

# The Establishment of the Kingdom



**INTERMEDIATE NOTES – 13 to 14 Years**

**STAGE TWO OF FIVE STAGES**

CHRISTADELPHIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION  
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*“Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield;  
but I come to thee in the name of Yahweh of Hosts. 1 Samuel 17:45*

# **CHRISTADELPHIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION**

## **INTERMEDIATE — STAGE 2**

### **FOREWORD**

The Lessons for this year take us from the time when Israel sent the 12 spies into the promised land right up to the period when David was made king and given the promise of a sure house. There has been an endeavour made to draw out the lessons especially relevant to the last perilous days of the Gentiles in which we live. We must make the effort of applying the instruction to our own lives now if we would share the glory the Father has laid up for His children. The questions too, at the end, will bear largely upon the way in which we can profit today from the examples of the past. As Christ is the centre of God's purpose, wherever possible the types applicable to him have been brought to your attention.

We have also striven to make the lessons as lively and vital as possible. We hope that you will find them easy to understand and enjoyable to read. May we suggest that you use your imagination and transport yourself back to the actual event and so relive the drama. The maps should help to this end.

Above all things let us realise that the present determines the future: today is the important time so far as we are concerned. We either learn the instruction of God's Word or through inattention fail in the test before us. We must as individuals then take the lessons to ourselves. May the rich blessing of our heavenly Father be upon us as we contemplate these compelling examples of the past which He has preserved for us.

“Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”

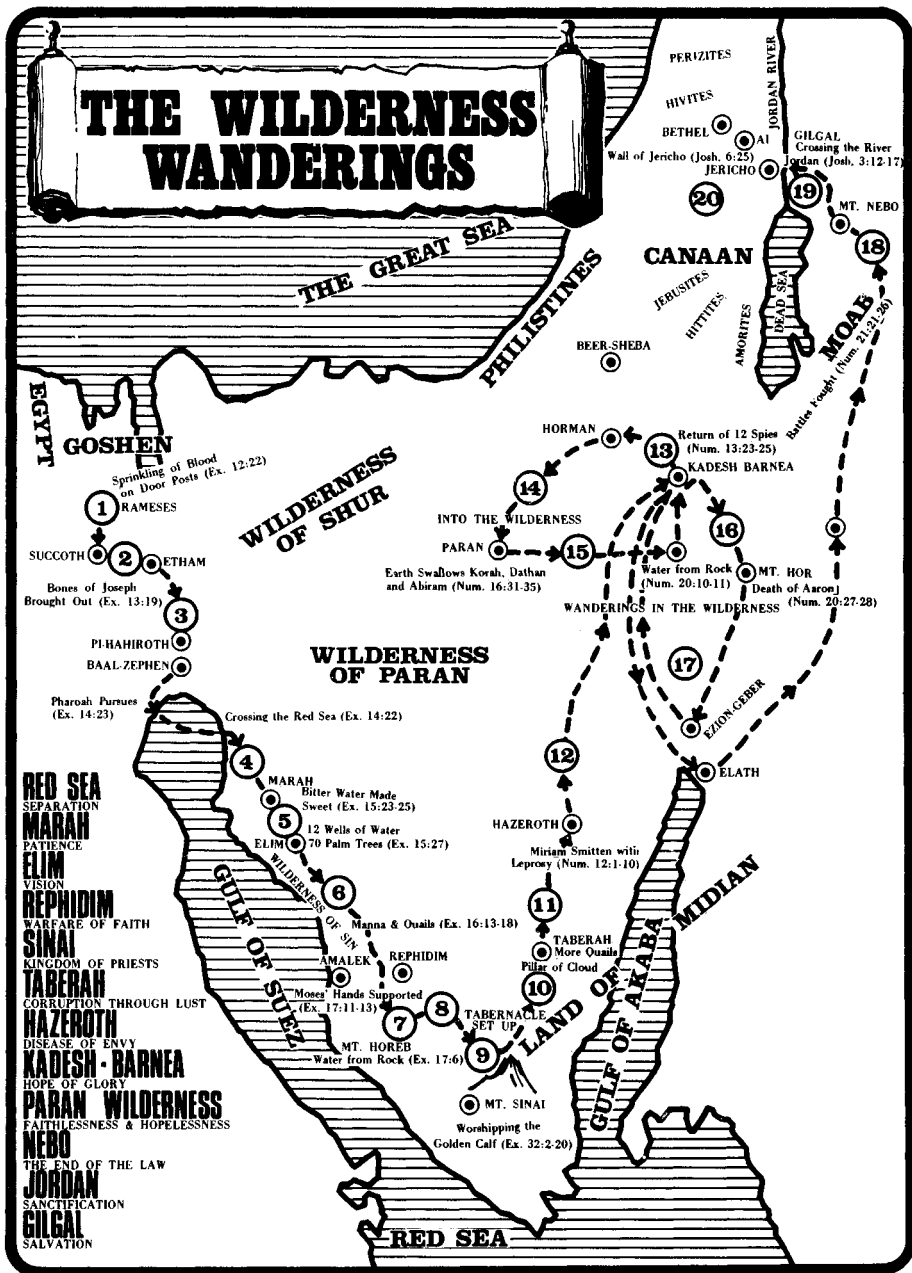
The Committee



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# THE WILDERNESS WANDERINGS



# 1. WHY ISRAEL FAILED

## “And Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses”

*The people of Israel remained at Sinai for twelve months until the fourteenth month after leaving Egypt. They had received the ten commandments and many other laws which regulated their day by day way of life and taught important lessons about their attitude toward God and about His attitude toward them. There, they received the instructions for the tabernacle and priesthood, so important to them as God's chosen people. At Sinai, too, the people agreed to obey the laws of God and accept the covenant which God offered, making them “a kingdom of priests and an holy nation”. And yet Israel failed many times to do the things God required of them. We should be ready to learn from their mistakes so that we might avoid making the same errors.*

### Numbers 10, 11 and 12

#### **KEEPING THE PASSOVER.**

When the fourteenth day of the first month of the second year drew near, God commanded the people to keep the Passover. This time it was a Passover of remembrance. The people would have explained to their young children the events of that dramatic night only one year previous when they were preparing to leave Egypt. Even in our times the Israelites keep the Passover feast as a memorial of their deliverance from bondage in the land of Egypt centuries ago.

#### **DEPARTURE FROM SINAI (Numbers 10:11-36).**

When God had decided that it was time for Israel to depart from Sinai, the cloud above the tabernacle lifted up and moved forward in the direction they were to travel. As the people rallied to the blast of the trumpets, the Tabernacle was taken apart, its furniture covered and then carried in the appointed way by the sons of Levi. The people let down their tents, gathered their few belongings for the journey and took up the coffin containing the bones of Joseph. Then with the cloud of glory, symbol of God's presence at their head (Numbers 10:12), the nation marched in four divisions under the leadership of Judah, Reuben, Ephraim and Dan (Numbers 10:14-28). At the front of each division was the standard of the leading tribe, Judah — a lion; Reuben — a man; Ephraim — an ox, and Dan — an eagle. Each day's march began and ended with a prayer (Number 10:35-36).

At the time of setting out, only eleven days separated the children of Israel from the promised land (Deut. 1:2). Even allowing more time for the very young, the aged and the sick to travel, the land of Canaan was not many days' journey away. All that was required for an untroubled entry was a patient endurance, a trusting in God's ability to lead them to the land promised.



## **REASONS FOR FAILURE (Numbers 11).**

But these qualities were lacking among the Israelites. It is true that they had to pass through a dry and barren desert between Sinai and Kadesh. Weariness and the unpleasantness of the desert surroundings would have pressed hard upon them; but the presence of God and the glorious vision of the land full of the blessings of abundant provisions awaiting them ought to have outweighed those difficulties. But in just 3 days grumbling broke out among the people (Numbers 11:1) and though this was punished by fire from God which consumed those on the edges of the camp, new complainings soon followed. There were Gentiles among the Israelites (Numbers 11:2) who had joined themselves with the people of God. They began to compare the comforts they had given up in Egypt with the hardship in the wilderness. These complaints affected others, until the whole camp was in a state of discontent, and because of this Moses became discouraged.

A common human reaction to hardship such as Israel were experiencing, is to make the troubles of the present seem worse and to exaggerate the pleasure of the past. The people foolishly imagined that their bondage in Egypt was better than life in the wilderness of Sinai. They remembered the fish, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions and the garlic which contrasted greatly with the regular diet of manna they now received; they forgot the long hours of slavery, the pain of the lash they had received and the murder of their children under the Egyptian taskmasters. They forgot too, that the richness of the promised land they were journeying toward was far greater than the imagined delights of Egypt (Deut. 8:7-10).

Every person who accepts the call of Christ to inherit the Kingdom of God will be under pressure at one time or another to similarly follow Israel's pattern of failure. It is easy to allow the problems of the present to obscure our vision of the coming kingdom. Doubts may enter our minds in place of the faith necessary for "patient continuance in well doing." Paul exhorted the Romans with these words which apply to all who would enter the journey through this present life to the Kingdom — "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Romans 8:18).

## **GOD SENDS QUAILS (Numbers 11:33-35).**

Moses was displeased and troubled and God was angry with the people because of their complaining. However, God showed His ability to provide for them by sending a huge quantity of quails which came down to rest on the ground throughout the camp of Israel. The people greedily gathered far more than they needed. They had neglected the daily burnt offering, the times of prayer and personal devotion yet when it came to

satisfying their craving for food, they could stay up all night. We need to examine where our real interests lie — with spiritual “food” or with the temporary pleasures of life. Our real need is for the daily guidance of God’s word which will lead us unto eternal life. The pleasures of the world will never give lasting satisfaction. The end result of seeking such pleasures is to perish without hope. Wisdom would teach us to follow Christ’s teaching: “Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled” (Matt. 5:6 cp. Psa. 119:20).

There was no thought of thanking God for His provision and while they were still eating, God showed His anger by sending a plague among them, and many of the people died. Because of this, the place was named Kibroth-Hataavah which means “the graves of the greedy” (Num. 11:33-35; Psa. 78:29-31).

### **THE COMPLAINT OF MIRIAM AND AARON (Numbers 12).**

A further trial awaited Moses. Miriam and Aaron, his own sister and brother, spoke critically of him. Their accusation was based on envy. They wanted a greater share of the authority and responsibility which had been given to Moses.

We remember the attitude of Moses when he was instructed to lead God’s people from Egypt. He did not feel capable. His confidence of forty years previous had been reduced to nothing. The authority of God, then, was placed upon the shoulders of this humble man. Read Numbers 12:3, “Now the man Moses was very meek, above all men which were upon the face of the earth.” It is clear that the complaint of Miriam and Aaron was false. Besides all this, God would speak to no man mouth to mouth except to Moses his servant (Numbers 12:6-8). Moses clearly was given authority by divine appointment and was worthy of it.

Miriam was punished for her sin. As the cloud of the divine presence rose from the three who had met at the tabernacle, Moses and Aaron were shocked to see that Miriam was “white as snow” (Numbers 12:10). Aaron appealed to Moses on her behalf and confessed his sin before him asking forgiveness. Moses prayed to God on their behalf and Miriam was cleansed of the disease after spending seven days outside the camp. As an outcast and leper she was a sign and a warning to all of the evil consequences of envy and jealousy.

### **LESSON FOR US:**

As we seek the Kingdom of God we should forget the pleasures of the world and leave them behind us. Rather than complain we should always be thankful for God’s blessings.

Envy of the character, capabilities or rank of others is a characteristic which stems from pride and selfishness. It is one of those sins which is more subtle than many others because it may not be seen outwardly. We should examine our thoughts and the basis of our actions carefully, in order to be rid of such things from our minds before the time of the judgment seat of Christ when all these things will be revealed. We should consider very carefully the all seeing and all knowing presence of God and in our dealings one with another apply the words of Paul as found in Phil. 2:2-5, 19-21; 4:8

#### **REFERENCE LIBRARY:**

- “Where it Happened” (Islip Collyer) Chapter 6*
- “Moses My Servant” (H. Tennant) Pp. 105-114*
- “The Story of the Bible” (H. P. Mansfield) Vol. 2 Pp. 62-71*

#### **PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:**

1. *Why was the Passover feast kept each year?*
2. *Describe how Israel were organised as they left Sinai.*
3. *What was the manna and how did the children of Israel react to it?*
4. *Describe the incident involving quails at Kibroth Hataavah. What lessons can we learn from this incident?*

#### **ESSAY QUESTIONS:**

1. *When Israel left Sinai, it was not long before they sinned against God. Explain*
  - a) *How they failed and describe the part played by the Gentiles (“mixed multitude”).*
  - b) *The lesson this failure teaches us today.*
2. *Aaron and Miriam envied Moses. Miriam was stricken with leprosy. What was the reason for this punishment and show how we can suffer the same problem and how we can avoid this sin.*

## 2. 12 SPIES IN THE LAND

**“And we were in our own sight as grasshoppers”**

*At last the people came to Paran and then to Kadesh, south of the Land of Promise. Kadesh was an oasis in the harsh wilderness, so that when they came to this spot they saw a vast contrast to the barren scenery they had passed through (Jeremiah 2:6-7).*

*They were now camped upon the border of the Land. Moses exhorted them strongly to “go up and possess it, and the LORD God of thy fathers hath said unto thee; fear not, neither be discouraged” (Deut. 1:21).*

*The people showed a lack of faith by requesting Moses to send spies (v. 22). This was not God’s intention but He permitted it and instructed Moses accordingly (Numbers 13:1-2). The result of this request led to the death of many Israelites shortly after the spies returned and delayed their inheritance of the land for a further 38 years.*

### **Numbers 13 & 14; Deuteronomy 1:19-46**

#### **THE LAND SPIED OUT**

The twelve spies spent 40 days in spying out the Land. They found it exactly as God had described it, “flowing with milk and honey” (Exodus 3:8). So bountiful was the land that it took two men to carry a cluster of grapes from the brook (Valley) of Eshcol. This was an area near Hebron where, in earlier years, Abraham had lived (Genesis 13:18; 14:13). Other fruit was also brought back to show the fertility of the land.

#### **THE SPIES EVIL REPORT.**

The spies returned after 40 days and said “the land floweth with milk and honey. . . BUT”. Then they went on to give a report which discouraged the people from going in to possess it. It was an “evil report” which “they brought up” (Numbers 13:32) for it overlooked the good condition of the land and emphasised the problems of “walled cities”, “giants”, “strong people” in a way which discouraged Israel. There were 10 spies who vigorously maintained this stand. They were completely faithless and had no regard for God’s dealings with His people and had forgotten His love for them.

#### **TWO FAITHFUL SPIES.**

Only Caleb and Joshua were prepared to stand against this evil report and encourage the people to go up. They had been impressed with what they saw and recognised the true worth of the land. They were eager to possess it and were greatly encouraged by the knowledge that there was fear of Israel in the hearts of the inhabitants. They told the people that the Canaanites “are bread for us: their defence is departed from them and Yahweh is with us.” Caleb and Joshua showed faith in God; that is,

they believed God's promises that He would give them the land, and they wanted the people to inherit it. What then is faith? It is a confident anticipation of things hoped for: an acceptance of things not seen (cp. Hebrews 11:1); and a full persuasion that what God promises He is able to perform (Romans 4:21).

### **MOSES MEDIATES FOR THE PEOPLE.**

The reaction of the people to Caleb and Joshua's message was to take up stones to slay them. They sought to justify their faithlessness by saying that they were thinking only of their wives and children. This was a lie but they had deceived themselves into thinking it was true.

God suddenly quietened the people by revealing His glory above and within the Tabernacle. He told Moses that He was considering destroying all the murmurers and creating a new nation from him.

Moses' reaction was immediate. He was concerned for two reasons:

- (a) God's name could be brought low in the eyes of the nations round about;
- (b) He did not want the people destroyed. Sinners though they were, he had a feeling of responsibility toward them.

He sought no fame for himself but thought only of others and principally of God. Full of compassion for his people he pleaded for their life (Numbers 14:17-19). The basis of his appeal being the honouring of God's own name (v. 18). Would not Yahweh be merciful and longsuffering as He had declared Himself to be (Exodus 34:6-8)?

It must have been with pleasure and relief that he heard God say "I have pardoned. . ." (Numbers 14:20). But before God had ended what He was saying, Moses realised that God would "by no means clear the guilty" (v. 18) "for" said God to that generation, "your carcasses shall fall in the wilderness" (vv. 28 and 29).

### **THE TWO OATHS.**

Numbers 14 records two oaths sworn by God. An oath of God is permanent: nothing can change it. Therefore, when God swore by His own existence, that He would fill the earth with His Glory (Numbers 14:21) Moses would have rejoiced for he knew that God's glory consisted of revealing His righteous character in people. Eventually a race of people would inhabit the earth, who would all reflect the divine character, name and glory in every way:

- mentally—in their knowledge of God;
- morally—in their fellowship with God;
- physically—in their nature—divine and incorruptible like God's.

Moses saw in God's pardon (v. 20) that God's purpose to develop this race of people through the nation of Israel would remain unaltered. But God made it quite clear that though He had pardoned the nation as such,

the guilty individuals in it would be punished.

Therefore He swore a second oath that all those over 20 years of age would die in the wilderness. In His wrath a whole generation over 20 would not enter the promised land (Psa. 95:8-11; Heb. 3:16-18).

Moses would have been very sad at this, but he saw in it God's justice. Also because it was confirmed by oath he no longer pleaded for his people for God's word would stand.

### **THE NATION PUNISHED.**

They were condemned by God to wander 40 years in the wilderness (2 had already passed) until all those over 20 years old were dead — a year for every day the spies were in the land. What a tragic picture that is — to imagine the repetition of all those people dying, day after day, until a whole generation had perished!

Their children, who they said would “be a prey” (Numbers 14:3), would be the ones to inherit the land. Their reaction to this was as bad as the rest of their conduct had been.

They ignored God's statement to “turn you, get you into the wilderness by the way of the Red Sea” (Numbers 14:25). Instead, they took up their swords and attempted to take the land (Numbers 14:40; Deut. 1:41). Despite warnings by Moses, they went up against the Amorites in the south of the land and were defeated and many died.

Only two persons of that great company of people (over 20 years old) would enter the land — Caleb and Joshua. They would be rewarded for their faith. Immediate punishment was given to the 10 unfaithful spies who “died by the plague before the LORD” (Numbers 14:37).

### **LESSON FOR US:**

We must believe, without question, God's promises concerning the Kingdom and not be discouraged by the problems that we encounter day by day. The prospect of the Glory of God filling the earth should thrill us and should encourage us to look forward to the day of Christ's appearing. We should also carefully consider the severity of God's judgments upon His people when they were rebellious or disobedient as seen in their exclusion from the Land of Promise.

Compare Instructor Lesson No. 14.

### **REFERENCE LIBRARY:**

“The Visible Hand of God” (R. Roberts) Chapter 17

“Where It Happened” (Islip Collyer) Chapter 6

“The Story of the Bible” (H. P. Mansfield)—Vol. 2 Pp. 71-80

“Moses My Servant” (H. Tennant) Pp. 115-125

**PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:**

1. a) *What was the “evil” report of the 10 faithless spies?*  
b) *What was the good report of Joshua and Caleb?*
2. *What is faith?*
3. *Describe how Moses pleaded for the people of Israel when God said He would destroy them because of their reluctance to enter into the Promised Land.*
4. *Describe Yahweh’s two oaths as recorded in Numbers 14 and show how these will be or have been fulfilled.*

**ESSAY QUESTIONS:**

1. *Joshua and Caleb faithfully reported the goodness of the promised land. In contrast to the rest of the spies and the people, show how and why they were faithful.*
2. *Why did God condemn Israel to wander for forty years in the wilderness? In your answer describe the two oaths that Yahweh offered on that occasion.*

### 3. REBELLION IN ISRAEL

**“The man’s rod, whom I shall choose, shall blossom”**

*Turned away from the Land of Promise, Israel was condemned to wander in the wilderness for 38 years (40 since leaving Egypt) until all the previous generation were destroyed with the exception of Caleb and Joshua etc. (Deut. 2:14). But Yahweh did not leave them entirely. He continued to communicate with them through Moses (Numbers 15:1, 17, 35). He gave the manna each day, supplied water for the people, and provided raiment (Deut. 8:2-6; 29:5-6).*

*Meanwhile, the disappointment of the people, the defeat when they had tried to force their way into the Promised Land (Numbers 14:45), the general murmuring and disturbed state of the nation, became a fruitful ground for stirring up discontent. The opportunity was seized by Korah to further his claims. He was a prominent Levite, a first cousin to Moses and Aaron (Exodus 6:18, 21), and, according to Josephus, he was also wealthy and a good orator. He gathered others around him and spoke out against Moses and Aaron. But the priesthood was by God’s appointment and we are shown in this lesson the principle of divine selection.*

**Numbers 16 & 17 (see also Deut. 11:6-8); Psalm 106:16-18**

#### **REBELLION IN ISRAEL**

Korah, a prominent leader and cousin of Moses and Aaron was envious of the two leaders (see Psalm 106:16). Gathering some other Levites with him, and 250 princes “famous in the congregation” (vv. 1-2), he opposed Moses and Aaron with the accusation that they took too much upon themselves. They claimed that all Israel were holy, and that there was no reason for Moses and Aaron to place themselves above others. Quite obviously Korah wanted the leadership for himself.

Moses was very distressed by these actions, but he confidently told the people that God would show who were His leaders (v. 5). The 250 princes as commanded, came to the tabernacle carrying censers having fire in them. Dathan and Abiram, the leaders, stood at their tents. The moment Moses had finished speaking and in the sight of all Israel, an earthquake swallowed up Korah, Dathan and Abiram, and all who were gathered with them (vv. 29-32). Then, as the people fled in terror, a terrible fire came out from Yahweh and consumed the 250 princes with their censers. From the censers, plates were made for the altar, as a memorial that only Aaron’s seed could be appointed to the priesthood and tabernacle services (vv. 36-40).



