

HISTORY JUDGES - ESTHER

TMBC Course #4



Leader's Guide

Dear Teacher,

I want to share some wonderful words of God's promise to Joshua and by application, to you and me. *"Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them. Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. **Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.**"*

—Joshua 1:6-9

For some of you this is the first time you are leading a Bible study group and for others this might be your third or fourth. The Lord's word to you is found in His words to Joshua to encourage him and let him know that if he did his part (meditate on His Word and be obedient) God would do His part (make him prosperous and successful).

As we move through the study of the History of Hebrew people I want you to be asking yourself and your group the following questions:

- What does the Word of God say?
- What does this passage mean?
- What does this passage mean to me? How can I apply God's eternal principles to my life today?

If you have these three questions in mind and search for their answers, then this course will be truly fruitful and profitable in your life and in the lives of those you will be leading through this study.

Please take a few minutes to read the thoughts and ideas given in this introduction to help you be more effective in your study and teaching.

It is my prayer that the experience of this study of Judges through Esther, and then as you teach it, will continue to help you in your spiritual journey and nurture you in your faith as you continue to grow in your spiritual life and lead others in their spiritual journey. When you are teaching the history books of the Bible, 1 Corinthians 10:11 should guide your teaching. This verse teaches that all these things happened to them for examples and are written as warnings for you and me. This means we should continuously look for examples and warnings as we teach the history books of the Bible.

Praying for His blessing upon you,

Dick Woodward
Pastor and Author of the Mini Bible College

Leading the Bible Study Group

The Mini Bible College has prepared this devotionally practical survey of the foundational books of the Bible. Your role as teacher is to guide your group through the study sessions and exercises, helping them to understand the concepts, discover the eternal principles and, most importantly, apply them to their lives. This is a survey study that will take almost four months and is designed to be more than just a course. This study is part of a strategic plan to provide you with the tools to nurture and grow personally and help your church grow both spiritually and numerically.

To help you we have provided the following tools:

- This Leader's Guide
- A Leader's Manual
- Report forms
- Audio of Judges through Esther
- A study booklet on Judges through Esther
- A set of 10 workbooks for the students

GETTING STARTED

Before Class

- Personally start inviting people to come to this spiritual banquet. *"Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find. So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, both good and bad, and the wedding hall was filled with guests."* —Matthew 22:9-10
- Prepare yourself in prayer for those who will attend. If possible, pray for them by name. Only God can change the hearts of people, and prayer is the most powerful tool. *"Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up."* —Luke 18:1
- Ask for help. Do not try to do everything yourself. Invite one or two people to help with music, singing, greeting, and keeping records for the class.
- Review the lesson and understand the lesson objective.
- Become familiar with the material; listen, read and study each lesson and memorize the Bible verse before class time.
- Be sure all materials are ready for each class.
- Make sure the meeting area is adequate and comfortable for the class.

During Class

(Remember to try to keep the class time to one hour and a half.)

- Greet everyone as they arrive. Remember how nice it is when you are welcomed? Extend God's welcome to all. Have someone serve as the greeter and introduce people to one another if they are not already acquainted.
- Open with a time of worship and prayer, asking God to help you and each one understand and apply the God's Word to your lives.

- Recite the memory verse.
- Listen to the audio lesson.
- Work through the workbook, inviting discussion with a focus on application. We trust the questions will raise interesting discussion and understanding that will lead to application. If the group is large (more than 10), consider dividing it into smaller groups of three or four people to encourage discussion. Be sure to monitor the time and be careful that the conversation does not detract from the focus of the lesson and the study of God's Word.
- Thank all for coming and encourage attendance to the next class.
- Challenge the students to invite others to join the Bible study.
- Encourage the students to memorize the biblical passages of the lessons each week.

After Each Class

- Gather up all materials.
- Restore the meeting room to the proper order. Leave things more orderly than you found them.
- Fill out and file report forms.
- If you are meeting in someone's home, be sure to thank them for their hospitality.

Special Instructions for Teaching Auditory Learners

It is important to remember that those who cannot read and write learn and retain information differently than those of us who are literate. The auditory learners learn from listening and telling what they have heard. Illiteracy was not an obstacle in Jesus' day. It is good to remember and even tell those in your class that most of the disciples and the majority of the people who first shared and spread the Gospel could not read or write.

In many ways, auditory learners have a greater capacity to learn what they hear than we who must write something down to remember it. Take the time, therefore, to allow your students to hear the Scripture and the lessons, pausing the message and even going back to listen again to a portion if it was not understood, and then allow them to respond to questions. When auditory learners can "story back"—tell in their own words what they have heard and learned—it indicates that they have properly grasped the principle. Therefore, use the study questions to guide the study time as it will help in the learning process. Ask the questions out loud and encourage all to participate and this will lead them into a deeper understanding of God's Word and a stronger relationship with His Son, Jesus the Christ.

Why We Study Hebrew History

Chapter 1

Audio Lesson: Old Testament Survey lesson 27



Objective: To learn why Hebrew history is important for us to understand today.



These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come.

—1 Corinthians 10:11

Some historical narrative is in the first five books of the Bible, and the next twelve books of the Old Testament are all history. So we could say that the first seventeen books of the Old Testament are history books. Why should we study so much history of this one little nation of Israel?

One reason we read Hebrew history is to look for examples. When the Hebrew people obeyed the Word of God, God blessed them, and they are examples for us. When they did not obey the Word of God, they lived under the curse of God, and their lives are warnings for you and me. For this reason and many others we should study Hebrew history for it is through them that God has chosen to bless the whole world.



1. True or **false**? Hebrew history has very little relevance for us today.
2. **True** or false? Israel has a very special place in God's future plan.
3. **True** or false? As the people of God, Hebrew history is part of our own social history.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. The history of the Old Testament is _____.
a. Allegorical
b. Historical fact
c. Both
d. Neither. It is just a collection of legends.
5. Why is Hebrew history important for us? (*choose all that apply*)
a. It has examples for us to follow.
b. It has warnings for us to observe carefully.
c. It gives us clear instructions about all our social problems today.
d. It is the key to understanding science.
e. It tells us of the Messiah.
f. It relates to prophecies about the end times.
g. As people of God, it is part of our history.
6. With whom does the history of the Hebrew people begin?
a. Adam
b. Abraham
c. Moses
d. God
7. At the end of the book of Joshua, the Hebrew people said “we will serve God.” In the book of Judges, what will we learn about how well they kept their commitment?
a. They fulfilled it completely.
b. They kept it pretty well.
c. They tried hard, but they failed.
d. They frequently forgot about their commitment and stood away from God.
8. How did God feel about Israel’s desire for a human king?
a. He was grieved because He wanted to be their king.
b. He wanted them to have a king, but not until later.
c. He agreed that it was a good idea to be like other countries.
d. He was glad because that is what He wanted too.
9. What was the result of Israel’s monarchy?
a. It worked out very well, like God said.
b. It was better than God said it would be.
c. It eventually ended in futility and despair.
d. It did not last very long.
10. Whose sin resulted in a divided and conquered kingdom?
a. Saul’s
b. Solomon’s
c. David’s
d. Samuel’s

11. What happened to the two kingdoms after their captivities?
- a. We never hear of either one again.
 - b. Judah was lost, but Israel returned.
 - c. Israel was lost, but Judah returned.**
 - d. Both kingdoms returned.
12. What kind of leader did God prefer for His people?
- a. A prophet-priest**
 - b. A king
 - c. A dictator
 - d. A pastor
13. What kind of leader did God work through?
- a. Only prophets and priests
 - b. Only kings
 - c. Only leaders who were good
 - d. All kinds, even evil kings**
14. Number these seven important facts of Hebrew history in order that they occurred.
- 4 Northern kingdom is totally destroyed
 - 2 Israel is divided into northern kingdom and Judah
 - 3 Northern kingdom is taken captive by Assyria
 - 7 Judah returns from 70 years of captivity
 - 6 Babylon is conquered by Persia
 - 1 Israel becomes a kingdom
 - 5 Judah is taken captive by Babylon



What lessons have you learned from your past? How can learning about Israel's past affect your future?



Thank God for the rich history of His people and the legacy of faith that He has given to us through them. Thank God that through His chosen people He has revealed to us the Messiah, His Word, and salvation. Ask Him to help you continue that legacy by teaching faith to this generation and the next.



Going Deeper

1. Explain this statement: “The key verse to all the historical narratives in the Bible is found in the New Testament verse of 1 Corinthians 10:11, which tells us that all the things that happened to the Hebrew people happened to them for examples and warnings.” _____

2. Based on this verse, why do we study Hebrew history and what are two things we should look for in all of the historical narratives in both the Old and New Testaments? _____

3. One well-known paraphrase of the Bible tells us that these examples and warnings come in the form of object lessons or little allegories. Compare/relate that to the two verses where Jesus tells us how to approach the Word of God (John 17:17; 7:17). _____

4. Did Jesus teach that we should approach the Scriptures asking, “What is the literary form of this Scripture?” Or did He teach that we should approach Scripture looking for truth, with the commitment that we are going to apply that truth to our life? Explain. _____

5. How can we explain the commitment expressed by the children of Israel at the end of the book of Joshua and what we read about them in the darkest pages of Hebrew history in the book of Judges? _____

6. In what ways do the awful pages of Hebrew history contained in the book of Judges, which border on pornography, validate the book of Judges as authentic history? _____

7. What failure on the part of Joshua can explain the terrible bankruptcy of leadership in the next generation? _____

The Agonies of Apostasy

Chapter 2

Audio Lesson: Old Testament Survey lesson 28



Objective: To understand the cycle of apostasy in the book of Judges and learn from it.



And the people said to Joshua, "We will serve the LORD our God and obey him."

—Joshua 24:24

In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes.

—Judges 17:6

The book of Judges covers the 400 years after the conquest of the Promised Land, 400 years after the Israelites said, "We will serve the Lord our God and obey him." There was no king in this period of Hebrew history, and "every man did what was right in his own eyes" (Judges 17:6). The main problem in the book of Judges is the cycle of apostasy, or falling away, in which people who had pledged to obey God, began to abandon their faith. They would begin with commitment to God, and then fall away from that commitment. Then they would become corrupt and be defeated by their enemies. In their distress, they would cry out to God, who would send a judge to deliver them, and then they would recommit. Then the cycle would start all over again.

This cycle happens seven times in the book of Judges and teaches us that as individuals and as nations we can miss God's blessings when we forget our commitment to love and obey Him. Judges warns us of the dangers of neglecting God and the rewards of loving, worshiping, and serving Him.



1. **True** or false? The book of Joshua is about conquest, and the book of Judges is about failures after the conquest.

2. True or **false**? The Bible says that war is always wrong.

3. True or **false**? All Christians agree on issues of war and pacifism.
4. True or **false**? True followers of Christ never commit apostasy.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. How many years of Hebrew history are covered in the book of Judges?
 - a. 50
 - b. 100
 - c. 400**
 - d. 800
6. Who did Joshua train to succeed him?
 - a. Caleb
 - b. Gideon
 - c. Deborah
 - d. No one**
7. What's the key statement in the book of Judges?
 - a. Everyone did right in his own eyes.**
 - b. Everyone obeyed God.
 - c. Israel conquered all its enemies.
 - d. Israel had to leave the Promised Land.
8. What is the primary spiritual problem in Judges?
 - a. Apostasy, or standing away from God**
 - b. Corrupt priests
 - c. Enemies deceiving the people
 - d. Arguments over how to sacrifice
9. Place the following steps in their proper order in the cycle of apostasy.

