

Old Testament History I

International Alpha Bible Course
by Ralph Vincent Reynolds



OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY

PART I

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INTERNATIONAL ALPHA BIBLE COURSE

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Writer

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Sponsor's Page:

The Pentecostals of Dothan, Alabama

Dedicated to:

The Michael Patterson family Missionaries to Romania



FRONT ROW: Nathan Harrelson, Reverend Joe Patterson, Joann Patterson, Clay Forrest
SECOND ROW: Lauren Harrelson, Teresa Harrelson, Gigi Forrest, Angela Forrest, Jill Patterson
THIRD ROW: Reverend Philip Harrelson, Justin Harrelson, Daniel Patterson, Kay Patterson Cureton, Reverend Michael Patterson

The Joe Patterson family moved to Dothan, Alabama, in 1967 to start a home missions church as there was no UPC church in Dothan. The beginning was small. Slowly over the years, however, the church has grown to an average attendance of approximately 150 in 2010. The Dothan church is a giving church, being first in the Alabama District in giving to Foreign Missions, Sheaves for Christ, and Christmas for Christ for many

years. The church also gives to other UPCI sponsored projects. There have been many ministers and missionaries to come from this church. In 2006 Reverend Joe Patterson became the senior pastor ("the bishop") and Reverend Philip Harrelson is pastor. The church is negotiating to purchase a building in order to accommodate the rapidly expanding congregation in 2010.

Old Testament History I

Lesson One



BEFORE THE CONQUEST

A. AT KADESH-BARNEA

When the children of Israel first arrived at Kadesh-Barnea, God instructed Moses to send twelve men, one from each tribe, to spy out the Promised Land. These twelve spies spent forty days going as far north as Rehob. When they returned, all agreed that the land was fertile, but only Caleb and Joshua asserted that Israel could take Canaan with God's help. The other ten spies claimed that it would be impossible to possess the land.

When the people listened to and believed the report of the ten spies, God threatened to annihilate Israel. Moses interceded, however, and God changed the nature of the punishment. God stated that the entire nation would remain in the wilderness for a total of forty years, one year for each day that the spies spent in Canaan, and that no Israelite, twenty years or older, with the exception of Caleb and Joshua, would enter the Promised Land. (See Numbers 14:20-35.)

Israel then began wandering in the desert for thirty-seven and a half years. During these years they moved about in a confined area, going as far south as the northern tip of the Gulf of Aqaba, about eighty-five miles in distance. Some sixteen stopping places are listed within this area. It is likely that much of the time was spent at Kadesh-Barnea. They were definitely at Kadesh-Barnea at the beginning of the fortieth year, for it was here where Miriam died. (See Numbers 20:1.)

During this period of wandering, 1,200,000 men and women had to die (600,000 thousand of both men and women). This meant they averaged eighty-five funerals per day. Thus they were constantly reminded of the judgment of God upon them because of unbelief.

B. THE DEATHS OF MIRIAM AND AARON

In passing judgment upon Israel, God made exception for only Caleb and Joshua. This meant that even the members of the head family had to die before Canaan could be possessed. Miriam, Aaron, and Moses, however, were permitted to live until the final year of wandering in the wilderness. Miriam died in the first month of the fortieth year while at Kadesh-Barnea (Numbers 20:1), and Aaron died five months later at Mount Hor at the age of 123 years. (See Numbers 33:38.) God instructed Moses to accompany Aaron and Eleazar, Aaron's son and successor, to the top of the mountain. He took Aaron's clothes and placed them upon Eleazar, and they came down the mountain alone. Aaron died on the top of the mountain. The people mourned for Aaron for thirty days.

C. THE SIN OF STRIKING THE ROCK THE SECOND TIME

Scripture Reference: Numbers 20:2-13

At Kadesh the people lacked water once more. When they complained to Moses, he took the matter to God. Moses was instructed to bring water from the rock as he had done at Rephidim. (See Exodus 17:1-16.) However, this time he was instructed to speak to the rock; nothing was said about striking it.

Apparently the patience of Moses was being exhausted, for he did a very foolish thing. Instead of speaking to the rock, he struck the rock twice and cried out to the people, "Shall we bring you forth water out of this rock?" In this act he greatly displeased the Lord, and God pronounced, in judgment, that he would not be permitted to enter the Promised Land.

We need to understand the seriousness of the sin committed by Moses. In this act he was guilty of the following:

1. He disobeyed God.
2. He had made it appear as if he had produced water through his own human efforts.
3. He broke the type. Christ as the Rock (see I Corinthians 10:4) was smitten only once at Calvary. Now one needs only to speak to Him to receive the water of life.

We should remember that it is possible to commit a similar sin today (Hebrews 6:4-6).

D. THE REQUEST TO PASS THROUGH EDOM DENIED

Scripture Reference: Numbers 20:14-22

At Kadesh, Moses sent messengers to the king of Edom, asking permission to travel through his land. His plan was to go around the southern end of the Dead Sea and march north to the east side of the Jordan River. Moses promised to travel on the King's Highway, a well-known, ancient road. This was an easier and shorter route, but the king of Edom refused. Because of his refusal, Israel had to travel south and then north. It is estimated that the children of Israel traveled some 180 extra miles.

Moses did not interfere with the Edomites and traveled around their territory. He also skirted the land of Moab. Moses then requested permission to travel across the kingdom of Sihon. When the king of Sihon refused, Moses defeated him and occupied this territory to the Jabbok River. Moses then took the offensive and defeated Og, king of Bashan, who ruled as far north as Mt. Hermon, and slew him.

These defeats gave Israel control of most of the land east of the Jordan River, from Moab in the south to Mt. Hermon in the north, a distance of 130 miles.

E. BALAAM

Scripture Reference: Numbers 22-27

With these victories, Moses assembled Israel near the Jordan River across from Jericho. Balak, king of Moab, became concerned and sent messengers to Balaam, a prophet who lived in the far north. He requested Balaam to come south and curse Israel.

Balaam first refused to go but was finally persuaded. However, instead of cursing God's people, Balaam blessed Israel. As Balaam could not curse Israel, he advised Balak how the nation could be defiled and weakened. Through his advice the Israelites were ensnared in the cult worship of Baal-peor. As a result God punished Israel by sending a plague that took 24,000 lives. The plague was stopped only when Phinehas, son of the high priest Eleazar, slew an Israelite man and a Midianite woman in a tent. (See Numbers 25:8.) Moses then sent an army of 12,000 men who defeated the Midianites, and Balaam himself was killed.

The following New Testament verses can be applied to Balaam:

1. Error of Balaam (see Jude 11): This speaks of the sin of using the gift of God for material gain, of selling God's gift, and of becoming a hireling.
2. Doctrine of Balaam (see Revelation 2:14): This speaks of the sin of enticing God's children to commit fornication.

F. A REQUEST GRANTED

Scripture Reference: Numbers 32

With the land east of Jordan conquered and found to be good pasture land, the tribes of Reuben and Gad (and later half of Manasseh) asked permission to settle there. At first Moses did not agree. When these tribes assured him that their men would fight for the conquest of Canaan, he consented. He made it clear that all men of military age would have to cross over and help in occupying the Promised Land. When the agreement was reached, they began preparing the land for their families while the men were away fighting.

G. PREPARING FOR THE CONQUEST

In preparation for the conquest, Moses had a second census taken. (See Numbers 26.) The first census had been taken thirty-nine years before at Mt. Sinai. During these thirty-nine years some 1,200,000 deaths had occurred and there was a

need to know Israel's strength as she faced the challenge of Canaan. The census revealed there were 601,730 men twenty years and older.

In these thirty-nine years, seven tribes had grown in number while five tribes were now smaller. The tribe that increased the most was Manasseh, which had grown from 32,200 to 52,700; the tribe that decreased the most was Simeon, which had gone from 59,300 to 22,200.

No person could have been more than fifty-eight or fifty-nine years of age except Caleb (seventy-nine years old), Joshua (possibly ninety years old), and Moses (120 years old).

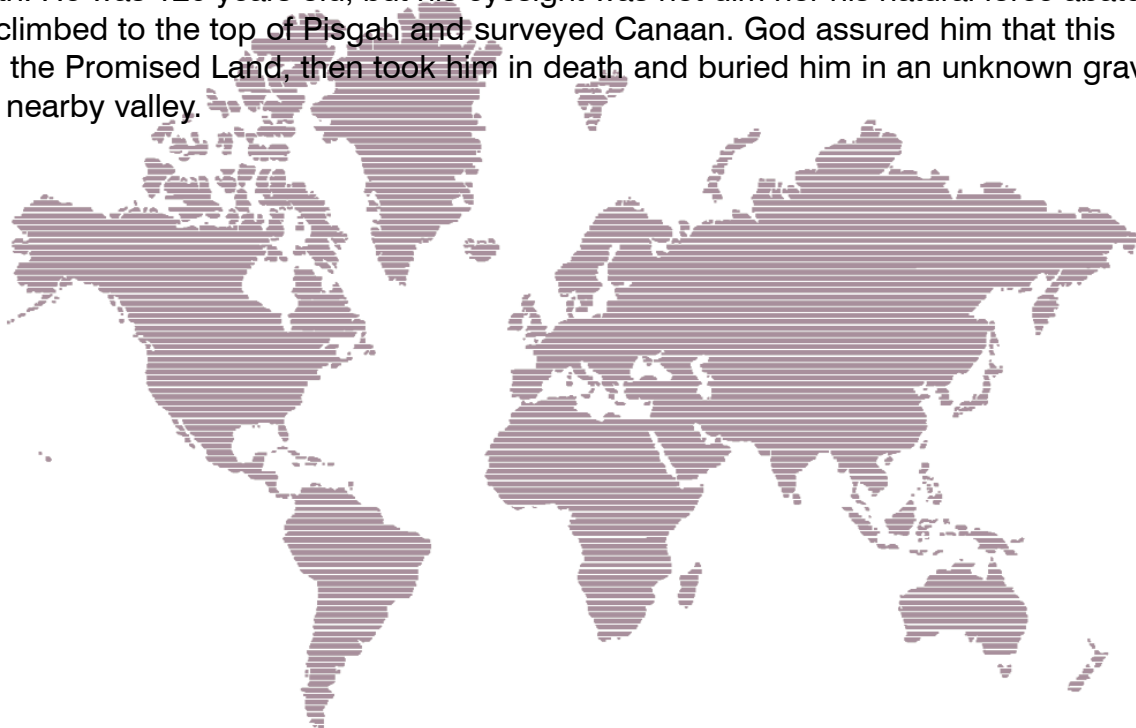
H. THE DEATH OF MOSES

Scripture Reference: Deuteronomy 34

As it was nearing the time for Moses to die, a new leader had to be chosen. God's choice was Joshua. (See Numbers 27:15-23.) As God had instructed Moses, Joshua was placed before Eleazar and installed as the new leader.

On the first day of the eleventh month of the fortieth year, Moses orally delivered the great messages of Deuteronomy. This was only two months and ten days before Israel crossed the Jordan River.

With his work of leadership and writing completed, Moses was now ready for death. He was 120 years old, but his eyesight was not dim nor his natural force abated. He climbed to the top of Pisgah and surveyed Canaan. God assured him that this was the Promised Land, then took him in death and buried him in an unknown grave in a nearby valley.



Old Testament History I

Lesson Two



JOSHUA

A. THE SUCCESSOR TO MOSES

When Moses came to the end of his life, someone had to be selected to take his place. This was a very important decision, for the successor would be the one to lead Israel across Jordan to possess Canaan. God's choice was Joshua.

1. His Name

The meaning of the name *Joshua* is "Jehovah is Salvation." It may be written as Hoshea, Oshea, Jehoshua, Jeshua, and in the New Testament, Jesus.

2. His Family

He was the son of Nun, of the tribe of Ephraim. (See Numbers 13:8, 16.)