There is an obvious lesson here of respect for authority. In an age when young people are openly rebellious and defiant of authority, Christadelphian young people should be very careful to be obedient to parents, teachers and to all those in authority. We should be respectful and give honour to those who hold positions of authority and leadership both in the world and in the ecclesia (cp. 1 Pet. 2:13-17; 1 Tim. 5:17-19; 1 Thess. 5:12-13). Above all else we should give the greatest respect and honour to God and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will soon return to reward the faithful and crush the rebellious.

### **FURTHER REBELLION.**

Even these remarkable and awesome happenings did not convince Israel. The people blamed Moses for the calamity, probably feeling pity for Korah. As they gathered angrily before the Tabernacle with their complaints against the leader appointed by God, they were smitten by God with a plague, and 14,700 died. The terrible plague was only stopped by the intercession of Moses and Aaron (vv. 46-47).

### **AARON'S ROD THAT BUDDER (Numbers 17).**

To stop all further murmuring and to show clearly to all Israel, that He had selected Aaron as High Priest, God instructed that each tribe was to select a rod, and write on each rod the name of the leader of the tribe. These were placed before the tabernacle, and on the following day it was seen that Aaron's rod had budded, and not only that but that it had also brought forth blossoms and yielded almonds (v. 8). This showed conclusively that he was appointed of Yahweh, and the divine authority was vested in him.

The events of Numbers 16 had shown that Aaron was CHIEF OF LEVI.

The events of Numbers 17 showed that he was HIGH PRIEST IN ISRAEL.

It was a token "against the rebels" to stop "all murmuring" against the authority of Aaron (v. 10).

It taught the people that they would die if they dared to approach God except through the High Priest He had appointed (v. 12).

### **THE RESURRECTION.**

The symbol of the appointment of Aaron was the budding of a dead rod, which typifies the **Resurrection**. Thus we have in this, a *beautiful type of Christ* whose divine selection was shown beyond all doubt by his resurrection (Romans 1:3-4; 1 Corinthians 15:4-6). The fact that Christ rose from the dead shows that God has appointed Him to be our leader,

and none other. We must hearken to him, follow him, seek God through Him — otherwise we, too, will die. As Aaron's rod "bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds" so too the resurrection of Christ assures us that other fruit shall come forth to God (1 Corinthians 15:14-23).

### **LESSON FOR US:**

These remarkable incidents showed that the High Priest's position was one of divine appointment and not to be determined by the voice of the people. They tried to set up whom they wanted, but God would have none of it.

God selected Jesus, and appointed him to his position, and by the power of the gospel message, he is choosing us. If we will hear his voice and hearken to that message, we can become king-priests with the Lord Jesus in the Kingdom He will establish (Revelation 5:9-10). The rulers of that Kingdom will not be appointed by the voice of the people by majority vote, but by the divine selection of God.

### **REFERENCE LIBRARY:**

"The Visible Hand of God" (R. Roberts) Chapter 18

"The Story of the Bible" (H. P. Mansfield) Vol. 2, Pp. 81-93

"Moses My Servant" (H. Tennant) Pp. 125-141

### **PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:**

1. *Describe the rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Abiram in Israel.*
2. *What was the result of the rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Abiram?*
3. *What lessons do we learn from the rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Abiram?*
4. *How did God prove to Israel that He had chosen Aaron to be High Priest in preference to any other prince from any of the other 11 tribes?*
5. *What does the budding of Aaron's rod remind us of (give your reasons).*

### **ESSAY QUESTIONS:**

1. *Describe the background, the challenge and its outcome of Korah, Dathan and Abiram's rebellion.*
2. *Describe the purpose and outcome of God's use of Aaron's rod to show who was the divinely appointed High Priest. In what way does this sign point forward to Christ?*

## 4. FIERY SERPENTS

**“And as Moses lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up”**

*Moses was a faithful servant and had led the Children of Israel to the borders of the Promised Land. In a moment of anger he forgot God's commandment and was punished. In this we learn that God is honoured by our complete obedience to His word. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ can deliver us from the trials and difficulties of life if we concentrate on keeping his commandments uppermost in our minds, particularly when we are provoked to anger.*

### **Numbers 20 & 21; John 3:13-18**

#### **MOSES PUNISHED.**

The Children of Israel were nearing the end of their wilderness wanderings. They were now back at Kadesh, a whole generation having died out (Numbers 20:1). Miriam died there and was buried.

There was a lack of water at Kadesh and the people complained bitterly. (How quickly we forget God's goodness toward us when things do not go right for us). God, however, was willing to provide for them. He told Moses to take Aaron's rod and "speak" to the rock.

Moses and Aaron assembled the people before the rock. Angrily Moses said, "Must WE fetch you water out of this rock?" And then he struck the rock twice with the rod. Water flowed forth abundantly but God was displeased with Moses' words and actions. Moses had not only disobeyed, but "he spoke inadvisedly with his lips" (Psalm 106:32-33). The apostle Paul tells us that the rock represented Christ (1 Corinthians 10:4). Christ was smitten once only when he was crucified and is now "able to save to the uttermost those who come unto God by Him" (Hebrews 7:25). We should note that earlier, at Rephidim, Moses had been told by God to smite the rock in order to provide life-giving water (Exod. 17:5-6; see Stage 1, Lesson 19). So in that sense it was inappropriate for Moses to smite the rock twice for in a **typical way** that was like crucifying Christ twice. Moses had dishonoured God when he said "must we fetch water" taking the honour of God's power to himself and God decreed that Moses would not enter the promised land because of this. How careful we must be in our dealings with one another to keep God's word uppermost in our mind and to be obedient. We must never act in such a way as to take to ourselves the honour due to God. That would not be sanctifying God as He would require of all His servants (Num. 20:12; Lev. 10:3).

## **DEATH OF AARON.**

The King of Edom refused to let Israel pass through his land which meant they had to turn south once again, turn eastward at the tip of the Gulf of Elath and then north on the east side of Edom (see map). This route brought them past Mt. Hor (Numbers 20:22) where Aaron died. His priestly garments were given to his son Eleazar who then became the High Priest of Israel. The Children of Israel remained there for 30 days while they mourned for Aaron.

## **FIERY SERPENTS IN THE WILDERNESS.**

They journeyed from Mt. Hor and the people became "much discouraged because of the way" (Numbers 21:4). Once again they were in danger of giving up. They doubted God's ability to save them and accused Moses of leading them to death. They said concerning the manna, "our soul loatheth this light bread" and in this way they despised God's care for them.

God punished them by sending serpents among them which had a deadly bite. The people realised that this was the result of their sin and requested that Moses pray for them asking God to remove the peril. Moses did so and was instructed to make a serpent of brass and to raise it up upon a pole. God told him that any who looked upon it would be healed of the serpent's bite (Numbers 21:6-9).

## **THE CRUCIFIXION OF CHRIST.**

Jesus later drew attention to this incident as typical of what he himself would do to deliver men from death (John 3:14-17).

Jesus can deliver us from sin and death because God has raised him from the dead. God did this because Jesus obeyed Him perfectly throughout his life. God promises salvation to all who will likewise seek to obey His commands and follow the example of the Lord Jesus Christ. God gave His only begotten son "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life".

Sin, like the bite of the serpent, brings death (Romans 6:23; 1 Corinthians 15:56; Genesis 3:15). The Lord Jesus Christ was one who had our sinful nature and yet had never sinned. He is represented therefore in this type as the brazen serpent, "lifted up" just as he was lifted up for all to see in his crucifixion. God showed to a sinful world that this was the only way for their salvation (Romans 8:3; Hebrews 2:14; 2 Corinthians 5:21). The brazen serpent was made to look like the fiery serpent, but of course it had no venom.

## **LESSON FOR US:**

The Israelite who refused by lack of faith to look at the serpent on the pole after being bitten, perished. We too, must look in faith to Jesus and see the same lessons. Salvation from the “sting” of sin requires faith or belief in “Christ crucified”. He is the one appointed by God to save us from the consequences of sin, i.e. death. We must follow his example to “crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts” (Gal. 5:24) and depend solely upon the help of God through Jesus Christ to save us. We must learn to recognise our sin, confess, repent and seek forgiveness. We need to turn to God’s Word for guidance in overcoming the ever-present temptation to sin against God.

## **REFERENCE LIBRARY:**

“The Story of The Bible” (H. P. Mansfield)—Vol. 2, Nos. 8 & 9  
“The Visible Hand of God” (R. Roberts)—Chapter 19  
“Moses My Servant” (H. Tennant)—Pp. 148-165

## **PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:**

1. a) *Why was Moses not allowed to enter the Promised Land?*  
b) *What lesson do we learn from the incident of Moses striking the rock?*
2. *Why were fiery serpents sent among the Israelites?*
3. *What lessons do we learn from the brasen serpent that Moses was commanded to set up on a pole?*

## **ESSAY QUESTIONS:**

1. *What lessons do we learn from the words and action of Moses and Aaron when they struck the rock instead of speaking to it?*
2. *Describe the incident of the fiery serpents and show how this points forward to Christ’s work in being “lifted up” for our salvation.*

## 5. BALAAM

**“Thou shalt not curse the people: for they are blessed”**

*The last lesson left the Children of Israel struggling up from the south toward the promised land. As they journeyed futher north the country changed and the going became easier. Coming up the east side of Moab God gave them resounding victories over the armies of the Amorite Kings, Sihon and Og (see map). They then settled in the plains of Moab overlooking the east bank of Jordan (Numbers 22:1). As we read of Balak's reaction to the presence of Israel we are taught that God's plans can never be thwarted. This lesson shows how God turned the curses of Israel's enemies into a blessing.*

### Numbers 22-25

#### **BALAK SENDS FOR BALAAM.**

Balak King of Moab feared the Israelites and sent for Balaam, a prophet in Mesopotamia. He foolishly hoped that Balaam would be able to put a curse on the Israelites which would destroy them (v. 5-6). But Balaam was warned by God not to go with the messengers of Balak (v. 12) and Balak therefore sent some of his most important men to Balaam with promises of great wealth (v. 15-17). Balaam at first refused and was subsequently told by God that if the men called again for him, he was to go but would speak only that which God told him (v. 20). So anxious was Balaam to go after the reward offered by Balak that it is evident that he did not wait for the men to call but saddled his ass and went himself (v. 21—cp. Jude 11; 2 Peter 3:15-16).

#### **THE ANGEL OPPOSES BALAAM.**

Balaam's eagerness to go angered Yahweh who sent an angel to block his path (Numbers 22:22). Although invisible to Balaam the ass could see the angel and turned aside into the field (v. 23). Balaam was angry with his ass and beat it. Again the angel appeared before the ass causing it to lurch to one side and crush Balaam's foot against the wall. Balaam was furious and when the beast dropped under him a third time he smote it heavily. Thereupon God opened the ass's mouth and it spoke to Balaam. Imagine his surprise at hearing his ass speak. Despite the absurdity of speaking to an animal he answered and threatened to kill it for its behaviour.

God then opened Balaam's eyes and he saw the angel that stood in the way. Balaam was terrified and would have returned back to his home but the angel bade him to go to Balak, but told him that he must speak only the words that God would give him.

It is interesting to note in this chapter that the Hebrew word "satan" is twice used and translated correctly as "adversary" (v. 22) and "withstand" (v. 32). Much confusion has arisen because in other places the word "satan" has been transferred into the English language to give the false idea that there is a sinister superhuman monster at large tempting men to sin. In all cases where this word is found it means simply "an adversary" (either good or bad).

### **THE CURSE TURNED TO BLESSING.**

Balak took Balaam to a high mountain where he could look down on the camp of Israel. It would have been an impressive sight to view the long orderly rows of tents grouped in tribes with the Tabernacle in their midst. After offering up their sacrifices Balak and Balaam prepared to curse Israel. But God appeared to Balaam and told him what to say (Numbers 23:4-5). So Balaam was forced to tell Balak that the people of Israel were destined to become a great nation in the earth (v. 7-10). Balak was shocked and took Balaam to another high place where the same procedure of offering sacrifices was repeated and Balaam again set out to curse Israel.

Again Balaam was given a message by an angel and for a second time his intended curse was turned to a blessing (v. 18-24). Balak was furious and took Balaam to two more lookout points only to hear further blessings upon the people (chapter 24:3-9; 15-24). We can see how powerful the inspiration of God's spirit was, for though Balaam wanted to curse Israel and receive the reward, he could only speak what God permitted (cp. 2 Peter 1:20-21).

### **BALAAM CAUSES TROUBLE FOR ISRAEL.**

Although unable to pronounce a curse on Israel Balaam sought to bring about their downfall another way. His motive was to gain for himself Balak's reward, for he was a greedy man. Balaam's counsel to the Moabites was to make themselves friendly to Israel and encourage them to join in the worship of the Moabites' gods. Then Yahweh God of Israel would be angry with his people and destroy them. This advice was followed and caused many in Israel to turn to the evil ways of the Moabites. They worshipped idols and committed fornication with Moabitish women, so that God sent a plague among the people until they broke off their friendship with Moab (cp. Numbers 31:16 with Revelation 2:14 and Jude 11). It is important for Christadelphian young people, to remain separate from the evil practices of the world. This is especially so in our contacts with other school children whose pressure for us to go with them to the pleasures of the world would be destructive of our faith and love of God.

What a tragedy it was for those approaching the land to be slain when nearly at the end of the wilderness wanderings. Yet, in that there is a clear

warning for us. We are rapidly approaching the Kingdom of God. In these last days of our preparation for the Kingdom let us not be tempted by worldly people to sin and perish, when Christ's coming is so near.

### **BALAAM SLAIN.**

Not only did Balaam's advice fail to destroy Israel but God's anger was kindled against the Midianite Kings who had sheltered Balaam and helped Balak. Therefore an army of Israelite soldiers were sent against the Midianites. The power of Midian was broken and Balaam was slain (Numbers 31:1-12).

### **LESSON FOR US:**

God has promised to protect those who are obedient to Him and walk in His ways (Psalm 34:7). However, when we turn aside to follow the evil ways of people who ignore God, He will allow the evil consequences which will follow. We must be always on our guard to see that we do not transgress any of God's laws in our desire to be friendly with other people (James 4:4).

Neither are we to develop greedy habits so that we are prepared to turn our back upon God and His ways for the sake of making material gains.

### **REFERENCE LIBRARY:**

"The Story of the Bible" (H. P. Mansfield)—Vol. 2, No. 8  
"The Visible Hand of God" (R. Roberts)—Chapter 19

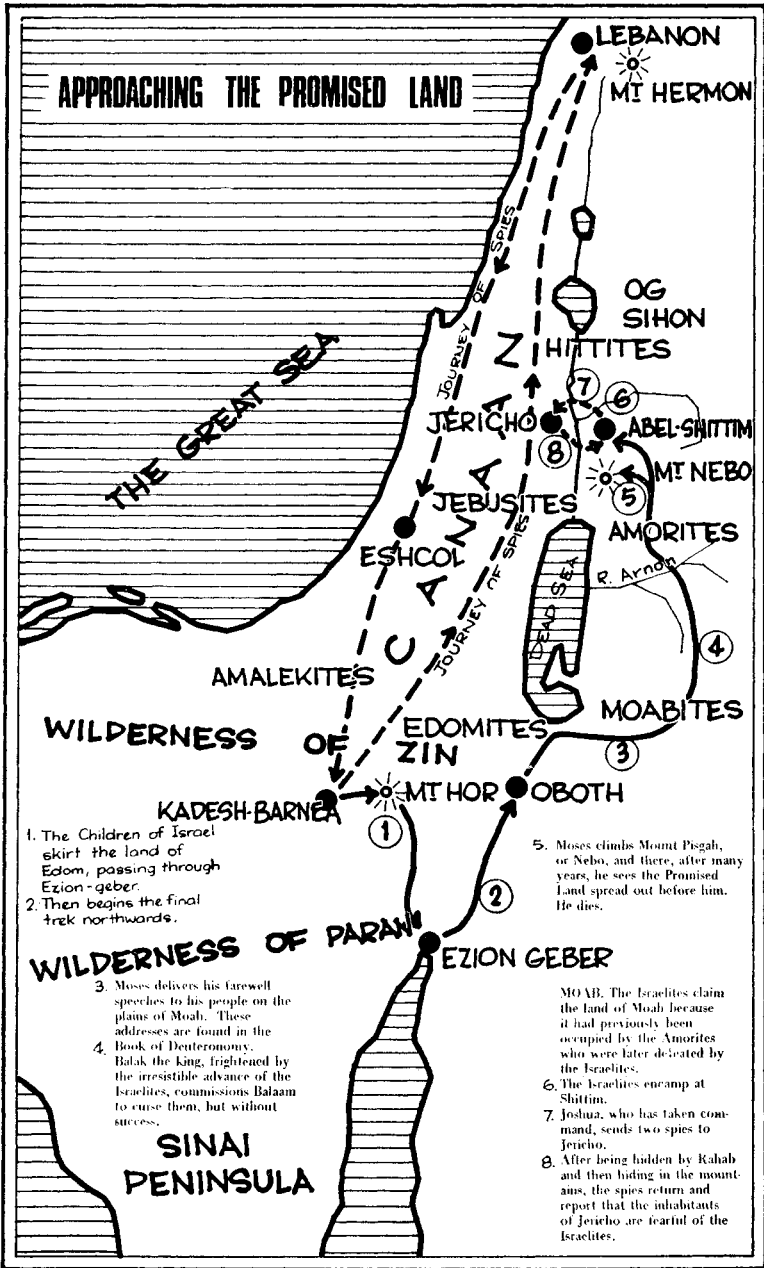
### **PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:**

1. *Why did Balaam want to go with the princes of Moab?*
2. *Explain how Balaam learned that God was angry with him for going to Balak.*
3. *How was Balak's intention to curse Israel defeated?*
4. a) *How did Balaam finally succeed in bringing about Israel's downfall?*  
b) *What is wrong with being friendly with the world?*

### **ESSAY QUESTION:**

1. *Show how Balaam was initially prevented from cursing Israel but did ultimately cause Israel to sin?*
2. *What lessons do we learn from the story of Balaam about*
  - a) *False prophets — that is people who use God's Word for their own gain, and*
  - b) *Being friendly with worldly people? Show how important it is to be separate from worldly practices as we prepare for Christ's coming.*





## 6. THE NEW LEADER

**“As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee”**

*The Children of Israel camped in the plains of Moab and waited for the time to come when they would enter into their inheritance. Moses, their great leader had not been idle. He wrote the book of Deuteronomy and called upon the people to take heed to its message. “Be strong and of good courage,” he told them, “for He will not fail thee nor forsake thee” (Deut. 31:6). One of his last acts was to appoint Joshua as his successor and to exhort him to be strong and courageous, “for thou must go with this people unto the land” (Deut. 31:7-8).*

### **Deuteronomy 34; Joshua 1-4**

#### **THE DEATH OF MOSES.**

The time had come for the great leader to die. Moses was still a strong man but his work was finished (Deut. 34:7). Leaving the camp of Israel, he ascended Mt. Nebo and there before him was the promised land. Beneath him was the camp of Israel set out in its four division, waiting for the order to march. On the other side of Jordan could be seen the fortress city of Jericho, key to the entrance of the land of promise. Beyond Jericho stretched the mountains of Palestine, the twin hills of Ebal and Gerizim, the fertile valley of Shechem. There were the hills of Judea with the powerful fortress of Jebus standing out upon what was later called Mt. Zion. As Moses gazed over this scene he knew that, although he was not to lead the people into the land, one day he would stand within its borders. With Abraham and the other worthies, under the leadership of the Lord Jesus, he will enter his inheritance. Like so many others, Moses “died in faith not having received the promise, but having seen them afar off. . .” (Hebrews 11:13). Death came quickly to this hero of faith, and the angel buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, and “no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day” (Deut. 34:6).

Moses was a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. God said to him, “I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and I will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him” (Deut. 18:18). Compare these words with Acts 3:22-23 and 7:37. When we think of Moses in leading Israel, caring for the people, pleading on their behalf, bearing with their sins, supporting them, guiding them through the desert towards the Promised Land and teaching them God’s laws, in these and in many other ways we see the work of the Lord Jesus Christ foreshadowed.

But the type was not complete in Moses, and thus another man was selected to give them their inheritance, Joshua. As God buried His

workman, so Joshua took up the task. Though the workmen die and thus lay down their tools, the work must go on. The great task of preserving the way of life in this age is the duty of every individual who seeks to follow the Lord Jesus Christ "in spirit and in Truth". And it is through the greater than Joshua, the Lord Jesus Christ, that we shall enter into our inheritance, the Kingdom of God.

### **JOSHUA—THE NEW LEADER.**

There were two men in the camp of Israel who had shown remarkable faith and courage, Joshua and Caleb. Of all the men who were over 20 years of age when leaving Egypt, they alone entered the Promised Land. Of these two, Joshua was chosen to be the leader. He had these necessary qualifications.

1. He had **COURAGE**—for this had been exhibited when he led Israel into battle (Exodus 17:8-16).
2. He had **FAITH**—as he proved when he and Caleb opposed the faithless report of the ten other spies.
3. He had **WISDOM**—for this had been given him (Deut. 34:9).
4. He had **EXPERIENCE**—for he had been constantly at the side of Moses throughout the wilderness trials.

The name "Joshua" indicated his mission, for it means "Yahweh is salvation." The Greek name "Jesus" in the New Testament means the same as the Hebrew "Joshua" in the Old (see Acts 7:45; Hebrews 4:8 —margin). Joshua was in effect, Israel's Saviour, and a type of the Lord Jesus who is our Saviour, and the "captain of our salvation."