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------|----------|
| a. Standing away from God | 12:00 | <u>c</u> |
| b. An enemy threatens | 1:00 | <u>a</u> |
| c. Right with God | 2:00 | <u>e</u> |
| d. Judge raised up to lead | 3:00 | <u>i</u> |
| e. Moral corruption | 4:00 | <u>b</u> |
| f. Defeated by enemy | 5:00 | <u>f</u> |
| g. Spiritual revival | 6:00 | <u>i</u> |
| h. Cry out to God for mercy | 7:00 | <u>h</u> |
| i. Slaughter and slavery | 8:00 | <u>l</u> |
| j. Political corruption | 9:00 | <u>g</u> |
| k. Deliverance from enemy | 10:00 | <u>d</u> |
| l. Repentance | 11:00 | <u>k</u> |



10. How many times in the book of Judges did Israel go through this cycle of apostasy?
- a. Once
 - b. Twice
 - c. Five times
 - d. Seven times**
11. What is a key message of the book of Judges for us today?
- a. Once in we are saved and enjoying God's blessings, we do not sin any more.
 - b. Sin is always possible. We must be careful.**
 - c. When we sin, God sends us out of the Promised Land.
 - d. We can never defeat all our enemies.
12. Who can go through the cycle of apostasy?
- a. Individuals
 - b. Churches
 - c. Nations
 - d. All of the above**
13. Which are consequences of apostasy?
- a. Slavery to the enemy
 - b. Moral corruption
 - c. Death
 - d. Suffering
 - e. All of the above**
14. Which of the following statements about repentance is true?
- a. We cannot really repent until we have experienced judgment.
 - b. Once we confess our sins, repentance is not necessary.
 - c. We do not have to experience judgment; we can repent first.**
 - d. When judgment comes, it is too late to repent. God will not restore us.



Where do you find yourself in the cycle of apostasy? Are you experiencing all of God's blessings in your "Promised Land"? If not, what are your spiritual enemies? Are there any areas of your life in which you need to repent?



Thank God for His forgiveness and ask Him to help you remain faithful to Him at all times.



Going Deeper

1. Demonstrate the cycle of apostasy by using the face of a clock. _____

2. Explain and discuss with others how this truth applies to churches, denominations, universities and nations today. _____

3. Apply this cycle of apostasy to yourself and your own walk of faith. How is it manifested in your life? _____

4. How does this truth about apostasy present the need for and the hope of repentance and revival? _____

5. What does the hard reality that Israel went through this cycle seven times in 400 years show us about the character of man and the character of God? _____

6. How does the leadership vacuum during this period of Hebrew history relate to a failure on the part of Joshua? _____

7. Where are you right now on this cycle of apostasy? What changes do you need to make? _____

Extraordinary Things through Ordinary People

Chapter 3

Audio Lesson: Old Testament Survey lesson 29



Objective: To learn how God works through the lives of ordinary people who are submitted and available to Him.



When the Lord raised up judges for them, the Lord was with the judge and delivered them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; for the Lord was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who oppressed and afflicted them.

—Judges 2:18

The personal lives of Israel's judges make for some of the most interesting character studies in the Bible. For the most part, the judges were ordinary people with the same strengths and faults that many of us have. The book of Judges shows us that God delights in doing extraordinary things through very ordinary people like you and me. Through God's Spirit, these ordinary people were able to accomplish great things. Though the book of Judges is primarily about apostasy and its terrible consequences, it shows us some wonderful truths about how God honors faithfulness and fulfills His purposes for His people.



1. True or **false**? God does great things through great people because of their greatness.
2. True or **false**? We do not have cycles of obedience and apostasy today like Israel did.
3. **True** or false? There were about seven cycles of apostasy and three civil wars in the period of the Judges.
4. **True** or false? Cycles of apostasy can apply to nations, individuals, families, and churches.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. Which of the following are applications from the book of Judges? (*choose all that apply*)
- a. We can repent and avoid God's judgment.**
 - b. Our enemies usually seem to be stronger than God is.
 - c. The biographies of the judges are examples and warnings for us.**
 - d. Even when we are faithful, God will not deliver us from all our enemies.
6. What did all the judges have in common?
- a. They were remarkable and exceptional people.
 - b. They were ordinary people but were available for God to use.**
 - c. They had all been trained as soldiers and leaders.
 - d. They were all men.
7. How did Gideon describe himself?
- a. As a mighty warrior
 - b. As a very faithful man
 - c. As the least of the weakest clan**
 - d. As a shepherd, not a fighter
8. What was Othniel's key to success?
- a. He was Caleb's nephew and the first judge.
 - b. He had been trained as a priest.
 - c. He knew how to deceive the enemy.
 - d. The Holy Spirit had control of him.**
9. What characteristic of Ehud did God use to deliver Israel?
- a. His great wisdom
 - b. His political skills
 - c. His large family
 - d. His left-handedness**
10. On what condition did Barak go to fight against Sisera?
- a. Deborah would go with him.**
 - b. He would have the opportunity to kill Sisera himself.
 - c. God would give him a large reward.
 - d. He would join the Canaanite army after Israel lost.
11. How did the people react after Jael killed Sisera and Israel was delivered from the Canaanites?
- a. They immediately rebelled against the Lord.
 - b. They celebrated and Deborah and Barak sang a song of victory.**
 - c. They mourned because of all the Israelites who died.
 - d. They decided to move out of Canaan.

12. Which of the following is one of the most common and effective ways people in the Bible expressed the inexpressible?

- a. Rituals
- b. Music**
- c. Prayers
- d. Preaching



What are your greatest weaknesses? Would any of them keep God from using you?



Praise God that He chooses ordinary people to do His work. Ask Him to use you in His power and strength as you learn to be available and on depend on Him.



Going Deeper

1. What do all the judges have in common? _____

2. In what way do the judges inspire the thought that God could use you to do extraordinary things for Him? _____

3. Does this mean that God only uses ordinary people and He cannot use extraordinarily gifted people? Explain. _____

4. Did these judges want to do what God was calling them to do and did they think they could do it? Explain. _____

5. Gifted or not gifted, what were the keys to their fruitful ministries? _____

6. Why have God's people always been a singing people, as when Deborah and Barak sang a song of victory? _____

7. Point out some examples and some warnings in the life and ministry of your favorite judge. _____

Every Man in His Place

Chapter 4

Audio Lesson: Old Testament Survey lesson 30



Objective: To learn spiritual secrets of faith and obedience from the life of Gideon.



The angel of the Lord appeared to him and said to him, “The Lord is with you, O valiant warrior.” Then Gideon said to him, “Oh my lord, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all His miracles which our fathers told us about, saying, ‘Did not the Lord bring us up out of Egypt?’ But now the Lord has abandoned us and given us into the hand of Midian.” The Lord looked at him and said, “Go in this your strength and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian. Have I not sent you?” ...Each stood in his place around the camp; and all the army ran, crying out as they fled.

—Judges 6:12 -14; 7:21

Many years had passed since the crossing of the Red Sea. The people of God had fallen away and were conquered and oppressed by Midian. God heard Israel’s cries and chose Gideon to deliver them. When an angel of God spoke to Gideon, Gideon wanted to know if God would still grant his people a miracle like He did in the time of Moses. The angel of the Lord called Gideon a mighty man of valor, even though Gideon was hiding and afraid. God demonstrated through Gideon that He delights in taking the least, the weakest, and the most ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary supernatural miracles.

It is important when God calls you to do a work for Him that you go into that work knowing that God has sent you and that God is with you. You must also learn some spiritual secrets that the judges and other great deliverers like Moses had to learn. Those spiritual secrets are:

- It is not a matter of who and what you are; it is a matter of Who and what God is.
- It is not a matter of what you can do; it is a matter of what God can do.
- It is not a matter of what you want; it is what God wants that matters.
- And when the miracles happen, you will then look back and say, “It was not what I did; it was what God did because God sent me, and God was with me.”



1. **True** or false? Midianites were one of Israel's terrible oppressors and did everything they could to destroy the land.
2. True or **false**? God's angel saw Gideon as weak and unimportant.
3. **True** or false? God has a right to test us, but we do not have a right to test Him.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. How did God respond to Gideon's request for miracles like in the days of old?
 - a. He got angry.
 - b. He told Gideon that he was part of a miracle God was about to do.**
 - c. He told Gideon that miracles do not happen anymore.
 - d. He felt sorry for Gideon.
5. How are we strengthened by knowing that God has sent us to do His work?
 - a. We know we are going in His strength and with His blessing.**
 - b. It shows us how much confidence God has in our abilities.
 - c. It reminds us that God loves us more than He loves other people.
 - d. It puts a lot of pressure on us to succeed.
6. Why does God like to choose people who are weak? (*choose all that apply*)
 - a. So they will have to learn how to be strong.
 - b. Because He knows they will have to depend on Him.**
 - c. It shows His power and strength.**
 - d. He does not. He chooses those who are strong.
7. Which of the following is/are God purpose(s) when He gives someone faith? (*choose all that apply*)
 - a. To keep us ignorant of His ways.
 - b. To prevent us from worshiping other gods.
 - c. To test our faith and prove it.**
 - d. To prove Himself to us.**
8. How did God respond the first time Gideon asked for confirmation by putting out the fleece?
 - a. He answered Gideon's request.**
 - b. He told Gideon to have faith without confirmation.
 - c. He got impatient with Gideon.
 - d. He decided to choose someone else.
9. Why did God respond the second time Gideon asked for confirmation with fleece?
 - a. He wanted Gideon to always ask for direction twice.
 - b. He wanted to confirm and affirm Gideon's faith.**
 - c. To give Gideon a different answer than the first time.
 - d. He wanted to prove that He always speaks with signs.

10. What is the difference between asking God for confirmation and putting Him to the test?
- a. There is no difference.
 - b. The first two times we ask, it is for confirmation. After that, we are putting Him to the test.
 - c. Asking for confirmation is a sign of unbelief, and putting Him to the test is a sign of rebellion.
 - d. Asking for confirmation comes from a desire to act in faith, but putting God to the test comes from a demand for God to prove Himself to us.**
11. Why did God tell Gideon to destroy his father's idol?
- a. To prove Gideon's faith and obedience.**
 - b. God wanted Gideon to get killed.
 - c. God was afraid of the idol.
 - d. God wanted to see if Gideon was foolish enough to offend his father.
12. Who does God prefer to use?
- a. A majority of His people. The more the better.
 - b. A single person because it is hard to get people to work together.
 - c. A faithful minority.**
 - d. He prefers to do things by Himself.
13. What was required for the success of Gideon's army against the Midianites?
- a. A huge army
 - b. One hundred percent participation**
 - c. Alliances with other countries
 - d. Years of planning
14. To defeat the Midianite army God chose to use?
- a. 32,000 valiant soldiers
 - b. 10,000 brave Israelites
 - c. A divine plan and 300 men**
 - d. Supernatural fire from heaven



If you were in Gideon's army, would you be one of those who went home? Or would you be completely committed to the cause? In what ways do you need to be more committed to God's kingdom?



Thank God for His victories and ask Him to show you how He wants you to serve Him faithfully. Ask Him to help you be like the faithful minority in Gideon's army that "stood, each one in his position."



Going Deeper

1. As you consider the essential meaning of the fleece of Gideon, what is the difference between God proving us and our proving God, putting Him to the test? _____

2. Relate and apply the daring plan that defeated the Midianites and the reduction of Gideon's army from 32,000 to 300, which was less than one percent of his original army. _____

3. Applying this story, are we to target our ministry energies to address the apathetic majority or the committed minority? Why? _____

4. How can the fact that the 300 victors "stood every man in his place" be applied to a church or to a ministry team today? _____

5. Why did God order Gideon to tear down his father's altar to a pagan god? _____

6. How much of the victory over the Midianites was supernatural miracle and how much of it was bold and daring faith on the part of Gideon and his 300 men? _____

7. Why did God call someone from the weakest and the least of the clans to lead the children of Israel into this great victory? _____

The Romance of Redemption

Chapter 5

Audio Lesson: Old Testament Survey lesson 31



Objective: To understand from the story of Ruth how God loves and redeems His people.



“Where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God.”

—Ruth 1:16

The book of Ruth is a beautiful love story that took place in the days of the judges. This love story mirrors salvation and our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Old and New Testament Scriptures tell us we are betrothed to Him as a bride is betrothed to her bridegroom. The book of Ruth presents this relationship as a “Romance of Redemption.”

