuel is also a great display of the critical role that prophets had in guiding kings and the people of Israel through the Word of God.

1. The words of Samuel had great impact (chapters 7, 12, 13, 15).
2. The prophet Gad influenced David in a positive manner, quite possibly saving his life (22:5).
3. This can be seen further in Second Samuel.

E. It should be stated that this inspired book was written for our learning and admonition.

1. One of the greatest lessons to be gleaned from this book is that God does not tolerate disobedience.
2. We should apply this and the other lessons found therein to our own lives.
3. *“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope”* (Romans 15:4)
4. *“Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come”* (1 Corinthians 10:11).

#### **IV. A SIMPLE OUTLINE OF FIRST SAMUEL**

- A. The birth of Samuel and his early service (1:1-7:17).
- B. King Saul, the answer to the people’s demand (8:1-15:35).
- C. Saul and David (16:1-31:13).

#### **V. AN EXPANDED OUTLINE OF FIRST SAMUEL**

- A. **The birth of Samuel: an answered prayer** (1:1-2:11).
  1. Hannah’s request and vow (1:1-18).
  2. Samuel is born (1:19-28).

3. Hannah's praise of the Lord (2:1-10).
4. Samuel begins his service with Eli (2:11).

**B. Corruption in the priesthood (2:12-3:21).**

1. The sons of Eli are sons of Belial (2:12-36).
2. Samuel becomes a prophet and proclaims the Word against Eli's house (3:1-21).

**C. Israel versus the Philistines (4:1-8:3).**

1. The ark in the hands of the Philistines (4:1-6:12).
2. The ark is returned to Israel (6:13-7:2).
3. Samuel tells them to put away their idols (7:3-14).
4. Samuel continues to judge, and his corrupt sons become judges (7:15-8:3).

**D. Institution of the monarchy (8:4-12:25).**

1. Israel demands a king (8:4, 5).
2. The Lord tells Samuel to listen to them, but warn them (8:6-9).
3. Samuel warns them about their request (8:10-22).
4. Saul providentially meets Samuel (9:1-27).
5. Saul is anointed and prophesies (10:1-16).
6. Samuel presents Saul to the people (10:17-27).
7. Saul defeats the Ammonites (11:1-15).
8. Samuel warns Israel to fear the Lord and serve Him (12:1-25).

**E. King Saul versus the Philistines (13:1-14:52).**

1. Jonathan defeats Philistine garrison at Geba (13:1-4).
2. Saul disobeys and is rebuked (13:5-23).
3. Saul's foolish curse; Jonathan prevails over Philistines (14:1-46).
4. Victories of Israel (14:47-52).

**F. The rise of David (15:1-18:30).**

1. Saul is rejected because of his disobedience (15:1-35).
2. David is anointed (16:1-13).
3. David in Saul's court (16:14-23).
4. David defeats Goliath and delivers Israel (17:1-54).
5. David and Jonathan (17:55-18:5).
6. David gains support (18:6-30).

**G. David flees from Saul (19:1-28:2).**

1. Saul begins to seek David's life (19:1).
2. David warned by Jonathan and Michal to flee (19:2-11).
3. David begins his flight by going to Samuel in Ramah (19:12-18).
4. Saul and his messengers seek David and prophesy (19:19-24).
5. David and Jonathan mourn because of Saul's evil plans (20:1-42).
6. David partakes of the hallowed bread at Nob (21:1-9).
7. David flees to Gath, Adullam, Mizpeh, and the forest of Horeth (21:10-22:1-5).

8. Saul kills the priests of Nob (22:6-23).
9. David flees to Keilah and the wildernesses of Ziph, Maon, and Engedi (23:1-29).
10. David spares Saul (24:1-22).
11. David spares Nabal, and later marries Abigail and Ahinoam (25:1-44).
12. David spares Saul again (26:1-25).
13. David goes to the Philistines (27:1-28:2).

**H. Saul's final days** (28:3-31:13).

1. Saul consults the witch of Endor (28:3-25).
2. David dismissed by Achish (29:1-11).
3. Amalekites raid Ziklag; David retaliates and recovers all (30:1-31).
4. The final battle at Mount Gilboa; Saul and Jonathan die (31:1-13).

**VI. GOD'S KING VERSUS MAN'S KING**

(Wilson and Taylor list the following contrasts between David and Saul):

- A. **David was God's kind of king** (1 Samuel 16:13); **Saul was man's kind of king** (1 Samuel 10:23, 24).
- B. **David was a man after God's heart** (1 Samuel 13:14); **Saul was a man after the people's praise** (1 Samuel 18:6-8).
- C. **David's kingship was eternal** (through Jesus, 2 Samuel 7:29); **Saul's kingship was rejected** (1 Samuel 15:23).
- D. **David was kind and benevolent** (2 Samuel 9; 1 Chronicles 19:2); **Saul was cruel** (1 Samuel 20:20-34; 22:11-19).
- E. **David was forgiving** (1 Samuel 26); **Saul was unforgiving** (1 Samuel 14:44; 18:9).
- F. **David repented** (2 Samuel 12:13; 24:10); **When confronted, Saul lied** (1 Samuel 15:10-31).
- G. **David was courageous** (1 Samuel 17; 1 Chronicles 18); **Saul was fearful** (1 Samuel 17:11; 18:12).
- H. **David was at peace with God** (Psalm 4:8; 37:11); **Saul was separated from God** (1 Samuel 16:14).

**VII. THE MESSIAH AND FIRST SAMUEL**

- A. Samuel was a type of Christ (Hebrews 1:1-3; John 5:22).
  1. Samuel was a prophet: "*And all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord*" (1 Samuel 3:20).
  2. He was a priest: "*And Samuel took a sucking lamb, and offered it for a burnt offering wholly unto the Lord: and Samuel cried unto the Lord for Israel: and the Lord heard him*" (1 Samuel 7:9).

3. He was a judge: *“And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life”* (1 Samuel 7:15).

B. David was a type of Christ.

1. David was born in Bethlehem, later called the city of David: *“And the Lord said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons”* (1 Samuel 16:1; cf. Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:1; Luke 2:4).
2. He was a shepherd: *“And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep...”* (1 Samuel 17:34; cf. John 10:11-18).
3. He was a man after God's own heart who became Israel's greatest king: *“So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and king David made a league with them in Hebron before the Lord: and they anointed David king over Israel”* (2 Samuel 5:3; cf. 1 Samuel 13:14; Revelation 17:14).
4. He wrote Messianic psalms of rejection and perils (Psalm 22).
5. In the New Testament we find explicit links between David and Christ.
  - a. *“Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh”* (Romans 1:3).
  - b. *“I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star”* (Revelation 22:16).

C. Hannah prophesied of *“His anointed.”*

1. *“The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the Lord shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed”* (1 Samuel 2:10).
2. The very word *“Messiah”* means “anointed one,” and *“Messiah”* is the Hebrew word used here.
3. This seems to be a reference to God's chosen king – possibly David (but ultimately Christ, the anointed one, the Messiah, King of kings).

D. Christ Himself alluded to Scriptures found within First Samuel:

1. His allusion to 1 Samuel 21:6 is recorded in Matthew 12:3, 4.
  - a. *“So the priest gave him hallowed bread: for there was no bread there but the shewbread, that was taken from before the Lord, to put hot bread in the day when it was taken away”* (1 Samuel 21:6).
  - b. *“But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him; How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests?”* (Matthew 12:3-4).
2. His allusion to 1 Samuel 16:7 is recorded in Luke 16:15.
  - a. *“But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord*

*seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7).*

- b. *“And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God” (Luke 16:15).*

**VIII. KEY VERSES** – (8:4-7; 12:24, 25; 13:13, 14; 15:22, 23).

**IX. KEY PLACES**

- A. **Ramathaim-zophim, or Ramah** (1:1; 2:11; 7:17; 8:4; 19:18; 25:1, etc.)
- B. **Shiloh** (1:3, 24; 3:21; 4:3, etc.)
- C. **Ebenezer** (4:1; 5:1; 7:12)
- D. **Ashdod** (5:1-7; 6:17)
- E. **Kirjath-jearim** (6:21; 7:1, 2)
- F. **Mizpeh** (7:5-16; 10:17)
- G. **Gilgal** (7:16; 10:8; 11:15; 13:7-12; 15:22, etc.)
- H. **The Valley of Elah** (17)
- I. **Nob** (21:1-9)
- J. **Keilah** (23:1-13)
- K. **The Wilderness** (23:14-26:25)
- L. **Gath** (5:8, 17:4; 21:1; 27:3; etc.)
- M. **Ziklag** (27:5-12; 30:1-31)
- N. **Mount Gilboa** (28:4 – 31:12)

**X. VARIOUS PEOPLE RECORDED IN THE BOOK**

- A. **Abiah** – *“worshiper of the Father,”* a corrupt judge, a son of Samuel (8:2).
- B. **Abiathar** – *“father of abundance; liberal,”* son of Ahimelech (22:20-23, etc.).
- C. **Abigail** – *“source of joy,”* wife of Nabal, then wife of David (25:3-42; 27:3; 30:5).
- D. **Abishai** – *“father of a gift, or source of a gift,”* brother of Joab and Asahel (26:6-9).
- E. **Achish** – *“angry,”* Philistine king of Gath (21:10-15; 27:2-29:11).
- F. **Agag** – *“flame”* or *“violent,”* king of the Amalekites (15:8-33).
- G. **Ahimelech** – *“brother of the king,”* a priest in Nob (21:1-22:18).
- H. **Ahinoam** – *“pleasant,”* one of David’s wives (14:50; 25:43; 27:3; 30:5).
- I. **Belial, sons of** – *“worthless men,”* those who commit wickedness (1:16; 2:12, etc.).
- J. **Dagon** – *“fish,”* god of the Philistines (5:2-7).
- K. **David** – *“affectionate or beloved,”* shepherd, son of Jesse, a man after God’s own heart (16:12ff).
- L. **Doeg** – *“fearful; anxious,”* an Edomite who served Saul (21:7; 22:9-22).
- M. **Eli** – *“the offering or lifting up; ascent,”* a judge and high priest in Shiloh, with whom Samuel served (1:3; 2:11, 3:13, 4:15-18, etc.).
- N. **Elkanah** – *“whom God has gotten,”* husband of Hannah, father of Samuel (1:1, 20, etc.).
- O. **Gad** – *“fortune,”* a prophet who warned David to flee to Judah (22:5).
- P. **Goliath** – *“great; stout,”* giant champion of the Philistines (17:4-57).
- Q. **Hannah** – *“graciousness,”* wife of Elkanah, mother of Samuel (1:2-2:10; 2:19-21).
- R. **Hophni** – *“pugilist,”* corrupt priest, son of Eli (1:3; 2:34; 4:4, 11, 17).
- S. **Ichabod** – *“where is the glory?,”* son of Phinehas, born after his father’s death, and

after the ark was taken by the Philistines (4:19-22).