God told Joshua that he and all the people were to go over Jordan to the land of their inheritance, the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Joshua 1:6). He assured Joshua of His help (v. 5). He gave him the basis for success: "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein; for **THEN THOU SHALT MAKE THY WAY PROSPEROUS, AND THEN THOU SHALT HAVE GOOD SUCCESS.**" And that is a basic rule for our success too.

Joshua directed officers to see that Israel had food for three days in readiness (Joshua 1:10-18). The tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh were reminded of the agreement made in Moses' day. They had asked for the land of Gilead, east of Jordan, for their inheritance, and were promised it on condition that they first help their brethren fight the Canaanites (Numbers 32:1-5; 5:29-30). These tribes readily agreed to assist in the conquest.

### **SPIES IN JERICHO (Joshua 2).**

Before the River Jordan was crossed, Joshua sent two spies from the camp at Shittim. They had hidden in the house of Rahab whose home was built upon the walls of the city, and she had protected them when the King of Jericho sought to take them. Rahab had heard the reports of the wonders that God had done, and confessed her faith in God (Joshua 2:9-11; Hebrews 11:31). As a reward for her kindness and faith the spies promised that she and her family would be saved. The spies returned to the camp of Israel with encouraging words, "Truly the LORD hath delivered into our hands all the land; for even the inhabitants of the land do faint because of us" (Joshua 2:23-24).

### **THE PASSAGE OF THE JORDAN (Joshua 3).**

For three days Israel camped near the banks of the River Jordan. On the third day they were commanded to sanctify themselves because on the morrow God was going to do wonders among them. They had to contemplate the spiritual significance of what was about to take place.

The ark was the visible sign of God's presence, and when it was carried across Jordan, Israel understood that God was directing their march and would give them victory over the seven nations of Canaan (Joshua 3:10).

When the feet of the priests who were carrying the Ark, touched the water, the waters on the right hand were miraculously "driven back" (Psalm 114:3-5), and banked up (Joshua 3:16). Those of the lower waters drained away. The miracle was all the more amazing because at the time the river was in flood.

But the miracle has some interesting parallels. The word Jordan means "Descender." The river slowly descends from the sea of Galilee (a fresh water lake) down through the city, Adam to the Dead Sea (Joshua 3:16). It is like a parable of mortality, commencing with life (the fresh water lake) and passing through Adam and finally passing to death (the Dead Sea). But when the Ark of the Covenant (representing the Lord Jesus) stood in the midst of these descending waters, they were driven back as far as the city Adam, towards the Sea of Life (see Joshua 3:16; Psalm 114:3). The words "very far from the city Adam" can be rendered "far off at Adam" (R.S.V.). This highly significant crossing into the Land of Promise is a foreshadowing of Christ's resurrection, assuring the personal resurrection of so many who have died in faith and assuring them of an entrance into the "Promised Land", i.e., the Kingdom of God.

### **THE TWO MEMORIALS (Joshua 4).**

Joshua commanded a chosen man from each tribe to take a stone from the bed of the River Jordan. These 12 stones were set up at Gilgal, Israel's new camp, on the western bank of the River. A second memorial of 12

stones was set up in the midst of Jordan, one for each tribe (v. 9).

These memorials were to teach the children of successive generations the great story of the passage of the Jordan that they might always appreciate the mighty power of Him who fought for Israel (v. 23, 24).

The priests remained holding the Ark of the Covenant aloft, in the midst of the River Jordan, until "all the people were passed over" (Joshua 3:17). Then they carried the Ark up out of the river and the River Jordan resumed its normal course, flowing down to the Dead Sea.

#### **LESSON FOR US:**

Having passed over Jordan, Israel began a new life as God's special people in the promised land. Egypt, the wilderness, and their old life, were now behind them. Under Joshua's leadership in Canaan they had long and continuous wars to wage against their enemies. But they were victorious while they obeyed God's commands. From Israel's experience we can take a lesson.

With Christ as our Leader we begin a new life. We have a long battle to fight against natural desire and worldly things, for they are our enemies. God will help us to overcome provided we love and obey Him. As Israel had to sanctify themselves, so must we also be "set apart", to learn His purpose, and obey His commands. The miraculous crossing of the flooded River Jordan, foreshadowed the work of Christ who turned back the tide of mortality and has enabled those who will pass through the waters of baptism to receive, by God's grace, an eternal inheritance in the promised land — the Kingdom of God.

#### **REFERENCE LIBRARY:**

"The Story of the Bible" (H. P. Mansfield)—Vol. 2, No. 9

"The Ways of Providence" (R. Roberts)—Chapter 12, 13

"The Visible Hand of God" (R. Roberts)—Chapter 21

"Joshua" (J. Ullman)

#### **PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:**

1. *What is meant when Christ is described as a prophet like Moses?*
2. *"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off and were persuaded of them and embraced them." Show how Moses fits this description.*
3. *What qualities of character did Joshua have that suited him to be Israel's new leader?*
4. *What instruction was Joshua given when he was appointed as Israel's new leader?*
5. *How and why did Rahab help the two spies who came to Jericho?*
6. *Describe the preparations that Joshua made before Israel crossed the river Jordan.*

**ESSAY QUESTIONS:**

1. *Joshua held the necessary qualifications for the leadership of Israel at the death of Moses. Describe those qualifications and the instructions God gave Joshua for his success.*
2. *Describe the miraculous crossing of the River Jordan by the nation of Israel and show the significance of the event as a type of resurrection.*

## 7. JERICHO

### “The wall fell down flat”

*In three great campaigns Joshua conquered first the centre, then the south, and finally the north of the land of Canaan. This was done to the extent that each tribe could go in and obtain their inheritance (Joshua 18:3). He thus made it possible for each Israelite and tribe to obtain what God had promised. But they had to show individual faith and courage, and “go in” themselves. In this, Joshua is like the Lord Jesus. He has made it possible for us to obtain our inheritance. But some effort on our part is necessary.*

*We propose to study the campaigns of Joshua to see, first, what he did for the people, and secondly, what they should have done to complete the victory.*

*Opposite the place where the Israelites were camped on the western side of Jordan, grew majestic palms, beyond which could be seen the massive walls and high towers of Jericho — defending the entrance to Palestine. It was a fortress city, less than half a mile in circumference, but very powerfully protected. Archaeologists have been amazed at the extent of the fortifications of this and other cities in the Land. And what had Yahweh commanded? Were the people to lay siege to it and take it by war? No; but that the priests and army should compass it seven days, and seven times on the seventh day. Then as they blew the trumpets, the wall would fall down flat. These were the instructions given to Joshua, and they were a test of faith to him and all Israel. But the faith of Joshua was equal to the occasion.*

### Joshua 6

#### THE INHABITANTS ARE FEARFUL.

The inhabitants of the land knew of the miracle of the crossing of the Jordan, they had heard some of the remarkable incidents of the Exodus, and consequently a great fear possessed them (Joshua 5:1). The gates of the city were closed in anticipation of an attack and for the moment, all was quiet.

#### JOSHUA ENCOURAGED.

As he stood gazing at the city his attention was suddenly drawn to a warrior who stood not far from him with a sword in his hand (Joshua 5:13). Who was he? Was he enemy or friend? The answer came that he was the captain of the army of Yahweh. Joshua bowed before the angel and asked what instructions he had for him. These are given in Chapter 6, commencing with the words, “See, I have given into thy hand Jericho”.

## **WITHIN THE CITY.**

Inside Jericho there was fear among the inhabitants (Joshua 6:1). They wondered at the strange behaviour of their attackers. For some weeks nothing appeared to be happening. Then one day the news came that the army of Israel was marching towards the city. Quietly, with military precision, uttering no words, the soldiers of Israel encompassed the city. Then they marched back towards the camp. After them came seven priests blowing upon seven trumpets, filling the air with shrill notes. They were followed by priests holding aloft the Ark of the covenant. This strange procession encircled the city, returned to the camp, and quietness again settled down on Jericho.

On the next morning the same thing happened, and the same procedure followed for six days.

On the seventh day there was a change. Rising early in the morning, Joshua carefully instructed the leaders of Israel. On this day the walls would fall down flat, and soldiers were to destroy the inhabitants because of their wickedness (Deut. 9:5-6). Would the people of Israel have faith in God's strange instructions? Would they obey His word? Could faith overthrow such a powerful fortress-city?

The people of Jericho were disturbed by the strange marching of the Israelites. Doubtless they watched the soldiers encircle the city, and expected them to return to their camp. But this time the soldiers continued marching around the city, seven times, followed by the priests blowing the trumpets and after the trumpets those carrying the Ark. On the seventh occasion, when the priests completed their last walk around the city, the people of Jericho were startled by a terrible shout from the ranks of Israel. The earth began to heave and shake, and the walls began to reel over. Finally with a terrible crash, the outer wall gave way, dragging the inner wall with it. The city was now open to the warriors of Israel. What an amazing victory of their faith. What a powerful vindication of God's Word.

## **RAHAB SAVED.**

Not all the wall was destroyed. The portion upon which Rahab's house was built was preserved intact. In the window could be seen the sign that the spies had given her, the scarlet rope (Joshua 2:18), telling the story of faith and redemption as did the blood-spattered lintels of the houses of the Israelites in Egypt when the Angel of Death passed over the land. Rahab and those sheltering in the house, were saved from the destruction, but the rest of the city was wholly destroyed somewhat like a sacrifice unto God (Joshua 6:17). The word "accursed" can also mean "devoted" or "consecrated". Every living being in the city was destroyed except, of course, Rahab and her household. The gold and silver and all



metals were consecrated to God and placed in the treasury (v. 19). The Israelites were forbidden to keep anything for themselves. It was God's victory, and everything belonged to Him.

Joshua declared that whoever attempted to rebuild the city of Jericho would suffer the loss of children. This was later fulfilled (Joshua 6:26; 1 Kings 16:34).

### **THE TYPE.**

The destruction of Jericho is a type of the judgments that the Lord Jesus Christ will bring upon the rebellious cities and nations of the world when he returns to the earth. In place of the false worship and corrupt politics which govern the peoples of the 20th Century will be righteousness and peace. God will be recognised as supreme and all powerful through the work of His son Jesus (Jesus is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Joshua). But the world will not submit initially, even as Jericho did not surrender. It will require divine acts similar to those that subdued Canaan before the nations will accept that Jesus Christ is universal King.

### **LESSON FOR US:**

The fall of Jericho is primarily a lesson of faith. "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days" (Hebrews 11:30). Israel was taught that only by faith could they conquer the land. We have studied the great promises to Abraham and seen how God protected His people. Moreover He brought them from Egypt and carried them through the wilderness. All these things have lessons for us. But what is the greatest lesson of all? Paul declares, "*Without faith it is impossible to please God*" (Hebrew 11:6). We must then obtain faith. But HOW may we develop it? "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God" (Romans 10:17). When we hearken to the Word we find out that God has done what He said He would do in the past. This gives us confidence that He will also perform the other promises He has made. We therefore believe and have faith in the truthfulness of God's Word, accepting the evidence from the past of God's stupendous acts of power and looking earnestly to the time when He will send Jesus Christ, and the great walls of modern "Jericho" will come falling down.

Thus the lesson of the first great battle in the campaign of Joshua is the lesson of **Faith**.

### **REFERENCE LIBRARY:**

- "Archaeology explains" (W. H. Boulton)
- "The Story of the Bible" (H. P. Mansfield)—Vol. 2, Nos. 9 and 10
- "Jericho" (Prof. J. Garstang)
- "The Visible Hand of God" (R. Roberts)—Page 212

“Digging in Jericho” (K. Kenyon)

“Joshua” (J. Ullman)

**PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:**

1. *Why were the inhabitants of Jericho fearful of Israel?*
2. *What important instructions were given to Joshua before the attack on Jericho?*
3. *How did Rahab show her faith in God?*
4. *Explain how faith was demonstrated in the conquest of Jericho.*

**ESSAY QUESTIONS:**

1. *Describe the fall of Jericho and show how faith was involved in the conquest.*
2. *“By faith the walls of Jericho fell down” (Heb. 11:30). Explain the meaning of these words and compare this victory to the victories to be achieved by the Lord Jesus Christ.*



## 8. ATTACK ON AI

**“The Children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing”**

*The victory of Jericho was a triumph of faith, and now, in the next incident, we have stressed the importance not only of faith, but of obedience as well. God has recorded His will, and it is our duty to hearken to His word and OBEY it.*

*Because that was not done by all Israel at Jericho — a disaster was about to overtake the nation.*

*Instead of devoting all the spoil of Jericho to Yahweh as commanded, Achan secretly kept some back (Joshua 7:1 — remember the word “accursed” means “devoted” i.e. “consecrated or given to God”). Thus Achan stole from God. The terrible consequences matched this terrible transgression.*

### Joshua 7 & 8

#### AI.

Twelve kilometres from Jericho was the town of Ai. The word “Ai” means “ruin” and it was to prove a ruin to some in Israel. Ai stood at the beginning of the wild maze of hills that lead to the uplands of Palestine. It commanded the valleys that gave access to the land (Joshua 8:11). It was only a small town, and the spies reported that only a token force of Israelites would be needed to take it (Joshua 7:3).

This suggests that Israel were perhaps confident of their own ability and were rather presumptuous. Moreover they did not approach God first for directions.

#### DESPAIR (vv. 6-9).

The small army was despatched, but soon returned in full retreat to the camp of Israel. 36 men had been killed, and Israel was defeated. Fear swept through the camp (v. 5). Had God deserted them? If so, how then could they continue after the Canaanites heard of their defeat. Enemies would attack them on every side.

Clothes were rent, and dust put on heads as a sign of mourning. Notice the prayer of Joshua, “What shall I say when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies. . .” He appealed unto Yahweh, desperate to know what it was that had caused God to allow such a thing to happen.

#### THE CAUSE OF THE TROUBLE (vv. 10-12).

Note the urgent answer to Joshua, “Get thee up”. This was no time for complaint, for the fault really lay with Israel. Israel had “sinned and they have also transgressed my Covenant which I commanded them: for they

have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled (hid) also, and they have put it even among their own stuff". This was the reason for defeat and not only so but God would not be with them again until those responsible were punished.

**THE CURE (vv. 13-15).**

On the morrow the intense search began. In the morning all the tribes of Israel were assembled. By means of casting lots, the tribe in which resided the guilty party was identified. Then the family of that tribe was revealed and then the household, until the man responsible was exposed. Imagine the feelings of Achan, the guilty party as all this went on. What a lesson there is for us in this. The Lord Jesus Christ shall soon return to the earth and from his throne of judgment will judge his servants. Let us heed and obey now, when the opportunity is present so that we shall not be among those who will weep and gnash their teeth in the last day.

**CONFESSION (vv. 16-21).**

Read carefully the confession of Achan. Notice the kindness of Joshua (v. 19). "My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession unto Him. . .". There was sorrow in Israel. The whole work of God was put in jeopardy by an act of foolishness and disobedience. God cannot work with sin. A true confession would justify the action of God in withdrawing His protection at Ai, it would show that He was right.

The confession came. Note the following words. Mark them in your Bible, "*I have sinned*, i.e., "*I saw*", "*I coveted*", "*I took*" (vv. 20-21, see also James 1:15). This is how sin arises. The same process took place when Eve sinned (Genesis 3:6). As a result of her action, death, the wages of sin, then came on all men (Romans 5:12). The same thing happened when Achan sinned. Defeat and death came on the camp of Israel. How important it is for us to carefully guard our thoughts and actions. God is not mocked. He discerns our every thought. Let ours be a heart purged of covetousness and ever willing to obey His Word. Disobedience will surely bring great suffering for us and may well involve others in our sin and suffering.

Achan's name means "trouble" and he had "troubled Israel" as Joshua declared (v. 15).

**PUNISHMENT (vv. 22-26).**

The punishment of sin is death (Romans 6:23). Achan and his family were stoned. The family was involved in the sin, for they knew Achan had taken the goods and would have helped him to hide them. All Israel stoned Achan with stones and burned them with fire. Thus they all repudiated what had been done. It was a public condemnation of the sin

of Achan. They covered him with a large heap of stones for a memorial for a continual reminder of the tragedy of sin and the loss the nation suffered as a consequence.

### **FAITH RESTORED (Joshua 8).**

Joshua was told to “fear not” for God would deliver Ai into his hands. He was to take “all the people” (i.e., the army) for this purpose. From them he selected 30,000 men and taking 5,000 of these, he set them in the valley that divided Ai from Bethel to act as an ambush. He did this overnight. The remaining 25,000 he had placed before the city and told them the strategy he had planned. Then, when all was ready, he went to a high hill overlooking the city so that he could supervise the operation.

Next day, the soldiers of Ai, together with reinforcements from Bethel (v. 17), seeing the body of Israelites advancing up the valley, vigorously attacked them. Following the instructions of Joshua, the 25,000 Israelites turned and fled. The men of Ai thought they had another easy victory, and were drawn away from the city. Joshua stretched out his spear (v. 18).

This was the signal agreed upon with the men in ambush. Rising up out of their hiding place in the valley behind Ai, they entered the city and set it on fire. As the smoke ascended, the soldiers of Ai saw that they had been caught between the two groups of Joshua’s army. They halted their attack. Immediately the 25,000 Israelites, together with the rest of the army that had remained hidden from Ai, turned and attacked. The city was completely destroyed. The king was publicly executed to teach Israel the fate of those who were so wicked (see Deut. 9:5-6).

In the victory of Ai, faith was restored, and the people could clearly see that whereas sin led to defeat, obedience would bring victory.

### **LESSON FOR US:**

Following the example of outstanding faith shown at Jericho we see how the carelessness of Israel and the dishonesty of Achan brought sin and despair. It shows that we must not only believe but also obey. See the words of the Lord Jesus — John 14:21, 23; John 16:27. If we love God we will obey Him. It is no use saying we love Him otherwise. A Scriptural love is LOVE IN ACTION. Therefore we must not only understand His purpose, and have faith in His promises, but we must learn to OBEY him. Then we will avoid mistakes such as Achan made.

### **REFERENCE LIBRARY:**

- “The Story of the Bible” (H. P. Mansfield)—Vol. 2, Nos. 9 & 10
- “The Visible Hand of God” (R. Roberts)—Chapter 21
- “The Ways of Providence” (R. Roberts)—Chapter 12.
- “Joshua”, J. Ullman

**PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:**

1. *What was the cause of the failure in Israel's first attack on Ai, and what should we learn from their failure?*
2. *From Achan's confession show the step by step development of sin.*
3. *What plan of attack did Joshua use in the second attack on Ai?*

**ESSAY QUESTIONS:**

1. *Describe how Achan troubled Israel and how his sin was revealed. What lessons do we learn from this?*
2. *Show how Israel was successful in their second attack upon the city of Ai in contrast to their first attack.*





## 9. THE GIBEONITES

**“The men took of their victuals, and asked not counsel at the mouth of Yahweh”**

*The fall of Ai made a profound impression among the inhabitants of Canaan. The Pass of Ai opened the way to Bethhoron and the southern parts of the country. The nations of the south joined together in order to resist Joshua, doubtless feeling that there was safety in numbers.*

*The next town of importance was Gibeon. It was situated at the Pass of Beth-horon, immediately opposite the Pass of Ai, about 8.5 kilometres west of Bethel, and 12 kilometres N.N.W. of Jerusalem. Gibeon was the chief of four cities set in a pretty part of the land among hills, valleys and springs of water (v. 17). Being but a few kilometres distant from Ai, they had a first hand account of the terrible destruction of that city. They felt incapable of defending themselves against Joshua, and decided to use cunning instead of force. Israel were deceived by the Gibeonites and tricked into making an agreement with them. They did not seek God's guidance but relied on their own judgment.*

### Joshua 9 & 10

#### THE PLAN OF THE GIBEONITES.

The Gibeonites clothed themselves in old garments and wore old patched shoes (note the word “clouted” v. 5 is Anglo-Saxon for “patched”). They carried stale and mouldy bread in old sacks, and took wine skins that had been torn and mended.

They claimed to have a great respect for the God of Israel, and spoke of His wonderful deeds (vv. 9-10). They showed the Israelites their shoes and clothes and food as proof of their coming from a far country.

#### ISRAEL'S MISTAKE.

Israel was completely deceived by this trickery. God had decreed that the inhabitants of the land should be destroyed because of their terrible wickedness (Deut. 7:1-3; 20:16), and had specifically prohibited the making of covenants with them (Exodus 23:32; 34:12-14; Numbers 33:51-56). However those cities “very far off from thee” could be spared (Deut. 20:11-15). Israel believed that they were from distant lands and spared them. Israel made a fatal mistake in that “they asked not counsel at the mouth of Yahweh” (v. 14). As a result they were led astray by the “wiles of the adversary” (Ephesians 6:10-11), and entered into a covenant of peace with the Gibeonites.

## **THE DECEPTION DISCOVERED.**

Three days later, the army of Israel approached the cities of the Gibeonites. They made ready for war. How surprised they were to find that their visitors from a far country were their neighbours. They had been completely hoodwinked. As is usual in such cases, the Israelites became angry, and some spoke of destroying the Gibeonites straight away. Others condemned the leaders for making such a mistake (v. 18). But the covenant had been made and had to be respected. As punishment the Gibeonites were made servants to the Israelites, performing the menial work of hewing wood and drawing water (v. 27), tasks usually left to the women or to servants (Deut. 29:11). The Gibeonites were thus degraded but for their part they had saved their lives and cities.

Israel should have been more careful, and sought God's instructions. So should we. God has given us His word, and by its means we can find out what He requires of us (Micah 6:6-8; Psalm 119:9; 19:7-8; Colossians 1:9-10), else we shall surely be deceived by the cunning and lies constantly practised by the world.