Ruth was not a Hebrew, but after her Hebrew husband died, she chose to identify with her mother-in-law’s people. Her commitment to Naomi, to the Hebrew people, and to God is a remarkable picture of loyalty. In her story, we see how God loves those who are not part of His family and how His grace applies to those who love Him. From the law of the “kinsman redeemer,” we learn how God redeems those who come to Him and brings them into His eternal family.



1. **True** or false? The period of the judges is considered a low point of Hebrew history spiritually, culturally, intellectually, and socially.
2. **True** or false? A love story is very appropriate to include in the Bible.
3. **True** or false? The book of Ruth is more than a love story. It is also an allegory that teaches us spiritual truths.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. How does Scripture most frequently portray God's relationship to His people?
 - a. As a master to his slaves
 - b. As a teacher to his students
 - c. As a bridegroom to his bride**
 - d. As a general to his army
5. What does the book of Ruth illustrate?
 - a. Captivity
 - b. Redemption**
 - c. Disobedience
 - d. Holiness
6. What country was Ruth from?
 - a. Moab**
 - b. Egypt
 - c. Midian
 - d. Israel
7. What attitude did Ruth show when she went with Naomi to Bethlehem?
 - a. She was very reluctant to go.
 - b. She agreed to try living in Bethlehem for a few months.
 - c. She just wanted to get away from Moab.
 - d. She made a pledge of loyalty to the Hebrew people and their faith.**
8. Who did Naomi blame for all of her problems?
 - a. Ruth
 - b. Herself
 - c. God**
 - d. Boaz
9. How does God deal with prodigals? (*choose all that apply*)
 - a. He lets them suffer the consequences of their choices.**
 - b. He turns His back on them.
 - c. He makes everything work out well for them.
 - d. He welcomes them back when they return.**
10. How did God's laws affect Ruth?
 - a. She experienced judgment because of them.
 - b. She experienced grace because of them.**
 - c. She did not have to obey them because she was not a Hebrew.
 - d. The law excluded her from Israel.

11. What did a kinsman-redeemer do for a widow?

- a. **He paid all her debts and married her.**
- b. He paid her debts and let her go.
- c. He married her after she paid her debts.
- d. He agreed to find a good husband for her.



Naomi was bitter at God and did not want to accept any responsibility for the consequences of the choices she had made. Have you made some bad choices and are now suffering the consequences? What should you do?

In what ways is your commitment to God like Ruth's commitment? Will you go wherever He leads? Write a statement of your loyalty to Him in the space below.



Thank God for His grace and acceptance, and praise Him for His mercy. Ask Him to help you understand His love more deeply.



Going Deeper

1. Would a good title for the first chapter of the book of Ruth highlight a prodigal father, a prodigal mother, or a prodigal family? Why? _____

2. Joshua, Judges and Ruth are history books and allegories. What is the allegorical theme of the book of Ruth? _____

3. In what way does the pledge of loyalty that Ruth gives to Naomi (Ruth 1:16) show that she had become a believer while she was living in Moab? _____

4. What hope did Ruth have when she returned to Bethlehem with Naomi? _____

5. How did Ruth know she had the right to go follow behind the reapers in the fields as a gentile woman? _____

6. Why was Naomi overjoyed when she heard that Ruth had gleaned in the fields of Boaz? _____

7. Since this couple and their child are in the genealogy of the Messiah, was the reality that she happened to glean in the fields of Boaz fortunate, random chaos, a coincidence or was it Providential? Explain. _____

Love at First Sight

Chapter 6

Audio Lesson: Old Testament Survey lesson 32



Objective: To understand our role in the miracle of redemption.



“May the Lord repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge.”

—Ruth 2:12

“For anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

—Romans 10:13

The book of Ruth is a profound allegory that illustrates redemption. To redeem means “to buy back” and “to bring back.” Boaz redeemed Ruth in two ways. First, he bought her back when he paid all her debts. Then he established a relationship with her that brought her back into the family of God.

What we see in Ruth is “Romance in Reverse.” In most cultures, the man chooses and proposes marriage to a woman. The Jewish laws of redemption that are applied in this beautiful love story meant that Ruth had to propose to Boaz and ask him to be her redeemer. The same thing is true in our redemption. All Boaz could do was show Ruth that he loved her and that he wanted to redeem her. But she had to decide that she wanted to be redeemed by Boaz. In the same way, we must decide that we want Jesus to be our redeemer—to buy us back through the cross and to bring us back into the family of God.



1. **True** or false? Ruth was an ancestor of Jesus Christ.

2. True or **false**? Boaz was very reluctant to show kindness to Ruth.
3. **True** or false? In redemption, we have something to believe and someone to receive.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. What did Ruth do when she got to Bethlehem? (*choose all that apply*)
 - a. **She went right to work to take care of her mother-in-law and herself.**
 - b. She began to complain and blame God for all her problems.
 - c. **She had hope in God and His redemption.**
 - d. She began to beg.
5. Why was it important for a relative of a deceased husband to marry his widow?
 - a. **It fulfilled a law given in Deuteronomy to preserve the family's bloodline.**
 - b. She would be rejected by society if she remained single.
 - c. Because no one else would want to marry her.
 - d. Because she was considered the property of the family.
6. Why did Boaz give another man the opportunity to marry Ruth before he agreed to?
 - a. Because he really did not want to marry her.
 - b. So he could keep his family's inheritance to himself.
 - c. Because it was against the law to marry a Moabite.
 - d. **Because the closest relative to the deceased husband had the right to marry her if he wanted to.**
7. Why did the other man not want to marry Ruth?
 - a. He was too old for her.
 - b. He already had a wife.
 - c. **He did not want to redeem her and divide his inheritance with her.**
 - d. She was not beautiful.
8. How did Boaz buy Ruth back and also bring her back?
 - a. By paying her father a bride price and building a house for her.
 - b. By hiring her to work in the fields and giving her a room to stay in.
 - c. **By paying all her debts and marrying her.**
 - d. By buying her as a slave.
9. How does Jesus buy us back and also bring us back?
 - a. He gives us all the money we ask for and gives us a big house.
 - b. **He paid the price for our sin debt and He comes into our hearts.**
 - c. He makes us earn our salvation and will take us to heaven if we're good.
 - d. He makes us His slaves and commands us to live in difficult places.

10. How is Ruth a picture of each of us?

- a. **We are all spiritual foreigners who need God's grace and love.**
- b. We should always let the woman propose to the man.
- c. All of us are very kind to our mother-in-law.
- d. We must all leave the land in which we were born.

11. How is the story of Ruth a "romance in reverse?"

- a. She had to marry someone who was lower in status than she was.
- b. The longer she knew Boaz, the less she loved him.
- c. It happened before God gave any laws about marriage.
- d. **For her redemption, she had to propose to the man.**

12. How is Boaz like Jesus?

- a. He will redeem us only if He has to.
- b. He tries to get someone else to save us.
- c. He lets us eat the leftovers of the crops.
- d. **He shows us that He loves us and waits for us to accept Him as our redeemer.**

13. How is Naomi a good picture of the church?

- a. She demonstrates gratitude and grace from beginning to end.
- b. She never does any work.
- c. **She tells Ruth how to be redeemed.**
- d. She is always persecuted for her faith.



In what ways has God shown you His love? What steps did He take to redeem you? When did you ask God to be your redeemer? If you have not, ask Him to be your redeemer today.

I Corinthians 6:20 says that we have been redeemed—bought back. "You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body." In what ways should you honor God with your body? What steps should you take to live a redeemed life?



Thank God for His love, the romance of redemption, and for knowing that He redeems you purely out of love, grace, and mercy. Ask Him for an even closer relationship than you have with Him now and ask Him who you should share the redemption story with.



Going Deeper

1. In this allegorical “Romance of Redemption” describe how Boaz represents the Redeemer, Ruth represents the redeemed, and Naomi represents the Church. _____

2. In this “Romance in Reverse,” how does the fact that Ruth had to propose to Boaz apply to the allegory of our redemption? (Consider Revelation 3:20) _____

3. In what way can we apply to our marriage the fact that Boaz did not consummate the marriage until he made it legal with the elders? _____

4. How did the reality that Boaz bought Ruth back by paying all her debts and brought her back through marriage demonstrate the Gospel of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ for our redemption? _____

5. How does this beautiful love story illustrate the concept of grace and redemption? _____

6. When Ruth met Boaz and he lavished his attentions on her, she asked the question, “Why have I found grace in your eyes?” In how many ways had she been the beneficiary of the grace of God? _____

7. As Ruth proposed to Boaz and asked him to be her redeemer, have you ever asked the risen Christ to be your personal Redeemer? _____

The Kingdom of God

Chapter 7

Audio Lesson: Old Testament Survey lesson 33



Objective: To introduce and understand the history books that describe the kingdom of God.



When they said, "Give us a king to lead us," this displeased Samuel; so he prayed to the Lord. And the Lord told him: "Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king."

—1 Samuel 8:6-7

The next six books tell the history of Israel's kings and begin to describe what the kingdom of God is like. These books help us understand the concept of the kingdom of God in the New Testament, especially in the teachings of Jesus. These Kingdom Literature History Books can be confusing, but seven basic facts of Hebrew history will help you understand them:

1. The united kingdom (under Saul, David, and Solomon)
2. The divided kingdom
3. The Assyrian captivity of The Northern Kingdom: Israel
4. The extinction of The Northern Kingdom
5. The Babylonian captivity of The Southern Kingdom: Judah
6. The Persian conquest of Babylon
7. The return of the Jews from the Babylonian (Persian) Captivity

In the Old Testament, God's kingdom was literal. It was a historical and geographical realm over which God was sovereign, with God Himself wanting to be the only ruler over a specific people in a specific place at a specific time in history. The people, however, rejected God as their king and asked for human kings, which they got. The results were often tragic.



1. True or **false**? The books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles are known as a collection of allegories and poetry.
2. True or **false**? In the Old Testament, the kingdom of God was only symbolic, not a real kingdom.
3. True or **false**? The past is not important, and the study of Hebrew history is boring and has no value for us today.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. What does Jesus teach us to put first in our lives?
 - a. Our work
 - b. Our family
 - c. Our friends
 - d. The kingdom of God**

5. Read John 3:3. According to Jesus, who is able to see the kingdom of God?

- a. Anyone who looks for it
- b. Only those who are born again**
- c. Only priests
- d. Only Jesus Himself

Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."
—John 3:3

6. What was God's desire for the government of Israel?
 - a. To rule Israel Himself through a prophet-priest**
 - b. To give them a king from the very beginning
 - c. To make them the world's first democracy
 - d. To make them the wealthiest nation in the world
7. Who was the last prophet-priest to govern the nation before Israel's first king?
 - a. Saul
 - b. Moses
 - c. Samuel**
 - d. David
8. When Israel rejected Samuel, who were they really rejecting?
 - a. All of the priests
 - b. All of the prophets
 - c. All of the judges
 - d. God Himself**
9. What was Saul, Israel's first king, like?
 - a. Good and faithful
 - b. Weak and fearful
 - c. Disobedient and unfaithful**
 - d. Wise and generous

10. What was David, Israel's second king, like?
- a. Angry and insane
 - b. Faithful and obedient**
 - c. Bitter and jealous
 - d. Weak and fearful
11. What happened to the kingdom of Israel after David and Solomon? (*choose all that apply*)
- a. It was divided.**
 - b. It grew and flourished.
 - c. It was conquered and taken into captivity.**
 - d. It stayed about the same.
 - e. It was taken captive and suffered greatly.**
12. How does someone become part of God's kingdom?
- a. By living a perfect life
 - b. By submitting to God as King on His terms**
 - c. By moving to Israel
 - d. By going to church as often as possible
13. How do the Old Testament history books relate to the New Testament?
- a. There is no relation between them.
 - b. The New Testament kingdom replaces the Old Testament kingdom.
 - c. The Old Testament teaches us about the kingdom of God.**
 - d. The kingdom is exactly the same in both testaments.