3. His Experience

- a. He led Israel in the battle against the Amalekites. (See Exodus 17:8-14.)
- b. He had accompanied Moses part way up Mt. Sinai when Moses received the Mosaic law. (See Exodus 24:13.)
- c. He had assisted Moses and ministered to him following Israel's repentance regarding the sin of the golden calf. (See Exodus 33:11.)
- d. He went as one of the twelve spies, representing the tribe of Ephraim. He brought back a good report and, along with Caleb, urged Israel to occupy the land. (See Numbers 13:8; 14:6-9.)
- e. He, along with Caleb, was one of the older men who would be permitted to enter Canaan. He was probably about ninety years of age.

4. His Character

Throughout his life, Joshua always acquitted himself well, demonstrating responsibility and leadership. He assumed the tremendous task of leading the Israelites into Canaan without making a single excuse. He showed his humility in his service to Moses.

Throughout his life no sins are recorded against him. The record of his life is faultless. In the conquest of Canaan, Joshua met with only one reverse, the defeat at

AI, showing the necessity of absolute obedience to God's commands. Some of the greatest characteristics possessed by Joshua were faith, obedience, and courage.

B. JOSHUA—A TYPE OF CHRIST

Apart from bearing the same name as Jesus and leaving a sinless record, Joshua was a type of Jesus in the following ways:

1. He was captain of the armies of the Lord.
2. He followed after Moses (the Law).
3. He led his people through to victory.
4. He was their advocate.
5. He allotted the portions due the people.

C. GOD'S MESSAGE TO JOSHUA

Scripture Reference: Joshua 1:1-9

After the death of Moses, the Lord appeared to Joshua with a message of encouragement. This is one of the outstanding selections in the book of Joshua. This message may be divided into five main points:

1. Statement Concerning the Death of Moses

Since no man was with Moses when he died, it was necessary for Joshua to be certain that Moses had died. God did not leave Joshua in doubt.

2. The Covenant of Abraham Confirmed Once Again

God clearly defined the borders of the Promised Land as had previously been promised to the patriarchs and Moses. The borders were to be the wilderness in the south, the Euphrates River in the north, and the Mediterranean Sea on the west.

3. God's Message of Encouragement

God made several promises to Joshua to encourage him. These promises were:

- a. God would give him every place that the sole of his feet should walk upon (verse 3).
- b. No man would be able to stand before him all his life (verse 5).
- c. God would be with him even as He was with Moses (verse 5).
- d. God would not fail him nor forsake him (verse 5).
- e. God would be with him wherever he went (verse 9).

4. God's Exhortation

Three times God exhorted Joshua to be strong and of good courage. He also exhorted him not to turn from the law of Moses, neither to the right hand nor to the left.

5. God Placed Emphasis upon the Importance of the Law

Joshua was exhorted to meditate upon the Law day and night and not to let it depart out of his mouth. He was told that he must observe it just as it was written. The promise of prosperity and success would be conditional upon this factor.

It is evident that Joshua remembered God's message to him throughout the years of conquest and undoubtedly his success was greatly dependent upon this fact.

D. RAHAB AND THE SPIES

Scripture Reference: Joshua 2:1-24

Joshua recognized that the city of Jericho was a strong city and was to be the first objective. He desired more knowledge of the city and sent out two spies. These spies were protected by a harlot, Rahab, whose house was located on the city wall. When the men were detected, she hid them beneath drying stalks of flax on the roof. She was convinced that Jericho would be taken by the Israelites and requested safety for herself and family in return for saving the lives of the spies. With her help, the men escaped back to Joshua. They did not learn much about the city, but they did learn that the people of Jericho greatly feared Israel. This was a good report.

Rahab tied a line of scarlet thread in her window, which, like the blood applied to the doors of the Israelites at the time of the Passover, became the means of her salvation. This scarlet line was a type of the crimson line of blood that runs throughout the Bible. As a result Rahab and her family were saved and she came to be included in the ancestral line of David and of Christ. (See Matthew 1:5.)

E. CROSSING THE JORDAN

Scripture Reference: Joshua 3, 4

The next morning after the return of the spies, Joshua ordered the people to move to the bank of the Jordan River. Here they camped for three days while they received final instructions. The river was at flood stage, making it most difficult to cross.

When all was ready, the ark, carried by the Levites, went ahead. Two thousand cubits (3,000 feet) separated the people from the ark, permitting a large number of people to see it going ahead. As soon as the feet of the priests touched the water of

Jordan, a great miracle occurred. Every drop of water at a given point quit flowing and banked up in a great heap while the water below flowed on toward the Dead Sea. God's invisible dam was stronger than any built by man.

The priests halted midway in the river. They stood holding the ark of the Lord until all the people had passed over. The Lord's name was in His ark. (See I Chronicles 13:6.) Here the new generation born in the wilderness was baptized. Like the older generation baptized by the crossing of the Red Sea, this younger generation had to go through the water (in the name of the Lord).

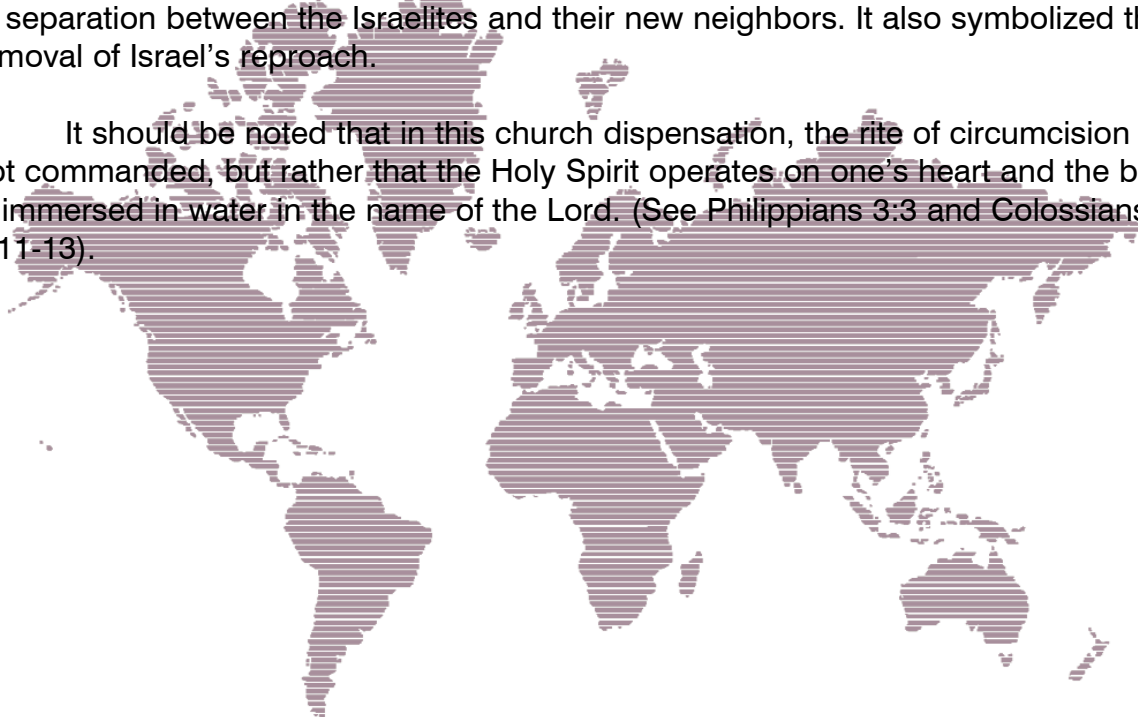
Two memorials of this crossing were created; one was in the Jordan and the other across at Gilgal where the people encamped. (See Joshua 4:1-24.) Twelve men, one from each tribe, took one stone each from the Jordan, near where the priests stood, and carried them to the place of encampment. Joshua then set up twelve stones in the middle of the river at the spot from which the other stones had been taken.

The priests bearing the ark then moved across the river to the bank, and the river once again flowed downstream. When all the people had arrived at Gilgal, Joshua made the second pillar from the stones carried from the river.

F. CIRCUMCISION

The generation that had been born in the wilderness had not been circumcised, but at Gilgal, after Jordan had been crossed, Joshua commanded that they all should be. This rite had been given to Abraham and now was commanded as a sign of separation between the Israelites and their new neighbors. It also symbolized the removal of Israel's reproach.

It should be noted that in this church dispensation, the rite of circumcision is not commanded, but rather that the Holy Spirit operates on one's heart and the body is immersed in water in the name of the Lord. (See Philippians 3:3 and Colossians 2:11-13).



Self Help Test: Old Testament History I

Joshua

1. Write a character sketch of Joshua.
2. How is Joshua a type of Jesus?
3. Describe fully the two memorials erected to remember the crossing of the Jordan.
4. What was the significance of the rite of circumcision?
5. What has taken the place of circumcision in the New Testament church?

Old Testament History I

Lesson Three



THE CONQUESTS OF JOSHUA

A. THE LAND OF CANAAN

The land of Canaan was an area of city states. There was no central government, but many cities, each with its own king. To conquer the land meant to defeat each city in turn. Egypt was their nominal overlord, but the then-present pharaoh had very little interest in his domain and left the individual cities of Canaan to themselves as prizes of conquest for Israel.

This does not mean that Israel's task was to be easy. Thirty-nine years before, the spies had given a true report in speaking of aggressive Canaanites and their strongly fortified cities. The Canaanites' frequent fights among themselves and with outside foes kept their warriors well equipped and in fighting trim. The cities were built to withstand siege for months at a time. Sometimes these cities banded together against a common enemy—as they later did against Joshua in both a southern and northern confederacy. Besides this, the land was mountainous. It was rugged country, making it difficult to travel and to fight wars.

Canaan was advanced in material culture. Cities were well laid out. Workers were skilled, and their pottery was among the finest in the world. Extensive trade was conducted with foreign countries. In technical knowledge, the Canaanites were much more advanced than the Israelites who had spent the past forty years in the desert. This led to a grave danger for Israel. The advanced knowledge of the Canaanites influenced the Israelites and eventually led them to accept the worship of the Canaanite Baal.

Apparently the strategy of Moses was revealed to him by God. It was to attack the land at its midpoint, coming in from the east, and to divide it into southern and northern sections. Then each of these areas was to be conquered separately. He very likely had shared this plan with Joshua who now prepared to carry it out.

B. JERICHO

The ancient city of Jericho lay directly before the children of Israel when they crossed over Jordan. It was located some five miles west of the Jordan and seven miles north of the Dead Sea. It was about average size for the cities of that day, covering an area of eight acres. The great wall that encircled the city was of such strength and size that houses were built on it. These walls were forty to fifty feet high.

One day while Joshua was inspecting the city, the Lord appeared as a man with a sword drawn in his hand. He told Joshua that He was the captain of the host

of the Lord. The Lord gave Joshua definite instructions how he was to conquer Jericho. The plans were to have men of war, led by seven priests carrying the ark, walk around the city once each day for six days, and seven times on the seventh day. At the close of the thirteenth time, the priests would blow trumpets and the people would shout with a loud voice. When they did this, the walls of the city would collapse, and the army would enter.

The plan was carried out as given to Joshua by the Lord. Thirteen times the city was encircled, and the walls fell when the trumpets were blown and the people shouted. The army took the city with ease. All the people of the city were killed, with the exception of Rahab and her family, and the city was leveled by fire. No Israelite was permitted to enrich himself by spoil, for God had placed a ban on the city, declaring that it was a kind of firstfruits to Himself. Valuable metals, gold, silver, and bronze were placed in God's treasury. Joshua further pronounced a curse on any who would rebuild the city.

C. ACHAN

The victory of the nation depended on personal obedience. God showed His displeasure because of disobedience in the defeat of Israel's army at Ai.

The city of Ai was the next objective before Israel. A small party was sent out by Joshua to inspect the city. They were not impressed by Ai's strength and advised that merely two or three thousand men would be sufficient to take the city. Joshua sent 3,000, but they were defeated by the men of Ai, who killed thirty-six men as Israel's army fled.