## **ATTACK ON GIBEON (Josh. 10).**

The covenant Gibeon made with Joshua filled the Canaanites in the south of the land with fear. Gibeon was only about 12 kilometres from Jerusalem, and the way was now open for Joshua to attack. The king of Jerusalem decided that if he was to effectively defend his city then it was no use waiting for Joshua to attack. Gathering his forces about him and calling to his assistance the other kings of the south, he led an attack against Gibeon because they had made peace with Israel.

Meanwhile, Joshua had withdrawn to Gilgal (v. 6). An urgent message was sent to Joshua by the Gibeonites to come quickly as the kings of the south had attacked. The time was ready for the pre-battle preparations of Deut. 20:1-9 to be put into effect.

## **JOSHUA ATTACKS AT DAWN (vv. 8-11).**

The army of Israel was prepared. They marched overnight and quite unexpectedly appeared on the field of battle early in the morning. With the sun shining directly into the eyes of the enemy, Joshua led the attack. The forces of the confederated armies from the south broke rank and fled, up the long rocky incline to Bethhoron. At the summit a wide view opens over the valley of Ajalon which runs in from the Plain of Sharon (see map). A long, narrow valley leads down to this plain which is rough and rocky.

The Canaanites thought that if they could reach this summit, they would have the advantage and be able, possibly, to elude their pursuers. They reached the summit and began to rush down the slopes.

Then Yahweh fought for Israel. A tremendous storm broke over them. Large hailstones pelted down from heaven so big that they killed the fleeing soldiers (v. 11). But even so, by the time Joshua had reached the summit, he could see that some of the Canaanites would escape because the day was almost finished. He prayed that the day might be extended, that the sun might stand still, and the moon be stayed, until the people had avenged themselves on their enemies. God performed Joshua's request by His mighty power (vv. 12-14).

This wonderful miracle, and remarkable defeat of a powerful enemy was remembered for many years (Psalm 44), and is referred to in the prophets as a type of the greater victory by the Lord Jesus when he will come against the enemy in possession of Jerusalem (Isaiah 28:21; Zechariah 14:3). At that time God will again rain down hailstones upon the enemy (Ezekiel 38:22), and the defeat of the confederated forces gathered together in the land will enable the Lord Jesus Christ to establish the Kingdom of God in Israel.

The defeat of the kings at Beth-horon opened the whole of the south to Joshua (see vv. 40-43). Thus both the centre and south of the land were now in the hands of Israel. Joshua marched through the southern region and conquered all the major cities before returning.

#### **LESSON FOR US:**

The Gibeonites were clever and deceived Israel with "the wisdom of the world". Had Israel sought God's advice before making an agreement with the Gibeonites, the deception would have been revealed.

Both parties are shown up in a bad light. The Gibeonites wanted to join the company of Israel and were prepared to be Israel's "servant". But they told lies and deceived Joshua and the elders. The desire of the Kingdom and of Yahweh's protection requires that we seek the Truth in the CORRECT WAY. God commands that we worship Him in "spirit and in truth" (John 4:23, 24) and our approach to God requires the specific steps of belief in the gospel and baptism into the Lord Jesus Christ (Mark 16:16; Gal. 3:27-29). We cannot offer or accept the Truth on our own terms.

Israel were at fault in not seeking guidance from Yahweh in this matter, as indeed, they had not sought counsel of Yahweh at Ai. We may feel sorry for Israel in being tricked, but they should have appreciated Yahweh's love and concern for Israel's well being in commanding, "Thou shalt make no covenant with the Canaanites" (Exod. 23:32).

We must learn to consider every action or commitment that we make in the light of God's word (Prov. 3:5, 6). Otherwise we too, might be placed in embarrassing situations which could lead us into compromise with the world. Like Israel in the time of Joshua we may find that we are committed to keep a promise that will ultimately bring harm upon us.

**REFERENCE LIBRARY:**

“The Visible Hand of God” (R. Roberts) Page 212

“The Story of The Bible” (H. P. Mansfield)—Vol. 2, No. 10

“The Ways of Providence” (R. Roberts)—Chapter 12

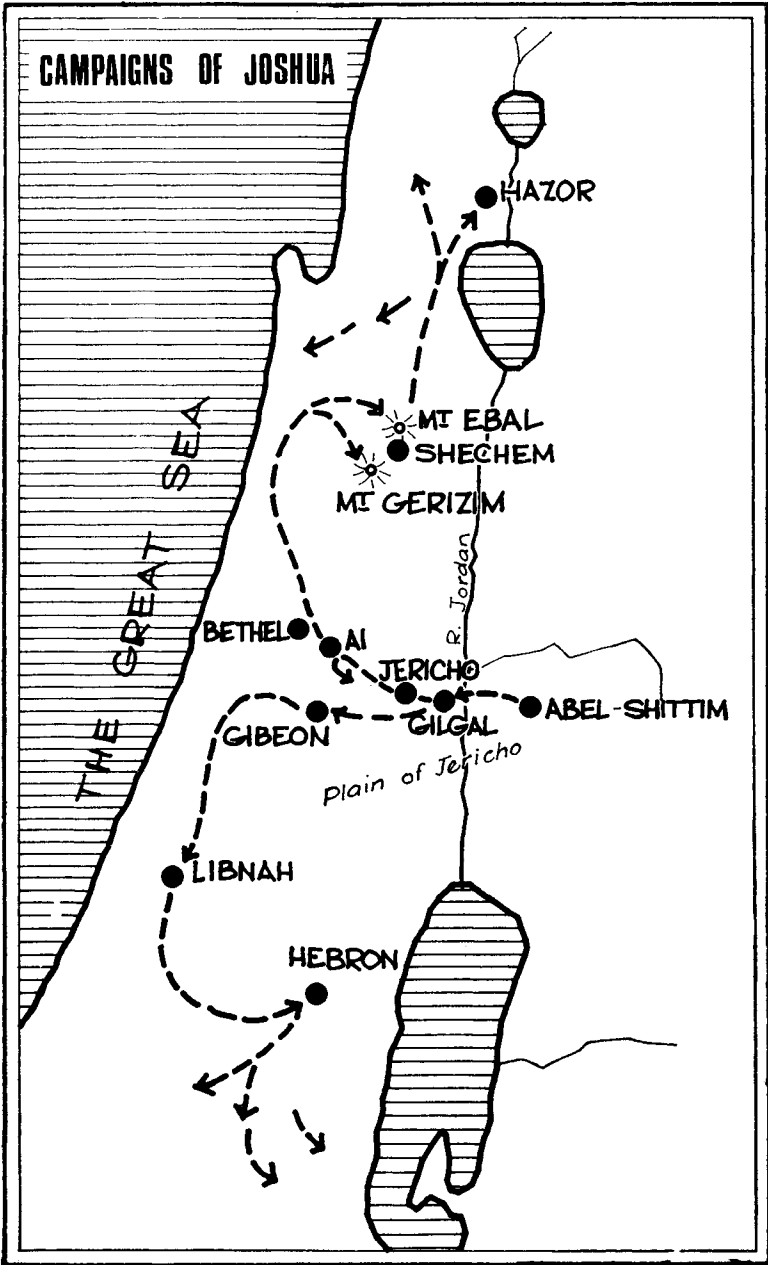
“Joshua” (J. Ullman)

**PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:**

1. *How did the Gibeonites deceive Israel?*
2. *How did Joshua and Israel do wrong in dealing with the Gibeonites? What lessons can we learn from the deception of the Gibeonites and Israel's failure to seek Yahweh's guidance.*
3. *What miracle took place at Beth-horon?*
4. *Why was the battle of Beth-horon an important one?*

**ESSAY QUESTIONS:**

1. *Describe how Israel was deceived by the Gibeonites? What lessons do we learn from the Gibeonites deception and Israel's failure to consult Yahweh.*
2. *Describe the battle of Beth-horon. Show how this miraculous victory will be repeated at Christ's return.*



## 10. JOSHUA TURNS NORTHWARD

**“He left nothing undone of all that Yahweh commanded Moses”**

*The success of Joshua in the centre and south of Palestine did not go un-noticed. In the far north reigned Jabin (the word means “The Wise”), king of Hazor. He was a powerful king and the chief ruler among the Northern Canaanite tribes (Joshua 11:10). As news reached him of the successes of Joshua, he realised the danger to his own authority. Sending out a summons to all the lesser nations, he gathered a great force from all parts of the land (vv. 1-5). This army was greater than anything that Joshua had yet opposed, and included “horses and chariots” (v. 4). These were equivalent to the modern war-tanks and had not been encountered by Israel since leaving Egypt. Joshua’s faith did not waver however and the resultant victory gave Israel command of the Land. This lesson should bring to our minds that just as Joshua did everything necessary to enable every Israelite to gain his inheritance, so Christ has done everything necessary for us to obtain our reward (Hebrews 2:14-15).*

### Joshua 11

#### **GOD ENCOURAGES JOSHUA (v. 6).**

God assured Joshua that He would give Jabin and his host into his hands. “Be not afraid because of them, for tomorrow about this time will I deliver them up all slain before Israel: thou shalt hough their horses, and burn their chariots with fire.”

The horses had to be houghed or destroyed and the chariots burned. They were symbols of fleshly power but Israel was to trust in faith upon the strength of Yahweh for the battle would be His victory (see Psalm 33:16-22, Deut. 20:1-4).

#### **THE CANAANITES DEFEATED.**

Jabin gathered his forces by the waters of Merom, by Lake Huleh in the far north, where the flat country would give the greatest advantage to his chariots. At that time, Joshua was about 100 kms. to the south. Similar to a previous campaign Joshua moved his army quickly and arrived for the battle much earlier than expected. Suddenly (v. 7) the forces of Israel swooped down from the heights onto the plain and confronted the huge host. Before the chariots could enter the battle, the lightly armed Israelites were among them, and the confusion was great. Jabin’s army was scattered and forced to retreat in disarray. They were chased west to Zidon on the coast.

This was the last time Israel faced organised resistance. With the fall of Jabin, the whole land was taken by Joshua, apart from some small areas

of resistance. One by one they were destroyed until “the land rested from war” (v. 23).

### **GOD’S REASONS FOR DESTROYING THE CANAANITES.**

A terrible punishment was meted out to the Canaanites, and some have thought that this shows that God is vengeful and without mercy. But in that regard vv. 18-20 should be carefully noted. As for “Yahweh hardening their hearts”, He did that, not by forcing them to do what they did not want to do, but by permitting circumstances to arise that caused the Canaanites to think they could successfully resist Israel. For example, the numbers that rallied to Jabin’s cause made him confident of victory. Note the similar case of Pharaoh (Exodus 9:34-35; 1 Samuel 6:6). The defeat of the Canaanites enabled Israel to see and appreciate God’s power and mercy towards them (cp. Exodus 9:16). Moreover His purpose with Israel could only be fulfilled if Israel remained a separate and holy nation and this was in danger while large numbers of Gentiles were in their borders. It was right and proper for God to condemn the Canaanites. The whole land was given over to extreme wickedness (Deut. 20:16-18; 18:9-12). It was a veritable Sodom and Gomorrah on a large scale, and was condemned to destruction — both young and old — as a nest of serpents would have been. We do not save the young snakes merely because they look pretty and are harmless. We know that they will grow up to be a menace, and so in our wisdom we destroy them. God did the same with the Canaanites. He knew the danger they would be to Israel (Deut. 7:1-4). It was better that the wicked be destroyed than that they should lead astray the righteous. Thus God was looking after His children in love, when He commanded that the Canaanites be put to the sword. He was conducting a work of mercy for those who follow Him. If the occupation of the land had been conducted on more peaceful lines, the heritage of the truth that has come to us through Israel would have been lost. Thus in the war against the Canaanites, Joshua was fighting a battle to safeguard the Truth.

God is calling us to a life of separateness from the world. That calling shows God’s wisdom and mercy in saving us from suffering in an evil and wicked way of life. The apostle John says “the whole world lieth in wickedness” (1 John 5:19). We must see the peril of close contact with a world that closely resembles the ways of the Canaanites, especially since we know that the Lord Jesus Christ and his saints will destroy the wicked at his coming (Psa. 149:5-9; Zech. 14:3, 5, 21; Rev. 2:26, 27). Yahweh’s wrath will be poured out on this godless society just as severely as it did in the days of Joshua. We must step aside from such evil and believe in the justice of God’s coming judgments.

Joshua accomplished all that God asked of him (Joshua 11:15). He had conquered the Canaanites sufficiently, for every tribe to “go in and

possess his inheritance". Some did so. Others hesitated through lack of faith or courage (Joshua 18:3). Some allowed the Canaanites to grow strong again, and drive the Israelites out. Thus, although Joshua did all that was required, Israel as a nation did not maintain his example and as a result many did not obtain their inheritance.

### **JOSHUA, A TYPE OF JESUS.**

Joshua was a type of Jesus in the things he did and the faith he displayed. Many years later Jesus conquered the greatest enemy of all mankind, SIN (Hebrews 2:14; Romans 8:3).

By faith and obedience he remained sinless and kept in complete subjection the desires of his human nature. His final victory came when God raised him from the grave and exalted him to glory at His right hand. He has thus conquered death (Romans 6:9) and is now able to help us do the same. Jesus has led the way and we must do our part. We must fight the enemy (fleshly desires — pride, envy, hatred, etc.) with FAITH, COURAGE AND OBEDIENCE, hearkening continually to the voice of God in His Word.

If we are prepared to follow in the footsteps of Jesus then we too can obtain an inheritance in the Kingdom of God.

### **CALEB'S INHERITANCE.**

In the work of "going in and obtaining an inheritance", Caleb, Joshua's faithful companion during the 40 years in the wilderness was a notable example (Joshua 14:6-15). He was a man of faith and courage who, with Joshua, had opposed the faithless counsel of the other spies in the days of Moses. Now, an old man of 85 years of age, he approached Joshua to claim the fulfilment of a promise made 45 years earlier. He pointed to a life of faithful service (vv. 7-9) and recalled God's promise that he should inherit the land (Deut. 1:36). Though old, he was full of courage and faith, and did not hesitate to oppose the Canaanites in the occupation of his inheritance. Through his action they were driven out, and Caleb obtained that which was promised him.

### **LESSON FOR US:**

So will it be with us if we have faith and courage. As the Lord Jesus Christ has led the way, we must follow, and despite all problems and difficulties, despite our own shortcomings, steadily press on in confidence. God can give us the victory as He did to Caleb and all like him (Joshua 14:12; 14).

We can gain the victory and that victory will come by our faith and determination to secure our inheritance.



**REFERENCE LIBRARY:**

- “The Story of the Bible” (H. P. Mansfield)—Vol. 2, No. 11  
“The Visible Hand of God” (R. Roberts)—Chapter 21  
“The Ways of Providence” (R. Roberts)—Pp. 100-106  
“Joshua” (J. Ullman)  
“Elpis Israel” (J. Thomas)—Pp. 300-301

**PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:**

1. Describe the threat Jabin posed to Israel and Joshua.
2. Show how Joshua defeated Jabin’s large army?
3. Why were the Canaanites to be totally destroyed by Joshua?
4. In what way was Joshua a type of Christ?
5. What lessons can we learn from the example of Caleb?

**ESSAY QUESTIONS:**

1. Joshua’s campaigns showed that God’s purpose was to rid the land of the Canaanites. Explain why showing
  - a) the sinfulness of the Canaanites
  - b) the threat they posed to Israel if they remained and
  - c) how that lesson applies to us today.
2. Compare the victory of faith in the examples of Joshua and Christ and the hope for us.
3. Summarise the faithful service of Caleb from the wilderness wanderings to the securing of his inheritance.



## 11. JOSHUA'S LAST WORDS

**“Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you Yahweh, to serve Him”**

*With the enemies of Israel subdued, the land divided among the tribes, Joshua's work was almost done. One thing remained — to try and impress Israel with the need to serve God in honesty and truth. Only by so doing would they be successful. In other words, he tried to pass on to them, the advice God had given him at the beginning of his leadership (Joshua 1:7-8). That same advice is just as necessary today as we endeavour to learn some of the principles required for a successful walk in the Truth.*

### Joshua 23 & 24

#### **ISRAEL CALLED BEFORE JOSHUA (Joshua 23:1-2).**

In an impressive ceremony, Israel and the leaders were brought before Joshua. Final words of advice and instruction were given by Joshua in preparation for the presentation and acceptance of the covenant recorded in the next chapter.

Israel was first reminded of the great benefits it had received from God (vv. 3-4). As they listened to Joshua who had led them to victory, they could have forgotten who it was who had guided him, and rather showered Joshua with their praise. But Joshua reminded them that all praise was due unto the God of Heaven.

Next Joshua refers to the benefits they would receive (v. 5), provided they faithfully did the will of God. Unfortunately, Israel failed to do so, as we learn later.

Then he gave them the rules for success (vv. 6-10). This entailed a recognition of the authority of the Book (the “Bible” for them) they now had in their possession (v.6). Moreover, they had to exercise courage in obeying its commands (v. 6), for this would require them to consecrate (or separate) themselves exclusively unto God (v. 7-8).

He warned them of conduct that would prove fatal (vv. 12-13). Mixing and intermarrying with the nations was strictly forbidden. They were a separated people unto God and such actions would not only break down their separateness but would bring God's wrath upon them.

Finally, he warned them that if they failed to do the will of God, they would be left to their own resources (vv. 14-16). God would not help them, and they would fail before their enemies.

In this address, we are shown something of the character of God. He will be our help and support if we follow in His ways; but if not, He will

leave us to our own ways, and we will fail (see also 2 Chron. 15:2, 16:9; 32:7). Paul tells us to “behold therefore the goodness and severity of God” (Romans 11:22). We see this in His dealings with Israel. The Psalmist likens Him to a Sun and a Shield (Psalm 84:11). He is as a Sun to His enemies, consuming them in the heat of His anger; but He is a Shield to those who trust Him and seek to serve Him, protecting them from life’s dangers, and ultimately bringing them to His Kingdom.

### **JOSHUA RENEWS GOD’S COVENANT WITH ISRAEL (Josh. 24).**

At Shechem, under the shadow of the Mounts Ebal and Gerizim, the Mounts of Cursing and Blessing, the last impressive ceremony in Joshua’s long career of service was undertaken. The leaders of the people were brought forth to renew their covenant with Yahweh. Already, in the incidents recorded in the previous chapter, the people had been made ready for this final act.

At first Joshua reviewed the history of the people. He showed them how carefully God had looked after them, and had been with them in all their ways. In the call of Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees, the care He exercised over Isaac and Jacob, and the manner in which He delivered the people from Egypt, was the evidence of His goodness.

God was also with them in the wilderness, protecting and fighting for them. He was with them when they entered the land, driving out the Canaanites before them. Thus Joshua called upon the people to count their blessings, to look around them and see how much they owed to God. Everything they had came from Him, and apart from Him they would have been destroyed by their enemies. You could make a list of all the things that God had done for His people — it’s a long list!

As we read these words of Joshua, let us apply them to our lives. Consider how God has blessed us, try to recognise how He has helped us in life. All we have comes from Him, and in addition, He has given us His book, and invites us to so live that He might give us the Kingdom at the return of His son.

### **AN EXHORTATION—SERVICE TO GOD BRINGS ITS REWARD (vv. 14-15).**

Because of all the things God had done in His great love, Joshua calls upon Israel to “fear Yahweh, and serve Him in sincerity and truth” and to “put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt, and serve ye Yahweh”. Let us consider closely this appeal.

- (a) **Fear**—the word means reverence.
- (b) **Sincerity** — the word means to give oneself completely.

(c) **Truth**—sincerity is not enough, it must be in accordance with God's Word.

(d) **Undivided Loyalty**—they must put away all other forms of worship.

The Lord Jesus Christ endorsed this attitude of mind when he said that true worshippers would worship the Father "in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him" (John 4:23, 24).

And let us remember that idolatry is not confined to worshipping idols. Idolatry takes place whenever God is given second place in our hearts. See the words of 1 Samuel 15:23 and Colossians 3:2-5. We can thus be guilty of idolatry by allowing *anything* to stand between us and God (1 John 5:21). Let us show an undivided loyalty to God and all of His standards.

### **"CHOOSE YOU WHOM YE SHALL SERVE" (v. 15).**

Joshua and his house were determined to choose Yahweh. Israel now had to make their choice. We can imagine how the people listened to Joshua as he set the issues plainly before them. Here he was accusing them of idolatry. Perhaps they had not bowed down to idols, but were letting other things stand between themselves and God. They answered him, "God forbid that we should forsake Yahweh and serve other gods" (Joshua 24:16). Joshua repeatedly warned them of God's jealous wrath falling upon the disobedient and they, on each occasion, tried to assure Joshua of their loyalty. On the last occasion Joshua made a covenant with the people solemnly sealing their professed loyalty as a witness against them if they were to forsake Yahweh, the God of their covenant.

### **DEATH OF JOSHUA.**

So there passed to rest a great man and leader in Israel. One who was strong, courageous, brave, faithful, and ever a good example to his people. He died in hope however, and in the certain knowledge of the resurrection into life eternal in the Kingdom of Christ.

### **LESSON FOR US:**

Joshua told the people they could not serve God acceptably unless they severed all connection with other forms of worship. He is an "holy God". The word "holy" means "separate". It means that God is apart from all else. And if we are to worship Him acceptably, we must do so completely. We must give Him an undivided loyalty far in excess of anything, or anyone else. Nothing must stand in the way of doing His will. He demands of us separateness. He is jealous, and will not tolerate His worship being mixed with any other form of service. This is the **FIRST** commandment. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind*" (Matthew 22:37). Having explained all this, the people replied to Joshua "Yahweh our God we will serve, and His voice will we obey" (v. 24).

Joshua then renewed the covenant with the people. The words of it were written in a book and an altar of witness was set up as a memorial of the solemn undertaking of the people before Yahweh.