"And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

— Matthew 6:28-34



What are your priorities in life? What should your priorities be? What can you do to seek first God's kingdom today and each day?



Thank God for the opportunity to be part of His kingdom forever. Ask Him to remove any obstacle to His reign in your heart. Ask God to help you seek Him and His kingdom first.



Going Deeper

1. What was God's plan for the government and leadership of His people? _____

2. How did Samuel represent the kind of leader that God needed for the kind of government He wanted? _____

3. In what ways was David the kind of leader that God wanted to lead His people, and in what ways were Saul and Solomon not the kinds of leaders God wanted to lead His people? _____

4. Why does God give us six books in His inspired library that teach us about the Kingdom of God? _____

5. How does this teaching relate to the New Testament, especially the teaching of Jesus about the Kingdom of God? (consider Mark 1: 14-15; John 3: 3-5 and Matthew 6:28-34) _____

6. What value did Jesus place upon the Kingdom of God when He taught that seeing and entering into the Kingdom of God is the purpose of the new birth, and that we should seek first the Kingdom of God? _____

7. How does all of this teaching about the Kingdom of God relate to you personally? _____

Heard of God

Chapter 8

Audio Lesson: Old Testament Survey lesson 34



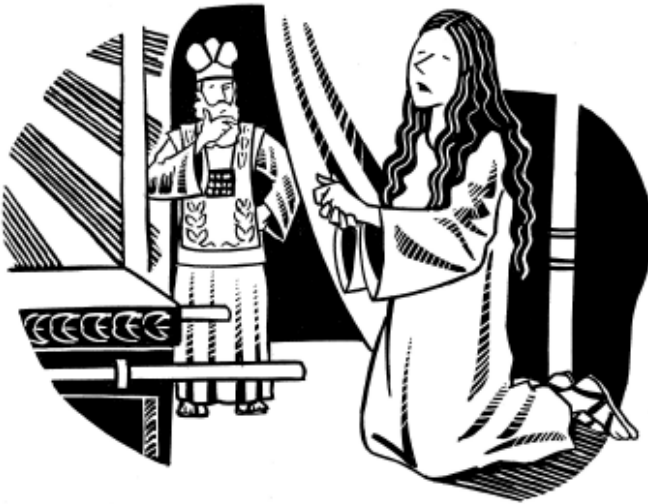
Objective: To understand the warnings and examples contained in 1 and 2 Samuel.



“If you fear the Lord and serve and obey him and do not rebel against his commands, and if both you and the king who reigns over you follow the Lord your God—good! But if you do not obey the Lord, and if you rebel against his commands, his hand will be against you, as it was against your fathers.”

—1 Samuel 12:14-15

The books of Samuel communicate God’s truth to us in the form of short biographies, focusing on three people in particular. The first eight chapters of 1 Samuel give us a positive example to follow in the life and leadership of the prophet Samuel. In chapters 9 through 15, the focus shifts to Israel’s first king, Saul, whose life is a warning against making wrong choices, falling away from the Lord, and living for self. Beginning with 1 Samuel 16 and going all the way through the end of 2 Samuel (30 chapters in all), the primary character is David. David is the best king Israel ever had, and judging from the amount of space the Holy Spirit gave to his story, he is one of the most important characters in the Bible.



1. True or **false**? The stories in the history books of the Old Testament are only illustrations for us and are not always really true.
2. **True** or false? The books of 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, and 1 and 2 Chronicles were not always divided into six books.
3. **True** or false? The three main characters in the books of Samuel are Samuel, Saul, and David.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. Read 1 Corinthians 10:11. What should we look for in the literature of the Old Testament?

- a. Entertaining stories
- b. Scientific principles
- c. Examples and warnings**
- d. Political lessons

*All these events happened to them as examples for us.
They were written down to warn us, who live at the time
when this age is drawing to a close.*

—1 Corinthians 10:11

5. In the blank beside the name of each of the following characters, indicate whether the character is primarily a warning or an example for us.

- a. Samuel **example**
- b. Saul **warning**
- c. David **example and warning**

6. How does David rank among Israel's kings?

- a. He was the worst king Israel ever had.
- b. He was the best king Israel ever had.**
- c. He was average.
- d. His reign was too short for us to know how good he was.

7. David wrote more than half of which book in the Bible?

- a. 1 Samuel
- b. 2 Samuel
- c. Chronicles
- d. Psalms**

8. What does the name Samuel mean?

- a. Loved by God
- b. Heard of God**
- c. False prophet
- d. Pride of the kingdom

9. What did Samuel accomplish during his lifetime? (*choose all that apply*)

- a. He had a part in removing the priest of Israel.**
- b. He conquered the Philistines.
- c. He anointed Israel's first king.**
- d. He removed Israel's first king.**
- e. He became Israel's first king.
- f. He built a temple for the Lord.
- g. He anointed Israel's greatest king.**

10. What did Saul do when Samuel told him that he would be the first king? (*choose all that apply*)

- a. He became very proud.
- b. He was very humble.**
- c. He could not believe it.**
- d. He rejoiced and told everyone to obey him or be punished.

11. Why did many people think Saul would be a good king?
- a. He was very wise.
 - b. He was a good politician.
 - c. He was tall and handsome.**
 - d. He was very faithful and obedient.
12. What were God's plans for Saul?
- a. To establish his kingdom forever**
 - b. To prove to Israel that all kings were bad
 - c. To replace him with David as soon as possible
 - d. To make him Israel's greatest prophet
13. What is the key to receiving redemption?
- a. Obey
 - b. Believe**
 - c. Serve
 - d. Sacrifice
14. What is the key to receiving the anointing of the Spirit?
- a. Obey**
 - b. Believe
 - c. Serve
 - d. Sacrifice
15. Saul had the kingdom taken away from him because he _____
- a. Was proud.
 - b. Was not a good leader.
 - c. Disobeyed God twice.**
 - d. Offered the wrong sacrifice.

But Samuel replied, "What is more pleasing to the LORD: your burnt offerings and sacrifices or your obedience to his voice? Obedience is far better than sacrifice. Listening to him is much better than offering the fat of rams. —I Samuel 15:22



What lessons from Samuel's life will help you grow as a believer? What warnings from Saul's life do you most want to avoid?



Thank God for His faithfulness to you in Jesus Christ. Ask Him to help you learn complete obedience in every area of your life.



Going Deeper

1. What are three ways that the meaning of the name Samuel (“heard of God”) applied to the life and ministry of this great spiritual leader? _____

2. As we continue to study Hebrew history, name two things that the instruction of the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 10:11 tells us we should be looking for. _____

3. How does this instruction relate to what we find in the characters of Samuel, Saul and David?

4. Why did God through Samuel take the disobedience of Saul so seriously? _____

5. What are several reasons why you think that the initial spiritual profile of Saul shows he at least had the potential to be a great spiritual leader? _____

6. Does this mean that we can have great spiritual leadership potential that is lost and wasted as a result of disobedience? Explain. _____

7. What concept is the key to the anointing of the Holy Spirit on the life of a believer? (Consider Acts 5:32; John 14: 15,16; 22-24) _____

Anointed Obedience

Chapter 9

Audio Lesson: Old Testament Survey lesson 35



Objective: To understand the main differences between the life of Saul and the life of David.



“The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”

—1 Samuel 16:7

Saul’s disobedience caused the Lord to cast him away from His presence and take His Holy Spirit from him. When that happened, the life of Saul became a walking definition of what we describe in our culture as the disintegration of a personality.

David’s life was the exact opposite of the life of Saul. The dominating characteristic of David’s life was obedience—he was a man after the Lord’s own heart who would do all God’s will. Where Saul’s life was disintegrating because he had divorced himself from God, God was bringing everything in David together because David was more focused on obedience and Saul was focused on disobedience.

David was a shepherd, a musician, a warrior, a leader, and a friend. Most important of all, he is described as a man after God’s own heart.



1. True or **false**? God is just as concerned about how we look as He is about how pure our heart is.
2. True or **false**? David became king immediately after Samuel anointed him.
3. **True** or false? God spent years preparing David to be king.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. Which of the following words describe David? (*choose all that apply*)
- a. Godly**
 - b. Weak
 - c. Musical**
 - d. Obedient**
 - e. Strong and brave**
 - f. Handsome**
 - g. Double-minded
 - h. Afraid
 - i. Heroic**
5. Which of the following words describe Saul? (*choose all that apply*)
- a. Godly
 - b. Paranoid**
 - c. Faithful
 - d. Strong**
 - e. Weak
 - f. Jealous**
 - g. Disobedient**
 - h. Musical
 - i. Militant**
6. Why did David fight Goliath?
- a. He thought he was stronger than Goliath.
 - b. He thought Goliath would surrender.
 - c. He wanted to be promoted in rank.
 - d. He was outraged that God and His people were being mocked.**
7. How did David's men feel about David?
- a. They were very loyal.**
 - b. They resented him.
 - c. They liked Saul better.
 - d. They were afraid of him.
8. How is David's relationship with Jonathan described?
- a. As immoral
 - b. As a rivalry
 - c. As a beautiful friendship**
 - d. Like a father and son
9. Why was David a fugitive from king Saul?
- a. Jonathan asked his father to kill David.
 - b. David sinned against Saul and had to flee.
 - c. Saul wanted to make David king, but David did not want to be.
 - d. Saul was insanely jealous that God had chosen David.**

10. What did David write when he was a fugitive?
- a. The book of Ruth
 - b. His autobiography
 - c. Many of the psalms**
 - d. Letters to Saul's supporters
11. What did God use to prepare David to be king? (*choose all that apply*)
- a. He was the little brother, youngest of eight.**
 - b. He had the boring job of watching sheep.**
 - c. He was asked to lead the army to defeat a giant.
 - d. He got a job playing music in the king's castle.**
12. What did God promise David?
- a. To make him king of all of Asia
 - b. To establish his dynasty forever**
 - c. To let David build a temple for God
 - d. To cut off his descendants completely



When God looks at your heart, what do you think He sees? Are there areas you have held back from God? What “giants”—impossible circumstance that test your faith—are you facing? In what ways can you devote more of your heart to Him?



Ask God to give you a heart like David's. Thank Him that He has sought for you to know Him and love Him.



Going Deeper

1. Contrast what the people saw when they looked at Saul with what God saw when he, through Samuel, looked at David (1 Samuel 16:7). Compare this to what James calls the sin of showing favoritism, partiality, or in the Authorized Translation, the sin of respecting persons (James 2: 1-9). _____

2. What did God see when He looked at the heart of David? _____

3. Do you base your evaluation of people on their persons (externals or masks) or on what you believe is in their heart? Explain. _____

4. Profile the tool kit and the leadership gift patterns of David that qualified him to be the best king that Israel ever had. _____

5. When David fought Goliath, what motivated him, and where was his confidence that he, as a young teenager, could kill the 9-foot giant? _____

6. Where are most of David's writings found? What do they tell us about who/what David was? _____

7. As you consider the disintegration of the personality of Saul and the integration of the life and personality of David, why did Saul hate David so much, and what does it tell us about the character of David when he refused to kill Saul? _____

How to Fail Successfully

Chapter 10

Audio Lesson: Old Testament Survey lesson 36



Objective: To learn from David's mistakes as well as his desire to, confess, repent and be forgiven.



Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord"—and you forgave the guilt of my sin.

—Psalm 32:5

Obedience is the prerequisite for experiencing the power of the Holy Spirit. For much of his life, David was a shining example of this truth. But David also knew that God's blessings were not given because of his achievements. They were given because of God's grace.