The reason for the defeat was the existence of sin in Israel's camp. Achan, of the tribe of Judah, had sinned in disregarding God's ban on the items from Jericho and took for himself a Babylonian garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a fifty-shekel bar of gold. God revealed to Joshua that such a sin had been committed and told him to make inquiry as to the identity of the guilty party. The fault was found to be with Achan, who had hidden these goods in his tent. These were recovered from their hiding place. Achan, his family, and all his possessions were stoned and burned.

Joshua then prepared to attack Ai the second time. He sent an ambush to hide in the valley between Ai and Bethel. The next day Joshua led another force in a frontal attack. When the men of Ai came out from the city, Joshua's force again retreated as if defeated. The ambush then arose and attacked the army of Ai from behind. Joshua's force then turned and the enemy was trapped. The result was that all 12,000 of the male inhabitants of Ai were killed, the king was hanged, and the city was reduced to rubble. This time God permitted the Israelites to take of the spoil. God had taught the Israelites three lessons: the seriousness of sin, God's dealings with personal sin, and the error of overconfidence.

D. THE GIBEONITES

Everyone can be deceived if they fail to ask counsel of the Lord. One should not rest upon past experiences but ask God's guidance in every issue. By not doing this, Joshua was tricked into making a league with the Gibeonites.

The Gibeonites heard of Israel's early successes and saw wisdom in making peace with Israel. They contrived a trick. Wearing worn-out clothing and bearing moldy bread to make themselves appear to have traveled from a distant country, they asked that Israel make a treaty of peace with them. It was granted. This was contrary to God's instruction, however, and the Israelites were held responsible because they had not asked counsel of the Lord (Joshua 9:14). When Joshua learned they had been tricked, he and the elders kept the treaty, but forced the Gibeonites to serve as hewers of wood and drawers of water for the entire congregation. The one good thing that came of this was the fact that Israel gained control in some cities in the central part of the land without having to fight.

E. THE SOUTHERN CAMPAIGN

When news of the capitulation of Gibeon reached the other cities in the south, an alliance was made to resist Israel by first attacking Gibeon. Five kings formed the alliance and marched against Gibeon. They were Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon.

The Gibeonites appealed to Joshua for help, and he brought his troops, by forced march, the twenty-four mile distance to Gibeon in one night. He took the attackers by surprise, routed them, and pursued after them. The armies of the southern kings fled down the hills and God rained hailstones upon them. More died from these stones than by the swords of the Israelites. The five kings were captured and beheaded.

With this battle won, Joshua continued south to subdue all the lower part of the land. His army even reached Kadesh-Barnea. Finally, Joshua returned to Gibeon where the campaign had started. This extensive campaign must have occupied several months. The cities had fallen with comparative ease. However, one city was not conquered at this time and that was the city of Jerusalem. It was not conquered until David seized it much later, then making it the capital.

F. JOSHUA'S LONG DAY

Scripture Reference: Joshua 10:12-14

As Joshua stood on a hill watching the enemy flee before his troops, he feared that the Canaanites might escape. He therefore commanded the sun and the moon to stand still. They obeyed until the conquest was complete. The verb translated

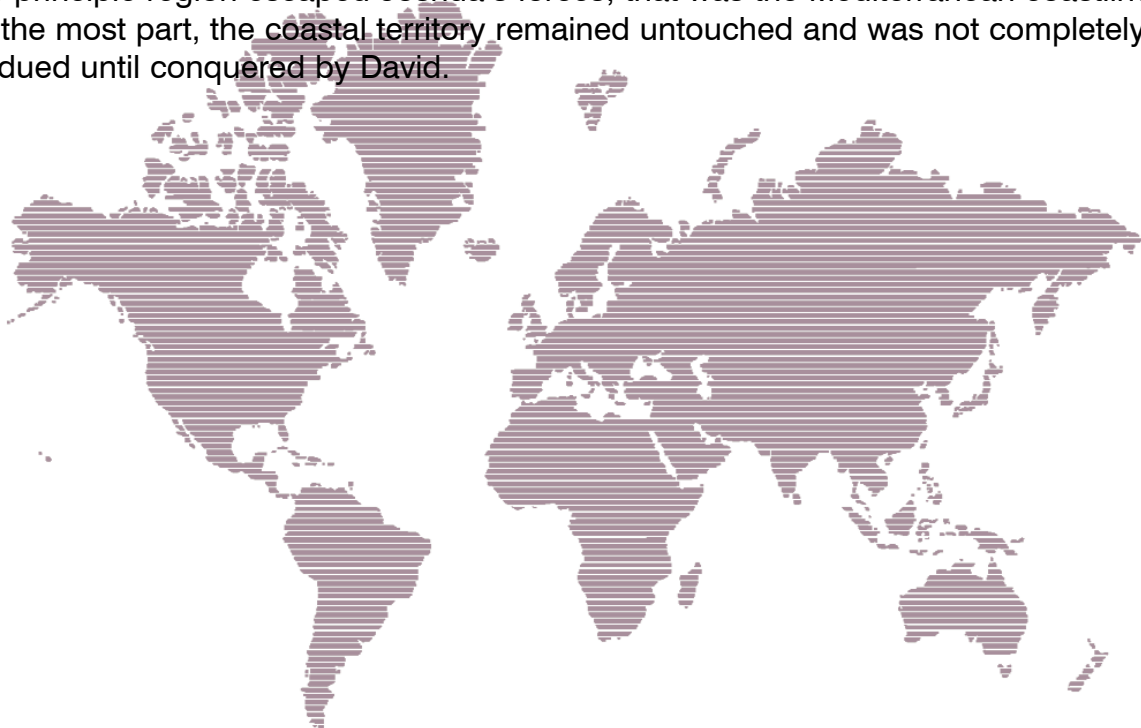
“stand still” basically means “be silent.” In some way God controlled the light and permitted Joshua to have a long day.

We should note that it states “about a whole day.” It is thought that the miracle of the shadow on the sundial going back ten degrees for Hezekiah, as recorded in II Kings 20, equaled forty minutes and that Joshua’s long day was twenty-three hours and twenty minutes. If so, the two miracles would total twenty-four hours or a whole day. Science confirms the fact that there is a day that cannot be accounted for except by the miracles that took place for Joshua and Hezekiah.

G. DEFEAT OF THE NORTHERN CONFEDERACY

The northern or Galilean district remained to be subdued. News of Joshua’s remarkable conquest of the south traveled north and reached the ears of Jabin, powerful king of Hazor. Jabin, fearing an attack on his region, formed a confederacy. He planned to do better than the southern alliance by gathering a greater force. This confederacy grouped its forces in the vicinity of the waters of Merom, and the host numbered like the sand that is on the seashore. (See Joshua 11:4.) Joshua moved north, attacked, and surprised them. The huge enemy army was routed and chased far to the west. Joshua followed up this triumph by smiting them with the edge of the sword. He then returned to the city of Hazor and burned it, something he did not do to the other cities.

Defeat of the northern confederacy completed the conquest of Canaan, though many areas were bypassed and resistance continued until the time of David. One principle region escaped Joshua’s forces; that was the Mediterranean coastline. For the most part, the coastal territory remained untouched and was not completely subdued until conquered by David.



Self Help Test: Old Testament History I

The Conquests of Joshua

Fill in the blanks with the words below:

Hezekiah	Gibeonites	Jericho	Ai
Jordan	Hazor	Egypt	Canaan
Babylonian	Rahab	Eglon	Kadesh-Barnea
Jabin	Merom	thirteen	Twenty

1. _____ covered an area of about eight acres.
2. Israel was defeated at _____ because of sin.
3. Israel was deceived by the _____.
4. The shadow on the sundial went back forty minutes for _____.
5. The city of _____ was burned by Joshua.
6. The land of _____ was an area of city states.
7. _____ was nominal overlord of Canaan.
8. Jericho was located five miles from _____.
9. Everyone in Jericho was killed except _____ and her family.
10. The King of _____ was one who marched against Gibeon.
11. The army of Joshua reached as far as _____.
12. Achan took a _____ garment.
13. The northern armies gathered near the waters of _____.
14. The Israelites march around Jericho _____ times.
15. Joshua's long day was twenty-three hours and _____ minutes.
16. _____ formed the northern confederacy against Joshua.

Old Testament History I

Lesson Four



THE DIVISIONS OF CANAAN

A. MAPS OF THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN AND DIVISIONS OF THE LAND

Scripture Reference: Joshua 13





B. THE DIVISION OF THE LAND

Under Joshua's leadership, thirty-one kings had been conquered. Now Joshua was commanded to divide the land among the tribes. (See Joshua 13:1-6.) Joshua, with the help of Eleazar, the high priest, now had the task of dividing the land. In dividing Canaan, Joshua both recognized the victories given by God and encouraged the tribes to enter and occupy the land assigned to them. Joshua divided the land as follows:

1. Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh:

These tribes already had their territory assigned to them on the east side of the Jordan during the lifetime of Moses.

2. Judah:

The territory assigned to Judah was very large. It consisted of southern Canaan, stretching from the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean and included Kadesh-Barnea.

3. Ephraim and Manasseh:

The important central part of Canaan was given to the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. This was still inhabited by a number of Canaanite groups that had to be conquered. Joshua was of the tribe of Ephraim. Gideon came from the tribe of Manasseh. For many years Ephraim was the principle tribe.

4. Benjamin and Dan:

These tribes were assigned territory between the lands of Judah and the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. At the border between Judah and Benjamin was the city of the Jebusites. This city, Jerusalem, later became the spiritual and political center of Israel. The tribe of Dan had difficulty in establishing itself in the coastal area, and a group of them migrated to the extreme northern sector of Canaan.

5. Asher, Zebulun, Issachar, and Naphtali:

These tribes received inheritance in the north. This area later became Galilee. It was here where Jesus spent the greater part of His earthly life.

6. Simeon:

Simeon was given no land area as such, but the tribe was assigned seventeen cities within the large territory of Judah. One reason for this was that the part of the children of Judah was much too much for them. (See Joshua 19:1-9.) Another reason was that Simeon was one of the smallest of the tribes, numbering only 22,200 men at the time of the second census.

7. Levi: The tribe of Levi was not given a tribal inheritance since they were devoted to the offices connected with the priesthood. They were supported by the tithes and offerings of the whole people. They were given forty-eight cities for their residence, six of which were cities of refuge. The Levites lived throughout the land of Canaan.

C. CALEB'S PORTION

Scripture Reference: Joshua 14:6-15

Caleb was not an Israelite. He was a descendant of Kenaz, a grandson of Esau. Caleb represented the tribe of Judah when the spies went into Canaan, but he was not actually of that tribe. At Kadesh-Barnea, Moses had promised him Hebron, and now Caleb reminded Joshua of this promise. Caleb was eighty-five years old, but he drove out the Anakim from the land and possessed the mountain that had been promised him.

Caleb was a great man. He was courageous, faithful, energetic, generous, and humble. Caleb is remembered by his great faith and the fact that at his advanced age he said, "Give me this mountain."

D. THE TABERNACLE AT SHILOH

Scripture Reference: Joshua 18:1

Shiloh, located in the territory of Ephraim, north of Bethel, was chosen as the resting place for the ark of the Tabernacle. The ark remained there for many generations, and Shiloh remained the central place of worship until just before God allowed the building of the Temple. The Hebrew people went there from year to year to celebrate the feasts of the Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. After the ark had been removed from Shiloh, God forsook Shiloh and judgment came upon it. (See Psalm 78:58-61; Jeremiah 7:12.)

E. THE CITIES OF REFUGE

Scripture Reference: Joshua 20:1-9

Six cities were set apart to be cities of refuge. Three of these cities were located east of Jordan and three were located west of the river. These cities were set apart to make provision for the protection of all those who unwittingly committed murder. The names of these cities were: (1) Kadesh, (2) Shechem, (3) Kirjath-arba (Hebron) (4) Bezer, (5) Ramoth, and (6) Golan.