We too can enter into covenant with God through baptism into His Son the Lord Jesus Christ. True peace and happiness are found only in service to God in the way appointed. The way of the flesh *seems* attractive, but it only brings trouble, anguish, bitterness, and finally defeat and death. Israel was to learn that lesson. Let us learn it too, not by personal experience, but by observing the lessons of the past as revealed to us through stories such as those of Joshua and other great men of faith.

#### **REFERENCE LIBRARY:**

“The Story of the Bible” (H. P. Mansfield)—Vol. 2, No. 11  
“Joshua” (J. Ullman)

#### **PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:**

1. *What do we learn about God’s character from Joshua chapter 23.*
2. *Joshua appealed for Israel to serve Yahweh “in sincerity and in truth” and to rid themselves of idols. How can we serve God in a similar manner today?*
3. *What does serving God demand of us when we consider the example of Joshua’s life.*
4. *What is idolatry and why does God hate it?*

#### **ESSAY QUESTIONS:**

1. *Show how we can see the goodness and severity of God in the history of God’s dealings with Israel as recorded in Joshua chapter 23.*
2. *Joshua repeatedly stressed the need for Israel to separate themselves as a holy people unto Yahweh. How were they to keep separate? Describe how we can show undivided loyalty to Yahweh today.*

## The Six Episodes of the Judges

	SIN	SUFFERING	SEEKING GOD	SALVATION
Judges 1. 3: 7-11	"And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord and served Baalim . . ."	"Therefore the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and He sold them into the hand of Cushan-rishathaim, King of Mesopotamia.	"And when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord".	"The Lord raised up a deliverer, even Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother . . ."
Judges 2. 3: 12-30	"And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord".	"And the Lord strengthened Eglon the King of Moab against Israel".	"But when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord . . ."	"The Lord raised them up a deliverer, Ehud the son of Gera a Benjamite, a man left-handed . . ."
Judges 3. 4 & 5	"And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord when Ehud was dead".	"And the Lord sold them into the hand of Jabin, King of Canaan, the captain of whose host was Sisera . . ."	"And the children of Israel cried unto the Lord".	"And Deborah, a prophetess, she judged Israel at that time, and also sent and called Barak . . ."
Judges 4. 6 to 8	"And the children of Israel did evil . . ."	"And the Lord delivered them into the hand of Midian seven years. . ."	"And the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, because of the Midianites. . ."	"And there came an angel unto Gideon".
Judges 5. 10 to 12	"And the children of Israel did evil again and forsook the Lord".	"And the anger of the Lord was hot, and he sold them into the hand of the Ammonites".	"And the children of Israel cried saying We have sinned against thee. . ."	"Then the spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah. . ."
Jud. 6. 13 to 16	"And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord . . ."	"And the Lord delivered them into the hands of the Philistines forty years. . ."	There is no cry recorded on this occasion, it doubtless being included in the cry of Jud. 10: 15. On that occasion the Philistines and Ammonites. Jephthah repelled the latter and Samson commenced the work of deliverance from the former.	"The angel of the Lord said, He (Samson) shall begin to deliver. . ."

**"BEHOLD THEREFORE THE GOODNESS AND SEVERITY OF GOD" Rom. 11: 22**

## 12. DEBORAH AND BARAK

“The Children of Israel again did evil”

*After the death of Joshua there followed a period when “every man did that which was right in his own eyes” (Judges 17:6; 21:25). As the phrase implies, “right in his OWN eyes” meant wrong in God’s eyes. It was a time of failure and disgrace in which the nation learnt by bitter experience that sin brings suffering. “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man but the end thereof are the ways of death” (Proverbs 14:12).*

*There were also periods when the nation, or parts of it, were led back to favour with God, by the example and leadership of brave and faithful men. These men were called Judges and were raised up by God to deliver His people from the trouble and oppression that they had brought upon themselves.*

*Thus we learn that although Israel continually disobeyed, God was merciful and forgave them for their waywardness on many occasions.*

### Judges 4 & 5

#### THE CAUSE OF ISRAEL’S FAILURE.

Psalm 106:34-45 reveals the cause of Israel’s failure, namely compromise, or failure to carry out God’s requirements. They became puffed up and imagined that they could conduct their own affairs independent of God (e.g. Judges 1:28, cp. Deut. 7:2). When Israel departed from God He departed from them. As He declared through the prophet “I will go and return to My place till they acknowledge their offence and seek My face. In their affliction they will seek Me early” (Hosea 5:15). God punished them in an effort to turn them unto Him again that He might show His love for them. He was acting as a loving heavenly Father, chastising his children for their eternal well being (see Heb. 12:5-11).

#### THE PATTERN OF THE BOOK OF JUDGES.

The Book occurs between Joshua and the setting up of the Kingdom under David and Solomon. Thus it corresponds to the period of time that we live in today, i.e., between the first advent of Jesus and the setting up of the Kingdom at his second coming. “Every man does that which is right in his own eyes” is true of both time periods.

The Book of Judges shows the consequences of sin and obedience. It shows that SIN will bring SUFFERING, but SEEKING GOD will bring SALVATION. It is as true today as it was then and we do well to note carefully both “the goodness and severity of God” (Romans 11:22), here displayed in the record of the Judges.

## **CHAOS IN ISRAEL.**

After a period of peace lasting some 80 years the Children of Israel are found in Judges 4 to be suffering great hardships. A cruel King of the north was oppressing them. He was called Jabin, and his army captain was Sisera. Sisera was a cruel person with great military skill. So fierce was his persecution that the Israelites were frightened to be seen on the roads and were forced to leave their farms and hide or shelter in protected cities.

Why? Had not God given them the land? Judges 5:8 gives the answer. Israel had sinned. As a result, they were suffering. For 20 long years they suffered until in their distress they turned to God (Judges 4:3) who heard their prayers and saved them by the hand of Deborah.

## **A CALL TO ARMS.**

In the vicinity of Bethel dwelt an upright and faithful woman, Deborah, whose name means “a bee” and implies “orderly motion.” This courageous woman was guided by her Creator and set in “orderly motion” the forces of Israel against Sisera whose name means “warlike array.” His was a display of the flesh which fell before the superior power of Israel’s God.

Deborah commanded Barak to assemble an army and march to Mt. Tabor. Barak did so after being assured that Deborah would go with him and advise him. Israel, and especially Barak, were not enthusiastic about going to war against Sisera.

A call throughout the land brought help from some of the northern tribes but little response from the remainder. So Barak marched his small army of 10,000 men to Tabor. Sisera was informed by Heber the Kenite of Barak’s movements. Heber had separated himself from the God of Israel but his wife Jael remained faithful.

## **THE CONFLICT — SISERA DEFEATED.**

Sisera swiftly assembled his army of 900 chariots in the plain of Jezreel. The army of Israel was on foot and once they descended to the valley floor would be easy prey for his chariots with their vicious scythe blades protruding from the wheels. Sisera proudly showed off his military prowess as he wheeled his mighty chariot force to and fro across the plain.

Imagine how Barak and his men tried to strengthen their faith and courage when Deborah told them to go down from the safety of the mountain and march against this brutal enemy. “For this is the day in which Yahweh hath delivered Sisera into thine hand, is not Yahweh gone out before thee?” she said.



What a great test of faith! They had to have confidence in the unseen presence of Yahweh who had brought Sisera and all his mighty army to this moment of battle. God had answered their cry for deliverance. Now they had to believe, in faith, that God would go out “before thee” in victorious battle. Deborah’s faith and Barak’s obedience inspired that small band of 10,000 men to plunge down the 300 metre mount to the waiting chariots below. As they descended from the mountain, God fought for them by suddenly sending a terrific storm which brought the Kishon River down in flood (Judges 5:20-22). Unable to drive their chariots in the mud the Canaanites fled on foot and were defeated by Barak’s army.

### **SISERA’S DEATH.**

Sisera himself fled to the tents of Heber the Kenite. Jael, Heber’s wife saw him coming and invited him into her tent. Sisera was exhausted and thinking he was with a friend fell asleep. But Jael was faithful to the God of Israel and as he lay there asleep, she took a hammer and a tent peg and slew Sisera (Judges 4:21). What great faith and courage that act required yet God’s purpose is often brought to pass with the help of things (and people) considered insignificant by human standards (see 2 Chron. 32:7-8; Psa. 33:16; Zech. 4:6). Thus Israel was delivered and had peace 40 years.

### **LESSON FOR US:**

The stories in the Book of Judges provide examples for our times, for we live at a time when there is no visible leader, when the anti-typical Joshua (the Lord Jesus) has left his people, and when men so often do what is right in their own eyes.

The Book illustrates the great mercy of Yahweh in showing that He is always ready to forgive and save those that will put aside their own desires and seek to follow Him. It teaches that as SIN will bring SUFFERING, SEEKING GOD will bring SALVATION. And great victories can be achieved to the furtherance of God’s purposes by men and women who whilst they may seem to be insignificant by worldly standards have an amazing faith and belief that God will work in their lives (Heb. 11:6; 1 John 5:4).

### **REFERENCE LIBRARY:**

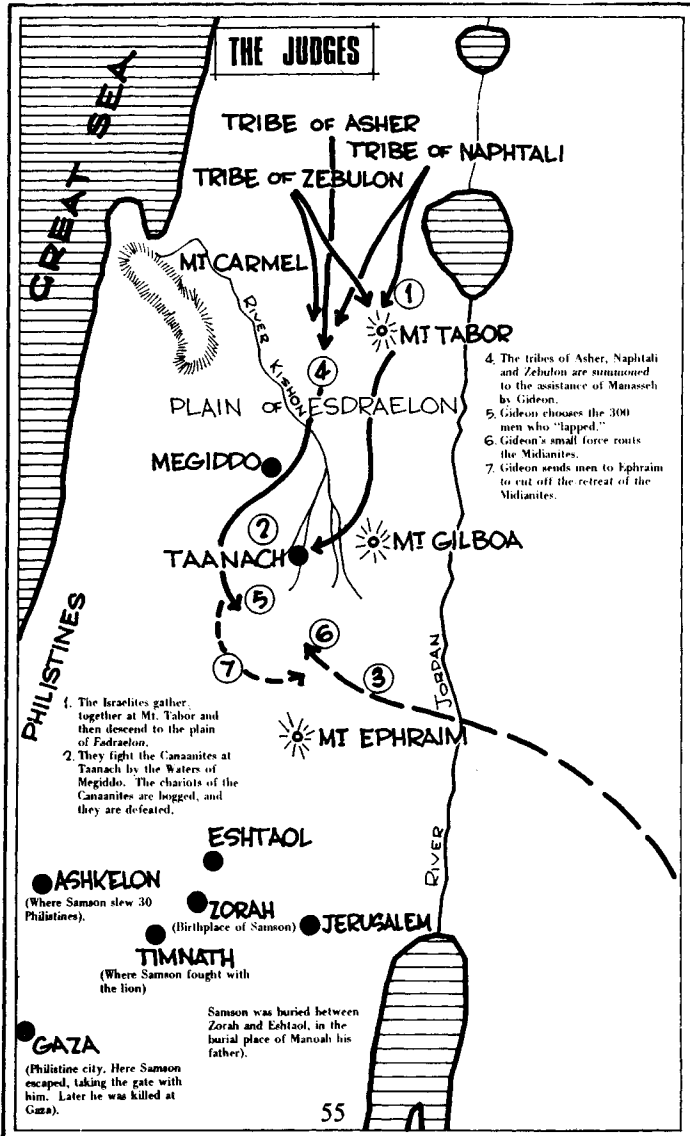
“The Ways of Providence” (R. Roberts)—Chapter 13, No. 12  
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“The Judges”, C.S.S.S. Study Notes

### **PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:**

1. *What was the cause of Israel’s sufferings during the period of the Judges?*
2. *How did God show his “goodness and severity” toward Israel during the period of the Judges?*

**ESSAY QUESTIONS:**

1. Show how the principle that sin will bring suffering but seeking God will bring salvation proved true in the overthrow of Sisera.
2. Show how God used two women to overthrow Sisera and his forces and comment on the essential element of faith.
3. Describe Jael's faithful work in slaying Sisera.
4. How are our days similar to the period of the Judges?



## 13. GIDEON

**“And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, were 300 men”**

*The Children of Israel again did evil in the sight of God (Judges 6:1) and He allowed the Midianites to invade and overrun the Land.*

*A battle had been fought at Mt. Tabor in which Israel was defeated, and Gideon's brothers slain (Judges 8:18). Midian oppressed Israel for seven years (Judges 6:1-2) and stripped the land of all its produce. Fire and sword spread terror on every hand. Pillage, massacre and murder drove the Israelites to take refuge in the numerous caves in the hills and in strongholds on hill tops. Their crops were eaten out by the invaders, and their homes destroyed. Famine started to sweep through the land.*

*Why did they suffer? BECAUSE OF SIN. And all the suffering in the world is due to sin. It is a heritage that man has brought upon himself, and the only way whereby we can escape from the consequence of sin is to turn to God and seek His guidance and walk in His ways.*

### **Judges 6, 7 & 8; Hebrews 11:32**

#### **A PROPHET'S MESSAGE (Ch. 6:7-10).**

Faced with starvation, and continuing oppression, Israel turned to God and prayed for deliverance. He sent a prophet who reminded the people of how they had turned from God and had disobeyed His voice. He reminded them of God's mercy in saving them from Egypt and other enemies who had attacked them from time to time.

In this way the people were made to realise the cause of their troubles which really was not the Midianites but their own disregard for God and His Law.

#### **THE CALL OF GIDEON (Chapter 6:11-16).**

God sent an angel to Gideon, the son of Joash. He was secretly threshing wheat hoping that the Midianites would not find him. The angel addressed him as “a mighty man of valour.” Apparently Gideon had already shown his opposition to the idolatry in the land including that of his own father's house, for later the people quickly picked on him as the one responsible for destroying their altar and god (v. 29).

Note Gideon's question and comments in v. 13. The angel did not reply to this statement. All he did was to look at Gideon (v. 14). Under the steady gaze of the angel no reply was necessary. Gideon knew why Israel suffered. His own father's house was a centre of idolatry (v. 25).

### **GIDEON ASKS FOR A SIGN (vv. 17-24).**

Gideon had been told to deliver Israel. It was a tremendous task. The land was overwhelmed by an army that was likened to grasshoppers because of their numbers and destructive power. But Israel were not in a position to go to war. How could Gideon convince and encourage them. He requested a sign and it was given. Gideon had prepared a meal for the angel, and had placed it on a rock. The angel touched the food with his staff, and instantly the food was consumed by fire. Gideon was then told what he must do. **FIRST** — Baal worship in Israel must be destroyed. **SECOND** — He was to deliver Israel from its enemies. This is consistent with the principle that the truth of God is first pure, and then peaceable (James 3:17). Jesus Christ is first **KING OF RIGHTEOUSNESS**, and then **KING OF PEACE** (Hebrews 7:2). In other words, righteousness must precede peace.

### **BAAL WORSHIP OVERTHROWN (vv. 25-32).**

In obedience to these instructions, Gideon took ten of his servants and overthrew the altar of Baal belonging to his father. He cut down the wooden image (called “a grove”) that was erected beside it and then built an altar unto Yahweh. He used the wood of the image to burn the sacrifice he then offered.

He did this at night, because of the men of the village who were Baal-worshippers. In the morning they demanded the life of Gideon, but Joash, his father, replied, “If Baal be a god, let him plead for himself.” Joash’s belief in God had been restored by the courage and faith of his son. Gideon, whose name signifies a Great Warrior, had his name changed to Jerubbaal which means “contended with Baal”. He was also known as Jerubbesheth (2 Samuel 11:21), which means “He shall contend against confusion and shame.”

Gideon’s faithful action helped to restore the Truth again in Israel. His personal faith stirred the heart of Israel to have faith in God.

### **ISRAEL’S DELIVERANCE.**

All this did not go unnoticed by the Midianites. They could see in the action of Gideon and the spirit he was arousing in Israel, the seeds of revolt against their occupancy of the land. They gathered a huge force together to put down the revolt before it became too great.

Meanwhile Gideon sent messengers through the tribes, and gradually the people were gathered unto him (see vv. 34-35). In comparison to the number of the invaders, those who gathered to support Gideon were very few. He pleaded for another sign to show that God was indeed with him. The sign was given (see v. 36-40). As requested, when Gideon put out a fleece of wool in the evening, he found the fleece ringing wet with dew in the morning, whilst the ground was dry round about. The sign was reversed on the following night. Gideon then knew that God was indeed with him.

### **GIDEON'S ARMY REDUCED TO 300 MEN (Ch. 7:1-8).**

32,000 Israelites had answered the call of Gideon (7:1). They gathered at the valley of Jezreel by a well called Harod (meaning "trembling"). They saw opposed to them, a huge force of well-armed Midianites numbering 135,000 (8:10). The Israelites were not well equipped and they were conscious of the power of those opposed to them. Thus the well, by which they camped, was called the Well of Trembling because many of the Israelites were frightened. But God said that the forces of Israel were too large. He called upon Gideon to remove those who were afraid, from their midst (see Deut. 20:8). As a result, 22,000 left Gideon.

Even so that was still too many. Gideon was told to take them down to the well, and observe how they drank. Those who hastily put their heads straight into the water were told to stand on one side, those who were watchful, lifted it up in their hands and drank were put on the other side. The former, were sent home and Gideon found himself at the head of just 300 men. They were opposed by 135,000 well-armed Midianites. The victory would be so obviously attributable to God's control of the battle (see Psa. 33:16).

This mere handful of men against a far superior army again illustrates the principle that God's "strength is made perfect in weakness" in overcoming a humanly impossible situation with a few whose strength lay in their faith in Yahweh.

### **A DREAM OF VICTORY (vv. 9-15).**

God commanded Gideon to go down at nightfall with Phurah, his armour-bearer, and listen to the enemy talking in their tents. Creeping stealthily down the valley, they came to the outskirts of the camp. The Midianites lay along the valley like grasshoppers for multitude. Close to the tents, they heard two soldiers speaking together about a dream, one had received. He had seen a cake of barley bread tumble into the camp of Midian. Striking a tent, it turned it over. His companion replied, "This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon, the man of Israel, for into his hand hath God delivered Midian and all his host."

The barley loaf was the bread of poverty; it was a small thing to destroy the tent of Midian. And Gideon's force was pitiable in the sight of Midian's thousands. But the dream showed Gideon that God was with him. He realised that God had caused the spirit of fear to sweep through the camp of Midian.

Gideon divided his 300 men into three companies. He gave each man a trumpet and a torch covered with a pitcher. Thus spread out they would be able to encompass the whole forces of Midian better. At midnight, (the middle watch) as the sentries of Midian were being changed, they made their presence known.

## **THE VICTORY (vv. 16-25).**

The Midianite encampment was on the northern side of the valley, between Gilboa and Little Hermon. Israel's camp was on the slope of Gilboa. The Midianitish camp was suddenly and fearfully awakened by the blast of the trumpets, by the crashing of 300 pitchers and the cry "the sword of Yahweh and of Gideon". Already troubled by dreams and omens, the Midianites woke in panic. Little dreaming how small was the attacking force, they fought each other to escape, and thus, soldier cutting down soldier, the camp was thrown into complete confusion and uproar. The Midianites fled eastward across the Jordan, back to their own land.

But Gideon had appealed to the tribe of Ephraim to assist him, and the Ephraimites gathered at the fords of Jordan to cut off the Midianites as they escaped. There the two princes Oreb and Zeeb were caught.

Even so, 15,000 Midianites escaped with Zebah and Zalmunna their chiefs, and rested secure (Judges 8:10-11) far from the battle. They imagined that they had escaped the sword of Gideon, but with his faithful 300 men, Gideon with great determination still pursued them (Judges 8:4). Coming suddenly upon Zebah and Zalmunna, he completely destroyed the remnant of their mighty army.

He returned to punish those Israelites who had refused to assist him in the height of the campaign. The large tribe of Ephraim were jealous of the success of Gideon, and he pacified them with a soft answer that turned away their wrath (Judges 8:1-2; Proverbs 15:1). But the cities of Succoth and Peniel had refused to give food to Gideon's army in its time of need, and were punished by him when he returned from slaying the remnant of the Midianite army.

## **GIDEON REFUSED TO BE ISRAEL'S KING (Ch. 8:22-25).**

Gideon was requested by the grateful Israelites to be their king, but he refused, saying, "Yahweh shall rule over you." Israel had peace as long as Gideon lived. But after his death, we learn that "the children of Israel remembered not Yahweh their God, who had delivered them out of the hands of all their enemies, neither shewed their kindness to the house of Jerubbaal, namely Gideon, according to all the goodness which he had shewed unto Israel" (Judges 8:34-35).

## **LESSON FOR US:**

The story of Gideon repeats the important principle that:—

- (a) SIN will bring SUFFERING:
- (b) SEEKING God will bring SALVATION.

It shows that great men like Gideon required the help and encouragement that God alone can give, and that His mercy is always extended to those who seek it. Out of weakness he was made strong. He waxed valiant in fight and turned to flight the army of the Midianites (see Heb. 11:32, 34, 39-40).