In one season of David's life, he committed the sins of adultery and murder; and for a whole year, he tried to cover up his sin. His sins show us that even godly people may give in to temptation if they are not careful. The guilt David felt afterward actually made him physically ill. Eventually, when confronted with his sin, he turned to the Lord. There is a sense, however, in which the greatness of David is emphasized by the way he responded to his failures and to the consequences of his sin. When we fail, the important thing is what we do about our failure—how we respond to it. It is at this point that David's life, even when he sinned, becomes one of the greatest examples in the Bible for us.



1. **True** or false? Saul is a good example of "anointed disobedience."
2. True or **false**? "Anointed disobedience" can last indefinitely, even for someone's entire life.
3. **True** or false? David is a good example of "anointed obedience."

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. What did David most want to do for God?
 - a. Conquer more territory
 - b. Build God a house (temple)**
 - c. Become a priest
 - d. Improve the nation's economy
5. How did David respond to God's promise for his descendants?
 - a. He thanked God for giving David what he deserved.
 - b. He refused to accept it.
 - c. He did not have faith to believe it.
 - d. He humbly recognized that it was a gift of grace.**
6. How could someone who loved God as much as David did sin as seriously as David did?
 - a. He thought he was doing what God wanted him to do.
 - b. He forgot God's laws.
 - c. No one is too great to sin. We all have weaknesses.**
 - d. He did not really love God as much as he said he did.
7. When are we usually most vulnerable to temptation?
 - a. When we are at the peak of our spiritual life and think we cannot sin.**
 - b. When we are aware of how sinful we can be.
 - c. When God tempts us more than we can bear.
 - d. When everything in life is going wrong.
8. What sin(s) did David commit? (*choose all that apply*)
 - a. Taking God's name in vain
 - b. Stealing
 - c. Adultery**
 - d. Dishonoring parents
 - e. Murder**
 - f. Breaking the Sabbath
9. What was David's spiritual condition during the year he covered up his sin?
 - a. He was still very fruitful and close to God.
 - b. He was spiritually dry and felt distant from God.**
 - c. He did not notice any difference.
 - d. He grew much closer to God than before and all his prayers were answered.
10. What was David's response when he realized the seriousness of his sin?
 - a. He got mad at Nathan the prophet.
 - b. He paid everyone who knew about his sin to keep quiet.
 - c. He pretended that he had never sinned.
 - d. He confessed his sin and repented.**

11. How can we learn from David?
- a. He is a good example for us.
 - b. He is a strong warning for us.
 - c. He is both an example and a warning.**
 - d. He is neither an example nor a warning.
12. Which of the following did David handle well?
- a. Life
 - b. Death
 - c. Success
 - d. Failure
 - e. All of the above**
13. What happened after David was forgiven?
- a. There were still consequences of his sin.**
 - b. God removed all consequences of his sin.
 - c. He had to abdicate his throne.
 - d. He became insane like Saul had been.



How do you react when you sin? Are there any sins that you have never honestly confessed to God?



Ask God to show you if there are any sins that are hindering His blessing in your life. Confess any sins that God brings to your mind and thank Him for His complete forgiveness. Pray that He would help you stand firm against temptation.



Going Deeper

1. What does the reality that a man as holy and godly as David could sin so grievously teach us about temptation and sin? (Consider 1 Corinthians 10:12, 13) _____

2. According to the way God sees our sins, which was the worst of David's sins, his adultery or his murder of Bathsheba's husband? _____

3. In what ways did David fail successfully? _____

4. In what ways did David not fail successfully? _____

5. Robert Louis Stevenson wrote: "Soon or late every man must sit down to a banquet of consequences." The Scriptures tell us that the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). What were some of the worst consequences of David's sin and why? _____

6. If David had not had that cover-up of his sin for a whole year, might his "banquet of consequences" not have been as severe as it was? In other words, if David had gone to the prophet Nathan instead of Nathan coming to him, could the consequences of his sin have been different? Explain. _____

7. How did the prophet know about the sin of David as he accused David with great courage? What changes might Nathan have seen in David's life during that year of cover-up? _____

The Blessedness of Forgiveness

Chapter 11

Audio Lesson: Old Testament Survey lesson 37



Objective: To understand what true repentance is and how God forgives our sin.



“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

—1 John 1:9

“Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.”

—Psalm 51:10

In the psalms that David wrote in the years of turmoil after he sinned, we come to understand his greatness, even though he had failed morally and spiritually.

David was a king for 40 years—for 16 years before he sinned, and for 24 more years after God restored his soul and kingdom. But that restoration only came after David walked in the paths of righteousness by confessing his sin, repenting of it, and committing himself to follow the Lord’s way.

Like David, we all have a guilt problem. God’s solution to our guilt problem is forgiveness, but to experience His forgiveness, like David, we must confess that that we have sinned. We show that we understand and believe God’s solution to our guilt problem when we confess and then offer the sacrifices of righteousness—doing what is right—that express our repentance and put trust in the Lord. When we follow the example of David’s confession in Psalm 51, we are following God’s path for forgiveness and restoration. We then can experience the blessedness of forgiveness, because our guilt will then be removed.



1. True or **false**? David is only a minor character because the Bible does not give much space to his life.
2. **True** or false? The historical information in 1 and 2 Samuel helps us understand the book of Psalms.
3. True or **false**? The psalms always describe for us how life is when everything goes well.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. What happens when we try to be our own shepherd?
 - a. We are able to control our lives well.
 - b. We always know which direction to take.
 - c. God blesses us for our independence.
 - d. Life does not work out well.**
5. How did David respond when another man cursed him?
 - a. He did not stop the cursing because he thought he might deserve it.**
 - b. He executed the man who cursed him.
 - c. He became afraid of God.
 - d. He answered the man with another curse.
6. What happens when we submit to God's chastisement?
 - a. He keeps chastising us until we are very embarrassed and discouraged.
 - b. He restores our soul.**
 - c. He tells us to stop complaining.
 - d. We lose status in God's eyes.
7. How do we know when we are forgiven?
 - a. When we deny that we are guilty
 - b. When people forgive us just as God does
 - c. When we forget what we did
 - d. The Bible says we are forgiven when we confess and repent.**
8. When David asks God to create a new heart in him, what is he really asking for?
 - a. To go back to the way he was before he was a sinner
 - b. To help him change his mind about sin
 - c. For God to create something entirely new that David has never had**
 - d. To be physically healthy again
9. What did David believe about restoration?
 - a. That God would certainly restore him**
 - b. That God might restore him if he promised never to sin again
 - c. That God was reluctant to restore him
 - d. That God only restores people from small sins

10. How does God really want us to react to our sin?
- a. He wants us to make the right animal sacrifices.
 - b. He wants us to have a broken and sorrowful heart.**
 - c. He wants us to hide our sin from everyone else.
 - d. He wants us to understand that we have not sinned as badly as others.

11. What does confession mean?
- a. We are very sorry we were caught.
 - b. We say we are sorry.
 - c. We must do penance and sacrifice.
 - d. We agree with God and admit that we sinned.**



Can you remember a time when you had a broken heart about your sin? What did you say to God? In what ways did He restore you?



soul.

Ask God to give you the same perspective on sin that He has. Ask God to help you to see your sin as He sees it and that you quickly confess it to Him. Thank Him that He loves you enough to chastise you when you sin. Thank Him for His promise to restore your



Going Deeper

1. What does Psalm 51 tell us about the confession of his sin, and what does Psalm 32 tell us about the results of that confession and the state of David's spiritual, emotional, psychological and physical health before he made that confession? _____

2. What kind of a year did David experience while he was trying to cover-up all that he had done? (I recommend the Living Bible Paraphrase of Psalm 32 while you are thinking about the answers to these questions.) _____

3. What does this tell us about the futility of trying to cover up and live with unconfessed sin?

4. In Psalm 51 David literally prays in the Hebrew to *un-sin my sin*. He also uses the word "justified." In what way does this show us that David was a prophet? What books of the New Testament were written to show us what God had to do to make it possible for God to un-sin our sin, or to declare us justified? _____

5. How do these two books of Samuel help us to know how to interpret many of David's psalms? _____

6. Explain the meaning of this statement: "When we bring our guilt and sin before God with a confession, we must then remember what God remembers, and forget what God forgets." _____

7. David prayed the great petition, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.” (Psalm 51:10) What was he telling God and us about himself, and what, precisely, was he asking God to do? _____

Three Facts of Sin and Three Facts of Salvation

Chapter 12

Audio Lesson: Old Testament Survey lesson 38



Objective: To learn both the tragedy of sin and the remedy for sin.



“As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.”

—Psalm 103:12

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.

—Romans 8:1, 2

David tells us that we solve our guilt problem when we acknowledge God’s standard of what is right and wrong, and that standard convinces us that we are sinners. When we confess our sin, God will restore our soul. That is one of the most important applications we can make from the story of David’s sin.

We can learn three facts about sin in David’s life. First, sin has terrible consequences. Sin always comes with a penalty, both future and present. Second, sin has great power. If a man like David could be brought down by the power of sin, who are we to think that we can withstand it? We should never underestimate the power of sin. And third, sin has a very high price tag. *“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord”* (Romans 6:23). It leaves scars and its stains, and some of those scars and stains are irreversible and irrevocable.

Like the black velvet background against which a jeweler displays his diamonds, sin’s dark penalty, power, and price tag make three facts of salvation shine all the brighter. First, Jesus Christ has removed the penalty of sin. Second, the Holy Spirit is more powerful than the power of sin and can keep the power of sin from ruling our life. The third fact of salvation is a little more complicated, because it relates to sin’s stains, scars, and price tag. In the sight of God, even the stains of sin are washed away by forgiveness, but sometimes sin’s stains and scars are irreversible on a human level. Consequences for our sins may remain, even though we are completely forgiven by God.



1. True or **false**? The Bible teaches us to never have guilty feelings.
2. True or **false**? The best way to solve guilt is to lower our standards and deny that we fall short or sin.
3. **True** or false? Sin has a penalty.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. What is the only way to remove the future penalty of sin?
 - a. By paying God back for our sin
 - b. By forgetting our sin completely
 - c. By doing many good works
 - d. By accepting Jesus Christ's finished work on the cross by faith**
5. Which of the following are present consequences of sin? (*choose all that apply*)
 - a. Freedom
 - b. Wasting parts of our lives**
 - c. Bondage to sin**
 - d. Spiritual and material prosperity
 - e. Peace in our heart
6. How long do we have to be a Christian before overcoming the power of sin?
 - a. At least three years
 - b. Usually after ten years
 - c. As long as it takes to have enough faith
 - d. We never completely overcome sin's power in this life. It is always possible for us to sin.**
7. According to the Bible, what are the wages of sin?
 - a. Memorizing and repeating long prayers
 - b. Many sacrifices of meat and grain offerings
 - c. Years of penance
 - d. Death**

8. What happens to the consequences and scars of sin when we have been forgiven?
- a. **Many times the consequences and scars remain.**
 - b. God removes them completely.
 - c. We forget them, though everyone else remembers.
 - d. We remember them, but no one else does.
9. How many solutions did God provide for the future penalty of sin?
- a. **One**
 - b. About three
 - c. Many
 - d. None. He only took care of the present penalty.
10. How can we keep the power of sin under control?
- a. We cannot.
 - b. By self-discipline
 - c. **Only by the power of the Holy Spirit**
 - d. By memorizing God's laws
11. How does God see our sin after He forgives us?
- a. **He chooses not to see our sin anymore.**
 - b. He always sees the stains.
 - c. It still grieves Him.
 - d. He reminds us of our sin often.
12. In what ways does God justify us when He forgives us?
- a. In the eyes of people
 - b. **In His eyes**
 - c. Both
 - d. Neither
13. What are the three facts of salvation? (*choose all that apply*)
- a. **In God's eyes we are justified, but we still suffer the consequences of sin.**
 - b. **The Holy Spirit can give us the power to conquer sin.**
 - c. **Jesus' death on the cross paid the future penalty of sin.**
 - d. We can live in sin because God forgives us.



Satan does not want us to know or think about the three facts of sin. What facts of God's salvation do you need to understand and experience more in your life? Who do you need to tell about the three facts of sin and three facts of salvation?