- T. **Joel** – “*Jehovah is God,*” a corrupt judge, a son of Samuel (8:2).
- U. **Jonathan** – “*given of God,*” son of Saul, loyal to David (14:1-46; 18:1-4; 31:2, etc.).
- V. **Michal** – “*a small stream,*” daughter of Saul, wife of David (18:27; 19:11; 25:44, etc.).
- W. **Nabal** – “*foolish,*” refused to help David, husband of Abigail (25:2-39).
- X. **Peninnah** – “*pearl*” or “*coral,*” wife of Elkanah, adversary to Hannah (1:2, 4).
- Y. **Phinehas** – “*mouth of brass,*” corrupt priest, son of Eli (1:3; 2:34; 4:4, 11, 17).
- Z. **Samuel** – “*asked of God,*” judge of Israel, prophet, and priest (1:20ff).
- AA. **Saul** – “*desired,*” first king of Israel’s earthly monarchy (9:1ff).

#### **XI. NOTEWORTHY “FIRSTS” IN THE BOOK**

- A. First time the title “*Lord of hosts*” is recorded (1:3; later found in 234 other verses of God’s Word).
- B. First time the phrase “*God save the king*” is recorded (10:24; cf. 2 Samuel 16:16; 2 Kings 11:12; 2 Chronicles 23:11).
- C. First time “*His anointed*” recorded as a probable reference to Christ, the Messiah (2:10)
- D. First time there is an allusion to the “schools of the prophets” (10:5-12; cf. 19:18-24).
- E. The familiar terms “*Ichabod*” (4:21) and “*Ebenezer*” (7:12) originated in this book.

#### **XII. LESSONS FROM THIS TEXT**

- A. The Word of the Lord should be precious to us: “*...the word of the Lord was precious in those days...*” (3:1).
- B. Prayer works – God provides! (Hannah’s prayer, 1:10-20; cf. James 5:16).
- C. Parents should desire to see their children serving the Lord (1:11, 28).
- D. God desired faithful priests in Samuel’s day, and He still desires faithful priests today! (2:12-17; 3:11-14; 1 Peter 2:9).
- E. We should be servants who are receptive to what our Master is telling us through His Word: “*...Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth*” (3:10).
- F. God desires us to rear our children properly – we should know how to train and restrain: “*For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not*” (3:13).
- G. We should trust more in the unseen God than things which are seen.
  - 1. The people seemed to put more faith into the ark of the covenant than they did in

God Himself: *“Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of Shiloh unto us, that, when it cometh among us, it may save us out of the hand of our enemies”* (4:3).

2. The unseen Ruler should have been preferred over any earthly king (8:4-7).
3. David trusted in the power of the unseen God more than earthly weapons and might, as shown in his defeat of Goliath (chapter 17).

H. Man-made “gods” cannot stand before the true living God (5:1-7).

I. *“Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people”* (Proverbs 14:34).

1. God’s people had to learn to put away their idols to be successful against their enemies.
2. *“And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines”* (7:3).

J. We should not place any person over God (8:4-7).

K. It is often unwise to be *“like all the nations”* (8:4-20); we should be that *“holy nation”* and *“peculiar people”* that God desires (1 Peter 2:9).

L. The details of God’s Word are important (10:8; 13:8-14; 15:3-24).

M. Remember the Lord and all that He has done for us: *“...Consider how great things he hath done for you”* (12:24).

N. Remember also the severity of God toward those who love wickedness rather than righteousness: *“But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed...”* (12:25; cf. Romans 11:22; Hebrews 10:31, 12:29).

O. We should not presume to do what God has not authorized (13:9-14; cf. Colossians 3:17).

P. No person on earth (not even a king) is above God’s commands (13:9-14; 15:22, 23).

Q. Partial obedience equals disobedience and rebellion (15:3-24).

R. God desires faithful obedience more than outward acts of worship (15:22, 23).

S. God does not lie and has no need to repent: *“And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man, that he should repent”* (15:29; cf. Titus 1:2).

T. God’s preacher often has to bring unpleasant words to the people, as shown in the example of Samuel:

1. Eli, the man with whom Samuel had lived since early childhood, was to be told that his family would be punished for iniquity: *“For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his*



*sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not” (3:13); “And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him...” (3:18).*

2. Samuel told God’s people to put away their idols: “...*put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only...*” (7:3).
3. Samuel told them they would regret their decision to have a king (8:10-18).
4. Samuel told them that if they chose to be wicked, they would be consumed: “*But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king*” (12:25).
5. Samuel told Saul that he had behaved foolishly: “*And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly...*” (13:13).
6. Samuel told Saul that his reign would cease and that he would be replaced: “*But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee*” (13:14); “*And Samuel said unto him, The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou*” (15:28).
7. Samuel told Saul that Saul had sinned (15:16-31).

U. A faithful preacher has the responsibility to declare all the counsel of God: “*And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him...*” (3:18; cf. Psalm 119:160; Acts 20:27).

V. Those who are “little in their own sight” shall be exalted: “*And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee king over Israel?*” (15:17; cf. Luke 14:11).

W. God sees the inward man: “*But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart*” (16:7).

X. The Philistines were resisted in the Valley of Elah and they fled (17:51); if we resist our enemy, he will flee also (James 4:7).

Y. With various types of leadership displayed in First Samuel (prophets, priests, judges, kings), one learns that the success of any person is ultimately dependent on his devotion to God.

Z. “*Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall*” (Proverbs 16:18).

1. Notice the pride of Goliath (17:8-10, 43), and the fall of Goliath (17:49-51).
2. Notice the pride of Saul (15:17; 18:7-9), and the fall of Saul (13:13, 14; 15:28; 31:1-13).

AA. It is difficult to break fellowship with those we love who turn their backs on God: “*It*

*repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the Lord all night” (15:11); “And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death: nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul...” (15:35).*

BB. A true friend is to be cherished: “...*the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul*” (18:1; cf. 2 Samuel 1:26).

CC. “*Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?*” (Proverbs 27:4) – Envy is a horrible sin, and David could not stand before Saul’s envy (18:7-9; cf. James 3:14-16).

DD. We are to have respect for government leaders, because they are in their positions by the power of God: “...*The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord*” (24:6; cf. 26:9-11; Romans 13:1-7; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13-17; 2 Peter 2:10, 11; Jude 8).

EE. Our sins affect others (Saul’s sins ultimately resulted in the deaths of many, 31:1-6; and later in David’s life his sins would affect others).

### **CONCLUSION:**

1. First Samuel is a treasure chest of truths and lessons from God, and it gives us a glimpse of a very important period in the history of God’s people.
2. The book is so rich that anyone who loves God and His Word will thoroughly enjoy the time spent studying this book.

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# Overview of the Book of Joshua

## Jeff Johnson

### **INTRODUCTION:**

1. The book of Joshua tells us a great deal about the fortunes and misfortunes of the people of God under Joshua's leadership.
2. As recorded by Moses (Exodus 17:9), Joshua appeared as a military leader.
3. As recorded by Moses (Exodus 24), he became a minister to Moses.
4. As recorded by Moses (Numbers 14:6), he was named as one of the twelve spies.
5. Later, when Moses died, Joshua became the leader of the children of Israel.
6. Under the leadership of Joshua, the nation of Israel had become possessors of the land of Canaan.
7. Joshua realized that the people were enjoying the fruits of victory, eating from fields that they had not planted and dwelling in cities that they had not built.
8. There was a danger that a life of ease would bring forth unfaithfulness and immorality.

Discussion:

### **I. JOSHUA THE MAN.**

- A. Joshua an Ephraimite, son of Nun, though born in Egyptian bondage was named, significantly, "Hoshea," which means "salvation".
- B. Two months after Israel's exodus he was appointed commander by Moses and successfully repulsed an Amalekite attack (Ex. 17:9).
- C. Moses changed Hoshea's name to "Jehoshua" or "Joshua" which means "Jehovah is salvation".
- D. Joshua attended Moses on Mt. Sinai and guarded both his tent and position (Numbers 11:28).
- E. He represented Ephraim in spying out Canaan (Numbers 14:7-10).
- F. God designated Joshua as Moses' successor.