F. THE PORTION OF THE LEVITES

After the land was divided, the Levites requested that Eleazar, the priest, present their claim for cities to dwell in. They were given no division of land, but forty-eight cities and their suburbs were their portion. They served at Shiloh and later at Jerusalem. It was God's plan that the Levites, His ministers to the people, live holy, separate lives. God gave them the tithe of their brethren for their support. (See Leviticus 27:30; Numbers 18:26.) Tithing was not instituted under the Law; it began with Abraham. (See Genesis 14:20.)

G. THE ALTAR EAST OF JORDAN

The tribes who chose to stay on the east side of Jordan had passed over Jordan with their brethren and helped them subdue the land. Then Joshua commanded them to go home, cautioning them to remain faithful to the Lord. Nevertheless, they did a very unwise act when they passed over Jordan. They built a great altar on the bank of the Jordan. This almost resulted in war, for the other tribes feared this would create a rival establishment to Shiloh. Phinehas and ten princes were sent to confer with them. They showed them that they needed no altar besides the altar of the Lord at Shiloh (Joshua 22:19). However, the men of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh explained that they had no intention of ever offering sacrifices on the altar, but built it only as a witness that "the Lord is God." (See Joshua 22:34.) Their explanation was accepted.

From the time of the building of the Tabernacle, God has had one place for His altar. First it was in the Tabernacle, next it was in the Temple, and now it is in His church.

H. THE DEATH OF JOSHUA

About twelve or fourteen years after the final division of the country, Joshua assembled the heads of all the tribes at Shechem and gave his final charge. They were entreated to cleave to the Lord, and they vowed never to turn to idols.

The life of Joshua is a great inspiration to all. Until the day of his death, he declared, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (See Joshua 24:15.) He died at the age of 110 years and was laid to rest in the family burial ground.

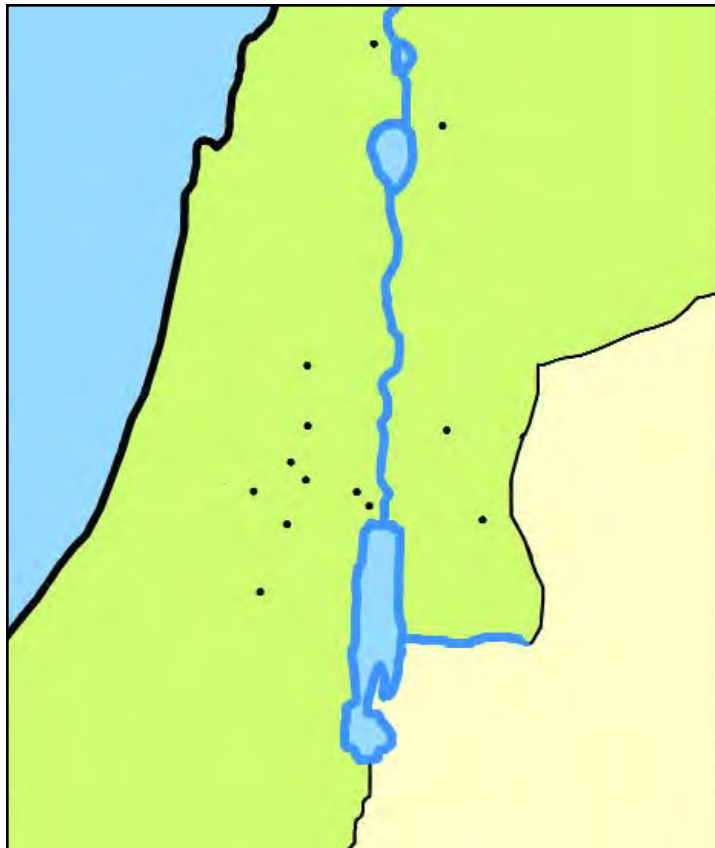
Self Help Test: Old Testament History I

The Division of Canaan

1. Mark on the map the following locations:

Ai
Bethel
Gibeon
Gilgal
Hebron
Jericho
Jerusalem
Jordan River
Shechem
Shiloh

2. Name and locate the six cities of refuge.



3. Explain what was wrong with building an altar east of the Jordan.

Old Testament History I

Lesson Five



JUDGES

Part I

A. THE BOOK OF FAILURES

The Book of Judges is a book of failures, followed in each case with divine deliverance. When Israel settled in Canaan, it was a day of great promise. God had promised an unusual blessing, stating that if the people followed Him faithfully, they would be “the head, and not the tail,” and be “above only” and “not beneath” (Deuteronomy 28:1-14).

In Judges we have the account of a series of national calamities in which the enemies of Israel gained control of the land and of the judges who were raised up to deliver God’s people. The historical record given in this book shows the reason Israel did not receive the great blessings promised her. The main reason was that of disobedience. One of the key verses of Scripture that explains clearly why there were so many failures is repeated twice:

“In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes” (Judges 17:6).

“In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes” (Judges 21:25).

Throughout Judges, there is recorded a series of cycles which were all very similar. They followed these steps:

1. They would lapse into idolatry.
2. Idolatry was followed by great immorality.
3. Judgment of God brought them under the servitude of other nations.
4. Judgment was followed by a cry of repentance.
5. In answer to their cry for help, God sent them a deliverer.
6. They would remain faithful during the lifetime of the deliverer.

The main reasons for the failures and sins of Israel during this period of time may be summed up as follows:

1. Failure to Drive the Canaanites from the Land: Under Joshua important confederations from the north and south had been conquered. However, many Canaanites were left in the land and became pockets of resistance that challenged Israel until the time of Saul. These Canaanites which were left in the land were the

means of Israel's downfall. This was the main reason Israel lapsed again and again into idolatry.

2. Lost Sense of Unity: It became difficult to maintain a sense of unity. They still had a theocratic government and the Tabernacle remained at Shiloh (Joshua 18:1; Judges 18:31). However, it soon became evident that each tribe was on its own.

3. Material Prosperity and Worship of Baal: Baal was one of the gods of the Canaanites, who believed he controlled rain and storms. The Israelites were attracted to this form of idolatry, for they wanted to prosper in their new agricultural way of life. The main reasons for failure in Israel may cause our defeat today.

B. THE TIME OF THE JUDGES

The events of Judges were not recorded chronologically. The oppressions and deliverances were not successive, but occasionally while one part of the country was struggling for deliverance, the rest of the land had peace. Also, certain of the events overlapped in time. For example, in Judges 10:7 it is implied that Jephthah, occupied with the Ammonites east of Jordan, and Samson, concerned with the Philistines on the west, were contemporary in activity.

The sum of the time periods as given in Judges are:

Judges 3:8	Mesopotamian oppression	8 years
Judges 3:11	Othniel's deliverance	40 years
Judges 3:14	Moabite oppression	18 years
Judges 3:30	Ehud's deliverance	80 years
Judges 4:2	Canaanite oppression	20 years
Judges 5:31	Deborah's deliverance	40 years
Judges 6:1	Midianite oppression	7 years
Judges 8:28	Gideon's deliverance	40 years
Judges 9:22	Abimelech's rule	3 years
Judges 10:2	Tola as judge	23 years
Judges 10:3	Jair as judge	22 years
Judges 10:8	Ammonite oppression	18 years
Judges 12:7	Jephthah's deliverance	6 years
Judges 12:9	Ibzan as judge	7 years
Judges 12:11	Elon as judge	10 years
Judges 12:14	Abdon as judge	8 years
Judges 13:1	Philistine oppression	40 years
Judges 15:20	Samson's exploits	20 years
	TOTAL	410 years

It is necessary to reconcile this information with I Kings 6:1, "And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel . . . he began to build the house of the Lord." This verse states there were 480 years between the Exodus and Solomon's fourth year. These years include the following:

Wilderness period	40 years
Joshua's leadership	16 years
Time between Samson and Saul	5 years
Saul's reign	40 years
David's reign	40 years
Solomon's first four years	4 years
TOTAL	145 years

A study of this information shows there was an overlap of time in the events in Judges of seventy-five years. We may safely conclude that the actual length of time covered by the judges was 335 years.

C. THE JUDGES

The judges were twelve in number. They are listed as follows:

	Name	Oppression	Reference
1.	Othniel	Mesopotamians	Judges 3:7-11
2.	Ehud	Moabites	Judges 3:12-30
3.	Shamgar		Judges 3:31
4.	Deborah with Barak	Canaanites	Judges 4-5
5.	Gideon	Midianites	Judges 6-8
6.	Tola		Judges 10:1-2
7.	Jair		Judges 10:3-5
8.	Jephthah	Ammonites	Judges 10:6-12:7
9.	Ibzan		Judges 12:8-10
10.	Elon		Judges 12:11-12
11.	Abdon		Judges 12:13-15
12.	Samson	Philistines	Judges 13-16

To this list Abimelech, Eli, and Samuel may be added. However, Abimelech was a renegade king during his three years of leadership, and Eli and Samuel were high priest and prophet, respectively.

D. THE SIX INVASIONS OR SERVITUDES

Sometimes the whole country was not brought under the dominion of the enemy. On some occasions it was only the part that lay nearest to the enemies' respective territories that suffered from their attacks.

The following summarizes the six servitudes:

Servitude	Oppressor	Judge	Reference
First	Mesopotamia	Othniel	Judges 3:5-9
Second	Moab	Ehud and Shamgar	Judges 3:12-31
Third	Jaban and Sisera	Deborah and Barak	Judges 4:1-23
Fourth	Midian	Gideon	Judges 6, 7
Fifth	Philistines and Ammon	Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon	Judges 10-12
Sixth	Philistines	Samson	Judges 13-16

E. INSECURITY OF THE EASTERN TRIBES

The tribes that settled east of Jordan were far more open to attack from the enemy than the other tribes. Apostasy from the true faith seemed to have broken out more frequently among them since they were closer to idolatrous neighbors. Because of this they suffered many chastisements and were the first to go into captivity.



Self Help Test: Old Testament History I Judges, Part I

1. State clearly the three reasons why the Book of Judges is a history of failure.

- a.
- b.
- c.

2. Name the twelve judges. Write these names from memory.

- | | |
|----|----|
| a. | g. |
| b. | h. |
| c. | i. |
| d. | j. |
| e. | k. |
| f. | l. |

3. Name the oppressor and the deliverer in each of the six servitudes.

	Oppressor	Deliverer
a.	_____	_____
b.	_____	_____
c.	_____	_____
d.	_____	_____
e.	_____	_____
f.	_____	_____

Old Testament History I

Lesson Six



JUDGES

Part II

A. THE FIRST SERVITUDE

The people of Israel served the Lord as long as the elders who saw the miracles of God under the ministry of Joshua lived. (See Judges 2:7.) However, soon after the death of the elders, Israel began its decline into apostasy. It was only a short time until the Israelites began marrying into heathen families, forsaking the Lord, worshipping Canaanite gods, and falling into terrible immoralities.

The first punishing oppressor came from the far northeast. This was an invasion from Mesopotamia. The name of the leader was Cushan-rishathaim. He was the only oppressor who came from such a distant land. During this first servitude the Israelites were kept in bondage for eight years.

The deliverer was Othniel, the first judge and younger brother of Caleb. (See Joshua 15:17.) He won the daughter of Caleb, Achsah, by winning the battle against Kirjath-sepher. (See Judges 1:11-15.) No record is given of how he won the victory against the Mesopotamians except the statement, "And the Spirit of the Lord came upon him" (Judges 3:10). After the victory, the land had rest forty years before the next oppression.

B. THE SECOND SERVITUDE

Scriptural Reference: Judges 3:12-31

The second nation to oppress Israel was Moab. Moab lay directly across the Dead Sea from Judah. It was their king, Balak, who had brought Balaam from the north to curse Israel. Now, with help from the Ammonites and the Amalekites, the Moabites crossed the Jordan River and used the former site of Jericho as the headquarters. They inflicted great suffering on the eastern tribes, as well as Benjamin and all who dwelt near Jericho. The king of Moab was Eglon, who was a very fat man. This servitude continued for eighteen years.