Thank God for His forgiveness and great grace and mercy in your life. Ask Him to help you experience His power over sin more in your life. Ask God to give you courage to share the good news of His salvation with others.



Going Deeper

1. Explain how you relate, by personal application, to the three facts of sin? _____

2. How do you relate, by personal application, to the three facts of salvation? _____

3. How do you relate, by personal application, to the challenges involved in the third fact of sin and salvation? _____

4. Relate these three questions and their answers to the sin of David. _____

5. What does the fact that David sinned in the 16th year of his reign and yet remained as king for 24 more years after his sin tell you about the way God rehabilitates a leader who has fallen into sin? Consider the fact that the Latin root of the word *rehabilitation* means *to invest again with dignity*.” _____

6. Did this whole experience increase or decrease David’s capacity to be a good king? How? _____

7. Did David have more or less compassion and understanding for people who fell into sin (consider the psalms of David that were written during this period of his life and reign as a king)? Explain. _____

Kings and Prophets

Chapter 13

Audio Lesson: Old Testament Survey lesson 39



Objective: To introduce the books that tell of the kings and the prophets of the Hebrew nations after David and to learn from the examples and warnings.



“O Lord, the God of Israel, there is no God like You in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and showing loving-kindness to Your servants who walk before You with all their heart.”

—1 Kings 8:23

The books of 1 and 2 Kings tell us about the kingdom of man that resulted from Israel not wanting God to be their king. In these books, we will find awesome warnings, especially in the lives of the wicked kings, and we will also find great examples in the lives of godly prophets, especially prophets like Elijah and Elisha. In 1 Kings, we learn about the division of that human kingdom. In 2 Kings, we learn the details of their sad captivities. There are many warnings in the books of Kings because most of these kings were wicked.

The significance of these two books is that they record the division of the Jewish nation into two kingdoms, Israel and Judah, and the collapse and captivity of each kingdom. They also record the ministries of Elijah, Elisha, and many other great prophets of God. We might call 1 and 2 Kings “The Rise and Fall of the Hebrew Nation.” In 2 Kings, we learn about the northern kingdom’s captivity by Assyria. These 10 tribes are often called “the lost tribes of Israel” because they are never heard from again in Scripture or in history. Later, the southern kingdom of Judah was also taken captive. They were taken to Babylon and returned 70 years later to rebuild Jerusalem when the Persian emperor freed them.

Two themes stand out in these books: (1) how God does not give up on Israel even in the midst of terrible apostasy and backsliding, and (2) God’s patience in dealing with some of their corrupt kings.



1. **True** or false? The book of 1 Kings is about the division of Israel into two separate kingdoms.

2. True or **false**? The book of 2 Kings is about how Israel was reunited into one united kingdom again.

3. True or **false**? The prophets mostly predicted the future.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. What eventually happened to the northern kingdom of Israel?

- a. It conquered the southern kingdom.
- b. It conquered the Assyrians and dominated the region.
- c. It was conquered by the Assyrians and never heard from again.**
- d. It learned its lessons and returned to God.

5. What eventually happened to the southern kingdom of Judah?

- a. It was conquered by the Persians and never heard from again.
- b. It was conquered by the Babylonians and eventually returned to Judah.**
- c. It conquered the Greeks and Persians.
- d. It was abandoned by its people, who returned to Egypt.

6. Which of the following are included in a prophet's role? (*choose all that apply*)

- a. They preached God's written word.**
- b. They ruled the nation by manipulating kings.
- c. They sometimes foretold the future.**
- d. They interpreted circumstances from God's perspective.**
- e. They punished people who disobeyed the king.

7. What did Elijah do that Israel's judges had not done well?

- a. Defeated Israel's enemies
- b. Trained Israel's armies
- c. Kept people from sinning
- d. Trained a successor**

8. After the kingdom divided, how many good kings ruled the north?

- a. None**
- b. Five
- c. Nine
- d. All of them

9. After the kingdom divided, how many good kings ruled the south?

- a. None
- b. At least three**
- c. Eleven
- d. All of them

10. How would the true prophets of Israel answer the king?
- a. They would tell the king only what he wanted to hear.
 - b. They would always tell the king every detail of the future.
 - c. They would take a vote and tell the king the most popular opinion.
 - d. They would only tell the king what God said.**
11. How were God's prophets treated for telling the truth?
- a. They were always generously rewarded.
 - b. They were very popular with the people.
 - c. They were often punished very harshly and persecuted.**
 - d. They were always killed immediately.
12. What kinds of powers did prophets usually have?
- a. They were just like everyone else, with no special powers.
 - b. God gave them supernatural wisdom, and often supernatural power.**
 - c. They could control the minds of kings.
 - d. They were invincible.
13. How did God respond to Elijah's confrontation with the false prophets and priests?
- a. He got angry at Elijah for testing Him.
 - b. He ignored Elijah.
 - c. He told Elijah to make peace with the false prophets and priests.
 - d. He honored Elijah's faithfulness by striking his wet altar with fire.**
14. How did the people respond to Elijah's victory?
- a. They tried to kill him.
 - b. They refused to repent.
 - c. They repented and believed God.**
 - d. They did not even notice what God had done.
15. As an "earthen vessel" that God used mightily, what was Elijah like after his great victory?
- a. He had weaknesses and fears like anyone else.**
 - b. He trusted God and was never afraid of anything again.
 - c. He became sinless.
 - d. He became very proud, and God punished him.



In what ways can you relate to Elijah? In what ways have you experienced God's power?
In what ways have you experienced weaknesses and fears?



Thank God that He does not reserve His power only for perfect people. Ask Him to do something powerful in and through your life this week.



Going Deeper

1. In these two books of Kings, in what ways do we discover why God did not want Israel to have the kings they requested of Samuel, when they told that great leader they did not want God to be their king? _____

2. What do we learn about the character of God from the way He related to the wicked kings in the Northern and Southern Kingdoms of Israel and Judah? _____

3. What happened to the Northern Kingdom after it was conquered and taken into captivity by the Assyrians? What happened to the Southern Kingdom after it was conquered and taken captive by the Babylonians? _____

4. Define the role and character of a true prophet. _____

5. Describe four or five ways Elijah demonstrated the role and character of a true prophet, when he challenged the false prophets of Ahab and Jezebel on Mount Carmel and facilitated a revival of the people of God (1 Kings 18). _____

6. How can we explain the burnout of Elijah in the very next chapter of Kings, when he sat under a juniper tree and asked God to take his life? _____

7. Describe the importance of the relationship between Elijah and Elisha. What did Elijah do that Joshua and the judges of Israel did not do? (Relate that to 2 Timothy 2:2 and the relationship between Paul and Timothy, and the way that Jesus apprenticed the apostles.) _____

The Rise and Fall of the Kingdom

Chapter 14

Audio Lesson: Old Testament Survey lesson 40



Objective: To understand what led to the fall and captivity of the kingdoms and how, with patience and mercy, God deals with His people.



“Your hearts must be fully committed to the Lord our God, to live by his decrees and obey his commands, as at this time.”

—1 Kings 8:61

The books of Kings give us examples of leaders who had both good and bad qualities. They begin with the reign of Solomon, the son of David, who humbly asked God for wisdom to lead His people. God blessed Solomon with wisdom, riches, and honor. He was a great example of putting God first in his life before riches or personal gain. But at the peak of Israel’s glory, Solomon turned away from God. He married many wives who worshiped foreign idols, and he joined in their worship. As a result, the kingdom was soon divided into two kingdoms, and after the reign of many evil kings, both kingdoms were conquered and taken into captivity.

In spite of the nation’s idolatry, God was very patient with His people. Every time the work of God ran into an obstacle, God raised up a prophet. One of the roles of God’s prophet was to center his preaching on that obstacle until it had been removed and the work of God could go on again. Being God’s instrument to remove problems and obstacles that blocked the work of God was the chief role or function of the prophets.

As you read 1 and 2 Kings, observe the rise and fall of the kingdom. As you learn about this kingdom, you will be able to learn what God wants to do today with His church. Also notice the lives of the kings; most of them are warnings for us, and a few are good examples. Then follow the prophets carefully, because they provide godly examples for us to follow.



1. **True** or false? The kingdoms in the books of Kings are not the same as the kingdom of God in the New Testament.
2. True or **false**? The united kingdom of Israel reached its worst point under Solomon's reign.
3. True or **false**? Both the northern and southern kingdoms were taken captive at the same time and in the same way.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. How did the southern kingdom of Judah's captivity come about?
 - a. Very suddenly and decisively
 - b. Just like the northern kingdom of Israel's captivity in Assyria
 - c. In three phases, with time to repent before the last phase**
 - d. So quickly that they did not have time to repent
5. What was the international reputation of the Hebrew people during the times of the kings?
 - a. They were very rebellious.**
 - b. They were very obedient to God.
 - c. They were clever strategists.
 - d. They were very righteous.
6. What is the balance of examples and warnings given in the books of Kings?
 - a. More examples than warnings
 - b. More warnings than examples**
 - c. About the same
 - d. Not much of either
7. Who is the most important king in these books?
 - a. Saul
 - b. David
 - c. Nebuchadnezzar
 - d. Solomon**
8. What kind of prayers did Solomon pray at the beginning of his reign?
 - a. Weak and faithless
 - b. Humble and pleasing**
 - c. Strong and forceful
 - d. Strange and obscure
9. Read Psalm 127:1. Why did Solomon write these words?
 - a. Because he toiled in vain for many years**
 - b. Because he learned from his friends' mistakes
 - c. Because he pitied ungodly people who did not know God
 - d. Because he never tried to live independently of God

Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain.

—Psalm 127:1

10. What message did Solomon preach in the book of Ecclesiastes?
 - a. "I lived the right way. Imitate me and you will be blessed."
 - b. "Always obey your king."
 - c. **"Do not make the same mistakes I made."**
 - d. "God did not bless me the way I wanted Him to."

11. What were Judah's good kings known for doing well?
 - a. They managed the economy well.
 - b. **They obeyed God and destroyed idols and their places of worship.**
 - c. They shrewdly made alliances with ungodly nations.
 - d. They killed everyone who opposed them.

12. What can we learn from Hezekiah's prayer for healing?
 - a. God disapproves when we pray against His judgments.
 - b. **It is not wrong to pray for healing.**
 - c. God will always heal us instantly.
 - d. Isaiah was a false prophet for predicting Hezekiah's death.

13. What does Elisha's ministry to Naaman teach us about what God thinks of foreigners?
 - a. **God is compassionate toward anyone who seeks Him.**
 - b. God would not heal Israel's enemies in those days.
 - c. God's promises are only for the Hebrew people.
 - d. God rejects foreigners.

14. What does Naaman's story teach us about God's instructions?
 - a. They always make sense right away.
 - b. They are always extremely difficult.
 - c. They are always exactly what we expected.
 - d. **They sometimes appear very foolish to test our obedience.**



If you need wisdom—if you want to know what God wants you to do—ask him, and he will gladly tell you. He will not resent your asking. —James 1:5

Have you ever prayed for wisdom as Solomon did? If so, how did God respond? If not, how do you think God would respond if you did?



Read Solomon's request in 1 Kings 3:9. Like Solomon, ask God to give you a discerning heart that can distinguish between right and wrong.

"Give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong."