1. Moses charged him to faithfulness, counseled him on procedures and encouraged both the new leader and the people.
  2. As Joshua was warned of coming apostasy, he still was promised successful accomplishments of the conquest.
  3. God assured him of victory.
  4. His personal actions, however, included making preparations, sending spies against Jericho, and then ordering Israel's advance across the Jordan.
- G. When the disobedience of Achan brought defeat at Ai, Joshua's prayer and his zeal for God's glory served as an example of his faithfulness to God in the execution of Ai's king (8:2, 29; 10:24-27, 40-41).
1. With central Palestine subdued, Joshua personally wrote Moses' law on the stones at Ebal and then proclaimed this law to the whole Israelite assembly.
  2. In six years Joshua took the whole land, "leaving nothing undone of all that the Lord commanded Moses" (11:15-23).
- H. As his death approached, Joshua summoned Israel's leaders, urging them to faithfulness in conquest (23), and then assembled the tribal heads to Shechem, charging them to "choose this day whom ye will serve" (24:15).
1. Having renewed their covenant with Jehovah, he inserted it into the book of God's law (24:25-26) and died at the age of 110.
  2. Throughout his days, he maintained Israel in faithfulness to her Lord.

## **II. AUTHORSHIP AND DATE.**

- A. Although the author's name is not given, many scholars believe that Joshua is the author.
- B. The author speaks of himself as having been present while some of the events took place (Joshua 5:1; 24:25-26).
- C. There are some statements in the book which indicate that someone else participated in the writing (Joshua 16:4).
- D. The events of Joshua may cover the history of about seventeen years, or as some chronologists suggest, twenty-seven or thirty years.

### **III. PURPOSE AND VALUE OF THE BOOK.**

- A. The purposes of the book are to continue the history of Israel begun in the Pentateuch and to demonstrate God's faithfulness to His people by settling them into the Promised Land.
- B. God's holiness is seen in His judgment upon the iniquitous Canaanites and in His insistence that Israel, in fighting, must put away everything evil.
- C. A third aspect of God's relation to man evidenced in the book is God's salvation.
- D. The redemptive history of Israel's entering and possessing Canaan may illustrate the Christian's experience of conflict, victory, and blessings through the mighty power of God.

### **IV. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.**

- A. Moses had led the Israelites from Egypt.
- B. They had spent a period of forty years wondering in the wilderness.
- C. They had expected Moses to take them to the Promised Land but he was gone.
- D. Their faith could have been wavering.
  - 1. They may have at times asked themselves, "Can God fulfill what He has promised?"
  - 2. This was a problem they had already faced (Num. 13:26-33).
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  - 1. The conquest of Central Palestine (Joshua 3-8).
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# PICTURES OF CHRIST IN THE BOOKS OF HISTORY

Keith A. Mosher, Sr.

## INTRODUCTION:

1. There are figures of speech used in all of scripture. (Metonymy, irony, metaphor, anthropopathy, synecdoche, paronomasia, amplification, hyperbole, and others.)
2. The figure of speech pertinent to this discussion is Ahistorical type.@ A historical type is that sense of scripture whereby things acted or done in the Old Testament prefigured and adumbrated things acted in the New Testament.
  - A. Christ, especially, is the antitype who is the essence of many Old Testament ceremonies and actions.
  - B. John 5:39.
3. Old Testament types of Christ are either:
  - A. Innate, that is such are expressly said to be about Him. (e.g. Jonah 1:10; 2:17 and Luke 11:29-30).
  - B. Natural, that is some object in the text typified the Christ (e.g. Exod. 25:17, the mercy seat; Rom. 3:25).
  - C. Inferred, that is that which is said to be a type by interpreters (e.g. Matt. 1:22).
4. In the books from Joshua to Esther there are several Apictures@ or types of the Christ that are either innate, natural, or inferred.

## IN JOSHUA

An actual appearance of the pre-fleshly Word seems to have been seen by Joshua:

And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he



said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? And the captain of the LORD'S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so (Josh. 5:13-15).

Although some commentators argue that the Acaptain of the host of the Lord@ is only an angel who is Aequal with God@ (Keil, p. 62), the being Joshua saw allowed Himself to be worshipped and instructed Joshua that the ground upon which he stood was holy (c.f. Exod. 3:14). Since no man has ever seen the Father (John 1:18) one must infer that the Second Person of the Godhead appeared to Joshua as He had to Isaiah (Isa. 6:1; John 12:41-43).

Christ is the captain of one=s salvation (Heb. 2:10). The term, captain, is a Greek military word (hegemon) derived from two words which mean to be the head leader (ago, archon). Christ is the authority over heaven and earth (Matt. 28:18). Note that a captain must be a qualified leader, valiant, and courageous. He is a commissioned officer (John 8:42) who appoints His soldiers to their proper works beyond which they are not to wander (2 John 9-11). As such, Jesus is the captain, pictured in Joshua as leading His people to victory.

## IN JUDGES

The judges (shophetim in the Hebrew) were saviors who procured justice or right for the people of Israel, not only by delivering them out of the power of their foes, but also by administering the laws and rights of the Lord (Jud. 2:16-19). Judging in the latter sense was different from the mere administration of civil law, but was such as would be expected from a king (1 Sam. 8:5-6). The name, shophet, given to such a person was seemingly founded on Deuteronomy 17:9 and 19:17 where a judge stood beside the high priest who was the supreme leader in ancient Israel.

By inference, Jesus is the antitype of a shophet, for He is the Judge of all (John 5:22). And, Jesus is Abeside@ the God of heaven (Heb. 1:3).

## IN RUTH

The book of Ruth is not merely in the Bible just so there is material for ladies= classes! She is in the genealogy of Jesus even though she was a gentile (Moabite, Ruth 1:4) and she is of the House of David (Ruth 4:18-22) from which Christ in the flesh came (Rom. 1:3). This gentile woman=s inclusion in the family of the Lord is also a strong reminder that Jesus came to save all men (Heb. 2:9).

Ruth married into the tribe of Judah from which clan Jesus was born (Heb. 7:14); Ruth=s husband was Boaz and her son was Obed the grandfather of king David (Matt. 1:5-6). Auberlen wrote:

Ruth, the Moabitish great-great-grandmother of David, longed for the God and people of Israel with all the deepest earnestness of her nature, and joined herself to them with all the power of love; and Boaz was an upright Israelite, without guile, full of holy reverence for every ordinance of God and man. . . From such ancestors was the man descended in whom all the nature of Israel was to find its royal concentration and fullest expression (Keil, p. 466).

It is obvious from the conclusion of Ruth=s account that she intended to look past her time to a glorious future. Whether she knew that she was in the seed-line of Christ is not known. Obviously, Jesus= fleshly descent was from kingly ancestors.

## IN I AND II SAMUEL

The messages of Samuel originally formed one scroll in the Hebrew Bible and in the Hebrew manuscripts still do. (The Septuagint, or Greek Old Testament translators divided the books.) Some think that Samuel=s writings belong to the Kings and the Septuagint entitles them Abooks of the kingdoms,@ for these writings cover the historical periods of Saul and David. The purpose of the exhortations of Samuel=s scrolls was to Aindicate that the spirit of Samuel formed the soul of the true kingdom in Israel@ (Keil, p. 1).

The kingdom of God in Israel was renewed by Samuel after the period of disarray during the time of the judges, but Samuel=s leadership (or rather God=s) was rejected by the people who wanted a secular king. Israel got secular kings who acted like heathen kings, but her rejection of a godly leader was her downfall. When the Christ eventually arrived in Israel, He as Samuel before Him was rejected, for the most part, by His people (John 1:11-12). As Samuel, a priest and judge, the world=s high priest and judge, Jesus, was not what the people wanted.

An incidental picture in Samuel is that of God=s control, even of the heathen (1 Sam. 5-7:14). Christ is Lord over all the earth and judge of all!

## IN KINGS

And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16).

The scrolls of the kings of Israel (originally one scroll) illustrate God=s providence in

controlling Israel and that the kingdoms of that world only provided a setting for God=s rule and the coming of the Messiah who is King over every king!

## I CHRONICLES

As with Samuel and Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles are one scroll in the Hebrew manuscripts. The masorettes, who copied scrolls for nearly eight centuries, even list the middle verse as 1 Chronicles 27:25. The messages are about David, Solomon, and their successors. The author emphasized the efforts of pious kings to revive temple worship because such adherence to God=s laws requiring adoration of Him would bring great blessings to Israel (1 Chron. 13). The temple was AGod=s House@ and the mercy seat was where the high priest Amet@ with God and offered the blood of the atonement. Christ is the mercy seat now and not only does one attain atonement with God through Christ, but His own blood remits sin (Rom. 3:25; Matt. 26:28).

## IN EZRA AND NEHEMIAH

During the age of the patriarchs God chose one named Abram in order to use his progeny as the seed-line of the Messiah (Gen. 12:1-3). Abram (Abraham) was ordered by Jehovah to leave his home in Mesopotamia and proceed to Palestine and in the latter land the Messianic promise would be kept. Because of God=s providence, the descendants of Abraham through his grandson Jacob eventually occupied the APromised land@ (Josh. 23:14; 24:8-13). However those ancient Israelites disobeyed God and were taken by Assyrian and Babylonian forces as captives in the land of Mesopotamia from whence God had ordered Abram (Abraham) to leave! Unless Israel returned to Palestine, the seed-line promise to Abraham would be over for Israel must be in the place where God could bless her. Ezra and Nehemiah recount Israel=s return to Palestine and the continuance of the promise. The Messiah will now come to Palestine.

Christ is the fulfillment of the Abrahamic promise and one must be in Christ to receive the blessing of atonement from God (Gal. 3:23-29). Reading Ezra and Nehemiah should thrill all of God=s people for God providentially (through a pagan named Cyrus) returned His people to the promised land so that Messiah would come (Ezra 1:1).

## IN ESTHER

Esther is a brief, poetic account of a moment in the history of Israel=s captivity in Persia. Esther=s bravery protected the Israelites from extermination by the Persians whose king (Ahasaerus) had been manipulated by the one Haman (Esther 3:1-5). Haman cast lots (pur) in order to determine the day for such a massacre and the deal was sealed by the king (Esther 3:7,12).