When Israel cried to God for help, the Lord raised up another deliverer, Ehud of Benjamin. He brought deliverance, not through warfare, but through an act of deception in which he succeeded in slaying King Eglon. When Eglon was killed, the Moabites retreated, and Ehud's men slew 10,000 of them. This brought a lengthy peace of eighty years to Israel. This was the longest period of peace enjoyed during the period of the Judges.

During these eighty years of peace, Shamgar lived as a third judge. We are not told much about this man except that he won a great victory over the Philistines. On one occasion he slew six hundred Philistines with nothing but an ox goad as a weapon.

C. THE THIRD SERVITUDE

Scripture Reference: Joshua 4, 5

The third oppression came from the Canaanites within Palestine, whom the Israelites should have driven out in the first place. Jabin, king of Hazor, was the leader, and Sisera was his general. The city of Hazor had been defeated by Joshua but again had become strong. Sisera had nine hundred chariots of iron. The Canaanites attacked Zebulun and Naphtali and reduced them to a condition of servitude for twenty years.

This time Israel's deliverer was a woman. Deborah was both a judge and a prophetess (Judges 4:4). The people came to her for counsel. She received people under a palm tree between Ramah and Bethel, some sixty miles south of where the battle with Sisera would take place. She called Barak, who lived in the north in Kadesh of Naphtali. She instructed him to raise an army of ten thousand men from Zebulun and Naphtali and to fight Sisera.

Barak agreed to do so if she would go with him. Deborah consented, and they fought Sisera west of Megiddo on the banks of the Kishon. The Lord miraculously gave the victory and Sisera fled northward. On the way, he took refuge in the tent of a Kenite named Jael, who lived near Barak's hometown of Kedesh. Jael killed Sisera by driving a tent peg through his head. This brought forty years of peace to Israel.

Judges 5 records the triumphant song of victory of Deborah and Barak. In Judges 5:7 she called herself "a mother in Israel."

D. THE FOURTH SERVITUDE

Scripture Reference: Judges 6, 7

After a period of forty years, the old corruptions broke out again. Another invasion was sent as punishment. The Midianites, aided by Amalekites and "children of the east," came pouring into the land at the time of harvest. They plundered the country and depleted the land of both livestock and grain. The Israelites were so fearful they took refuge in caves.

Gideon was the deliverer. He lived in Ophrah, a village of Manasseh. The people of Ophrah had accepted Baal worship so completely they had built their own pagan altar. God's first command to Gideon was to destroy this idolatrous altar. This

he did, showing courage and faith. The people first wanted to kill Gideon but later accepted him as their leader.

When he called for troops to fight the Midianites, 32,000 responded from the tribes of Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali. These seemed too few to fight the Midianites which numbered 135,000. However, God instructed Gideon that his army should be reduced, first by permitting all who were fearful to return home and then testing to see which men would drink from a brook in a manner showing readiness for battle. Gideon was left with only 300 men. He armed his men with trumpets and empty pitchers containing lamps. All the army blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers at the same time. The enemy was taken by surprise and fled in panic.

Israel invited Gideon to become king, but he would not listen to the proposal. He knew that God was Israel's king. Instead, Gideon acted as judge for forty years.

Gideon had seventy-one sons. One of his sons, Abimelech, child of the concubine at Shechem, wanted what Gideon had refused, the crown of Israel. He murdered sixty-nine of his brothers. Only Jothan, his youngest brother, escaped. Abimelech was crowned by the Shechemites, and he ruled for three years. He was finally killed in battle by a woman.

E. THE FIFTH SERVITUDE

Scripture Reference: Judges 10 - 12

The Ammonites ravaged the tribes east of Jordan, as well as Judah, Benjamin, and Ephraim, west of Jordan. When the children of Israel cried out for deliverance, God taunted them, telling them to cry to their heathen gods. Finally, the Israelites showed the fruit of repentance and put away the strange gods. God then raised up Jephthah to be their deliverer.

Jephthah was the son of Gilead and a harlot. His life was overshadowed by that fact, and he was cast out by his brethren. In Tob he became a bold and successful captain, and he was accepted as captain over the army against the Ammonites. He entirely defeated the enemy.

Jephthah is especially remembered because of his foolishness. Due to the influence of the idolatrous worship around him, he vowed that he would sacrifice to the Lord whatever should first meet him on returning home if he won the victory. It turned out to be his daughter. This vow was neither sanctioned by the Mosaic ritual nor acceptable to God.

F. THE SIXTH SERVITUDE

Scripture Reference: Judges 13-16

The last great oppression was brought by the Philistines. They were able to impose their will on Israel for forty years, the longest of any of the oppressions.

God's man to fight against the Philistines was Samson. His father was Manoah, a Danite. Samson's birth was announced by an angel. Samson was to be a Nazarite. He was never to drink wine or strong drink and never to cut his hair. He enjoyed great physical strength, but he proved to have a weak will.

Some of his feats of strength included:

1. Killing a lion with his bare hands
2. Slaying thirty Philistines, taking their changes of clothing
3. Catching 300 foxes, tying firebrands to their tails and burning the Philistine crops
4. Killing 1,000 Philistines with the jawbone of an ass

Samson served as a judge for twenty years, until he fell victim to lust and sinned with a harlot. (See Judges 16:1-3.) He finally lost his hair, was blinded, and lost his strength. Later, when his hair had grown out, he accomplished the great feat of pulling down the temple of the Philistines, killing them and himself.

G. CIVIL WARS

During the time of the judges, there were four periods of civil confusion that caused internal wars.

1. The Jealousy of Ephraim (Judges 8:1-32)

The Ephraimites were jealous of Gideon and refused to give him and his men food when they were faint and weak. When the battle against Midian was completed, Gideon fought and subdued the Ephraimites. This was the beginning of a deep-rooted rift in Israel that finally ended in the division of the kingdom under Jeroboam and Rehoboam.

2. Abimelech (Judges 9:1-52)

Abimelech's ambition to set up a dynasty led to civil war.

3. The Second Jealousy of Ephraim (Judges 12:1-7)

Ephraim was jealous again after Jephthah's victory over the Ammonites. This terminated in the slaughter of the Ephraimites who could not say Shibboleth.

4. The Punishment of Benjamin (Judges 19-21)

The tribe of Benjamin was severely punished because of a lewd crime. The entire tribe was almost destroyed because of this.

Self Help Test: Old Testament History I Judges, Part II

Mark True or False

- _____ 1. Eglon was a very fat man.
- _____ 2. Jephthah was the son of Manoah
- _____ 3. Gideon lived in Ophrah.
- _____ 4. Deborah and Barak fought Sisera
- _____ 5. Gideon had seventy-one sons
- _____ 6. Abimelech slew sixty-six of his brothers.
- _____ 7. Shamgar slew six hundred Philistines with an ox goad.
- _____ 8. Jael killed Sisera with a tent peg.
- _____ 9. Jair was the first judge.
- _____ 10. The Moabites afflicted Israel for eighteen years.
- _____ 11. King Ehud was slain by Eglon.
- _____ 12. Four periods of civil confusion occurred during the reign of the judges.
- _____ 13. Samson used five hundred foxes to burn the Philistines' crops.
- _____ 14. Gideon sacrificed his daughter because of a vow.
- _____ 15. Samson was of the tribe of Dan.
- _____ 16. Othniel was a younger brother of Caleb.
- _____ 17. Samson served as judge for twenty years.
- _____ 18. Sisera had a thousand chariots of iron.
- _____ 19. Deborah called herself a "mother in Israel."
- _____ 20. Jotham was killed by Abimelech.

Old Testament History I

Lesson Seven



RUTH

A. THE STORY OF RUTH

One of the most beautiful stories in the Bible is that of Ruth. This story occurred during the judgeship of Gideon. It has special interest to us because it shows the lineage of David. Ruth was the great grandmother of David, who began to rule at Hebron in 1010 BC. The last word in the Book of Ruth is the word *David*, and this reveals the main purpose of the book.

The account of Ruth shows a beautiful picture of a godly life and rewards of pure and true religious faith. Also, this book pictures many Hebrew customs of the times: the harvest, the land system of the Hebrews, the maintaining of family rights, and how members of other nations could be converted and brought to know God.

One of the notable things about the story of Ruth is that Ruth, a Gentile, married into a Jewish family, and, thereby, came into the line of David. Through it all Gentiles have been blessed. It is also interesting to compare Ruth with the Book of Esther, the only other book in the Bible named after a woman. Esther, a Jewess, married a Gentile monarch and brought deliverance to the Jewish nation.

Ruth's story began with the Israelite family of Elimelech and Naomi moving from Bethlehem to Moab in time of famine. In Moab, Elimelech died, leaving his wife, Naomi, and his two sons, Mahlon and Chilion. Ruth married Mahlon and another Moabitess, Orpah, married Chilion. Then both sons died, leaving all three women as widows. Naomi heard there was plenty to eat back at Bethlehem and decided to return home. She urged her daughters-in-law to remain in Moab. Orpah agreed to do so, but Ruth continued with Naomi, vowing never to leave her and to accept her mother-in-law's people as her own.

Ruth's statement of love and dedication is given in Ruth 1:16-17: "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me."

B. THE RETURN HOME

Naomi, accompanied by Ruth, returned to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest. They were destitute, arriving home without anything. When the people of the city welcomed Naomi, she said, "Call me not Naomi, but call me Mara . . . I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty" (Ruth 1:20-21).

The beautiful part of this picture was the faithfulness of Ruth to her mother-in-law, her devotion and love during this time of great need and destitution.

C. RUTH GLEANS IN THE FIELDS

“And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest. And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the Lord your God” (Leviticus 19:9-10).

In this passage of Scripture the Lord instructed Israel to leave some of the crop in the field to be gleaned by the strangers and the poor. Naomi and Ruth were destitute, and Ruth took advantage of this instruction. Since it was during the barley harvest, Ruth gleaned in the fields. She happened upon the field of Boaz, a wealthy relative of Elimelech. Boaz had heard of her kindness to Naomi and ordered his men to see that Ruth had special treatment and kindness while she gleaned in his fields.

D. RUTH’S MARRIAGE TO BOAZ

The third and fourth chapters of this book reveal a great deal about the customs of that day. We learn much in regards to the office of kinsman redeemer. When Naomi learned that Boaz would be threshing his barley and there would be a celebration regarding the harvest, she instructed her daughter-in-law to go in and to lie at the feet of Boaz. Ruth obeyed. When Boaz discovered her lying at his feet, he acknowledged the duty of a kinsman, and he sent Ruth back home with six measures of barley. The next day he called the next of kin, who had the first right to redeem the land of Naomi and to marry Ruth. When this kinsman refused his rights, Boaz was free to redeem the field and to marry Ruth.

E. THE GENEALOGY OF DAVID

The Book of Ruth shows how a Gentile woman became an ancestor of Jesus Christ. When Boaz married Ruth, they had a son whom they called Obed. He was the father of Jesse, who was the father of King David. It should be noted that the father of Boaz was Salmon and his mother was Rahab, the harlot. The fact that David was a descendant of both Ruth and Rahab takes on great significance as we consider Jesus Christ taking unto Himself a Gentile bride—the church.

Old Testament History I

Lesson Eight



ELI

A. THE PRIEST ELI

Eli was a priest of the line of Ithamar. Ithamar was the younger son of Aaron. Aaron had two sons, Nadab and Abihu, who had been destroyed for offering strange fire. A line of priests descended from Aaron's other son, Eleazar, but Eli was a descendant of Ithamar. The office of priesthood remained with the line of Ithamar through Eli, until Solomon deposed Abiathar and returned the priesthood back to the descendants of Eleazar.

B. ELI'S PIETY

Eli was a man of noble character. His piety is shown by his meek submission to God's will (see I Samuel 3:18), his reverential regard for the ark of God (see I Samuel 4:18), his willingness to take and train the young child Samuel, and his discernment of the moving of the Spirit of God (see I Samuel 3:8-9).