It teaches us also to work for God and not for man. Israel remembered not the house of Gideon for all he had done for them. But God never forgets. Service to Him brings its rewards. The story of Gideon also illustrates the chaotic period of the Judges leading to the establishment of the Kingdom of God in Israel. It is a story repeated many times with different characters — Jephthah, Samson, Barak and others. It is a story that finds reflection in the history of the Truth time and again, since the first advent of Christ. Men have arisen time and again, to revive the Truth in their day and generation. Then, after a time, the early enthusiasm has waned, the Truth has become buried in error, and has finally been lost to view. Then, once more, God has provided men of faith to bring it again to light. And this has continued since the first advent of the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### **REFERENCE LIBRARY:**

- “The Visible Hand of God” (R. Roberts)—Chapter 21
- “The Story of the Bible” (H. P. Mansfield)—Vol. 3, Nos. 1, 2
- “The Judges” C.S.S.S. Study Notes

#### **PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:**

1. *What were the signs that the angel gave to Gideon to show that God was going to use him in overthrowing the Midianites.*
2. *Describe how God caused Gideon to choose his army.*
3. *Describe the extent of Gideon’s battle to completely destroy the Midianitish army.*
4. *What was Israel’s response to Gideon following his victory over Midian?*

#### **ESSAY QUESTIONS:**

1. *Describe how and why God chose a numerically inferior force of Israelites with Gideon to overcome the Midianites.*
2. *Write a character study of Gideon as a man of faith with particular reference to the problems we face today.*

## 14. SAMSON

**“He shall begin to deliver Israel”**

*In the south west of the land of Canaan was the plain of Philistia. There were five principal cities and the people who dwelt in them were known as “the Philistines”. They were a warlike and fierce people who possessed superior weapons to those of Israel. They cruelly oppressed the people of God for many years making them subject to their rule.*

*At this time Samson was born. A man of great strength and great weakness. But we are taught from the story of his life that despite man’s weakness God is able to deliver His people.*

### **Judges 13-16**

#### **A STRANGE VISITOR TO MANOAH’S WIFE (Judges 13).**

Close to the Philistine border in the little town of Zorah, lived a faithful couple. The husband’s name was Manoah and he and his wife had no children.

Quite unexpectedly, a visitor appeared to Manoah’s wife and announced that she would have a son (Judges 13:1-3). He told her that this boy would be a Nazarite (separated one) from his birth and that she too was to observe the Nazarite customs until the child was born.

His mission, said the angelic visitor, would be to “begin to deliver Israel out of the hands of the Philistines” (v. 5).

Manoah and his wife were so concerned about this strange message from God that they requested God to give them more information about how they should bring the child up. God granted their request and the angel appeared again. He emphasised again the importance of the Nazarite vow, and when Manoah offered a burnt offering to God the angel ascended in the flame of the fire and disappeared from their view.

#### **THE NAZARITE VOW.**

Numbers 6 outlines the details of the Nazarite vow. It was given in order that any Israelite who wanted to separate himself from his normal duties and dedicate himself to the service of his God, could do so (v. 2). By it he was permitted to imitate the High Priest in certain ways. Like the High Priest, the Nazarite was not to touch any strong drink or fruit of the vine. He was not to be defiled with death, that is by touching a dead body and if accidentally so, then his vow was broken and he had to begin his time of separation again. Finally he was not to cut his hair as a symbol of his dedication to God (cp. Numbers 6:3-8; Leviticus 10:8-11; 21:10-12).

The vow could be taken for a specific period of time or a child could be devoted by the parents (as was Samson) for life.



It was because Israel had mixed with the Gentiles and adopted their practices that they suffered. Samson, the deliverer, was to be a Nazarite highlighting the principle that separation from the ways of the Gentiles would bring salvation. Samson in his life depicts the great struggle which has taken place in God's nation — sometimes strong — sometimes weak. Now achieving great victories — now succumbing to their enemies — occasionally showing great faith — usually wretched because of turning away from God and doing all the things that please themselves.

### **SAMSON'S WORK BEGINS (Judges 14:1-4).**

Samson's parents would have spent many hours instructing him in his mission. As he grew, the spirit of God came upon him from time to time and moved him to do things for God. He became a prominent figure in the region beyond Zorah and bordering on the Philistines territory (Judges 13:25).

Timnath means "assigned portion". It was a city of the Philistines, though God had granted it to the tribe of Dan (see Josh. 19:43). Samson went down to this city, no doubt at the prompting of the spirit of Yahweh, but while there Samson fell in love with a Philistine woman (14:1-2). He requested his parents to arrange the wedding. They were very disappointed in him, but did as he wished. How like the nation of Israel he was. The evidence of their God was all around them and His appeal was to obey Him and love Him and to show His ways. This would have meant a full and happy life for them, but they refused. Instead they loved the gods of the people around about and the evil practices that the nations indulged themselves with would bring sorrow and death to the Children of Israel.

To enter marriage with a Philistine woman brought Samson into conflict with his Nazarite vow. Here was one who had separated himself to a life of holiness, betraying his vow completely. The commandment forbidding marriage outside the Truth was brushed to one side (Deut. 7:1-4; see also Josh. 23:12, 13).

### **SAMSON'S MARRIAGE (Judges 14:5-20; Chapter 15).**

On his way down to Timnath to make arrangements for the wedding, Samson was attacked by a lion. The spirit of Yahweh came mightily upon him and with his bare hands he tore the beast apart and killed it. The Philistines were like the lion — destroying the people of God. But just as Samson in the strength of the Spirit of God destroyed the lion, so with Israel, if they allowed God to guide them would be able to defeat their enemies by His power.

Later, on his way down to the wedding, Samson observed that a swarm of bees had made a hive in the carcase of the lion and he was able to eat some of the honey. This became the basis of an impossible riddle which

Samson put to the Philistine wedding guests. He wanted to torment them. By threatening his wife the Philistines eventually obtained the answer from her and answered the riddle. Samson was angry with them for using his wife in this way. He slew 30 Philistines to obtain the raiment which he had promised as payment for solving the riddle.

This started a chain of events in which Samson

- burned down the Philistines corn by putting burning torches between the tails of 300 foxes (Judges 15:1-5);
- smote the Philistines in their villages “hip and thigh with a great slaughter” (Judges 15:8);
- slew 1,000 of them with the jawbone of an ass (Judges 15:9-20).

### **SAMSON’S DOWNFALL (Judges 16).**

Although moved to actions of great strength Samson also displayed great weaknesses. Eventually these brought about his downfall.

He allowed himself to become involved with an evil woman called Delilah. The Philistines promised to pay her a large sum of money if she could discover the secret of Samson’s strength.

After several false explanations to Delilah, Samson eventually gave her the right one. The secret was in his uncut hair (not that his long hair itself gave him strength but it was a symbol of his relationship with God). The strength came from God, but once Samson allowed his hair to be cut then God departed from him.

Samson betrayed his Nazarite vow. He had repudiated his position of a “specially separated” person unto God for the pleasures of the flesh. Weakened now, he was taken captive by the Philistines and putting out his eyes (the cause of his downfall) they made him grind corn in the prison.

### **SAMSON’S DEATH (Judges 16:21-31).**

How long Samson was kept in prison we do not know. But it was long enough for his hair to grow again. He spent many hours thinking of his God and realising how foolish he had been in betraying his vows. It could be said that he “saw” more of the principles of holiness in his blindness than when his sight led him astray.

Then, during a great feast that the Philistines held to their god, Dagon, they sent for Samson that they might make sport of him. A boy led him in before the huge crowd who mocked him to amuse themselves. At Samson’s request the boy guided him to a position between the two great pillars which supported the building.

With great feeling Samson prayed to God, “remember me”, “strengthen me”, “avenge me”. Then, with an arm straining at each pillar, Samson said, “let me die with the Philistines.” Exerting himself,

he felt the power of God surge into him again. He bowed himself forward. Loud were the jeers of the mob, but at the first great “crack” there would have been a sudden deathly hush. Samson bowed lower. Suddenly the pillars gave way and amid screams and shrieks of terror the huge edifice crashed down.

The number of Philistines slain in this one act were more than Samson had slain during his whole life.

Samson’s body was recovered by his brethren and he was buried with his father between the towns of Zorah and Eshtaol.

### **LESSON FOR US:**

Samson was a man of great contrasts. Faithfully serving God in one scene and serving the lusts of his flesh in the next. The spirit of God moved him frequently to do great acts of deliverance and the spirit of rebellion in his flesh moved him equally as often to acts which brought him into bondage.

Are we like Samson? All of us, when we attempt to serve God will find wonderful help in the Word of God and have access to a source of strength that will enable us to do great things for God (Phil. 4:13). We will also find that the desires of our flesh will try to assert themselves and turn our mind away from God’s truth and our responsibilities toward Him. We must learn from Samson that to give into fleshly lusts will bring ruin and death. The great lesson of Samson’s life is described in Proverbs 16:32, “He that ruleth his spirit (is better) than he that taketh a city.”

Samson’s eyes continually led him astray and eventually he lost the sight of them altogether. It was then that he was able to “see” his true position. Jesus recommends that we too, should put aside the things of this world so that we might “see” clearly the teaching and reward of God (Matthew 18:7-9; John 9:39-41).

### **REFERENCE LIBRARY:**

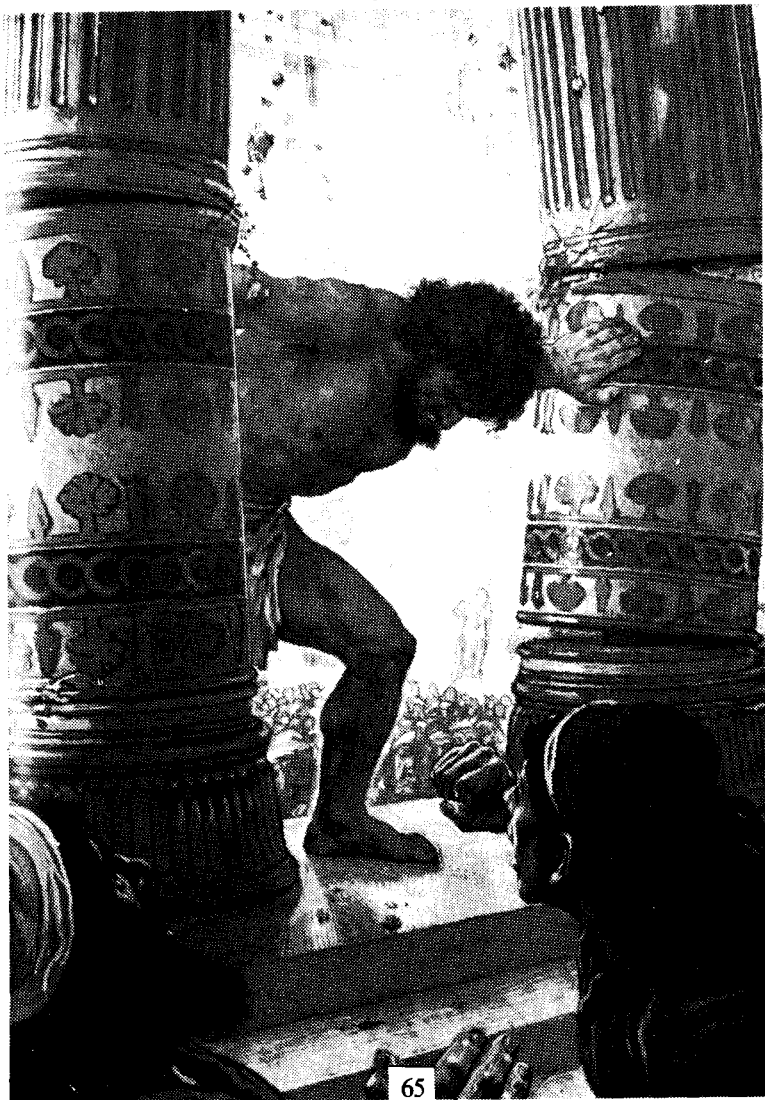
“The Story of the Bible” (H. P. Mansfield)—Vol. 3, No. 3  
“Samson” (R. W. Abel) C.S.S.S. Study notes

### **PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:**

1. *In what way was Samson a Nazirite?*
2. *In what way was Samson a type of his people?*
3. *What was the secret of Samson’s strength?*
4. *Why did God withdraw His strengthening spirit from Samson?*
5. *Explain Samson’s attitude which caused God to return to him after his imprisonment.*
6. *Explain what Samson’s weaknesses teach us about our choice of friends today.*

### ESSAY QUESTIONS:

1. *What was a Nazarite and why was Samson to be a Nazarite from his birth?*
2. *Samson was a man of great strengths and great weaknesses. Show how he was typical of Israel and how his experiences form a lesson for us today.*
3. *Separation from the world is essential for salvation. How is this lesson illustrated in Samson's life?*



## 15. RUTH

**“Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God”**

*Placed in between the Books of Judges and 1st Samuel, there is the short but beautiful story of Ruth. Compared with the violence and wickedness recorded in Judges, the story of Ruth emphasises all the things that Israel appeared to have forgotten about the love of God. It is a story of self-sacrifice and love that knew no bounds.*

*It teaches us that things are not always as bad as they seem. After the terrible anarchy of the period of Judges, when “every man did that which was right in his own eyes” we might wonder whether there was any good left in Israel at all. The story of Ruth is the answer. There had always been a few faithful ones. Similarly, later on, Elijah was told that there were 7,000 who had not bowed the knee to Baal (1 Kings 19:18). He thought all Israel had forsaken Yahweh.*

*Even in the chaotic period of the Judges there were faithful men and women in Israel. They quietly stood aside from the evils about them, and lived in peace with God (see Ruth 2:4). And the wonderful thing is this that the story of Ruth has been told time and time again during the ages that have elapsed. It is a reminder that there is always a faithful remnant. They have quietly lived a life of faith, service and love before their God in the midst of prevailing evil.*

### **Ruth — all 4 chapters**

#### **IT IS A STORY OF LOVE.**

The story commences with tragedy: with the record of famine, death and despair; but it ends in rejoicing and the appearance of new life, and the birth of an ancestor of David and Jesus.

It is a story of love, and is divided into four chapters, which can be headed as follows:—

1. **LOVE'S RESOLVE**—Ruth's noble choice. She refuses to leave Naomi in her sorrow.
2. **LOVE'S RESPONSE**—Ruth's faithful service. She responds to Naomi's need for a companion to help her.
3. **LOVE'S REQUEST**—Ruth's tender appeal. She pleads for help from Boaz.
4. **LOVE'S REWARD**—Ruth's final triumph. The ultimate joy of a beloved wife and mother. Ruth was the great-grandmother of King David.

## **THE STORY.**

A man of Bethlehem named Elimelech, with his wife Naomi, and his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, left their own country in a time of famine, and went to live in the land of Moab. Elimelech died in Moab and his 2 sons married Moabitish women. Mahlon married Ruth, and Chilion married Orpah. Within ten years both sons died, and Naomi was left without husband or children. Meanwhile, the famine in Judah ended, and Naomi decided to return to Bethlehem. On the way she told her daughters-in-law to return to their own country and kindred. Orpah heeded her advice, and after an affectionate parting, returned. Ruth, however, insisted on accompanying her mother-in-law.

The words of Naomi to Orpah could indicate that these two Moabitish women had been worshippers of heathen gods (chapter 1:15), while the marriages of Mahlon and Chilion were contrary to the law of God (Deut. 7:1-4). When Ruth determined to continue with Naomi, her mother-in-law explained to her in effect that she could only do so by forsaking her country, her place of abode, her people and her worship. She had to separate herself completely from all that she had known and loved. But so unselfish was the love of Ruth, that she determined to do so. Consider her beautiful reply in chapter 1:16-17. This outstanding example of selflessness, sincerity and devotion is a lesson for us. We are Gentiles, attracted to the Hope of Israel. Let us have the dedication of Ruth, in gladly leaving the hopeless ways of the world behind us and determining to hold fast to the hope of the Kingdom.

When they arrived in Bethlehem, the people remembered Naomi and spoke to her by name. But she told them to call her henceforth Mara. Naomi means "pleasant", but Mara means "bitter" and bitter had been her experience.

They arrived in Bethlehem at the "beginning of barley harvest." This was about the time of the Passover, and Ruth went into the fields to glean for their living.

## **RUTH'S STEPS DIVINELY DIRECTED (Chapter 2).**

Naomi was poor, so Ruth sought permission to glean, i.e. to gather the corn that had been missed by the reapers. This corn was to be left for the poor and the strangers, that they might live (Leviticus 19:9-10). The integrity of Boaz (strong one) is evident from the godly conversation of his household. He came to his reapers and addressed them thus, "Yahweh be with you" and they replied, "Yahweh bless thee." We can imagine how highly the Truth was esteemed by this man. God directed Ruth to the field of Boaz, a near kinsman or relative of Elimelech. Boaz found out who she was and gave orders for her to be kindly treated, and appointed her both meat and drink with his own servants irrespective of her being a Gentile. And so it was that Ruth found that she was able to gather much barley.

But Boaz had yet to perform a more important duty for his close relation.

### **THE LAW OF REDEMPTION.**

God, in His great mercy, made provision for those who suffered because of their poverty.

- (a) If a man became poor and had to sell his land, it was the duty of the nearest kinsman (his nearest relation) to redeem it for him, by either buying it back or paying what was owing (Leviticus 25:25).
- (b) If a man became poor and had to sell himself as a slave to a stranger, then his nearest relation had the right to redeem him with money (Leviticus 25:47-48).
- (c) If a man died, leaving no heir, and there was a danger of his name dying out in Israel, it was the duty of his nearest kinsman to marry his widow, and raise children in his name (Deut. 25:5-10; Luke 20:28).

### **BOAZ AS RUTH'S REDEEMER (Chs. 3 & 4).**

Counselled by Naomi, Ruth appealed to Boaz to redeem her, as he was a near relative. Boaz was glad to do this, but he was not the nearest kinsman. There was one (who is nameless in the story) nearer than himself. Boaz accordingly informed him but he refused to help Ruth, and forfeited his right. In those days important matters were conducted at the gate of Bethlehem before the elders of the city and this was the case with the redemption of Ruth. Boaz then took her to wife and acquired Elimelech's portion of land. Later, a son, Obed, was born and he was the father of Jesse, the father of David (4:17).

Naomi was consoled with the birth of a grandson and became the child's nurse. All of her friends rejoiced in her changed fortune (4:14, 15).

### **THE BEAUTIFUL TYPE.**

The story of Ruth is not only a delightful story of loving sacrifice that was suitably rewarded, but it teaches a very wonderful truth. It is a type of the work of God in Christ Jesus. All the characters of the story bear names that signify this. Particularly does this relate to Boaz the redeemer of Ruth. His name means "the Strong One" and he undoubtedly points forward in type to Jesus Christ, our Redeemer (Heb. 2:14, 15; 7:25-26, 1 Pet. 1:18-19).

In the story of Ruth we have two kinsmen — Boaz and the nameless one who refused to redeem. The former points to the Lord Jesus Christ and the latter to the Law of Moses which could not save (Galatians 2:16).

By birth we are as Ruth — Gentiles outside of the covenants of promise.

Like Ruth — we desire to follow the way of righteousness.

Like Ruth — we are prepared to forsake all to serve God.

Like Ruth — we are spiritually poor, and are prepared to “glean” in the fields of Israel, the field of Boaz, for spiritual food.

Like Ruth — we look to our Lord to redeem us from the poverty of our natural state.

### **THE REDEEMER.**

By his excellent character, Boaz (“in him is strength”) is very much like the Lord Jesus Christ who is more than willing to redeem us. Like Boaz, Christ is our kinsman because he is of like nature to us. By his perfect sacrifice, Christ is *able* to redeem us and to grant us a wonderful inheritance in his Kingdom. What we must do as a first step to redemption, is to willingly leave the hopeless ways of the Gentiles and gladly accept the Hope of Israel.

Naomi found that forsaking the land of the covenant brought further disaster and death, but the redemption of Ruth was manifested by a new life (Obed) and joy (Ruth 4:15).

We need to seek the redemption that the Lord Jesus offers, as Ruth did that of Boaz. If we do that, and show the loving service and faithful characteristics of Ruth, we too, will find the end of our pilgrimage a joyful experience.

Thus, amid the violence of the times of the Judges, Ruth and Boaz lived their lives teaching lessons of the greatest virtues — love, faith and obedience, which is of more importance, and greater value than the taking of cities, or the domination of fellow-beings. Let us learn the lesson of Ruth and lay hold of the Redeemer of Israel and the Hope of Israel.

### **REFERENCE LIBRARY:**

Read Instructor No. 54

“The Story of the Bible” (H. P. Mansfield)—Vol. 3, No. 5

“The Christadelphian Expositor” (H. P. Mansfield)—The Book of Ruth

### **PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:**

1. *What attitude did Ruth show when she left Moab with Naomi?*
2. *What lessons can we learn from Ruth’s attitude towards Naomi?*
3. *How was Ruth’s faith in the God of Israel rewarded?*
4. *a) What does the name Boaz mean?*  
*b) How is Boaz like the Lord Jesus Christ?*

### **ESSAY QUESTIONS:**

1. *Describe how God used His providential care in guiding Ruth out of Gentile darkness into the nation of Israel.*
2. *Describe how Boaz redeemed Ruth and similarly how Christ can redeem us.*





## 16. SAMUEL

**“And all Israel knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet”**

*The life of Samuel begins near the end of the period of the Judges. The nation of Israel had turned aside from worshipping God as a community. Samuel's life ends with the establishment of the nation as the Kingdom of God with David as their King. He was therefore the last of the Judges and the leader of the school of the prophets who followed him (see Acts 3:24). But it is Samuel's role as a “Messenger of the Lord” that we wish to consider in this lesson. We will see that his work can be compared to that of John the Baptist, the forerunner who prepared the way for the anointed of Yahweh.*

*This lesson reveals God's preparation for the establishment of His Kingdom in Israel by raising up a faithful prophet and leader.*

*The aim of this lesson will be to show how important early training in the Truth is for God's children.*

### 1 Samuel 1-3

#### **THE BIRTH OF SAMUEL (1 Samuel 1:10-20).**

A Levite named Elkanah lived in Ramah with two wives Peninnah and Hannah. Peninnah had children but scorned Hannah who was childless. Despite this Hannah was favoured by her husband.