Esther had become queen of Persia (by providence) and she went to the king, without being summoned, and risked her life to try to save her people (Esther 4:14-16). Esther's tactics eventually led to the salvation of her people and her account is the background for the Jewish feast of Purim (lots) kept to this day. Had Esther not been so brave would God have used another? Perhaps, because if the Jews had been exterminated there would have been no Messiah!

## CONCLUSION

Christ is the Captain of the Lord's host as seen in Joshua. Christ is a shopet as pictured in Judges and He came through the seed-line of Ruth and David. Christ is a true king but rejected as was Samuel by his own people. However Christ is the King of kings and the anti-type of the mercy seat. And, had a remnant of God's people not survived captivity, the world would not have a Messiah. The history books are truly a family album of the Lord.

# ACCEPTABLE WORSHIP -- ONLY WHERE GOD PUT HIS NAME --THEN AND NOW

Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

## INTRODUCTION:

1 God has demanded worship in prescribed places from His people in all three dispensations in which He has dealt with man.

2 There were the patriarchal altars of Abel, Noah, Abraham, Jacob and others in Genesis 4, 9,12,13,35. This is where He placed His name and accepted worship from the same.

3 There was the Levitical tabernacle and later the temple where He placed His name and accepted worship from the same.

4 There is the Lord's church in the New Testament era where God has placed His name and accepts worship within this prescribed realm.

## I      **WORSHIP THEN**

A      Abel and Noah are early examples as we note in Genesis 4 and 9. The writer of Hebrews notes what Abel offered in 11:4.

B      Abraham is another excellent example.

1      We just about can trace his various journeys by the ascending smoke from altars he built and on which he offered animal sacrifices (Genesis 12-25).

2      In only one place do we not read of his building an altar--in the land of Egypt in Genesis 12. This is significant for therein he lied relative to his real status with Sarah.

3      He was willing even to offer his beloved Isaac in Genesis 22. This was fullness of fervent faith.

4      He knew wherein acceptable worship was to be offered God.

C      Moses and Aaron are other examples.

1      Exodus 25-40 are sixteen chapters dealing with tabernacle construction and worship connected therewith.

2      The tabernacle with its outer court, Holy Place and Most Holy Place had to be made according to the pattern showed Moses while he was atop Sinai communing with the Lord. In tabernacle worship we have proper personnel--high priest, priests and Levites--as well as the place. This is where God placed His name and accepted worship therein and thereabout.

3      There was a serious worship departure at the Sinaitic base with golden calf worship. God had not placed His name on such and this idolatrous worship was unauthorized and very deadly in which to participate (See all of Exodus 32).

D David and Solomon are other examples.

1 David was worshipful by nature as many of his psalms fully reflect (See Psalm 29:2 for one instance).

2 His purchase of a worshipful site from Araunah in 2 Samuel 24 is significant indeed. He would not worship in a place or within an atmosphere that cost him nothing. There is a great lesson for us in this matter.

3 David desired to build the temple but God would not allow him to do so (2 Samuel 7:1ff).

4 David was allowed to prepare mightily for its future erection as we observe in the latter chapters of 1 Chronicles.

5 Solomon followed through with the actual construction in the early chapters of 1 Kings and 2 Chronicles.

6 We read of its dedication in 1 Kings 8 in which he connected acceptable worship in the temple which was located on Mount Moriah in Jerusalem. God let it be known in 1 Kings 9 that he hallowed this house and placed His name there.

7 Jerusalem, since the time of David, in all of Solomon's reign and on into the future, was the place where God placed His name. The temple was the specific place. Here the people came for Passover, Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) and the Feast of Tabernacles.

8 When they returned from the Exile one of the first things they did was beginning to build the temple again. They were hindered and finally finished it some twenty years after their return.

9 In John 4:20ff Jesus told the inquiring Samaritan woman at Jacob's well that Jerusalem was the proper place of worship -- not Gerizim where she and her peers worshipped in ignorance.

10 In Luke 2 Joseph, Mary and Jesus went from Nazareth to Jerusalem to worship at Passover time.

11 Note the number of times Jesus went to Jerusalem to worship during his personal ministry. This was where His heavenly Father had placed His name.

12 The events at Pentecost in Acts 2 took place among people who had come to Jerusalem for that prescribed feast.

13 The eunuch, not knowing the law of Moses had been abolished, came to Jerusalem in Acts 8 for to worship.

14 But Jerusalem is no longer that prescribed place.

## **II WORSHIP NOW**

A God has not placed His name in vain worship as in Mark 7, in ignorant worship as in Acts 17 or in will-worship as in Colossians 2.

B He has placed His name in true, acceptable, right worship as per John 4:23-24. 0

C This worship is in the church of His Son and we must be in that redeemed realm for our worship to be pleasing to Him.

1 This is the place of worship activity in Acts 2:42.

2 This is the place of Troas worship in Acts 20:7.

3 This is where the Lord's Supper was centered in 1 Corinthians 11:20ff.

4 It is in the midst of the church or congregation that singing is to occur as per Hebrews 2:12.

5 Very frequently in Pauline travels he would remain in various locales for seven days. Why? Obviously, it was to worship with the church in these various places.

6 We must be members of the Lord's church to pray acceptably. Non-members cannot say, "Our Father" for they are not children of God. Prayer is not for aliens; it is for God's children.

7 We must be members of the Lord's church or in the kingdom to partake acceptably of the Lord's Supper (Luke 22:29-30).

8 Acceptable singing and giving are related to our being members of the Lord's church.

9 Acceptable Bible Study on the part of alien sinners has as motive and purpose their becoming members of the Lord's church or Christians. Remember the Bereans in Acts 17:11.

**CONCLUSION:**

1 The altar in patriarchy, the tabernacle, temple and later the synagogue in the Mosaic System and the Lord's church in the gospel dispensation have been and are where God has stamped as places where He will meet His people and accept worship from them.

# The Book of 2 Kings

Todd Crayton

## INTRODUCTION:

1. The quote by Edmund Burke, "The only thing necessary for evil to triumph is for good men do nothing" is clearly illustrated in this time period in Israel's history.
  2. The record of the divided kingdom helps one to understand God's fulfillment of His promise to Abraham.
    - A. Those who were faithful to God in keeping his covenant were blessed.
    - B. God's just love demanded punishment for Israel's disobedience.
  3. The book of 2 Kings is a continuation from 1 Kings.
    - A. The Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Bible divides the book of Kings into two books.
    - B. It covers much of the chronology and major themes of the entire Old Testament.
      - a. United Kingdom
      - b. Divided Kingdom
      - c. Judah Alone
      - d. Babylonian Exile
- I. *AUTHORSHIP*
- A. Not specifically mentioned in the text.
  - B. It is assigned to Jeremiah by Jewish traditional theory.
  - C. Although it is not definitive that Jeremiah is the author, there is much similarity with his other writings.
    1. He quotes "The book of the words of Solomon", and "The book of the chronicles by the kings of Judah" (1 Kings 14:29, 15:7, 23).
    2. Jeremiah used available works of the prophets.
  - D. It is completely acceptable to designate Jeremiah as author so long as one accepts the divine authorship of the book---written by inspiration of God (Pledge).



1. One great reason for accepting the Bible as inspired is the unity of the writers= message.
  2. 1 & 2 Kings comprise the inspired record of Israel=s history.
  3. The book is inspired because Jesus referred to it. (Matthew 5:17, Luke 24:44).
- E. Background
1. Jeremiah=s father was Hilkiah (Jeremiah).
  2. Called to be a spokesman for God in the thirteenth year of Josiah.
  3. Prophet under the reign of Jehoiachin (same as Jeconiah/Coniah), Zedekiah, and Jehoiakim. (Holman)

## **II. KEY SCRIPTURES**

- A. 2 Kings 17:13-14 - God testified against Judah for her rebellious heart.
- B. 2 Kings 17:20 - Afflicted because of idolatry
- C. 2 Kings 17:22 - Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam
- D. 2 Kings 25:8-11 - Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem 586 B. C.

## **III. PURPOSE**

- A. Overall, the book of Kings is written to tell God=s people that obedience to the covenant of God was the only source of protection and refuge.
- B. The book covers the history of the Kings of Judah and Israel from the ascension of Solomon to the Babylonian Captivity.
- C. Accounts reign of Kings to the captivity of Zedekiah 895-562 B.C., (about 334 yrs.)
- D. God sent prophets to Israel, to call the people back to the law.

## **IV. OUTLINE**

Note: There are several outlines available in study Bibles and commentaries. This is an example of one outline of 2 Kings by Charles Pledge.

1. THE DIVIDED KINGDOM CONTINUED FROM 1 KINGS
  - a. The close of Elijah=s ministry and the beginning of Elisha=s, 1-2:25
  - b. The reign of Jehoram of Israel, 3:1-8:15
  - c. Jehoram and Ahaziah in Judah and Jehu in Israel, 8:16-10:36

- d. Hostilities between Judah and Israel resumed, 11:1-17:41
2. JUDAH from NORTHERN DESTRUCTION TO BABYLONIAN EXILE
- a. Hezekiah and Josiah 18:1-20:21
  - b. Manasseh and Amon 21
  - c. Josiah, 22:1- 23:30
  - d. Jehoahaz, 23:31
  - e. Jehoiakim, 23:36-24:7
  - f. Jehoiachin, 24: 8-17
  - g. Zedekiah, 24:18-25:26
  - h. Jehoiachin, 25: 27-30

**CONCLUSION:**

- A. Man can never escape the consequences of choice.
  - 1. Israel asked for God Amake us a king to judge us like all the other nations@ (1 Samuel 8:5)
  - 2. The kings which God allowed to reign did not always lead the people in the way of the Lord.
- B. The punishment for Israel was captivity.
  - 1. Babylonian exile for the Northern Kingdom.
  - 2. Assyrian captivity for the Southern Kingdom

Works Cited

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# Judges

## I. Introduction

### A. Judges is the 2<sup>nd</sup> historical book of the Old Testament

The book covers most of the time period between the death of Joshua and the beginning of the reign of King Saul, with the remainder of this time period covered in the first 8 chapters of I Samuel and in the book of Ruth.