—1 Kings 3:9



Going Deeper

1. How can you relate the Kingdom of God in these kingdom books (1 Samuel-2 Kings) to the teaching of Jesus about the Kingdom of God in John 3: 3-5? _____

2. Relate the hard reality that the divided kingdom and the captivities were the consequences of the sins of Solomon, to Psalm 127 (especially the first two verses). _____

3. After the first two verses of this swan song of Solomon, why does he abruptly begin talking about the blessing of having and nurturing children? _____

4. How does this psalm relate to the book of Ecclesiastes, and how can we relate the way Solomon began his reign to the way he became apostate and caused this calamity for the people of God? _____

5. When Solomon asked God for the wisdom to lead the people, and God made him the wisest man who ever lived, do you think he will give you wisdom when you ask Him for it, as instructed by James? (James 1:5) _____

6. What do we learn about the essence of prayer (what God sees when Hezekiah prays) from the prayer of Hezekiah, when Isaiah told him he was going to die? _____

7. Give at least three ways that the story of Elisha and Naaman the leper parallels the right ways and the wrong ways to respond to the Gospel when it is proclaimed to an individual. _____

Things Omitted

Chapter 15

Audio Lesson: Old Testament Survey lesson 41



Objective: To understand why Chronicles repeats the history of the two Hebrew kingdoms and to learn from its perspective.



"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

—2 Chronicles 7:14

The books of Chronicles cover the same period of history that the books of Samuel and Kings cover. The Greek name for Chronicles means "Things Omitted." The books spotlight the kings who were instrumental in bringing about revival, restoration, and reformation. Some kings in the southern kingdom of Judah were good and obeyed God, but there were no good kings in the northern kingdom of Israel. Chronicles tells us many of the details of the good kings that are not told in Samuel and Kings. None of the wicked kings of either kingdom are mentioned in Chronicles. Neither are the sins of David and Solomon.

The key to understanding the different ways in which Chronicles describes this period of Hebrew history is this: God's ways are not our ways, and His thoughts are not our thoughts. *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."* (Isaiah 55:8-9). If we want to have a divine perspective, to align the way we think and do things with the way God thinks and does things, we will learn much from the Chronicles. It is a tremendous message in values and perspective as we see Hebrew history from God's point of view.



1. True or **false**? God never hears the prayer of wicked people.

2. **True** or false? There are many signs of the mercy of God in the books of Kings and Chronicles.
3. **True** or false? The books of Chronicles repeat the same period of history described in the books of Samuel and Kings.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. Why does God give us a repetition of this period of history? (*choose all that apply*)
- a. Repetition is a key to education.**
 - b. Scribes disagreed on the facts, so they wrote two versions.
 - c. The earlier books were lost and then rediscovered after Chronicles was written.
 - d. God wants to emphasize important kingdom truths for us.**
 - e. God wants to show us His perspective on these events.**
 - f. The whole story had not yet been told.**
 - g. One version was written for Hebrew people and the other for Greeks.
5. What do many Bible scholars believe about the time of the captivities?
- a. It shows that God gave up on His kingdom.
 - b. It began an era called “the times of the Gentiles.”**
 - c. It shows God’s favor on Assyria and Babylon.
 - d. It proves that God cannot control history.
6. Where is God’s kingdom now located?
- a. Asia
 - b. North America
 - c. Africa
 - d. In the hearts of people**
7. Which of the following are differences between Kings and Chronicles? (*choose all that apply*)
- a. Chronicles omit David’s and Solomon’s sins because God forgave them.**
 - b. Chronicles omit the story of the northern kingdom.**
 - c. Kings emphasize the victory of God’s people.
 - d. Kings honor the good works of Babylonian kings.
 - e. Chronicles emphasize Judah’s wicked kings.
 - f. Kings emphasize Judah’s good kings.
 - g. Chronicles tell stories of the faithfulness of kings not found in the books of Kings.**
 - h. Chronicles were written after the time of Jesus.
 - i. Kings were written before the captivity and Chronicles afterward.**
 - j. Kings were written by men and Chronicles by the Holy Spirit.
 - k. Chronicles emphasize worship.**
8. According to Chronicles, why was David not allowed to build a house for God?
- a. Because of his sin with Bathsheba
 - b. Because he did not know how to worship
 - c. Because of all the blood he had shed**
 - d. Because he did not have enough money or laborers

9. What does God promise to people who humble themselves, repent, and pray?
- a. **He will forgive them and heal their land.**
 - b. He will make them wealthy.
 - c. He will solve all their problems.
 - d. He will help them conquer their enemy nations.
10. How much difference is there between the way we naturally think and the way God thinks?
- a. There is no difference because we are made in His image.
 - b. There is a slight difference.
 - c. There is a significant difference.
 - d. **The difference is as great as the difference between heaven and earth.**
11. According to Chronicles, what was David and Solomon's worst sin?
- a. Their sin of having more than one wife
 - b. Their sin of not worshiping God in the right way
 - c. **Their sins are not mentioned because God totally forgave them**
 - d. Their sin of killing innocent people



What sins and mistakes do you wish God would omit from your life? What blessings would you like Him to add?

"If we say we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and refusing to accept the truth. But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong."

—I John 1:8-9

*"We are made right in God's sight when we trust in Jesus Christ to take away our sins. And we all can be saved in this same way, no matter who we are or what we have done. For all have sinned; all fall short of God's glorious standard. **Yet now God in his gracious kindness declares us not guilty. He has done this through Christ Jesus, who has freed us by taking away all our sins.**"*

—Romans 3:22-24

*"You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ. **He forgave all our sins.** He canceled the record that contained the charges against us. He took it and destroyed it by nailing it to Christ's cross."*

—Colossians 2:13-14



If you have never accepted God's forgiveness, do so now. Confess your sins like kings David and Solomon did. Thank God that from His perspective on your life, your sins are all forgiven and omitted from His record, that now He delights in you. Ask Him to help you see yourself from His perspective and to write your "story" the way He wants to.



Going Deeper

1. Give three reasons why the two books of Chronicles repeat the same period of Hebrew history that are covered in the books of Samuel and Kings. _____

2. Give three examples of how the values of God differ from the values of man, in the way they each perceive this period of Hebrew history. _____

3. What are five differences between the values of God and the values of man today? _____

4. Relate the good news that the sins of David and Solomon are not mentioned in Chronicles, to the root meaning of the word *justified* found in the parable of Jesus in Luke 18:9-14, and in the letter of Paul to the Romans. _____

5. If God treats your confessed sins as if they never happened, what should your attitude be toward your sins once you have confessed them to God? _____

6. If the people of God will humble themselves and pray and seek the face of God, what does He promise He will do for them, and how does this apply to us today? _____

7. According to Jesus, where is the Kingdom of God today? How can that be? _____

The Synoptic Gospels of The Old Testament

Chapter 16

Audio Lesson: Old Testament Survey lesson 42



Objective: To learn how God faithfully restored His people to Jerusalem after their captivity.



They sang, praising and giving thanks to the Lord, saying, "For He is good, for His loving kindness is upon Israel forever." And all the people shouted with a great shout when they praised the Lord because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid.

—Ezra 3:11

For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.

—Romans 11:36

The books of Ezra and Nehemiah, along with Esther, are known as the post-captivity history books. The Babylonian captivity was a dividing line in Hebrew history. In fact, when we study the Prophets later on, we will discover that the prophets are classified as pre-captivity, in-captivity, or post-captivity prophets. Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther record that period of history that took place after the captivity had ended in which the post-captivity prophets wrote, preached, lived, and died.

The return from the Babylonian captivity came in at least three phases. The first return was for the specific purpose of rebuilding the temple. Soon after that work had begun, those who had returned were distracted by opposition and persecution, and they stopped building until the prophets Haggai and Zechariah urged them to finish what they had started. Years later, Ezra led the second return. This extraordinary priest and scribe was a great teacher of Scripture. Ezra brought a dynamic ministry to the rebuilt temple. Thirteen years after Ezra's return, Nehemiah led a third return. His purpose was to rebuild the wall around the city of Jerusalem. The prophet Malachi was involved with Nehemiah in the rebuilding of the wall.



Ezra and Nehemiah are very similar books. They both teach principles of leadership and of doing God's work in God's way.

1. **True** or false? The captivity is an important historical landmark for understanding Hebrew history.
2. **True** or false? Many people consider the books of Ezra and Nehemiah to be “identical twins.”
3. **True** or false? Judah was taken captive by Babylon and released by Persia.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. What was the main purpose of the first return from captivity?
 - a. **To rebuild the temple**
 - b. To destroy the Canaanites
 - c. To move the temple to another mountain
 - d. To gather forces to strike back at the Persians
5. What was the purpose of the second return under Ezra?
 - a. To rebuild the temple
 - b. **To reestablish the worship ministry in the temple**
 - c. To drive out the Canaanites
 - d. To find the lost tribes of Israel
6. What was the purpose of the third return under Nehemiah?
 - a. To reestablish the kingdom
 - b. To establish an army
 - c. To repopulate Canaan
 - d. **To rebuild the wall around Jerusalem**
7. Which of the following is a common theme among Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah?
 - a. Hebrew unity
 - b. **Building**
 - c. Hebrew dominance
 - d. Peace and prosperity
8. How do the principles in Ezra and Nehemiah apply to God’s people today?
 - a. There is no connection.
 - b. They teach us about the end times.
 - c. **They show us how to labor with God in His work.**
 - d. They show us how God abandons those who rebel against Him.
9. What do we find in Ezra and Nehemiah that is helpful for leaders?
 - a. **Good examples of leadership**
 - b. The consequences of a leadership vacuum
 - c. Warnings against moral failure
 - d. The leadership style that God wants all leaders to have

10. What was the nature of Ezra's and Nehemiah's work?
- a. They were both very practical.
 - b. They were both very pastoral.
 - c. Ezra was pastoral and Nehemiah was practical.**
 - d. Neither one did God's work in God's way.
11. Which of the following are similarities between the books of Ezra and Nehemiah? (*choose all that apply*)
- a. They both end in defeat and despair.
 - b. They both involve a pagan king supporting God's work in Jerusalem.**
 - c. They both begin with a war.
 - d. Neither one describes any enemies.
 - e. They both tell of a spiritual revival among God's people.**
12. What did Ezra set his heart on doing?
- a. Learning, keeping, and teaching the Word of the Lord**
 - b. Overthrowing the Persians
 - c. Reestablishing the kingdom
 - d. Becoming the king
13. Who is the prime mover behind God's work?
- a. His people
 - b. His leaders
 - c. His country
 - d. Himself**
14. What does God do to support His work? (*choose all that apply*)
- a. God hides it from His people so only He can do His work.
 - b. God provides clear guidance to His people so they can do His work.**
 - c. God provides everything needed for the work.**
 - d. God chooses the most intelligent and capable people for His work.
15. What strategy does Satan often use to keep us from God's best?
- a. He offers us something good in place of what is best.**
 - b. He offers us things that are better than what God offers.
 - c. He tempts us with things that are clearly evil.
 - d. Nothing, because he knows we cannot be distracted.



Can you think of any times when you chose something that was good over something God said was best? What areas of your life will you commit to His best today?



Thank God for all of the opportunities and plans He has for you. Ask Him for clear guidance and commit to choose His best every day. Pray for those in leadership that they will be led by God to do God's work God's way.



Going Deeper

1. In what ways do the characters of Ezra and Nehemiah show us that the work of God is a team sport? _____

2. How does the book of Ezra profile distinctive principles that identify, verify and validate a work of God? _____

3. How does the book of Nehemiah profile a leader that God can use to do a work of God? _____

4. How does the book of Nehemiah profile some critical dimensions of a vision? _____

5. How does the book of Ezra demonstrate the reality that the work of God is to be done by the people of God? _____

6. How does the book of Nehemiah demonstrate the “tunnel vision” that a leader of a work of God must have? _____

7. Give several examples of how Ezra demonstrates the priority of the Word of God in the life and ministry of a leader of a work of God. _____

The Work of God and Forces Opposing God's Work

Chapter 17

Audio Lesson: Old Testament Survey lesson 43



Objective: To understand what kind of opposition we will face as we serve God.



The weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

—2 Corinthians 10:3-5

Now glory be to God! By his mighty power at work within us, he is able to accomplish infinitely more than we would ever dare to ask or hope. May he be given glory in the church and in Christ Jesus forever and ever through endless ages. Amen.