Every year all the family made a pilgrimage to Shiloh where the Tabernacle with the Ark was set up. Here they worshipped Yahweh and offered sacrifices. But Hannah was very unhappy because she was without children. This caused her to pour out her heart in prayer at the Tabernacle. If God was willing to answer her prayer and grant her a son, then she would present him to God for His service, “all the days of his life.” Such a person was known as a Nazarite, separated and holy in God's service (see Numbers 6).

At first, Eli the High Priest, mistook Hannah's prayer for drunkenness. She reassured him, however, explaining the reason for her prayer. Eli was quick to recognise that her prayers were genuine and commended them, that “the God of Israel grant thee thy petition” (1:17).

In the process of time a baby son was born. With joy Elkanah and Hannah rejoiced at the birth of Samuel, whose name means “asked of God”. Remembering her vow, Hannah prepared the boy Samuel for his life in God's service. Then one day the family went up to Shiloh and Hannah presented Samuel to Eli. She was not reluctant but extremely thankful for God's answer to her prayer and in grateful response she dedicated Samuel to a life involved in the upholding of the holiness of

God despite the gross wickedness and apathy in the nation. Hannah's experience is a wonderful example of the power of prayer and of heartfelt gratitude for God's blessings. In the years that followed she was blessed with three more sons and two daughters.

### **THE TRAINING OF SAMUEL.**

Despite the immoral conduct of the nation which was led into apostasy by Eli's two wicked sons Hophni and Phinehas, Samuel grew up to appreciate and respect God's ways. This education was two-fold. Samuel's keen young mind was impressed with the worship of Yahweh under Eli's tuition and he would have received loving and sound advice from his mother and father when they made their regular visits to the Tabernacle at Shiloh.

The lesson of Samuel is one of separation and a child-like teachableness. Jesus spoke of children like Samuel when he said, "of such is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:3; 19:14). The faithful instruction of children in God's law was more than a duty, it was a divine command (Deut. 6:7-9). In today's wicked world that need for early training in God's ways is an urgent necessity. It is vital for young people to develop such a love and reverence for Yahweh that they can resist and overcome the godlessness about them.

Samuel's training teaches us that we can learn to love and respect God's law, however young we may be and despite the ungodly ways of people in the world around us. They should not discourage our personal love of God and His Word. We must not be led astray by the bad example of wicked people like Hophni and Phinehas but instead need to stay very close to the things of God, loving His Truth and obeying His commandments.

The contrast between the good response of Samuel to his training and the rejection of God's ways by the rebellious and apostate sons of Eli is dramatically brought out in the following quotations:

Chapter 2:11-12 — "the child did minister unto Yahweh before Eli the priest. Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not Yahweh."

Verses 17-18 — "the sin of the young men was very great. . . but Samuel ministered before Yahweh, being a child, girded with a linen ephod."

Verses 25-26 — "they hearkened not unto the voice of their father. . . and the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with Yahweh and also with man."

The last sentence indicates that Samuel's amazing aptitude for his training foreshadows the similar character of Jesus who as a youth also, "increased in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man" (Luke 2:52).

## **JUDGMENT.**

Because of Eli's failure to correct his sons and to restore the confidence of the people in the temple worship, judgment was pronounced upon his family. There would be an enemy invasion. Eli's sons would be slain in one day and the priesthood would be taken from Eli's family and given to another family of Levites.

The first two severe judgments quickly came to pass with the Philistine invasion, the defeat of Israel in battle, and the capture of the Ark. The shock of these tragedies overwhelmed Eli causing his death. The wife of Phinehas also died when she heard the news (at the point of child-birth). Her last words emphasised the despair of Israel suffering the judgments which the nation had brought upon itself. She died but not before naming her son "Ichabod, saying the glory is departed from Israel" (4:21, cp. Psalm 78:60-64).

Later during the reign of David and Solomon a change in the priesthood was made with Abiathar being removed in favour of Zadok thus fulfilling this judgment and the prophecies of 1 Kings 2:26, 27 and Numbers 25:11-13.

## **THE WORK OF SAMUEL.**

His principal work was that of a judge touring the countryside teaching and judging Israel (1 Samuel 7:15-17).

Although Samuel was not a descendant of Aaron and therefore not a priest, he nevertheless offered burnt sacrifices and offerings (1 Samuel 10:8) and was given the honour of anointing Saul and David as kings of Israel.

After twenty years of suffering the oppression of the Philistines, Samuel encouraged his people to seek deliverance. His words "If ye do return unto Yahweh with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you and prepare your hearts unto Yahweh and serve Him only: and He will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines" (1 Samuel 7:3). These words are remarkably similar to the words of John the Baptist who preached "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. . . bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance" (Luke 3:3, 8).

Both Samuel and John were therefore "messengers of Yahweh" acting as forerunners to prepare the way of the Lord's anointed, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. It is remarkable too, that both Samuel and John were consecrated as Nazarites, separated for the service of God (1 Samuel 1:11; Luke 1:15, Numbers 6:1-5). Even their names are similar: Samuel — "asked of God" (1 Samuel 1:10); John — "whom Yah has graciously given." Their zealousness for upholding God's commands is

seen in Samuel's condemnation of Saul and slaying of Agag and in John's condemnation of the nation in the time of Christ, particularly of the Pharisees and Herod.

**REFERENCE LIBRARY:**

- "Elpis Israel" (J. Thomas)—Pp. 451, 452
- "The Visible Hand of God" (R. Roberts)—Chapter 22
- "The Ways of Providence" (R. Roberts)—Chapter 14
- "The Story of the Bible" (H. P. Mansfield)—Vol. 3, Pp. 77-96

**PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:**

1. *Describe the faithful way in which Hannah sought a son from Yahweh.*
2. *What lessons do we learn from the training of Samuel which commenced at a very young age?*
3. *Why was Eli's priesthood rejected by God?*
4. *What was the mission of Samuel and how does it compare with the work of John the Baptist.*

**ESSAY QUESTIONS:**

1. *Describe the upbringing of Samuel and make a comparison with the training that we should receive in our youth.*
2. *Show the similarity of roles in the mission of Samuel and John the Baptist.*



## 17. SAUL: THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE

**“We will have a king over us: that we also may be like all the nations”**

*For 450 years Israel was ruled by the judges who were raised up by God from time to time to deliver the nation from oppression. This era drew to its conclusion in the days of Samuel who faithfully administered the law and endeavoured to direct the people in Yahweh's ways. When he was old he made his sons judges in Israel, but they “walked not in his ways”. Instead of following in their father's footsteps, their love of money led to the taking of bribes (1 Samuel 8:1-3).*

*The conduct of Samuel's sons prompted the elders of Israel to approach him with the request that a king be appointed who might rule them as the surrounding nations were ruled (8:4-5). They had forgotten that Yahweh was their king.*

*Our aim in this lesson will be to see how important it is for us to follow God's appointed will rather than the dictates of our own wills.*

### 1 Samuel chs. 8 to 12

#### MAKE US A KING.

The bad conduct and example of Samuel's sons seemed to bring the matter to a head. What would be the state of the nation after Samuel's death? Israel appealed for a king. They failed to see that their problems were of their own making. Yahweh was their King and had Israel followed His laws faithfully they would have been blessed above all men. But instead of looking to the God of Israel they turned to the surrounding nations for an example of conduct. They wanted to be like the surrounding nations and have a visible leader, a hero figure who they could proudly follow into battle.

Samuel took the people's request in a personal way, but God told him, “they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them” (8:7). What an insult to Yahweh! He had consistently guided them and protected them from the day they were delivered from Egyptian affliction. Yet they had repeatedly shown a lack of gratitude, disloyalty and a wayward desire to go after the gods of the Canaanites. Samuel was told to yield to their requests but only after he had protested to them and shown them the ‘manner of the king that shall reign over them’ (8:9). Accordingly Samuel outlined to them the greed of human monarchs. He told them that a king would enlist their sons in his armies, employ their children as labourers and cooks, confiscate their vineyards and oliveyards and require of them such heavy taxes that they would at length cry out to God for relief (8:10-18). In spite of Samuel's warning, their desire was unchanged and he was again told by God to anoint a king to reign over them.

## THE KING CHOSEN.

In response to the people's demand God gave them a king, Saul, of the tribe of Benjamin (Acts 13:21). He was selected and appointed before being presented to the people. Then his selection was indicated by the lot, divinely controlled. He was then brought forward and introduced to the people. "Behold the king whom ye have chosen" (1 Samuel 12:13). How could this be said? Although God had appointed him, he was such a man as the people themselves would have chosen. He was head and shoulders above every man, a popular choice, a figurehead who represented the people. He fulfilled all the outward requirements that the people expected of a king.

In his beginnings, Saul seemed overawed by his exaltation to the reign. His answer to Samuel (ch. 9:20, 21), his declining to tell of his anointing and contact with the prophets and his hiding among the baggage at Samuel's public announcement of his kingship over Israel (ch. 10:22) shows a certain bashfulness. But there is no scriptural reference to his having any spiritual humility. He was simply marked out for his stature — something very appealing for a nation that wanted a figurehead, a champion behind whom they could rally. 330,000 Israelites responded to his call to battle against the Ammonites where he was completely successful. Yet he attributed the success in battle to Yahweh's working salvation in Israel (ch. 11:11-13). Samuel had encouraged Saul with the words "God is with thee" (10:7). God had been rejected by his people, but He was still prepared to help them. God would work with Saul for Israel's benefit *if* Saul maintained his trust in Yahweh's guidance.

But whilst the wishes of the people seemed to be satisfied in the promising start of this king from Benjamin, later events belied their hopes. Whilst he was humble in his own eyes, and whilst he was willing to give credit to Yahweh for his success he and the people prospered. But there lay in his heart the evil characteristics of pride, stubbornness, jealousy and envy. On latter occasions pressure would bring these wicked traits of character to the fore with self interest and self preservation causing him to disobey God's word and instructions. If only the people could have patiently awaited God's will in the matter then much evil and sorrow would have been avoided. Their fleshly motivations inevitably brought the fulfilment of Samuel's predictions.

God's choice would have been different, had they waited till He was ready to appoint a King. God would not be guided by outward appearances, physique or reputation, but by the state of his heart (1 Samuel 16:7). This is seen in His choice of David "a man after Mine own heart" (1 Samuel 13:14; Acts 13:22).

As punishment upon Israel for demanding a king, Samuel called forth from God thunder and rain. This delayed the wheat harvest and spoiled the crop (1 Samuel 12:16-19).



## LESSON FOR US:

A vivid contrast is here presented between man's choice and God's choice, between man's ways and God's ways (Isaiah 55:8-9). We are clearly exhorted to separate from man's ways and to follow God's ways.

That requires us to acknowledge God in all of our ways and not to lean unto our own understanding, as in the people's choice of a King. We should never be like Israel and foolishly forget the presence of God. No matter what our situation may be we should never lose sight of Yahweh as our heavenly King. No earthly king or government can be compared to the protection and loving care that our heavenly Father gives to us, both now and in the future blessings of the Kingdom Age. To seek our own solution to our problems will lead to similar sufferings and heartache encountered by Israel in Saul's reign.

Man's ways bring disaster, ruin and death as shown in the ultimate overthrow of the kingdom of Judah (Ezekiel 21). God's way brings peace, prosperity and life. Israel failed to heed the lesson and were punished. We today face the same choice — to follow the ways of the world, or to separate, stand apart and follow the ways of God. Israel failed because the individuals who made up the nation were not strong enough to choose aright. "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4:6). Let us apply our hearts to the word and "be strong and of good courage" (Joshua 1:7-9).

## REFERENCE LIBRARY:

- "The Ways of Providence" (R. Roberts)—Chapter 14
- "The Visible Hand of God" (R. Roberts)—Chapter 22
- "The Story of the Bible" (H. P. Mansfield)—Vol. 3, Pp. 97-104
- "The Man David" (H. Tennant)—Chapter 1

## PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:

1. *Why was Israel wrong in asking for a king? What personal lessons can we learn from Israel's desire for a king?*
2. *Why did the people of Israel want a king?*
3. *What was Samuel's and Yahweh's reaction to Israel's demand for a king?*
4. *What problems did Samuel warn the people about if they chose a king?*
5. *Saul began his work well. Describe his early reign.*

## ESSAY QUESTIONS:

1. *Describe the reasons behind Israel's request for a king and show the result of Israel's impatient request. What is the lesson for us in this incident?*



## 18. GOD REJECTS SAUL

**“To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams”**

*In the beginning of his reign, Saul displayed a manner that made him appear to be an excellent choice as King of Israel. He also had the ability that was necessary for the task. But he chose to follow the dictates of his own heart rather than listen to the instruction of God. He gave every indication of wanting to satisfy the desires of the people and his life as king highlighted this tendency in his thinking and actions.*

*Popular opinion and reliance upon his own strength and judgement guided his decisions. He was not spiritually minded and therefore God was not uppermost in his life.*

*He was a good soldier, particularly in the early years of his reign and the support of courageous men, such as his son Jonathan greatly assisted his cause. But in the end he gave way completely to his weaknesses.*

### 1 Samuel 15

#### **SAUL’S FAITH TESTED (1 Samuel 13).**

Saul began his reign by selecting an army and training them to fight against the Philistines (13:2). When the time was ready Saul’s son Jonathan smote the Philistine garrison in Geba. This was a declaration of war and the Philistines were quick to answer the challenge.

Saul “blew a trumpet” in Israel which was a summons to all the fighting men to gather themselves to Saul and to fight with his army. Many of them fled and hid themselves (vv. 6, 7). Those who assembled themselves did so “trembling.”

Saul had gone to Gilgal in accordance with Samuel’s direction and was to wait there for Samuel to come and offer a sacrifice. For 7 days the people waited anxiously. There was no word from Samuel. The Philistines were building up their army and many of the Israelites slipped quietly away and hid.

At the end of the 7 days Saul was beginning to fear that he would have no army left. His confidence rested on the size of his army and not on God. Nevertheless he knew that it was important for him to sacrifice. He apparently thought that if he did so then God would automatically be on his side. So without waiting for Samuel, Saul set about to offer the sacrifice.

This was very foolish and showed that Saul did not understand his position as king. Only the priests could sacrifice offerings to God. He should have encouraged the people to wait and to trust in God to deliver

them. From this incident we can see that Saul as king thought he had the right to change God's decrees to suit his own purpose. Eventually this attitude brought about his downfall.

No sooner had Saul made the offering than Samuel came (v. 10). Samuel was very angry because he understood the foolish reason for Saul's action and knew that God would take away the Kingdom from him. Sadly he told Saul that God had sought him "a man after His own heart" to reign over Israel in place of Saul (vv. 13-14).

### **DELIVERED FROM THE PHILISTINES (1 Samuel 14).**

Saul had failed to deliver Israel from the Philistines but there was another more faithful warrior in his camp who did. Jonathan, Saul's son knew that God did not need an army to deliver Israel, and together with his armourbearer he moved against the Philistine garrison at Michmash. The two men slew many of the Philistines and God sent an earthquake which caused confusion and panic in the enemy's ranks.

Saul gathered his army to join in the pursuit of the fleeing garrison. Once again his foolishness was shown when he commanded that nobody could eat until the Philistines were overcome. This silly prohibition almost cost Jonathan his life because he ate a little honey while pursuing the enemy. However, the people showed more wisdom and justice than Saul, and refused to kill Jonathan who had saved all Israel by his faith and courage.

### **SAUL'S FAILURE (1 Samuel 15).**

1 Samuel 15 records Saul's great failure which caused God to take the kingdom from him. The command to utterly destroy Amalek could not have been stated in clearer terms (vv. 1-3). But his desire to please himself and the people caused him to alter God's command to destroy Amalek and his goods. Saul saved much of the flocks and brought back Agag, the Amalekite king, alive.

Saul was disobedient. But he didn't stop to think about this because he felt that he had the right, as king, to alter God's commands to suit himself. How often do we do wrong and try to excuse ourselves by saying that God really does not care or mean what He says? But God does care and we cannot set aside God's Word without suffering the consequences.

Saul was anxious to impress Samuel with the idea that he has been obedient (15:13). But Samuel was not deceived. "I hear bleating", he said. "They are for sacrifice" replied Saul. He did not understand the real meaning of sacrifice at all and shamefully he tried to shift the blame onto the people saying, in effect, that it was their idea.

### **THE CAUSE OF SAUL'S FAILURE.**

Samuel saw clearly the cause of Saul's failure. There had been a time,

“When thou wast *little in thine own sight*” (v. 17) but Saul’s conceit had caused him to elevate himself in his own eyes. He was proud and arrogant. He was a man who did not understand God’s purpose and therefore saw no need to be obedient.

God desired to rule His nation through the king. This meant that the king had to learn what God required for His people and then the king had the responsibility to see that God’s commands were carried out. To help kings understand His law and purpose God required them to write out for themselves a copy of the law (Deut. 17:18-20). There is no record of Saul ever doing this. Instead he spent his time in building up his own ego and attempting to ensure that his family would retain the throne of Israel.

Samuel showed what the principle of true sacrifice was when he told the king, “Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams”. We need not be impressed by the show of religious ceremony and acts of charity in the churches around us. In order to please the people the church leaders have forsaken the Word of God, like Saul. No longer do they believe and obey the Gospel, requiring baptism as essential for salvation. Instead they place importance on good works which will never find acceptance of God in the absence of obeying the Word of God.

We need to appreciate how important this principle is of obedience being far more important than sacrifice. We need to read and think about such passages as Psa. 40:6-8; 50:8-9; 51:15-17; Prov. 15:8; Eccl. 5:1 and Jer. 7:22-23. Samuel went on to emphasise how serious God views rebelliousness against His commandments by comparing such rebellion to witchcraft and stubbornness with iniquity and idolatry. Today we need to think clearly upon God’s attitudes to rebelliousness, especially when we see such a defiant spirit shown in young people of the world. We must take heed that such rebellion and stubbornness doesn’t “rub off” onto us.

Saul was rebellious and stubborn. The sad fact is that he did not realise it. He foolishly threw away the great honour of being the king of Israel because of pride (v. 23). God is merciful but He will on the other hand “by no means clear the guilty”, as Saul found out to his sorrow.

## **LESSON FOR US.**

We all suffer from the “deceitfulness of sin” because of our human nature (Hebrews 3:13). We must be prepared to study God’s Word continually so that we may recognise sin and avoid it. Not only so but we must become so busy in doing what God requires that we do not have time to think about satisfying our own desires. Whenever we are faced with a situation and feel that we cannot meet the challenge from the Word of God, we should remember Saul’s impatience at Gilgal.

God is not interested in outward show, such as mere attendance at Sunday school or meetings without the necessary enthusiasm for what we are doing. Such attendance is good but is only part of God's requirements. He wants us to love Him because He can teach us what is right. He wants us to be obedient to what is right. If we are we will be prepared to work hard for His Truth and encourage others by our example, and then He will strengthen us to do all to the glory of God.

**REFERENCE LIBRARY:**

- "The Story of the Bible" (H. P. Mansfield)—Vol. 3  
"The Visible Hand of God" (R. Roberts)—Chapter 23  
"The Man David" (H. Tennant)—Pp. 15-18

**PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:**

1. *Why did God reject Saul as King?*
2. *What instruction did God give to Kings in Deut. 17 and how can we apply this lesson in our lives today?*
3. *What did Samuel mean when he told Saul, "Obedience is better than sacrifice"?*
4. *What can we learn from Saul's experiences at Gilgal?*
5. *How did Jonathan show that Yahweh delivers those who love and trust Him?*

**ESSAY QUESTIONS:**

1. *Describe the incident involving Saul and the Philistines which caused Samuel to say that God would take the Kingdom away from Saul.*
2. *Describe Saul's failure to carry out God's instructions regarding the Amalekites and the consequences for Saul arising out of that failure.*

## 19. GOD CHOOSES DAVID

**“Man looketh on the outward appearance, but Yahweh looketh on the heart”**

*Israel had their first experience of an earthly king in the person of Saul. God, displeased with the people's choice, determined to choose for Himself a representative who would show the divine characteristics, and set a faithful example for the nation to follow. Israel had rejected Yahweh as their King, but in His love for them He was not casting them away. He chose a shepherd boy to lead them, one who was least likely to attract human attention, but whose heart was fixed upon the things of God. Such a man was David the son of Jesse, “a man after God's own heart” (1 Samuel 13:14), a type of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

### **1 Samuel 15:10-35; 16:1-13**

#### **SAUL'S FAILURE AND REJECTION (1 Samuel 15:10-35).**

Saul was a great disappointment to Samuel. He had begun so well (1 Samuel 10:24; 11:13; 13:4); his prowess in war and his generalship were not questioned, as David later testified (2 Samuel 1:19-27). Saul had done great good in lifting the nation from anarchy to order, but when trials overtook him, his failure to rely on God for help led him to inevitable disaster. Samuel watched the king's downward course and his determination to keep the throne at all costs. He saw Saul's heart harden against his God, until his whole life was directed toward an effort to maintain his own power. Outward show does not impress God. He looks on the heart and looks for a teachable response, a willingness to obey and subdue the spirit of rebellion and independence.

It was then that God warned Samuel to mourn no longer. Whatever were his personal thoughts, they had to be subjected to the will of God, whose rejection of Saul was final. He was therefore directed to fill his horn with oil and go to Jesse of Bethlehem, for God said, “I have provided me a king among his sons” (1 Samuel 16:1).