### B. Although there are some differing opinions among scholars, Samuel is the most

C. The book was written probably just after the monarchy began. This is assumed. We can be fairly certain it was written no later than the early days of David's reign because in chapter 1 verse 21 the Jebusites are said to be dwelling in Jerusalem with Benjamin. We know David conquered that city and made it his capitol in I Chronicles 11:4-7 2 Samuel 5:6-9, therefore the book must have been written prior to this event.

### D. If you use Ussher's dates, Joshua would have begun his work about 1451 b.c. and Whatever dates we use, we can say the period of the judges lasted about 350 We come to that conclusion by noticing the following facts:

In I Kings 6:1 we are told it was 480 years from the exodus from Egypt to the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Solomon's reign as king. If we take that 480 yrs. And deduct 4 yrs. Of Solomon's reign, and deduct 40 yrs. of David's reign (2 Sam. 5:4) and deduct 40 yrs of Saul's reign (Acts 13:21), we are left with 396 yrs. – representing the time from the exodus to the beginning of the reign of king Saul.

$$480 - 4 - 40 - 40 = 396 \text{ years.}$$

We can then deduct the time of the wilderness wandering and the time of Joshua and have a fairly close estimate of the time of the judges  
The people wandered 40 years (Deut. 8:2).

$$396 - 40 = 356 \text{ years.}$$

We can also estimate the time of Joshua's work. In Joshua 14:7-10, close to the end of Joshua's conquering the land, we are told that Caleb was 40 years old before the wilderness wandering and at the time he was about to receive his land promised to him, he was 85 years old. If we therefore attribute 6 years (and it may have been a few more or less) for Joshua's work we arrive at approximately 350 years.

$$350 - 6 = 350 \text{ years.}$$

Many of you may be aware of the fact, in the King James Version, in Acts 13:20

there is mention of the period of the judges lasting “about the space of 450 years”. It is not my intention to spend a lot of time here, but I did think it worth at least mentioning. There are many theories on the 450 years in Acts 13 – I will in no way cover them all but at least make you aware of some of them.

1. Some say the scripture is referencing the time the people faced oppression from the Canaanites extending the time up to when David defeated the Jebusites at Jerusalem. (Take the previously calculated 396 years and add 40 for Saul’s reign and then a number of years for David to take Jerusalem  $396+40+7=443$ yrs.)
2. Some say it refers to the 480 years mentioned in I Kings 6:1 less 40 years for the wandering leaving 440 years. – the 10 years being justified by the phrase “about the space of “
3. Some say it is a bad translation there in the King James Version (and other versions) – the American Standard version leaves out the 450 years here and places it in verse 19 causing it referring to the period of time the people occupied the land

There can be a lot of study on this passage, and if you wish to know more about the findings of scholars on this topic I encourage you to do so.

Fortunately the time frame is not a key issue in this book; therefore we need not spend any more time on it in this lesson.

E. The book of Judges could be summarized by the phrase “FAILURE THROUGH COMPROMISE”. God’s people chose to compromise in doing what God had commanded them and, as they were told, it caused them problems as they inherited and inhabited the promised land. In Judges, we see the people in a cycle of apostasy. They would turn from God in **SIN**, because of their sin they would enter a period of **SERVITUDE** to various nations within the promised land. After a period of oppression and punishment, the people would make **SUPPLICATION** unto God for deliverance. It was at these times, God, because of His love for his people, would then provide them with deliverance or **SALVATION** from their enemies by raising up Judges to lead them.

This cycle of Sin, Servitude, Supplication, Salvation was repeated throughout the book and we will notice it closer a little later.

There were 15 judges in all, 13 of which are in the book of Judges and the last 2 judges were Samuel and Eli.

There were seven major oppressions in the book of Judges  
(as shown on chart)

The Judges of Israel		Years	Oppressions	Years

			<b>Served</b>	<b>of Israel</b>	<b>Oppressed</b>
<b>Othneil</b>	Caleb's nephew		40 yrs.	Mesopotamia	8 yrs.
<b>Ehud</b>	left-handed		80 yrs.	Moab 18 yrs	18 yrs.
<b>Shamgar</b>	used an oxgoad to kill 600 men		?	Philistines	?
<b>Deborah and Barak</b> <i>(Barak-military leader)</i>			40 yrs.	Jabin and Sisera	20 yrs.
<b>Gideon</b>	used 300 men		40 yrs.	Midian	7 yrs.
<b>Abimilech</b>	Gideon's corrupt son		3 yrs.		
<b>Tola</b>	from Issachar tribe		23 yrs		
<b>Jair</b>	had 30 sons and 30 towns		22 yrs.		
<b>Jephthah</b>	made rash vow		6 yrs.	Ammonites	18 yrs
<b>Ibzan</b>	from Bethlehem		7yrs.		
<b>Elon</b>	from Zebulun tribe		10 yrs.		
<b>Abdon</b>	had 40 sons 30 grandsons		8 yrs		
<b>Sampson</b>	strong Nazarite		40 yrs	Philistines	40 yrs.
<b>Eli</b>	high priest		?		
<b>Samuel</b>	prophet and priest annoints kings		?		

F. The book of Judges is divided into 3 main divisions Chapters 1 -2 are introductory chapters

Chapters 3-16 hold the main body of the book

Chapter 17-21 are often referred to an appendix to the book

They contain information concerning primarily the Danites and the judgment of the tribes against the tribe of Benjamin for a particular event.

## II. Brief Outline of Judges

### A. Setting at the beginning

At the end of Joshua, Joshua told the people to choose whom they would serve, God, or the idols of their fathers. (Joshua 24:15). In Joshua 24:24 we remember the people vowed to follow God. The beginning of Judges finds the people of Israel in the promised land shortly after Joshua's death. The people have not yet completely cleansed the land of its inhabitants.

### B. Chapter 1 and 2

In These chapters Judah emerges as a leading tribe.

The people are unable to completely drive out the inhabitants.

Chapter 2 is a very good summary chapter for the whole book.

It shows the cycle of SIN ,SERVITUDE, SUPPLICATION, SALVATION

That will be the theme of the book.

### C. Chapters 3-5

We find the people intermarrying with the people of the land and worshipping their gods.

We find the oppressions of the Mesopotamians, the Moabites, the Philistines, and King Jabin of Hazor, coupled with the judgeships of Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, and Deborah.

### D. Chapter 6-8

The oppression of the Midianites

Gideon raised up to deliver the people.

Gideon's army reduced from 32000 to 300

Gideon refused to allow the people to make him king

### E. Chapters 9-12

This section begins with the treachery of Abimelech, Gideon's son

He kills 69 of his brothers to secure his reign

Jotham, the only surviving brother rebukes him with the fable of the trees

This is one of the oldest known fables.

Following Abimelech's death the Lord raises up Tola, then Jair

The ammonites oppress the people for their sin

God is angered by their sins and refuses to deliver them

The Lord sorrowed for their misery (chap. 10:16)

Jephthah raises up to deliver the people.

He makes a foolish vow (Chap. 11:31)

*Then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the LORD'S, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering.*

In verse 34 we find his only child, his daughter, was the first to come out to meet him.

In verse 39 we see Jephthah kept his vow – probably by sending her to the temple to serve the Lord, much like Hannah did with Samuel. However there are some who believe Jephthah actually offered her up as a burnt offering.

After Jephthah, the judges Ibzan, then Elon, then Abdon

#### F. Chapters 13-16

Oppression of the Philistines

God raises up Sampson

Sampson the deliverer killed 1000 Philistines with the jawbone of a donkey

He carried away the gates of the city of Gaza

He burned the fields of the Philistines by catching 300 foxes, tying them in pairs, tying a torch to them and sending them running through the fields.

He was tricked into his capture by a woman named Delilah

Killed thousands of Philistines at the time of his death by pulling down the temple of Dagon on top of them.

#### G. Chapters 17-21

Chapter 17 and 18 deal primarily with the tribe of Dan.

Dan was unable to drive the Philistines out of their land so they decided to move.

In doing so, they steal idols from a man with whom they stayed, destroyed the town of Laish, and renamed it Dan.

They then set up the stolen idols to worship and appoint Jonathan, a grandson of Moses, as their priest.

Chapters 19-21 tell the account of the treatment and eventual murder of a

Levite's concubine in the city of Gibeah, a city of Benjamin. After the concubine's murder, the levite cut her in 12 pieces and distributed her parts to all 12 tribes to show his outrage for the behavior of the men of Gibeah. The other tribes wish to punish the men, but Benjamin comes out to war against the other tribes. Ultimately the tribe of Benjamin was reduced to 600 men. A fact which then sorrowed the rest of the tribes to the point they went and took virgins from a town who had refused to discuss the issue of fighting Benjamin to give to the 600 men.

### III. The cycle of Judges

We have only noticed a brief introduction to the book of Judges and a very quick outline overview of the book. I 'd like to spend the rest of my time looking at the cycle that we see in judges

**SIN, SERVITUDE, SUPPLICATION, SALVATION,**

and noticing just a few of the many lessons we can learn from the book of judges.

A. SINS

We want to first take a look at a few of the sins that caused the people problems to see if we can learn from their mistakes. We will not have time to cover them all but will try to notice 3 of them:

1. Failed to wholly follow the commands of the Lord
2. Failed to teach their children
3. Failed to rely upon the word of God

1. Failed to wholly follow the Commands of the Lord

- a. In Deut 7:2, way before the people entered the promised land God told them:

**“And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them:”**

We notice at the very outset of the book of Judges the tribe of Judah and Simeon fails to FULLY comply with the Lord's instructions by not driving out all the people of the land. Chapter 1:19

**And the LORD was with Judah; and he drave out the inhabitants of the mountain; but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron.**

Why could they not drive out the people of the valley?