The fact that God trusted Eli with the training and bringing up of Samuel speaks well of him. Eli served Israel during a period of decided spiritual decline. It was about this time that God so thoroughly abhorred the people of Israel for their continual backslidings that He turned His face from Shiloh. Eli dwelt in Shiloh at the house of the Lord. Not everyone in Israel had turned their backs on God, but it was then, as it is now—salvation was personal and not national.

C. ELI'S NEGLIGENCE

Although Eli was a man capable of high ideals, there was a great blemish on his record. He completely failed in training his own sons. His sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were also priests. Eli was old, and these two sons were in charge of ceremonies. They were wicked men, sorely perverting the ritual and profaning the sanctuary in a debauchery similar to that of Canaanite temples. As a result, people hated to come to worship. Eli was held responsible by God and was rebuked for permitting this abuse by his sons. Reprimand came first through an unnamed prophet and later through the boy Samuel.

Hophni and Phinehas were worshipers of Belial. This was shown in their greed, their disregard of God's order, their self-will, and their unrestrained lust. God held Eli responsible for this, and the sin of his sons brought judgment upon Eli and the entire nation.

In the New Testament, the apostle Paul wrote that one of the qualifications of a minister was that his own children had to be in subjection and the minister had to rule his own house well. I Timothy 3:4-5 states, "One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God)." Eli disqualified himself for being priest for not correcting and disciplining his two sons.

D. ELI'S DEATH

Punishment from God came through a terrible battle with the Philistines. The Philistines had oppressed Israel for some twenty years and Israel attempted to end it by war. The battle was at Aphek. In the battle, Israel was badly defeated and lost some four thousand men.

The people, thinking that the presence of the ark at the battlefield would help in fighting, received permission from Hophni and Phinehas and took the ark from Shiloh, a distance of about twenty-three miles from camp. This was contrary to God's will. After moving the ark, another great defeat befell Israel. This time thirty thousand men of Israel fell, including Hophni and Phinehas, and the ark was captured. When news of this catastrophe reached Shiloh, Eli fell backward from his seat and died of a broken neck.

E. THE ARK TAKEN BY THE PHILISTINES

Scripture Reference: I Samuel 5, 6

The ark of the Tabernacle had been captured in the battle of Aphek, but it was returned to Israel just seven months after its capture. This came about through a series of events in which God brought judgment upon the Philistines. First, the image of Dagon, beside which the ark had been placed, twice fell to the floor. Second, painful tumors were inflicted on the people, which in some instances brought death. Finally, the land was overrun with mice.

The Philistine priests thought of a plan in which to test God. They placed the ark on a new cart drawn by young heifers. The young heifers were unbroken and their calves were taken from them. But instead of turning back, they miraculously moved straight along the road to Bethshemesh, which was in Israelites territory.

At Bethshemesh, the ark was desecrated when curious people looked into it. God took the lives of many in punishment. Instead of sending it back to the Tabernacle, the Bethshemites sent for men of Kirjath-jearim to come and get it. These people handled it properly, and they experienced no harm. But they still did not return it to the Tabernacle. It remained with them until David brought it to Jerusalem.

F. ICHABOD

Scripture Reference: I Samuel 4:21

The wife of Phinehas was ready to bear a child when the news came of the death of her husband. She immediately gave birth and died in childbirth. Before her death, she named the child *Ichabod*. The word means: “The glory is departed from Israel.” This tells us a great deal about the character of this good woman, and also of the spiritual condition of all Israel. Ichabod not only spoke of the fact that the ark had been taken by the Philistines, but it spoke of the great spiritual depravity of the entire nation. Israel had reached one of the darkest moments in her history.



Self Help Test: Old Testament History I

Eli

1. What is the meaning of the word *Ichabod*?
2. What was the greatest failure in Eli's life?
3. State the good characteristics of Eli.
4. Write the story of the ark being taken by the Philistines.

Old Testament History I

Lesson Nine



SAMUEL

A. ASKED OF GOD

One of the outstanding men of the Old Testament was Samuel. Samuel was called a judge, but he was also a prophet and a priest. Samuel was the son of a Levite, Elkanah. Samuel's mother was Hannah, one of Elkanah's two wives.

Prior to Samuel's birth, Hannah had been barren. She prayed for a son while at the house of God in Shiloh. The priest Eli saw her and thought she was drunk because of her intense burden. God heard her prayer, and Samuel was born.

This should teach us that children are the heritage of the Lord (see Psalm 127:3) and that the young women, when they marry, should desire to bear children according to the plan of God. It also teaches us that every child has a divine right to be wanted. The name *Samuel* means "asked of God."

B. GIVEN TO GOD

After Samuel was weaned, he was brought to the Tabernacle and given to the Lord for service. Since God had given Samuel to Hannah, she gave Samuel back to the Lord. The example of Hannah is a great inspiration to all godly parents, even today.

C. CALLED OF GOD

God called Samuel while he was still just a boy, ministering in the Tabernacle. Conditions at the Tabernacle were not good and were getting worse. The call of God came to Samuel one night. (See I Samuel 3:3.) It is also stated about this time that "the word of the Lord was precious in those days." It simply meant that God seldom spoke to His people.

On this occasion God called Samuel three times. The first three times, he thought it was Eli, and then Eli instructed him how to answer on the fourth. Samuel answered the Lord, "Speak; for thy servant heareth." He not only received his call from God, but God confided in him the judgment that was to befall Eli and the nation because of the sins of Eli's sons. Although Samuel was still just a boy, it was his responsibility to carry this message to the aged priest.

D. FAITHFUL TO GOD

When Eli died, Samuel was thrust into the position of Israel's leader. He was about twenty-five years of age. Samuel had already achieved a reputation as a prophet of God among the people. (See I Samuel 3:20.)

Prospects for the country were extremely dismal, and the task of bringing order out of near chaos was clearly his. Samuel knew well the corrupt atmosphere of the Tabernacle and the dire religious need of the people. He also knew the low morals that existed everywhere. However, Samuel had been given a courageous heart, full of faith in God, and Samuel moved into his work with ability and strength. The priests and Levites in their widely distributed cities had to be encouraged. The images of Baal and Ashtoreth had to be destroyed, and the people had to return to the worship of the true God.

E. THE VICTORIOUS BATTLE OF MIZPEH

Scripture Reference: I Samuel 7:5-14

Under the leadership of Samuel, a revival took place at Mizpeh in Benjamin. The Philistines, hearing of the assembly of Mizpeh, went to battle. But, in answer to Samuel's earnest intercession, God sent a thunder storm, making the Philistines easy prey to the Israelites. Samuel's weapon was prayer.

F. THEOCRACY REJECTED BY THE PEOPLE

Scripture Reference: I Samuel 7:15-8:22

God had blessed the work of Samuel. And following the Mizpeh victory, the priests and Levites were now doing their work with reasonable effectiveness. To help in the south, near Beersheba, Samuel installed his two sons, Joel and Abiah, as judges. These two sons did not follow the godly example of their father, but took bribes in perversion of justice.

Joel and Abiah's poor conduct and the desire of the people to be like other nations stirred the people to make a request of Samuel which disappointed him greatly. They asked that they be given a king. Samuel took the request as a personal affront. He had worked hard for Israel and now believed that the country was in a relatively strong condition. The request from the people seemed an indication of a lack of confidence in him. God, however, told him that this was not so, but the affront was really against Himself. It was God that they were rejecting. God had given them a theocratic form of government, but they were rejecting it and desiring a king. God told Samuel to comply with the people's request.

Samuel was true to God. He willingly obeyed and then gave Saul, whom he anointed king, counsel from God. Self interests were forgotten. Samuel knew his place and responsibility, and he endeavored to lift Saul to the same level of spirituality that he himself had reached. Never once did he shirk his duty because God had allowed the people to have a king.

G. A PROPHET-PRIEST

As prophet, Samuel represented God to the people; as priest, he represented the people to God. Not only did he deliver the Word of the Lord to them, he interceded to God for them. Israel needed this prophet-priest, for soon the young king lifted himself up with arrogant pride and began to defy the Word of God. All true ministers should have these priestly and prophetic aspects to their ministry.

Saul was unexcused for intruding into the priest's office. His excuse was his fear of the Philistines; his reason was his pride and impatience. Samuel pronounced the rejection of Saul and foretold God's choice of David to be king. (See I Samuel 13:14.) Through all the tension that developed in the kingdom with the failure of Saul, Samuel proved faithful to the people and endeavored to establish their faith in God.

Samuel is remembered for his fearlessness, his prayerfulness, his compassion, his devoted love for God and his service to his people. Undoubtedly, much of this was due to the prayers and dedication of his saintly mother.



Self Help Test: Old Testament History I Samuel

1. Define *Theocracy*.
2. Why did the people reject theocracy?
3. How was Samuel “asked of God”?
4. How was Samuel “given to God”?
5. How was Samuel “called of God”?
6. How was Samuel a prophet?
7. How was Samuel a priest?
8. How did Samuel fail?

Old Testament History I

Lesson Ten



KING SAUL

A. THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE

The people had requested a king that they might be like the other nations around them; God gave them a man according to their own choice. The man that God chose for them was Saul, son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin. Benjamin was one of the smallest tribes, situated between two of the largest tribes, Judah and Ephraim. Having a man chosen from Benjamin would prevent jealousy arising from either Judah or Ephraim.

Saul was tall and of striking appearance. None in Israel was a “goodlier person than he” (I Samuel 9:2). He was also humble and timid when he was a young man.

His father sent him with a servant to search for some lost asses. When he came to Ramah to seek the advice from the prophet Samuel, he was told that the animals had been found and then the astonishing fact that he was actually to be Israel's first king. Saul was invited to a feast where a special portion had been prepared for him. Early the next day Samuel went to the edge of the city with Saul and there anointed him and proclaimed him captain over God's inheritance. (See I Samuel 10:1.)

Samuel gave Saul three signs that he would experience as he traveled. First, he would meet two men who would tell him that the lost asses had been found. Second, he would meet three men having goats, bread, and wine, who would give him two loaves of bread. Third, he would encounter a company of the prophets. He was to join the last party of prophets and the Spirit of the Lord would come upon him. He would prophesy and be turned into another man.

Samuel summoned representatives of the tribes to meet with him at Mizpeh. He went through the procedure of choosing tribes and families until he came to the tribe of Benjamin, to Saul's family, and finally to Saul himself. When the people looked for Saul, he was hiding among the wagons and baggage. He was summoned and when the people saw his kingly stature, they accepted him with shouts of approval. It is here that people shouted, “God save the king” (I Samuel 10:24).

B. A PROMISING BEGINNING

An opportunity soon arose for Saul to establish himself as king. The Ammonites, who had been defeated by Jephthah some forty years earlier, attacked the city of Jabesh-gilead across the Jordan. These people sent for help, and their appeal came to Saul's attention. Saul butchered a yoke of oxen and sent pieces to

all the tribes. Three hundred thirty thousand men responded to this appeal. From this group, Saul selected three army contingents which he led against the Ammonites, winning a decisive victory. The Israelites now fully accepted him as king. The formal ceremony was conducted at Gilgal with Samuel leading the proceedings. Saul was crowned as first king amidst an offering of sacrifices and rejoicing.

Saul began his reign in a most promising manner. His government was simple, and he did not demand too much from the people. He established his capital at Gibeah, his own hometown. The Bible records the name of one officer, Abner, captain of the army, who was a cousin of Saul.

C. THE FIRST REJECTION

Scripture Reference: I Samuel 13:1-14

The Philistines gathered a tremendous force of thirty thousand chariots, six thousand horsemen, and many foot soldiers, and camped at Michmash, just four miles northeast of Gibeah. This brought great terror to the Israelites. Saul quickly assembled a force at Gilgal to withstand them and waited for Samuel to come and offer a sacrifice prior to the engagement. Having waited seven days, the impatient Saul assumed the priestly office and offered up a burnt offering himself. Saul was guilty before God of entering the priestly office. He had been anointed king but not priest. Through Samuel, God announced that for this act the kingdom would go to another. A considerable change was beginning to take place in the character of King Saul.