—Ephesians 3:20-21

There are many principles about God's work that we learn from the Book of Ezra, and they can be summed up by this statement: *It is the plan of God to use the power of God in the people of God to accomplish the purposes of God according to the plan of God.*

The book of Ezra teaches us about the opposition that comes to us when we are serving God in His work. We can always expect opposition because when God is working through us, we will experience God's best, and Satan does not want us to experience God's best. Sometimes he tempts us to accept what is good instead of what is best. Sometimes he tries to get the wrong people involved in the projects God wants His own people to accomplish. Whatever opposition we face, we can expect it to come from two directions—from the world and even sometimes from those within the church. But Ezra is not a message about being defeated or distracted by opposition. It shows us how to overcome it. By faith, we can trust that God will overcome the opposition in our lives in order to accomplish what He wants us to accomplish.



1. **True** or false? It is possible to think you do wonderful works for God and really be a worker of sin.
2. True or **false**? When God provides for His work, He usually provides only barely enough to do the work.
3. True or **false**? Satan knows he cannot distract God's people from His purpose and His work.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. What does God want for those who do His work?
 - a. Anything, as long as it is good
 - b. To work until they get burned out
 - c. To trust in their own wisdom
 - d. Only His very best**
5. What should we expect when we do God's work? (*choose all that apply*)
 - a. Strong opposition**
 - b. Immediate rewards
 - c. God's help and provision**
 - d. The support of the church and all our friends
6. From whom does our opposition come?
 - a. From our obvious enemies
 - b. From false religions
 - c. From friends and associates who do not understand
 - d. All of the above**
7. Who can shut a door that God has opened?
 - a. Satan
 - b. Other people
 - c. Circumstances
 - d. No one**
8. Which of the following might Satan attempt in order to oppose us? (*choose all that apply*)
 - a. Tell lies about us**
 - b. Mock us**
 - c. Discourage us**
 - d. Tempt us with attractive but ungodly alliances**
 - e. Overrule God's plan
 - f. Infiltrate the church with unbelievers**
9. What sometimes happens after God's people accomplish His work?
 - a. He makes them invincible to opposition.
 - b. He lets them fail when they do not stay close to Him.**
 - c. He sends Satan to tempt them more than they can bear.
 - d. He ruins them in order to prove that He is still in charge.

10. Why would God let His people fail?

- a. **He never lets His people grow proud and independent without consequences.**
- b. It is the only way to get Satan to stop bothering them.
- c. He likes to disguise His people so the world will not notice them.
- d. He wants to repeat the same victories over and over again.



Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given complete authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

—Matthew 28:18-20

What enemies and obstacles do you see at work in your life to keep you from loving and obeying God completely? What promises does God give you to overcome them?



Thank God for His power and wisdom, especially as He has already applied them to your life. Ask Him to strengthen you to overcome every obstacle to your faith and obedience.



Going Deeper

1. How do these “Synoptic Gospels” of the Old Testament (Ezra and Nehemiah) show us that we should expect opposition when we are doing the work of God? _____

2. Based on these two books, give three examples of where we should expect this opposition to come from. _____

3. In what ways does this opposition confirm that we are doing the work of God? _____

4. When you compare Scriptures like Ephesians 6:10-18 with these two books of Ezra and Nehemiah, what are two of the forces of our opposition when we are doing the work of God?

5. What are some of the weapons we must use to overcome this opposition? _____

6. How can we prevent the opposition that comes from within our team or spiritual community?

7. How do both of these books demonstrate the glorious reality that we can expect God to provide for the work He has called us to do? (Compare Ephesians 3:20) _____

The Profile of a Leader

Chapter 18

Audio Lesson: Old Testament Survey lesson 44



Objective: To learn from the example of Nehemiah's leadership.



When all our enemies heard about this, all the surrounding nations were afraid and lost their self-confidence, because they realized that this work had been done with the help of our God.

—Nehemiah 6:16

Ezra is best known for making the plans for God's work, while Nehemiah is better known for being the builder who actually did the work that God assigned to both of them. Nehemiah can be described as very pragmatic. He believed in getting out there and seeing that the work of God got done. These men are both superb models of leadership, even though they are very different.

As we approach the book of Nehemiah, we should look for the principles of leadership, or the attributes God found in him to do His work. The book of Nehemiah shows us the "Profile of a Leader for the Work of God." Nehemiah demonstrated great strength, commitment, understanding, focus, courage, and perseverance. He was completely dedicated to doing God's work in God's way, and God blessed him greatly by protecting him and giving him success and again we see: *It is the plan of God to use the power of God in the people of God to accomplish the purposes of God according to the plan of God.*



1. True or **false**? Ezra and Nehemiah had the same leadership style.
2. **True** or false? The book of Nehemiah focuses on the kind of leader needed to do the work of God.
3. True or **false**? Nehemiah led people by patiently teaching them the Word of God.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. What kinds of workers can Ezra and Nehemiah be compared to?
 - a. A shepherd and a fisherman
 - b. A soldier and a king
 - c. An architect and a builder**
 - d. A priest and a musician
5. What does God primarily look for in a leader?
 - a. One with a burden for God's work**
 - b. One with the right training for the job
 - c. One who is very talented
 - d. A perfect record of past service
6. How did Nehemiah respond when he heard about the condition of the wall of Jerusalem?
 - a. He got angry.
 - b. He wept and refused to eat.**
 - c. He was indifferent.
 - d. He quit serving God.
7. How did Nehemiah respond when the king asked him why he was sad?
 - a. He denied it because it was forbidden to be sad in front of the king.
 - b. He smiled so the king would not find out.
 - c. He admitted his sadness, even though he could have been killed for it.**
 - d. He ran away so the king's soldiers could not kill him.
8. Where did Nehemiah's vision come from?
 - a. His own desires
 - b. God**
 - c. The king of Persia
 - d. The people in Judah
9. How will a good leader handle criticism?
 - a. He will not be able to stand it.
 - b. He will be able to crush his critics.
 - c. He will persevere in spite of it.**
 - d. He will be able to change every critic's mind.
10. Which of the following are characteristics of a good leader? (*choose all that apply*)
 - a. He will be a man of prayer.**
 - b. He will do whatever the majority tells him to do.
 - c. He will eliminate his opposition.
 - d. He will be able to motivate people with his vision.**

11. How strong were Nehemiah's convictions?

- a. He did not have any convictions
- b. Weak
- c. Average
- d. Very strong**

12. What is a good leader's highest priority?

- a. His own plan
- b. Prosperity
- c. Achievement
- d. God**



What do you consider to be unfinished work in your life? What leadership characteristic do you need God to develop in your life? What steps can you take this week to fulfill God's plan for your life?

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

—Romans 12:1-2



work.

Praise God for the goodness of His good and perfect plan and for inviting you to be a part of it. Ask Him to give you a strong vision for the work He has called you to do. Ask God to develop the characteristics in your life so that God can use you greatly to do His



Going Deeper

1. How did Nehemiah demonstrate the reality that he had a burden for the work that God was calling him to do? _____

2. How did he show that he was a man of prayer concerning the work God was assigning to him? _____

3. What were some of the ways Nehemiah demonstrated courage regarding the work of God? _____

4. Give some examples of Nehemiah's wise and practical leadership. _____

5. How did Nehemiah deal with the enemies who were thwarting his work? _____

6. What work may God be calling you to do for Him? _____

7. How many ways can you follow the example of Nehemiah? Explain. _____

Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?

Chapter 19

Audio Lesson: Old Testament Survey lesson 45



Objective: To understand the book of Esther and learn from her example.



"If you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?"

—Esther 4:14

"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."

—Romans 8:28

The book Esther tells the story of a Hebrew woman who married a Gentile and saved the Jewish people from genocide, preserving the ancestry of the Messiah. The Persian king chose Esther to be his queen, and when an evil plot to kill all Jews was discovered, Esther realized that she could use her influence with the king to save her people. She was extremely courageous to approach the king, but God used her faith and courage to save the Hebrew people.

One of the most important themes of Esther is the providence of God in our circumstances. God is sovereign over our lives. If we do not love Him and follow His purposes and plans, He is not obligated to cause all things to work together for our good. But if we do love and serve Him, we can trust that He will fit all of our circumstances into His good plans, even when our circumstances are painful or difficult.



1. True or **false**? The Exodus was the only time God delivered His people in the Old Testament.
2. True or **false**? The book of Esther is about a beautiful woman with ungodly character.
3. True or **false**? The book of Esther is a love story very similar to the book of Ruth.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. Why did Queen Vashti lose favor with the Persian king?
 - a. She refused to live with him.
 - b. She would not obey him by showing off her beauty.**
 - c. She could not have any children.
 - d. She tried to kill him.
5. How did Mordecai feel when Esther was chosen for the king's harem?
 - a. He celebrated because it was a great honor.
 - b. He was confident that Esther would be chosen as the next queen.
 - c. He was grieved because the harem system was very cruel.**
 - d. He no longer loved Esther because she was the property of a pagan king.
6. What did Mordecai tell Esther to do?
 - a. Let everyone know that she was a Jew.
 - b. Hide the fact that she was a Jew.**
 - c. Help him plot to overthrow the king.
 - d. Assassinate the king herself.
7. How did Haman respond when Mordecai refused to bow to him?
 - a. He got the king to agree to kill all Jews.**
 - b. He had Mordecai executed immediately.
 - c. He punished Esther for Mordecai's offense.
 - d. He sent all Jews back to Judah.
8. What did Mordecai believe God would do?
 - a. Deliver His people**
 - b. Abandon His people
 - c. Punish Mordecai for putting the Jews in danger
 - d. Destroy the Persian kingdom
9. What characteristics did Esther demonstrate when she went in to the king? (*choose all that apply*)
 - a. Courage**
 - b. Unbelief
 - c. Faith**
 - d. Foolishness

10. How did the king respond to Esther?
- a. He had her imprisoned.
 - b. He sent her back to the harem and never saw her again.
 - c. He invited her to speak.
 - d. He welcomed her and gave her his scepter.**
11. How did God demonstrate His authority over circumstances? (*choose all that apply*)
- a. He reminded the king of Mordecai's honor.**
 - b. He struck Haman with lightning.
 - c. He let Haman get trapped by his own plan.**
 - d. He put Esther in the right position at the right time to save the Jews.**
12. What does the book of Esther teach us about how God protects His people?
- a. He barely saves them when He has to.
 - b. He saves them thoroughly and blesses them abundantly.**
 - c. Sometimes His deliverance is too late.
 - d. He usually does not punish the enemies of His people.
13. How does the book of Esther reflect the commission Jesus gave His disciples?
- a. We are to pronounce judgment on all our enemies.
 - b. We risk our lives every time we come to our king in prayer.
 - c. We are to hide from Satan's schemes.
 - d. We are to take the great message of life into a world under the curse of death.**



Do you believe that God can work in all of your circumstances for your good? In what ways can you show that you trust Him?

Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish!"

—Esther 4:16

And then he told them, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone, everywhere."

—Mark 16:15



Thank God for His power to protect and deliver. Thank Him for where He has placed you. Ask Him to protect you from Satan's schemes, to give you the courage to stand against evil, and to give you opportunities to tell the message of Jesus to those who do not know it, those who are under the curse of death.



Going Deeper

1. What are several ways that the book of Esther demonstrates the Providence of God? (Compare Romans 8: 28.) _____

2. Does the book of Esther and the Scripture referenced above teach us that everything happens for our good or for God's good? Explain. _____

3. Was there anything good about the way Esther was conscripted to live in a harem and wait for her night with the king? Explain. _____

4. How does the experience of Esther compare with the experiences of Daniel and Joseph? _____

5. How does the experience of the wicked Haman demonstrate the Golden Rule of Jesus in reverse? (Matthew 7:12) _____

6. Relate the two decrees at the end of this story to the Great Commission of Jesus (Matthew 28: 18-20). _____

7. The last word of Mordecai when he asked Esther to deliver her people was that for such a time as this she had come to be on the throne of Media Persia. Explain your conviction that for such a time as this God has placed you where you are. _____