Was God not able to defeat chariots of iron?

Certainly the problem was not with God; it was with the faith of the people.

They did not FULLY trust God – they began to rely on self. Sadly, if we read the remainder of chapter 1 we see that the failure to utterly destroy the inhabitants was not exclusive to Judah and Simeon. All of the tribes failed in complying with God's instruction.

Why would the Lord order the utter destruction of the inhabitants of the land?

God told them why! He had warned them back in Deut.30: 17 of the dangers of being drawn away to other gods. God wanted his people pure, set completely apart, sanctified from the idolatry of the day. He knew that leaving a part of the people in the land would cause problem. And notice – it did. Judges 3:5-7

**5 And the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and Hivites, and**



**Jebusites:**

**6 And they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods.**

**7 And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and forgot the LORD their God, and served Baalim and the groves.**

Today how many congregations are drawn away by compromising what God has said. How many congregations today keep themselves pure by keeping the world out. How many people become Christians who never really turn completely from the ways of the world, or who do so then are drawn back by worldly influence.

In I Cor. 15:33 we find

**“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.”**

- In James 44 we are warned of a friendship with the world.

**“Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”**

-A friendship with the world may cause a spotting by the world as spoken of in James 1:27

**“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”**

-Becoming spotted by the world may cause an eventual love for the world.

I John 2:15

**“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”**

-Loving the world would certainly cause one to conform to the world as we are warned against in Romans 12:2

**“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”**

- And finally, being conformed to the world would result in being condemned with the world, as were the people in the days of the judges

I Cor. 11:32 says: **“ But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.”**

We see this pattern of corruption by the world in Judges.

- b. Since the Israelites did not obey and drive out the Canaanites, God left some of the people of the land to prove whether or not they would keep his commandments and to teach them war. Look at Judges 3:1-4:

**“¶Now these are the nations which the LORD left, to prove Israel by**

them, even as many of Israel as had not known all the wars of Canaan;

**2 Only that the generations of the children of Israel might know, to teach them war, at the least such as before knew nothing thereof;**

**3 Namely, five lords of the Philistines, and all the Canaanites, and the Sidonians, and the Hivites that dwelt in mount Lebanon, from mount Baalhermon unto the entering in of Hamath.**

**4 And they were to prove Israel by them, to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of the LORD, which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses.”**

If they had obeyed, they would have had no reason to know war – but they didn't so they were going to face opposition from then on.

- The Lord allowed the people of the land to test his people, to see if they would remain faithful – so often they failed.

Today you and I will face tests from time to time.

**James 1:2-3 “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;**

**3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.”**

**James 1:12 Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.”**

**1 Peter 1:7 “That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:”**

What is our attitude when we are tested? Do we pass the tests we encounter?

The second sin we want to notice

## 2. Failure to teach their children

In Judges chapter 2 verse 10:

**“And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: (speaking of the generation of Joshua and of the elders that outlived Joshua that had seen the great works of the Lord (verse 7) and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.”**

The Israelites had been commanded and urged to teach their children; just as they had been reminded of the importance of following God's will.

Notice Deut 4:10:

**“Specially the day that thou stoodest before the LORD thy**

**God in Horeb, when the LORD said unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children.”**

**Deuteronomy 6:6-7 “And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:**

**And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.”**

**Deuteronomy 11:18-19 “¶Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes.**

**19 And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.”**

That’s pretty often isn’t it? There is a considerable amount of diligence that would be necessary to keep this command.

**In Joshua 4:5-7 Just as Joshua and the people were preparing to cross the river Jordan to enter the promised land, God told them to take up stones and build a memorial to teach their children.**

**Joshua 4:5 And Joshua said unto them, Pass over before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of Jordan, and take ye up every man of you a stone upon his shoulder, according unto the number of the tribes of the children of Israel:**

**6 That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones?**

**7 Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever.**

In verse 10 of chapter 2 we read that the next generation knew not God nor the works which he had done for Israel. The fact that they didn’t know the works God had done for them previously had to have been because their parents did not teach them.

We today must realize that we are always only 1 generation away from unfaithfulness if we fail to teach our children. It would not take long – Judges 2:17 says they “TURNED **QUICKLY** OUT OF THE WAY WHICH THEIR FATHERS WALKED IN”

We must teach our children. In Ephesians 6:4 we read:

**“And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath:  
but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”**

In I Timothy 3:12 we find:

**“Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling  
their children and their own houses well.”**

The command here is concerning the qualifications of a deacon, but it is important for every Christian household to diligently teach their children.

In judges 10 we saw they “knew not God”, but in verse 11 and 13 we see they knew Baal and Ashtaroth. We need to know, whether or not we are teaching our children, Satan is not missing any opportunities to do so; and how many “weapons” are at his disposal today?

The 3<sup>rd</sup> sin we want to look at

3. Failed to rely upon the Word of God as their Guide

This is probably the root of the rest of their problems.

In Judges 17:6 we read:

**“ In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.”**

This verse is repeated in chapter 21:25.

God’s people were warned over and over to fear God and keep his commandments, but **they did that which was right in their own eyes.**

How many people today do what is right in their own eyes?

How many people today say “I feel” that God will do this or that?

Many people today base their salvation on what THEY feel rather than what God has said.

Jeremiah 10:23 says: **“O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.”**

**Proverbs 21:2 ¶“Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the LORD pondereth the hearts.”**

**Proverbs 14:12 ¶”There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”**

In Luke 6 Jesus tell a parable about a wise man and a foolish man. Jesus warns of the danger of building upon a foundation other than the word of God.

**What a man feels will not stand the test of judgment. John 12:48 tells us**

**“He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.”**

God’s people did what was right in their own eyes and failed.

#### B. Servitude

Sin always has consequences – Something the people should have known.

1. When the people murmured when they had the first opportunity to possess the land, God punished them.
2. When Moses struck the rock instead of speaking to it, God punished him.

In the book of Judges, when the people rebel and sin against God, there would be no exception, God punished them. He punished them with periods of servitude to the pagan nations they had become like. 7 times the people were oppressed because of sin.

Today, there are still consequences for sin

Some sins have consequences here on this earth and some may not.

One thing is sure – ALL sin has spiritual consequences.

Sin will separate us from God.

**Isaiah 59:2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.**

Sin will cause spiritual death

**Romans 6:16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?**

**Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

**James 1:15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.**

There were consequences for sin in the days of the judges when “every man did that which was right in his own eyes” and there are certainly consequences today for sin.

### C. Supplication

When the Israelites fell into a life of sin, and then a punishment of servitude, they would eventually make supplication to the Lord for deliverance.

We see in Chap 3:9 Chap 3:15 Chap 4:3 Chap. 6:6 Chap 10:10 the phrase “cried unto the Lord”

Isn't it interesting- as long as things were going their way, they didn't know God; but as soon as the going got tough, they cried unto the Lord.

Is this anything we have seen before.

In this country, after the events of September 11, 2001, there were places across this country reporting Bible sales up as much as 40%!

We notice Chapter 10 verse 10:

**¶”And the children of Israel cried unto the LORD, saying, We have sinned against thee, both because we have forsaken our God, and also served Baalim.”**

Now notice verse 15 and 16:

**“15 And the children of Israel said unto the LORD, We have sinned: do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; deliver us only, we pray thee, this day.**

**16 And they put away the strange gods from among them, and served the LORD: and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel.”**

Although the book of Judges is often seen as a book of failures isn't verse 16 a beautiful verse of scripture

“they put away the strange gods and served the Lord and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel”

Here we see the repentant heart of the sinner, and the love that God felt for them.

What a joy it must have been to the Father to see his children want to come home

It sort of reminds us of the joy of the father in the account of the prodigal son in the New Testament; but imagine how hurt the Father must feel when he sees his children repeat the same mistakes over and over again as they did in Judges.

#### D. Salvation

The last phase of the cycle we see in Judges is Salvation

In Judges 2:18 we see the grace and mercy of God

**“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 it repented the LORD because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them.”**

When the people made supplication to the Lord with a penitent heart, the Lord would provide them with a way of salvation from their enemies. Each time he would raise up a judge to deliver them.

It is interesting to note that the freedom from their enemies that the people cried for is the same freedom God had promised them all along if they would have just been faithful.

God had already promised them salvation from these enemies, if they would obey his statutes and commands.

Today, we have the promise of salvation from eternal punishment, if we are faithful to do his will.

**Matthew 7:21 ¶Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.**

**John 5:28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, 29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.**

**Revelation 22:14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.**

God promised to give the people the promised land, and he did, but he required the people to drive the inhabitants from the land through faith in Him.

He could have driven the people out before the Israelites entered the land. He could have used hornets (as he had done in the past) or wind or water, or by just simply saying the word; but he didn't

He wanted the people to have faith in Him and he wanted to see their faith in

action.

God wanting to see faith in action is not a new thing

1. Noah, had to faithfully build and ark- had he not done so, he and his family would have been lost.
  2. Abraham had to offer up Isaac
  3. The people had to faithfully walk around the walls of Jericho
  4. Gideon faithfully fought with 300 men
- and on and on the list could go.

Today, if we find ourselves in a life of **sin, serving** the desires of Satan, If we will make **supplication** unto the Lord with a repentant heart, willing to faithful and wholly obey His word, God promises us **salvation** from sin and the punishment of eternal death.

But He still requires faith in action.

**1 John 2:3 ¶And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.**

**1 John 2:5 But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.**

1 John 3:24 And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

Perhaps the most beautiful passage in the Bible:

**John 14:2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.**

**3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.**

IV. Conclusion

1. We have noticed a bit of background information, a brief outline, and a few of the many great lessons in the book of Judges.

We have notice the cycle of the book of Judges

**Sin > Servitude > Supplication > Salvation**

Today, I ask you, Where are you in this cycle?