D. THE SECOND REJECTION

Scripture Reference: I Samuel 15

The second rejection came as a result of Saul's battle with the Amalekites. For a number of years Saul had been quite successful in battling the enemy that was always pressing against Israel. Then came the battle with the Amalekites where Saul proved disobedient and lost the kingdom.

Amalek was a grandson of Esau. He and his descendants were always at enmity against the people of the Lord. As Israel traveled through the wilderness, the Amalekites approached from the rear and smote the feeble Israelites. Because of this, the Lord gave the command that after the people of Israel settled in Canaan, they should exterminate the Amalekites. Now was the time for this command to be carried out.

Samuel gave Saul specific instruction regarding the battle. He was to destroy the people and all of their livestock. Saul won the battle; he defeated the foe. However, he disobeyed in sparing King Agag and some of the finest sheep and oxen. He explained to Samuel that the animals were for sacrifice. Samuel rebuked him and

said that God desired obedience more than sacrifice. Samuel then killed Agag with his own hands. Saul's incomplete obedience was a type of uncontrolled flesh. Incomplete obedience is disobedience.

E. POSSESSED OF AN EVIL SPIRIT

Saul let disobedience rule in his heart until an evil spirit finally took possession of him. Once a man takes a step away from God, he can quickly go from bad to worse. With Saul it was pride, which led to presumption, and then it was disobedience. Now extreme jealousy regarding David took over in his life, and he began to seek to take the life of David.

With this jealousy came an evil spirit that took possession of him. The Spirit of the Lord departed from his life and periods of severe depression came upon him. These periods of depression may have been partly due to the fact that he knew that he had been rejected by the Lord.

F. AN ATROCIOUS ACT

One of the most terrible acts that King Saul performed was slaying eighty-five of the Lord's priests and destroying the city of Nob. He did this in his anger and jealousy of David. Ahimelech, the high priest, had given David some of the shewbread that had been taken from the altar and the sword of Goliath. This information had been passed on to Saul by Doeg, an Edomite. Saul reacted in a fit of insane jealousy. This was the most atrocious act of his entire life.

G. THE WITCH OF ENDOR

The final battle with the Philistines came at Mount Gilboa. The Philistines encamped at Shunem near Mount Gilboa. Saul moved to meet them and took up quarters in that mountain. Fearing the coming encounter, he sought information on its outcome from God. However, he was not answered by dreams, or by Urim, or by prophets (1 Samuel 28:6). In desperation he visited a witch who dwelt at Endor.

Saul would not pray at the first of his reign. And he could not pray at the last. He rejected God at the first, and finally God rejected him. He could not hear from God. The future frightened him. The power of his enemies haunted him. The person who gets so far from God that he cannot hear from Him will go to any source in order to get an answer.

God permitted Samuel to appear to pronounce Saul's final doom. Saul's words to Samuel were, "God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do." What was Samuel's answer? It was doom because of sin. He pronounced the judgment of God.

H. A TRAGIC DEATH

Saul began his reign in such a promising manner, but the end could not have been more tragic. The Israelites were completely defeated by the Philistines at Mount Gilboa, and Saul and his three sons were slain.

Saul was wounded; then he attempted to commit suicide by falling on his own sword. As he lay there in agony, a young Amalekite man came, finished slaying him, and took his crown and his bracelet.

It should be noted that this young man was an Amalekite, one of those whom Saul had saved in his act of disobedience, which caused him to lose his crown.

The story of Saul should not be finished without noting the reaction of King David toward this Amalekite. Even though Saul had sought David's life for years and had failed God in such a miserable manner and been rejected by God, David avenged Saul's death. He said to the Amalekite, "How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the Lord's anointed?" (II Samuel 1:14). Then he called a young man to slay the Amalekite. This should cause us to be very careful today how we lay our hands upon the anointed of the Lord.



Self Help Test: Old Testament History I King Saul

1. Explain Saul's sin at the time of the first rejection.
2. Explain Saul's sin at the time of the second rejection.
3. Why did God command the complete destruction of the Amalekites?
4. Trace fully the details of the tragic death of King Saul.

Old Testament History I

Lesson Eleven



KING DAVID

Part I

A. HIS BACKGROUND

David was the eighth and youngest son of Jesse, of the tribe of Judah. Jesse was the grandson of Boaz and Ruth.

David was born about 1080 BC in Bethlehem, six miles south of Jerusalem. Jesus was born at Bethlehem over one thousand years later. Ramah, Samuel's headquarters, was only a few miles from Bethlehem, and undoubtedly Samuel's character and teaching had influenced this area.

David's job as a boy was tending his father's sheep. He became known for his skill as a shepherd boy and a musician with a harp. This background taught him to have a love of nature and brought him into fellowship with God.

David was not tall and handsome like his oldest brother, Eliab, but he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes. He had a pleasing personality and won the hearts of others. He was of ruddy complexion, and as such he contrasted with others about him who were dark skinned. As he grew up, he became a man of God—bold, patient, talented, and skilled in war. He was a great king, a great warrior, a great poet, and a great religious reformer.

B. THE ANOINTING OF DAVID

When Saul was rejected by God, Samuel was given instructions to anoint another man to take his place. He was to go to Bethlehem and anoint a son of Jesse. Jesse brought his sons before him, and God refused each. David, the eighth and youngest, had been left to care for the family sheep. Samuel insisted that he be brought, and God showed him that this was the one. As Jesse and the other seven sons watched, Samuel anointed David to be Israel's second king. He was probably about fifteen years of age at that time.

The appearance of David contrasted sharply with that of his brothers, and it is here that we have the well-known statement recorded. "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature . . . for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the out-ward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (I Samuel 16:7). We cannot always judge a person by the outward appearance. It is good to know that God sees both the outer and inner appearance of a man.

David was not only anointed by oil, but also by the Holy Ghost. The Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward (I Samuel 16:13).

C. GOLIATH

David's well-known victory over Goliath took place in the valley of Elah, fifteen miles southwest of Jerusalem. The Philistines had invaded Israel. Instead of the two armies engaging in battle, the giant Goliath came forth as the champion for the Philistines. He challenged the Israelites to send forth their champion, taunting the people of Israel. The practice of letting a single champion on each side settle the issue was common in ancient days.

Goliath was a member of the Anakim race of giants. He was about nine and one-half feet tall. He wore a coat of mail weighing 157 pounds. For forty days he challenged Israel, and the Israelites were greatly afraid of him. On the fortieth day, David heard his challenging words. He had come to visit his three oldest brothers and to bring them food. When he heard the insulting words of Goliath, he was astonished and cried out, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" When Saul heard these words, he sent for David. David convinced the king that his exploits with the bear and lion while he kept his father's flocks made him equal to this fight with the Philistine who dared insult Israel's God.

A somewhat comic scene took place when Saul tried to put his armor on David. However, David laid it to one side and picked up his familiar staff and sling. With five smooth stones from the brook, he went forth to meet the Philistine. Goliath was insulted when he saw David, who appeared to be such an unlikely opponent. Goliath was covered with armor from head to foot and had a shield bearer before him.

David went forth, however, not in his own strength but in the name of the Lord. David said, "I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel . . . that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel" (I Samuel 17:45-46). One stone was all that David needed. It struck Goliath in the one open place on his forehead. He fell to the ground, stunned, and David quickly killed him, cutting off his head with his own sword.

This was a day of defeat for the Philistines and a tremendous victory for Israel. It had been accomplished in the name of the Lord of hosts. Victories, even today, are won in the name of Jesus.

D. SAUL'S JEALOUSY OF DAVID

As a young man, David had ministered to Saul as a minstrel. Saul had frequent times of great depression and melancholy. David was well known for his ability to play the harp and sing. David was sent for, and as he ministered to Saul, Saul was

helped. In the beginning he was fond of David, but he became very jealous of David following the slaying of Goliath.

After the victory over the Philistines, the women came out of the cities, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul. But, their song made Saul very angry. They sang, “Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.” Saul’s jealousy of David was aroused and from that day he sought to kill him on every occasion. Saul made at least five attempts to kill David while he was connected with his court. Finally David had to flee for his life and became a fugitive.

E. JONATHAN

David won the friendship and love of Jonathan. Jonathan was Saul’s son and was one of the greatest men in the Old Testament. The friendship and love that existed between Jonathan and David is a great inspiration to all. The two men were as one. It was a friendship of the purest and warmest kind. Jonathan did all he could to soften Saul’s jealousy of David and tried to dissuade Saul from his murderous plot to kill David. When he failed, he entered into a covenant with David to protect him and to inform him of Saul’s secret movements. Jonathan asked nothing of him except that he would be kind to all his kindred when he should come into his kingdom.

This friendship must have had an effect upon David, for it showed him how noble a king would have succeeded Saul in ordinary course. It must have inspired him to be a man as good, or greater, than Jonathan.

F. DAVID’S LIFE AS A FUGITIVE

When David fled from Saul, he became a fugitive, legally an outlaw, hunted by the king. When David bade farewell to Jonathan, he went first to Nob where Ahimelech served as high priest at the Tabernacle. David received some of the sacred bread for food, Goliath’s sword for a weapon, and an indication through Ahimelech of God’s will. David then went to the Philistine city of Gath. He was recognized and feigned madness that he might escape harm.

He turned to his homeland and took up residence in a cave near Adullam, where he began gathering a protective force of men. He was within ten miles of his home in Bethlehem and he was able to make known his desire that men should join him. Four hundred men responded—men described as being in distress, in debt, and discontented. Undoubtedly, many were political refugees.

When he had the band assembled, David moved east to Moab, taking his parents with him. David learned that the Philistines were attacking the inhabitants of Keilah. Desiring to make friends, he went to the relief of Keilah and helped defeat the Philistines. However, the people of Keilah were going to turn him over to Saul.

David then moved southward to the region of Ziph, below Hebron. Here Saul made his first attempt to seize David. David then moved east to Engedi, on the shore of the Dead Sea, where Saul again pursued him. It was here that David spared Saul's life for the first time. Saul had entered the cave where David was hiding and David could have killed him. Instead, he merely cut off part of Saul's clothing for evidence of his nearness.

David next moved to the region of Maon. He sought food for his men from Nabal, a wealthy landowner who lived near his camp. Nabal was a surly person and refused to help him. When David prepared to punish him, Nabal's wife, Abigail, intervened and supplied food. Nabal died ten days later, and David then took Abigail as his own wife.

The Ziphites told Saul of David's hiding place, and Saul came. A second time David spared his life. David, accompanied by Abishai, went to where Saul slept under the guard of Abner and the army. David took away Saul's own spear and jug of water. The next day, Saul, shown the articles by David, repented and promised not to pursue David any longer.

David moved to the land of the Philistines where the king gave him the city of Ziklag. Here he served the Philistine king as a mercenary, attacking the foreign tribes on the south. When the Philistines were to fight Israel, David found himself in difficulty. However, he was saved from the embarrassing position when the Philistines themselves objected to his presence and sent him back to Ziklag.

When he reached Ziklag, he found that the Amalekites had destroyed the town and taken his wives, the wives of all his men and much booty. David's men came near mutiny. David saved the situation by acting quickly and finding out the location of the Amalekites. David attacked them and recovered both wives and booty. David remained in the land of the Philistines for sixteen months.

Upon the death of Saul, the outlaw life of David came to an end. During his life as a fugitive, David had many bitter experiences, but undoubtedly these trials taught him many profitable lessons which caused him to be a greater and nobler king.

G. KING OF JUDAH

When Saul was killed, David sought God's guidance, left Ziklag and returned to Hebron. Here he was anointed king by the people of Judah. This was quite logical, for David was well known in Judah. Many of his men came from Judah, and he had been their champion for many years. They were familiar with his ability, leadership, and warfare and were glad to make him king. He was one in whom they could place confidence. David was crowned king of Judah at Hebron in the year 1014 BC. David ruled over Judah for seven and one-half years.