If you were to face judgment today have you been living the way



you need to be to obtain salvation through the grace of God?

If not, I urge you to change that today, while you have opportunity.

# Judges

## I. Introduction

- A. Judges is the 2<sup>nd</sup> historical book of the Old Testament  
The book covers most of the time period between the death of Joshua and the beginning of the reign of King Saul, with the remainder of this time period covered in the first 8 chapters of I Samuel and in the book of Ruth.
- B. Although there are some differing opinions among scholars, Samuel is the most probable author of this book.
- C. The book was written probably just after the monarchy began. This is assumed because of verses in the book containing the phrase “in the days when there was no king in Israel”.(Chap. 17:6,18:1, 19:1, 21:25)

We can be fairly certain it was written no later than the early days of David’s reign because in chapter 1 verse 21 the Jebusites are said to be dwelling in Jerusalem with Benjamin. We know David conquered that city and made it his capitol in I Chronicles 11:4-7 2 Samuel 5:6-9, therefore the book must have been written prior to this event.

- D. If you use Ussher’s dates, Joshua would have begun his work about 1451 b.c. and Saul began his reign as king (beginning the monarchy) in about 1095 b.c. Whatever dates we use, we can say the period of the judges lasted about 350 years.

We come to that conclusion by noticing the following facts:

In I Kings 6:1 we are told it was 480 years from the exodus from Egypt to the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Solomon’s reign as king. If we take that 480 yrs. And deduct 4 yrs. Of Solomon’s reign, and deduct 40 yrs. of David’s reign (2 Sam. 5:4) and deduct 40 yrs of Saul’s reign (Acts 13:21), we are left with 396 yrs. – representing the time from the exodus to the beginning of the reign of king Saul.

$$480 - 4 - 40 - 40 = 396 \text{ years.}$$

We can then deduct the time of the wilderness wandering and the time of Joshua and have a fairly close estimate of the time of the judges  
The people wandered 40 years (Deut. 8:2).

$$396 - 40 = 356 \text{ years.}$$

We can also estimate the time of Joshua’s work. In Joshua 14:7-10, close to the end of Joshua’s conquering the land, we are told that Caleb was 40 years old before the wilderness wandering and at the time he was about to receive his land promised to him, he was 85 years old. If we therefore attribute 6 years (and it may have been a few more or less) for Joshua’s work we arrive at approximately 350

years.

$$350 - 6 = 350 \text{ years.}$$

Many of you may be aware of the fact, in the King James Version, in Acts 13:20 there is mention of the period of the judges lasting “about the space of 450 years”. It is not my intention to spend a lot of time here, but I did think it worth at least mentioning. There are many theories on the 450 years in Acts 13 – I will in no way cover them all but at least make you aware of some of them.

1. Some say the scripture is referencing the time the people faced oppression from the Canaanites extending the time up to when David defeated the Jebusites at Jerusalem. (Take the previously calculated 396 years and add 40 for Saul’s reign and then a number of years for David to take Jerusalem  $396+40+7=443$  yrs.)
2. Some say it refers to the 480 years mentioned in I Kings 6:1 less 40 years for the wandering leaving 440 years. – the 10 years being justified by the phrase “about the space of “
3. Some say it is a bad translation there in the King James Version (and other versions) – the American Standard version leaves out the 450 years here and places it in verse 19 causing it referring to the period of time the people occupied the land

There can be a lot of study on this passage, and if you wish to know more about the findings of scholars on this topic I encourage you to do so.

Fortunately the time frame is not a key issue in this book; therefore we need not spend any more time on it in this lesson.

- E. The book of Judges could be summarized by the phrase “FAILURE THROUGH COMPROMISE”. God’s people chose to compromise in doing what God had commanded them and, as they were told, it caused them problems as they inherited and inhabited the promised land. In Judges, we see the people in a cycle of apostasy. They would turn from God in **SIN**, because of their sin they would enter a period of **SERVITUDE** to various nations within the promised land. After a period of oppression and punishment, the people would make **SUPPLICATION** unto God for deliverance. It was at these times, God, because of His love for his people, would then provide them with deliverance or **SALVATION** from their enemies by raising up Judges to lead them.

This cycle of Sin, Servitude, Supplication, Salvation was repeated throughout the book and we will notice it closer a little later.

There were 15 judges in all, 13 of which are in the book of Judges and the last 2 judges were Samuel and Eli.

There were seven major oppressions in the book of Judges

(as shown on chart)

<b>The Judges of Israel</b>		<b>Years Served</b>	<b>Oppressions of Israel</b>	<b>Years Oppressed</b>
<b>Othneil</b>	Caleb's nephew	40 yrs.	Mesopotamia	8 yrs.
<b>Ehud</b>	left-handed	80 yrs.	Moab 18 yrs	18 yrs.
<b>Shamgar</b>	used an oxgoad to kill 600 men	?	Philistines	?
<b>Deborah and Barak</b> <i>(Barak-military leader)</i>		40 yrs.	Jabin and Sisera	20 yrs.
<b>Gideon</b>	used 300 men	40 yrs.	Midian	7 yrs.
<b>Abimilech</b>	Gideon's corrupt son	3 yrs.		
<b>Tola</b>	from Issachar tribe	23 yrs		
<b>Jair</b>	had 30 sons and 30 towns	22 yrs.		
<b>Jephthah</b>	made rash vow	6 yrs.	Ammonites	18 yrs
<b>Ibzan</b>	from Bethlehem	7yrs.		
<b>Elon</b>	from Zebulun tribe	10 yrs.		
<b>Abdon</b>	had 40 sons 30 grandsons	8 yrs		
<b>Sampson</b>	strong Nazarite	40 yrs	Philistines	40 yrs.
<b>Eli</b>	high priest	?		
<b>Samuel</b>	prophet and priest annoints kings	?		

- F. The book of Judges is divided into 3 main divisions Chapters 1 -2 are introductory chapters  
Chapters 3-16 hold the main body of the book  
Chapter 17-21 are often referred to an appendix to the book  
They contain information concerning primarily the Danites and the judgment of the tribes against the tribe of Benjamin for a particular event.

## II. Brief Outline of Judges

### A. Setting at the beginning

At the end of Joshua, Joshua told the people to choose whom they would serve, God, or the idols of their fathers. (Joshua 24:15). In Joshua 24:24 we remember the people vowed to follow God. The beginning of Judges finds the people of Israel in the promised land shortly after Joshua's death. The people have not yet completely cleansed the land of its inhabitants.

### B. Chapter 1 and 2

In These chapters Judah emerges as a leading tribe.

The people are unable to completely drive out the inhabitants.

Chapter 2 is a very good summary chapter for the whole book.

It shows the cycle of SIN ,SERVITUDE, SUPPLICATION, SALVATION

That will be the theme of the book.

### C. Chapters 3-5

We find the people intermarrying with the people of the land and worshipping their gods.

We find the oppressions of the Mesopotamians, the Moabites, the Philistines, and King Jabin of Hazor, coupled with the judgeships of Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, and Deborah.

### D. Chapter 6-8

The oppression of the Midianites

Gideon raised up to deliver the people.

Gideon's army reduced from 32000 to 300

Gideon refused to allow the people to make him king

### E. Chapters 9-12

This section begins with the treachery of Abimelech, Gideon's son

He kills 69 of his brothers to secure his reign

Jotham, the only surviving brother rebukes him with the fable of the trees

This is one of the oldest known fables.

Following Abimelech's death the Lord raises up Tola, then Jair  
The ammonites oppress the people for their sin  
God is angered by their sins and refuses to deliver them  
The Lord sorrowed for their misery (chap. 10:16)  
Jephthah raises up to deliver the people.

He makes a foolish vow (Chap. 11:31)

*Then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the LORD'S, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering.*

In verse 34 we find his only child, his daughter, was the first to come out to meet him.

In verse 39 we see Jephthah kept his vow – probably by sending her to the temple to serve the Lord, much like Hannah did with Samuel. However there are some who believe Jephthah actually offered her up as a burnt offering.

After Jephthah, the judges Ibzan, then Elon, then Abdon

#### F. Chapters 13-16

Oppression of the Philistines

God raises up Sampson

Sampson the deliverer killed 1000 Philistines with the jawbone of a donkey

He carried away the gates of the city of Gaza

He burned the fields of the Philistines by catching 300 foxes, tying them in pairs, tying a torch to them and sending them running through the fields.

He was tricked into his capture by a woman named Delilah

Killed thousands of Philistines at the time of his death by pulling down the temple of Dagon on top of them.

#### G. Chapters 17-21

Chapter 17 and 18 deal primarily with the tribe of Dan.

Dan was unable to drive the Philistines out of their land so they decided to move.

In doing so, they steal idols from a man with whom they stayed, destroyed the town of Laish, and renamed it Dan.

They then set up the stolen idols to worship and appoint Jonathan, a grandson of Moses, as their priest.

Chapters 19-21 tell the account of the treatment and eventual murder of a

Levite's concubine in the city of Gibeah, a city of Benjamin. After the concubine's murder, the levite cut her in 12 pieces and distributed her parts to all 12 tribes to show his outrage for the behavior of the men of Gibeah. The other tribes wish to punish the men, but Benjamin comes out to war against the other tribes. Ultimately the tribe of Benjamin was reduced to 600 men. A fact which then sorrowed the rest of the tribes to the point they went and took virgins from a town who had refused to discuss the issue of fighting Benjamin

to give to the 600 men.

### III. The cycle of Judges

We have only noticed a brief introduction to the book of Judges and a very quick outline overview of the book. I 'd like to spend the rest of my time looking at the cycle that we see in judges

#### **SIN, SERVITUDE, SUPPLICATION, SALVATION,**

and noticing just a few of the many lessons we can learn from the book of judges.

#### A. SINS

We want to first take a look at a few of the sins that caused the people problems to see if we can learn from their mistakes. We will not have time to cover them all but will try to notice 3 of them:

1. Failed to wholly follow the commands of the Lord
2. Failed to teach their children
3. Failed to rely upon the word of God

#### 1. Failed to wholly follow the Commands of the Lord

- a. In Deut 7:2, way before the people entered the promised land God told them:

**“And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them:”**

We notice at the very outset of the book of Judges the tribe of Judah and Simeon fails to FULLY comply with the Lord's instructions by not driving out all the people of the land. Chapter 1:19

**And the LORD was with Judah; and he drave out the inhabitants of the mountain; but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron.**

Why could they not drive out the people of the valley?

Was God not able to defeat chariots of iron?

Certainly the problem was not with God; it was with the faith of the people.

They did not FULLY trust God – they began to rely on self. Sadly, if we read the remainder of chapter 1 we see that the failure to utterly destroy the inhabitants was not exclusive to Judah and Simeon. All of the tribes failed in complying with God's instruction.

Why would the Lord order the utter destruction of the inhabitants of the land?

God told them why! He had warned them back in Deut.30: 17 of the dangers of being drawn away to other gods. God wanted his people pure,

set completely apart, sanctified from the idolatry of the day. He knew that leaving a part of the people in the land would cause problem. And notice – it did. Judges 3:5-7

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In I Cor. 15:33 we find

**“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.”**

- In James 4 we are warned of a friendship with the world.

**“Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”**

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I Cor. 11:32 says: **“But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.”**

We see this pattern of corruption by the world in Judges.



- b. Since the Israelites did not obey and drive out the Canaanites, God left some of the people of the land to prove whether or not they would keep his commandments and to teach them war. Look at Judges 3:1-4:

**“¶Now these are the nations which the LORD left, to prove Israel by them, even as many of Israel as had not known all the wars of Canaan;**

**2 Only that the generations of the children of Israel might know, to teach them war, at the least such as before knew nothing thereof;**

**3 Namely, five lords of the Philistines, and all the Canaanites, and the Sidonians, and the Hivites that dwelt in mount Lebanon, from mount Baalhermon unto the entering in of Hamath.**

**4 And they were to prove Israel by them, to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of the LORD, which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses.”**

If they had obeyed, they would have had no reason to know war – but they didn’t so they were going to face opposition from then on.

- The Lord allowed the people of the land to test his people, to see if they would remain faithful – so often they failed.

Today you and I will face tests from time to time.

**James 1:2-3 “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;**

**3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.”**

**James 1:12 Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.”**

**1 Peter 1:7 “That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:”**

What is our attitude when we are tested? Do we pass the tests we encounter?

The second sin we want to notice

2. Failure to teach their children

In Judges chapter 2 verse 10:

**“And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: (speaking of the generation of Joshua and of the elders that outlived Joshua that had seen the great works of the Lord (verse 7) and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.”**

The Israelites had been commanded and urged to teach their children; just as they had been reminded of the importance of following God's will.

Notice Deut 4:10:

**“Specially the day that thou stoodest before the LORD thy God in Horeb, when the LORD said unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children.”**

**Deuteronomy 6:6-7 “And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:**

**And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.”**

**Deuteronomy 11:18-19 “¶Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes.**

**19 And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.”**

That's pretty often isn't it? There is a considerable amount of diligence that would be necessary to keep this command.

**In Joshua 4:5-7 Just as Joshua and the people were preparing to cross the river Jordan to enter the promised land, God told them to take up stones and build a memorial to teach their children.**

**Joshua 4:5 And Joshua said unto them, Pass over before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of Jordan, and take ye up every man of you a stone upon his shoulder, according unto the number of the tribes of the children of Israel:**

**6 That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones?**

**7 Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever.**

In verse 10 of chapter 2 we read that the next generation knew not God nor the works which he had done for Israel. The fact that they didn't know the works God had done for them previously had to have been because their parents did not teach them.

We today must realize that we are always only 1 generation away from unfaithfulness if we fail to teach our children. It would not take long – Judges 2:17 says they “TURNED **QUICKLY** OUT OF THE WAY WHICH THEIR FATHERS WALKED IN”

We must teach our children. In Ephesians 6:4 we read:

**“And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”**

In I Timothy 3:12 we find:

**“Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.”**

The command here is concerning the qualifications of a deacon, but it is important for every Christian household to diligently teach their children.

In judges 10 we saw they “knew not God”, but in verse 11 and 13 we see they knew Baal and Ashtaroth. We need to know, whether or not we are teaching our children, Satan is not missing any opportunities to do so; and how many “weapons” are at his disposal today?

The 3<sup>rd</sup> sin we want to look at

3. Failed to rely upon the Word of God as their Guide

This is probably the root of the rest of their problems.

In Judges 17:6 we read:

**“ In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.”**

This verse is repeated in chapter 21:25.

God’s people were warned over and over to fear God and keep his commandments, but **they did that which was right in their own eyes.**

How many people today do what is right in their own eyes?

How many people today say “I feel” that God will do this or that?

Many people today base their salvation on what THEY feel rather than what God has said.

Jeremiah 10:23 says: **“O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.”**

**Proverbs 21:2 ¶“Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the LORD pondereth the hearts.”**

**Proverbs 14:12 ¶“There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”**

In Luke 6 Jesus tell a parable about a wise man and a foolish man. Jesus warns of the danger of building upon a foundation other than the word of God.

**What a man feels will not stand the test of judgment. John 12:48 tells us**

**“He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.”**

God’s people did what was right in their own eyes and failed.

#### B. Servitude

Sin always has consequences – Something the people should have known.

1. When the people murmured when they had the first opportunity to possess the land, God punished them.
2. When Moses struck the rock instead of speaking to it, God punished him.

In the book of Judges, when the people rebel and sin against God, there would be no exception, God punished them. He punished them with periods of servitude to the pagan nations they had become like. 7 times the people were oppressed because of sin.

Today, there are still consequences for sin

Some sins have consequences here on this earth and some may not.

One thing is sure – ALL sin has spiritual consequences.

Sin will separate us from God.

**Isaiah 59:2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.**

Sin will cause spiritual death

**Romans 6:16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves**

**servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?**

**Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

**James 1:15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.**

There were consequences for sin in the days of the judges when “every man did that which was right in his own eyes” and there are certainly consequences today for sin.

### C. Supplication

When the Israelites fell into a life of sin, and then a punishment of servitude, they would eventually make supplication to the Lord for deliverance.

We see in Chap 3:9 Chap 3:15 Chap 4:3 Chap. 6:6 Chap 10:10 the phrase “cried unto the Lord”

Isn't it interesting- as long as things were going their way, they didn't know God; but as soon as the going got tough, they cried unto the Lord.

Is this anything we have seen before.

In this country, after the events of September 11, 2001, there were places across this country reporting Bible sales up as much as 40%!

We notice Chapter 10 verse 10:

**¶’And the children of Israel cried unto the LORD, saying, We have sinned against thee, both because we have forsaken our God, and also served Baalim.”**

Now notice verse 15 and 16:

**“15 And the children of Israel said unto the LORD, We have sinned: do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; deliver us only, we pray thee, this day.**

**16 And they put away the strange gods from among them, and served the LORD: and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel.”**

Although the book of Judges is often seen as a book of failures isn't verse 16 a beautiful verse of scripture

“they put away the strange gods and served the Lord and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel”

Here we see the repentant heart of the sinner, and the love that God felt for them.

What a joy it must have been to the Father to see his children want to come home

It sort of reminds us of the joy of the father in the account of the prodigal son in the New Testament; but imagine how hurt the Father must feel when he sees his children repeat the same mistakes over and over again as they did in Judges.

#### D. Salvation

The last phase of the cycle we see in Judges is Salvation

In Judges 2:18 we see the grace and mercy of God

**“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 it repented the LORD because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them.”**

When the people made supplication to the Lord with a penitent heart, the Lord would provide them with a way of salvation from their enemies. Each time he would raise up a judge to deliver them.

It is interesting to note that the freedom from their enemies that the people cried for is the same freedom God had promised them all along if they would have just been faithful.

God had already promised them salvation from these enemies, if they would obey his statutes and commands.

Today, we have the promise of salvation from eternal punishment, if we are faithful to do his will.

**Matthew 7:21 ¶Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.**

**John 5:28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, 29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.**

**Revelation 22:14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.**

God promised to give the people the promised land, and he did, but he required the people to drive the inhabitants from the land through faith in Him.

He could have driven the people out before the Israelites entered the land. He could have used hornets (as he had done in the past) or wind or water, or by just simply saying the word; but he didn't

He wanted the people to have faith in Him and he wanted to see their faith in action.

God wanting to see faith in action is not a new thing

1. Noah, had to faithfully build an ark- had he not done so, he and his family would have been lost.
  2. Abraham had to offer up Isaac
  3. The people had to faithfully walk around the walls of Jericho
  4. Gideon faithfully fought with 300 men
- and on and on the list could go.

Today, if we find ourselves in a life of **sin**, **servicing** the desires of Satan, If we will make **supplication** unto the Lord with a repentant heart, willing to faithful and wholly obey His word, God promises us **salvation** from sin and the punishment of eternal death.

But He still requires faith in action.

**1 John 2:3 ¶ And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.**

**1 John 2:5 But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.**

1 John 3:24 And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

Perhaps the most beautiful passage in the Bible:

**John 14:2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.**

**3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.**

#### IV. Conclusion

1. We have noticed a bit of background information, a brief outline, and a few of the many great lessons in the book of Judges.

We have noticed the cycle of the book of Judges

## **Sin > Servitude > Supplication > Salvation**

Today, I ask you, Where are you in this cycle?

If you were to face judgment today have you been living the way you need to be to obtain salvation through the grace of God?

If not, I urge you to change that today, while you have opportunity.