H. KING OF ISRAEL

After the death of King Saul, Abner, captain of the host, encouraged Saul's son, Ish-bosheth, to accept the kingship of his father, and he was crowned king of the northern and eastern tribes. His capital was in Gilead, but Abner was the actual ruler. Civil war between Israel and Judah resulted, and Judah always prevailed. Finally, Abner deserted Ish-bosheth and joined himself unto David, but Joab murdered him. Soon after this, Ish-bosheth was murdered by two of his servants, and then David was anointed king over Israel. The civil war ended and David became king over the united kingdom. He ruled for thirty-three years over Israel, making a total reign of forty and one-half years.



Old Testament History I

Lesson Twelve



KING DAVID

Part II

A. THE CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM

When David became king of the united nation, he began to look for an appropriate capital. David's choice was Jerusalem, which was still held by the Jebusites and was called Jebus. The city had never been completely in the possession of the Hebrews. It was centrally located, suited to be the capital of the kingdom, lay on the border between Judah and Israel, had a good water supply, and was also a very good stronghold. The capture of this city was difficult but successful.

David desired to make Jerusalem not only the political capital but also the religious capital of the nation.

B. THE ARK PLACED ON MOUNT ZION

Since David desired Jerusalem to be the religious capital, it was not long before he sought to bring the ark to Jerusalem. It had been at Kirjath-jearim for seventy years. His first attempt was a failure due to a disregard of God's Word. Rather than have it carried by the Levites, it was put on a new cart. Uzzah, who touched it, died, and the ark was left for three months in the home of Obed-edom, whose household was greatly blessed by God as a result. After this, David brought the ark up to Jerusalem in the proper manner. Amidst great rejoicing and offering of sacrifices, he placed the ark in a tent he had prepared.

The work of God must be done God's way and according to His instructions.

C. DAVID'S DESIRE TO BUILD A TEMPLE

David built a fine palace for himself, but he was not happy because the ark of God rested in a tent. He planned to build a permanent Temple for the ark, but God did not permit him to do this. The prophet Nathan told him that this honor would be given to his son since David was a man of war. David's reaction to these disappointing words was to voice a prayer of submission and thanksgiving before God. He then proceeded to gather substantial quantities of material in preparation for the time when his son would build the Temple.

D. A MAN OF WAR

King David was very successful in warfare. He defeated the Philistines on the west. Then he turned east and defeated Moab, Edom, the Ammonites, and the

Amalekites. Finally, he began to extend his kingdom in the north as far as the Euphrates River, subduing the Syrians and their allies. He brought into his dominion a large tract of country. For the first time, the Hebrew territory filled up the whole outline originally traced in the promise to Abraham. (See Genesis 15:18.)

E. DAVID'S SIN WITH BATHSHEBA

Scripture Reference: II Samuel 11:1-27

The darkest blot on David's record concerned the sin of adultery and murder. While his army, under Joab, was in battle with the Ammonites, David was resting at home. He saw Bathsheba washing herself as he looked from a palace window. He desired her, sent for her, and committed adultery with her. When she informed him that she was expecting a child, he had Uriah, Bathsheba's husband, brought home from the battlefield so that he might be with his wife. However, Uriah would not go to his home, and David assigned him a deadly position at the battlefield. Uriah was killed, as David had planned, and David took Bathsheba as his wife. For this serious sin, David was severely punished.

David accepted the rebuke from the prophet Nathan, humbled himself, and repented. The rebuke brought him to the lowest depths of penitence. David's salvation at this time was in the fact that he was able to humble himself, confess, and truly repent.

This did not save him, however, from the judgment of God. The Bible states, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap." As David had sown, he also reaped. The child born of Bathsheba died, and the sword never departed from David's house. All his days, David's heart was torn by domestic trial and tragedy.

There are a few lessons the student should learn from this tragic episode in David's life:

1. One sin generally leads to another. The sin of murder took place as David tried to cover up the sin of adultery.
2. No sin can be covered. The Bible says, "Be sure your sin will find you out" (Numbers 32:23).
3. This sin took place because David was at home, idle. He should have been at the battlefield, leading his army. It does not pay to be idle.
4. David's sin took place because he looked upon Bathsheba. We must be very careful what we look upon.
5. All sin must be judged.
6. There must be heartfelt confession and repentance before there can be forgiveness.
7. Our sins generally affect others. The results of sin are far reaching, and others suffer as well as the one who commits the transgression.

F. ABSALOM

One of David's greatest trials transpired through a conspiracy led by his own son, Absalom. Absalom was David's third son. His mother's name was Maacah (II Samuel 3:3).

Amnon was the eldest son of King David. He had defiled his own sister, Tamar, and for this Absalom slew Amnon. It was probably at this time that the idea of taking the throne presented itself to Absalom. Following the murder of Amnon, Absalom fled to Geshur where his mother's father, Talmai, lived. After three years Joab persuaded David to permit Absalom's return to Jerusalem. (See II Samuel 14:1-24.) However, it was not until another two years had passed before David consented to see him and to forgive him.

Absalom was a handsome man, and many people were attracted to him. He moved through the country with chariots and fifty attendants. He pretended to take a great interest in people by meeting those with problems. He was clever and convincing, and these efforts caused many people to favor him. After four years, Absalom had sufficient goodwill to take the decisive step. He went to Hebron, assembled his followers, and had himself anointed king. (See II Samuel 15:7-12.) With a considerable force of men, he marched north against his father. David had to flee.

A battle was fought in an area called the "wood of Ephraim." (See II Samuel 18:1-18.) Absalom had gathered the troops of Israel, and he had a greater number of troops than David. However, David's men were hard-core troops, seasoned in battle and much superior to Absalom's hastily gathered soldiers. David's men won a decisive victory. With the battle won, Joab killed Absalom who had become ensnared in a tree by his long hair. When David learned of this, he reacted with great grief. Absalom's death finished the revolt and David was able to return to Jerusalem.

G. NUMBERING THE PEOPLE

Scripture Reference: II Samuel 24:1-25; I Chronicles 21

Another great sin that took place in David's life came about by his decision to take a census. The Lord did not want His people to trust in their numbers. Repeatedly He had proven His power to deliver them regardless of the power of the enemy. God had told them not to number the people (Exodus 30:12). However, David commanded Joab to do so.

The census was definitely an act of pride on the part of David. He may have also had other reasons for doing this, such as a desire to levy taxes upon the people. The Bible states that Satan provoked David to number the people. Consequently, this act was directly due to Satan's influence upon David. Joab tried to show David this was wrong, but David refused to listen.

The records in II Samuel and I Chronicles state different numbers, but a careful reading of the Scripture will show why different numbers are given. Here are the numbers:

II Samuel:	Israel	800,000	I Chronicles:	Israel	1,100,000
	Judah	500,000		Judah	470,000
	TOTAL	1,300,000		TOTAL	1,570,000

It is necessary for us to read carefully the explanation that the Bible gives. Concerning Israel, II Samuel states that the valiant men that drew the sword were 800,000. Chronicles states that all Israel was 1,100,000. Likewise, according to the record in II Samuel, the men of Judah numbered 500,000 while Chronicles states that the men who drew the sword were 470,000. In other words, in Israel there were 300,000 non-combatants and in Judah there were 30,000 non-combatants.

Joab actually didn't complete this census. He did not count the men of Levi and Benjamin.

God sent the prophet of God to David with three choices of punishment. David was to choose one. David's words were pathetic. He said, "I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the hand of the LORD, for his mercies are great: but let me not fall into the hand of man" (II Samuel 24:14). When he saw the pestilence from God taking men by the tens of thousands, David begged God to let the judgment fall on him and his father's house. Sin and disregard for God's Word cannot go unpunished. There is no respect of persons with God.

The plague that killed seventy thousand of David's newly counted people, was stopped just outside of Jerusalem at the threshing floor of Araunah, the Jebusite. (This was where Solomon later built the Temple.) In repentance, David purchased the floor and oxen from Araunah and offered sacrifices to God.

H. DAVID'S DEATH

Toward the close of his life, David handed over to Solomon the immense stores that he had set aside for the building of the Temple, along with the pattern that had been given him by divine revelation. By this act, David indicated that Solomon was to succeed him.

The last days of David were marked by physical weakness and a contest among his sons for the throne. David reigned for forty years and was buried on Mount Zion. His reign was one of the most memorable periods of Israel's history.

Self Help Test: Old Testament History I

King David, Part II

1. Explain clearly the difference between the records given in II Samuel and I Chronicles in the numbering of Israel.
2. State clearly the spiritual lessons that we may learned from David's sin with Bathsheba.
3. Give a brief account of the conspiracy and rebellion of Absalom.

Missionary Spotlight: Bill and Mollie Thompson

Bill and Mollie Thompson were household names for those connected with United Pentecostal Church missions in the mid and late twentieth century. Their names are closely associated with the



great revival in Colombia and the persecution that accompanied it. Mollie recounted their missionary adventures in her books *Of Caesar's Household* and *When You're In, You're Out*. Likewise, Cornelia Butler Flora's *Pentecostalism in Colombia: Baptism by Fire and*

Spirit documents the growth of Oneness Pentecostalism in Colombia and cites the ministry of Bill and Mollie Thompson.

William J. Thompson, an Irishman, and witty Mary Eliz-

abeth Bellerby from Lancashire met as students at Emmanuel Bible College in Manchester, England, and married in 1940. They went to Colombia in 1947 under the auspices of the Calvary Holiness Church, a traditional fundamentalist church in England. Although Bill had experienced his own Pentecost with speaking in tongues in 1943, he had not looked further into Pentecostalism.

In July 1949, their first child and son was born "with hydrocephalus (water on the brain), a facial disfigurement, and the sentence of death in four days pronounced upon him by a group of doctors, who, medically speaking, knew what they were talking about."¹ They took the baby to Barranquilla to see the doctors there. The Verner Larsens and Sallie Lemons, United Pentecostal Church missionaries, took them in. Brother Larsen laid hands on the baby and prayed, and the baby was instantly healed. The child grew well and proved normal mentally.

"The Thompsons became convinced through this experience that he was not preaching all that he knew

about God.”² Further contacts with United Pentecostal Church missionaries and a careful study of Scripture led to an understanding of the oneness of God and that the Thompsons needed to be baptized in Jesus’ name. Secretary of Foreign Missions Wynn T. Stairs baptized them. They subsequently resigned their CHC appointment to accept licensure and missionary appointment with the UPCI.

Mollie stated, “Like all missionaries to Latin America, I have slept in smoke-blackened chozas (hovels) where the bathroom was described as ‘behind that tree and watch for snakes.’ I have climbed into beds whose deceptive white sheets covered mattresses so thin that one could feel the wooden slats underneath. On other occasions the accommodations were so dirty that the night was spent trying to avoid being eaten alive by giant bedbugs with cannibalistic instincts.”³ Such physical sacrifice paled in comparison to the opposition and persecution inflicted by the recognized church.

Yet, in spite of the harsh sacrifices, the Thompsons and other missionaries planted the seeds of a great revival church in Colombian soil. The gospel seedling was watered by the tears and blood of martyrs who suffered

beatings, imprisonment, torture, and even violent, gruesome death to “know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings” (Philippians 3:10).

Bill and Mollie Thompson retired from foreign missionary service in Colombia in

1979 and became a part of Life Tabernacle, in Houston, Texas, at the invitation of Pastor James Kilgore. In 1984, they were approved



as associates in missions to the United Kingdom. They taught some Bible school classes but primarily assisted in the churches. They were sponsored by Life Tabernacle.

Mollie went to be with the Lord July 14, 2004. Bill followed on October 6, 2008.

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1. Mollie Thompson, *Of Caesar's Household* (Hazelwood, Missouri: Word Aflame Press, 1978), 19.
 2. Cornelia Butler Flora, *Pentecostalism in Colombia: Baptism by Fire and Spirit* (Cranbury, New Jersey: Associated University Presses, Inc., 1976), 44-45.
 3. Mollie Thompson, 32.