#### **SAMUEL SENT TO BETHLEHEM (1 Samuel 16:1-5).**

Samuel immediately knew the danger of his assignment. “How can I go?” he said, “If Saul hear it, he will kill me” (v. 2). Saul was becoming increasingly unbalanced in his determination to guard his royal privileges and any move to appoint another in his place would have been regarded as an act of treason. Saul had become violent and moved with moods of jealousy, anger and hatred. He could well have reacted against a new King by immediately ordering the massacre of all of Jesse's family, as Herod did when in a fit of jealous anger he ordered the young children of Bethlehem in the attempt to kill the new born Jesus. But it was not for this purpose that David was now anointed. His anointing was to mark

him out for future service and to indicate the one who was to be guided, in God's way and in God's own time, to the throne. Samuel's dilemma was resolved by God directing him to take an heifer with him, and say, "I am come to sacrifice to Yahweh." When he came to Bethlehem, the elders of the town were at first fearful (v. 4), perhaps because they feared that the prophet was coming to probe some alleged crime, or possibly because they were reluctant to incur Saul's displeasure by becoming involved in any dispute between the king and Samuel. A heifer was to be offered as a peace offering (Leviticus 3:1) and Jesse's sons were called to partake of the sacrifice (v. 5). So they sanctified themselves and came (cp. Lev. 10:3).

### **THE ANOINTING OF DAVID (1 Samuel 16:6-13).**

Jesse's sons passed before Samuel one by one. When Samuel beheld the first-born, Eliab, he was so impressed by his appearance that he felt sure that here was a fitting successor to Saul, qualified to be "the anointed of Yahweh". But in rejecting him, God told Samuel that He was more concerned with internal qualities than external ones. "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but Yahweh looketh on the heart" (v. 7 cp. Isaiah 57:15; 66:2). We should note this eternal principle of God's selection. All of God's chosen people in the Kingdom of God will be there because God has recognised men and women whose humble and faithful hearts are like His own. Likewise, God rejected each of the other sons of Jesse that came before Samuel (vv. 8-10). Only one remained; and he had not been thought worthy to be presented to the prophet. Jesse then sent for David who was minding the sheep. And he was God's choice. One who was considered least worthy among his brethren was yet known to God even as a young boy, to possess the qualities necessary to manifest the divine character to Israel and rule for God. Samuel received commandment from God and anointed this young lad in the presence of his brethren. From that time on the Spirit of God "came mightily" upon David (v. 13 R.S.V.). (Note contrast in v.14 "the spirit of Yahweh departed from Saul"). Under the quickening impulse of God's Word, David's character developed towards maturity and his mind became sharpened to discern spiritual lessons in every circumstance of life. David more than any other man, approached the ideal of the coming Messiah.

### **THE ANOINTING OIL AND ITS USE.**

This was pure olive oil with sweet-smelling spices added to it (Exodus 30:23-25), for the exclusive use of consecrating the high priest. It is symbolic of the Spirit of God (Psalm 45:7; Hebrews 1:9) through which the anointed person became separated and dedicated unto God. It's descent upon the head symbolised God's approval and sanctification for a special purpose. The Word of Truth (John 6:63; 17:17) is the sanctifying influence and power to us and when it is consumed produces "light" to our path (Matthew 5:16) even as oil in lamps.



## **THE APPLICATION TO CHRIST.**

Even in this record of David's first appearance we can readily discover typical characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ.

- As Samuel was sent to anoint David with oil symbolic of the Spirit, so John the Baptist was one sent from God to anoint Jesus that he might be revealed to Israel as the Messiah (John 1:31).
- As the Spirit came upon David so the Holy Spirit rested upon Jesus at his birth and baptism (Isaiah 11:2-3; Matthew 3:16; John 3:34).
- David was least esteemed among his brethren and Jesus' brethren did not believe on him (Psa. 69:7-9; Isa. 53:2-4; John 7:5).
- David was a shepherd, chosen to shepherd or rule God's people (1 Samuel 16:11 cp. Psalm 78:70-72), and Jesus is the Chief Shepherd over the ecclesia (1 Peter 2:25).

We too must make ourselves holy or separate and clean, and the only way we can do this is by continually digesting the Word of God (John 17:17). Then we will be influenced by the spirit-word to grow more like the one whom we look to as our shepherd, the Beloved of God, the Lord Jesus Christ

## **DAVID, A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART.**

As a shepherd boy caring for the sheep David used the time and opportunity well in meditating upon God's Word. His was an outdoor life surrounded by the beauty of creation and in the appreciation of the things around him he felt near to his God, who was a very real guide and comfort in his life. He trusted and depended upon God in all the circumstances of his life. His victories over the enemies of Israel, were the result of many years of the quiet development of a deep and abiding faith. His mind and heart were responsive and sensitive to God's word.

Even Saul's servants reported that David was "cunning in playing, and a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters and a comely person, and Yahweh is with him" (1 Sam. 16:18). Therefore he was God's choice as king over Israel and we will be elected and appointed king-priests (Revelation 5:9-10) by God on the same basis.

## **LESSON FOR US.**

Samuel was sad to see Saul decline in spirituality. He had begun well but it was not long before an independent spirit, a lack of faith and a rash, self-willed rejection of God's Word provoked Yahweh's absolute condemnation.

His successor, a young lad of Bethlehem, was the very opposite. He was humble in his own eyes and showed a deep and abiding dependence

upon God and His Word. Let us never be wise in our own eyes or dare to say, even in our own hearts, that God doesn't really mean what He says. Let us be like that young shepherd boy overlooked by everybody else as not being worthy of consideration, yet of him it is recorded that he was a man after God's own heart. And what an honour that would be. And what a wonderful, godfearing, faithful and obedient young lad David must have been to earn that great commendation.

**REFERENCE LIBRARY:**

- "The Ways of Providence" (R. Roberts)—Chapter 15
- "The Visible Hand of God" (R. Roberts)—Chapter 23
- "The Story of the Bible" (H. P. Mansfield)—Vol. 3
- "The Man David" (H. Tennant)—Pp. 19-23

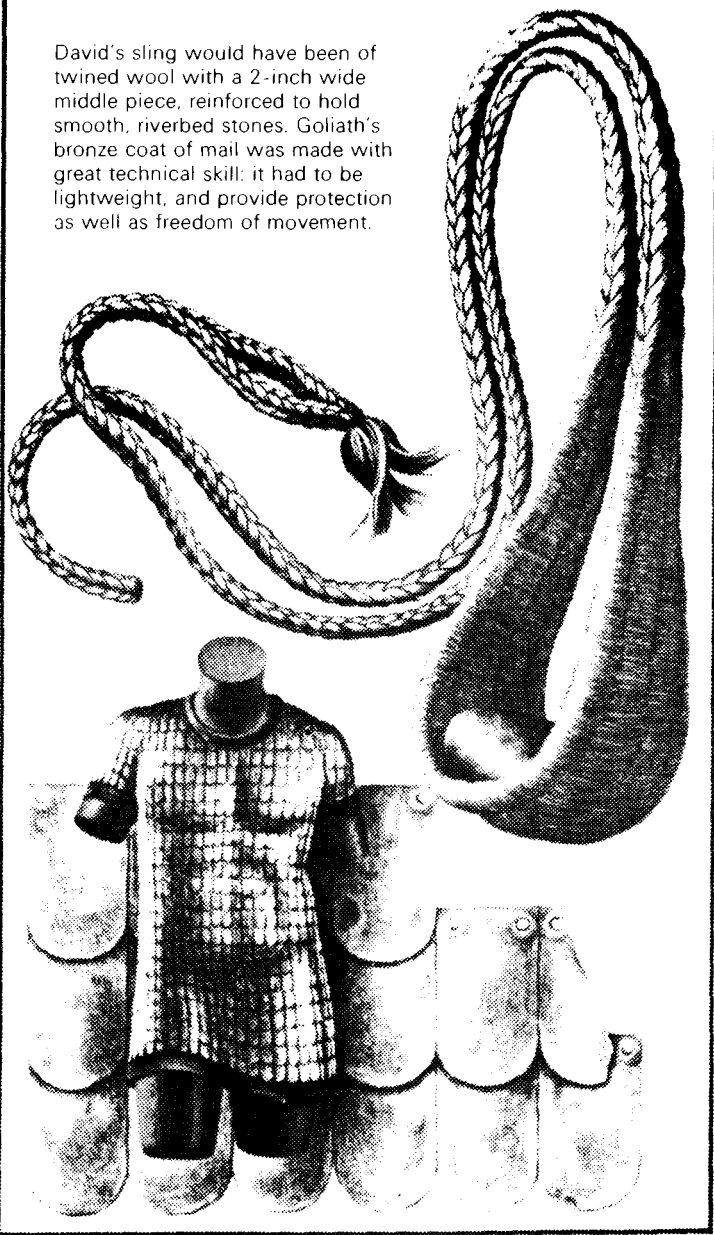
**PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:**

1. *Why did Samuel go to Bethlehem and seek out the family of Jesse?*
2. *What lesson is there for us in the choice of David to be King instead of his brothers?*
3. *What were the qualities in David that made him "a man after God's own heart"?*

**ESSAY QUESTIONS:**

1. *Describe the events surrounding the anointing of David by Samuel.*
2. *In what ways was David "a man after God's own heart" and describe the ways in which we can follow David's example today.*

David's sling would have been of twined wool with a 2-inch wide middle piece, reinforced to hold smooth, riverbed stones. Goliath's bronze coat of mail was made with great technical skill: it had to be lightweight, and provide protection as well as freedom of movement.



## 20. DAVID AND GOLIATH

“All the earth may know that there is a God in Israel”

*The simple story of David's swift defeat of the Philistine giant, Goliath, contains very powerful lessons. It is not merely a description of a struggle between two men or even two armies. The real contest was between Spirit and flesh, and David alone was aware of this. The key to the whole significance of this notable event in David's life lies in the words of Goliath's challenge and David's courageous answer. His complete confidence in God puts him in marked contrast to the rest of Israel who faithlessly cowered before the enemy. David went out to Goliath in the name of Yahweh of Armies, to vindicate Him in the sight of Israel and the Gentiles. His outstanding act of faith should be a constant lesson to us that we can overcome the greatest problems in our life if we place our confidence in God.*

### 1 Samuel 17

#### THE PHILISTINES.

Throughout Israel's history the Philistines remained one of their most formidable enemies. They occupied the coastal plain stretching along the fertile Western coast of Canaan (Gaza today). They were in the land in the time of Abraham (Genesis 21:32; 26:1, 14, 18) and they were strong when Israel came out of Egypt (Exodus 13:17). When Joshua divided the land, Judah was assigned their territory but never succeeded in completely conquering them (Joshua 13:2, 3; Judges 3:3). About the middle of the period of the Judges, their power increased considerably and they were a constant threat to Israel's security (cp. Judges 5:6; 1 Samuel 23:1). They were skilled in the manufacture of weapons and endeavoured to keep Israel in subjection to themselves by keeping strict control over the use of iron and tools (1 Samuel 13:19-22).

#### THE CHALLENGE TO ISRAEL (1 Samuel 17:1-3).

After the Philistines had been routed at Michmash (1 Samuel 14:52), Israel continued to be at war with them for many years. Chapter 17 describes what happened when the Philistines organised an attack on Israel along the valley of Elah, which runs from the hill country of Judah south-west of Jerusalem and westward through the lowlands, past Ashdod, to the Mediterranean Sea. This valley provided a direct route for a Philistine invasion right into the heart of Israel. The names Shochoh and Azekah mentioned in Chapter 17:1 were part of the territory given to Judah (Joshua 15:35). The Philistines attacked along the valley, taking possession of several kms. of territory and came to Ephesdammim, which means “the boundary of blood”, a well known battleground. Saul

gathered his army on the opposite side of the valley, to prevent any further advance by the enemy. In this situation both armies held strong defensive positions. A ravine ran through the valley, through which flowed a torrent of water and from which David later obtained his waterwashed stones. In such a situation the attacker would be at a decided disadvantage, for he would not only have to expose himself while crossing the ravine, but fight uphill against the enemy's stronghold.

### **GOLIATH OF GATH.**

Verse 4 says, "there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath of Gath." Since neither of the armies could fight a decisive battle in this terrain, Israel was challenged to decide the issue by single combat and Goliath was the Philistines' choice. Goliath was a huge Philistine, six cubits and a span (about 3 metres). The challenge was intended to unnerve Saul for it was a challenge to him personally to engage the giant single-handed in combat. He was the tallest in Israel being "head and shoulders above the people" (1 Samuel 10:23). His failure to do so revealed his lack of faith. Altogether, Goliath had six items of personal armour and equipment — a helmet of brass, a coat of mail, greaves (shinguards) of brass, a target or javelin, a staff or spear and a large shield carried by an armour-bearer (vv. 4-7). His coat of mail alone weighed 5,000 shekels (about 91 kgs. weight).

### **DAVID'S VISIT TO THE CAMP (1 Samuel 17:12-31).**

For forty days the armies faced each other (v. 16). The number forty in scripture always denotes a period of trial or testing, as it certainly was here. It was an unusually long period for two armies to face each other without a decision and Jesse became anxious for the welfare of his three sons in Saul's army. He therefore instructed David to take them provisions. David arrived at the camp and found his brothers safe, but was then horrified to witness the spectacle of Goliath hurling insults and the men of Israel cowering in fear (vv. 17-24). He was astounded that this Philistine should defy the armies of the living God. His brothers upset by the implied rebuke in David's comments angrily accused him of neglecting his sheep for the excitement of the battle (v. 28). David's words were reported to Saul who sent for David (v. 31). Fearlessly David volunteered to combat the Philistine champion. His lack of experience in war was no disability for he relied in the protection of God. Twice before, through the power of God he had delivered his flock from the ravages of a lion and of a bear (vv. 32-37). David's one concern was that this man had dared to breathe defiance against the living God, and this reproach must be wiped out and Saul was impressed by David's great faith, perhaps recognising a faith he failed to possess.

David decided not to use the armour of Saul because he had not

proved it, taking only his staff and his sling and five pebbles selected from the brook (v. 40). The sling was a deadly weapon in experienced hands. There were 700 men of Benjamin in the time of the Judges who could sling stones at a hair's breadth and not miss (Judges 20:16). The shepherds in Israel frequently used the sling to drive away wild animals which would prey on the sheep. So David the shepherd stood to protect the "flock" of Yahweh against the attack of the Philistine "beasts". David could not have shown more clearly his utter contempt of the Philistine —glorying in his fleshly might — than he did by putting aside the weapons of normal warfare, and meeting his foe with the weapons of a shepherd, secure in his supreme confidence in Yahweh. The Philistine roared his disgust, "Am I a dog that thou comest against me with a staff and stones?"

### **THE CONTEST.**

The contest between David and Goliath must not be viewed merely as a battle between two men or even between two armies, those of Israel and the Philistines. It must be recognised that the contest was between the God of Israel and all the gods of the Philistines (cf. Exodus 12:12). Goliath cursed David in the name of his gods (v. 43). David responded: "I come to thee in the name of Yahweh Sabaoth, the God of the armies of Israel" (v. 45). David was confident of victory in God's power. "That all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel" (v. 46) and also to impress upon Israel that the battle was Yahweh's. "All this assembly shall know that Yahweh saveth not with the sword and spear" (v. 47 cp. Zechariah 4:6). The battle was now Yahweh's and the outcome was never in doubt from that point as far as David was concerned.

When the two men had concluded their words David advanced. He placed a stone in his sling, whirled his sling and smote the Philistine in the forehead. The giant came crashing to the ground. Then David ran and using the fallen Goliath's own sword cut off his head (vv. 48-51). The Israelites could hardly believe their eyes. The Philistines were panic stricken and fled, pursued by the shouting Israelites. The Philistines scattered in wild confusion, some going north to Ekron, others south to Gath and to Ashkelon on the coast, being pursued by the Israelites right to the gates of those cities. After the rout of the Philistines the Israelites returned, plundering the Philistine camp en route. By this incident David was brought into public notice. Saul insisted that he remain permanently in his court (18:2). This acquaintance would have profound effects on the history of Israel.

### **LESSON FOR US:**

David entered the combat unarmed except for his shepherd's sling, scrip and staff and the faith that Yahweh would give him the victory. David, with one unerring aim slung a stone with great force at Goliath's

forehead, stunned him and then, with the giant's own sword, beheaded him.

David gained this notable victory because he was not hindered, as King Saul was, with selfwill. In this way he demonstrated the great moral victory that Jesus Christ gained over sin, and the great militant victory that will be gained as the "Stone cut out of the mountain without hands", will be victorious over the assembled might of the kingdoms of men when Christ returns to the earth (Dan. 2; Zech. 14:1-4).

It is this aspect of the battle that demonstrates eternal principles for us:

- (a) God's strength is made perfect in weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9).
- (b) Yahweh saves not by sword or spear (1 Samuel 17:45).
- (c) "This is the victory that overcometh the world (and the lust thereof) even your faith" (1 John 5:4).
- (d) Sin will be overcome by our complete trust in God and a willingness to allow His Word to direct our life. The victory is then attributable to the power of God and His Word.

It will be our privilege if we are wise now, to have a place with Christ in his day of victory (Psalm 149:6-9; Revelation 2:26-27).

#### **REFERENCE LIBRARY:**

- "The Ways of Providence" (R. Roberts)—Chapter 15
- "The Story of the Bible" (H. P. Mansfield)—Vol. 3, Nos. 8 and 9
- "The Letter to the Hebrews" (J. Carter)—Section 11
- "The Man David" (H. Tennant)—Pp. 24-32
- "The Historical Geography of the Holy Land" (George Adam Smith) 1966 ed., Pp. 160-162

#### **PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:**

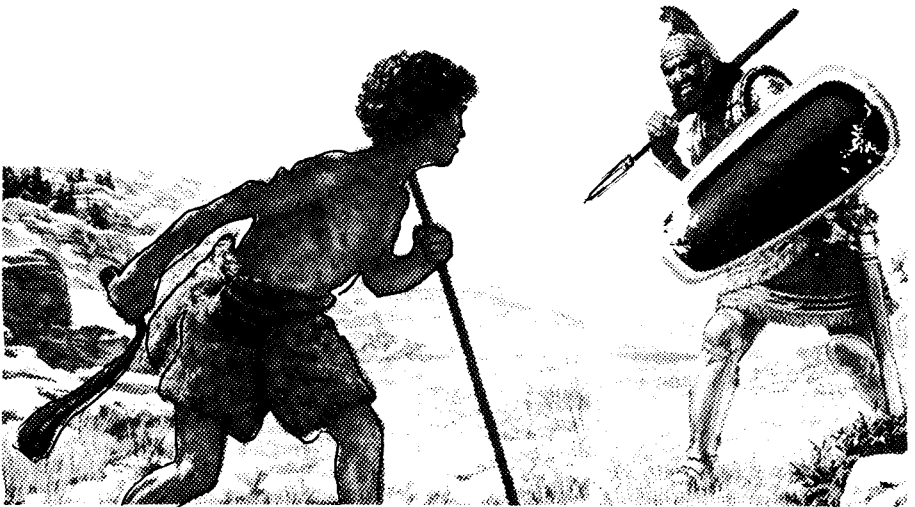
1. *In what way did the conflict with Goliath show the differences in the characters of David and Saul?*

2. *Explain whose honour was at stake in the meeting between David and Goliath?*
3. *What lessons are we able to draw from David's contest and victory over Goliath?*
4. *Why were the Philistines a major threat to Israel?*

**ESSAY QUESTIONS:**

1. Contrast Israel's lack of faith and David's confidence in God when confronted by Goliath.
2. Show how David's victory over Goliath is a fore-shadowing of Christ's future victory over the nations.

1 - 17 - 45 - 46







## 21. DAVID AND JONATHAN

**“Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul, his father”**

*The friendship between David and Jonathan is one of the closest revealed in the Scripture. The basis of their friendship was a common love of God. Each was zealous for the hope of Israel and so they were naturally drawn together. No pride or pettiness marred this friendship, each was willing to sacrifice for the other. In this they were like the Lord Jesus Christ who laid down his life for his friends, whose friends we are if we do as he commanded (John 15:13-15; 1 John 3:16).*

*On the other hand the very success and popularity of David became a stumbling block to Saul. Success bred envy and the lesson portrays the pathetic sight of the King of Israel using all his energies to shed innocent blood. “A sound heart is the life of the flesh but envy the rottenness of the bones” (Proverbs 14:30).*

### 1 Samuel 18, 19, 20

#### **DAVID AND JONATHAN DRAWN TOGETHER (1 Samuel 18:1-4).**

Jonathan’s courage and faith in God had already been demonstrated in an earlier war against the Philistines. He was the first to smite them (see Chapter 13:3) but the victory was attributed to Saul. When he saw the same courage and spirit in David when he slew Goliath, he was drawn to him (see 1 Samuel 14:6 and 17:45).

Despite his princely status and seniority of years Jonathan was attracted by David’s faith and love of God. “The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David and Jonathan loved him as his own soul” The Hebrew word “was knit” is also used to describe the deep affection Jacob had for Joseph (Genesis 44:30). Saul too could not help being impressed by David and desired that he should now remain permanently in his court (1 Samuel 18:2).

At this early time Jonathan and David entered into a solemn covenant of friendship. They made a solemn promise to each other saying “Yahweh be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed forever” (1 Samuel 20:42). Jonathan stripped himself of the symbols of his high office, his robe “and his armour and even his bow and his girdle” (R.S.V.). So it was there in the midst of the nobility of Saul’s court, that David was encouraged by the love of one who “esteemed other better than himself” (Phil. 2:3).

#### **SUCCESS BREEDS ENVY (1 Samuel 18:5-30).**

Under God’s guiding hand, David went from strength to strength. Appointed general over Saul’s men of war, he was accepted by the army, the

people and Saul's servants. No one seemed resentful or jealous of him (v. 5). As recorded in Chapter 16:21, "Saul loved him greatly". But David's growing popularity was to cast its shadow over his life. As the victorious Israelites led by David returned home, the women of Israel came out to meet them, dancing and singing, "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands" and Saul's jealousy was aroused. Samuel had made it plain to him that God would take the kingdom from him and give it to a neighbour (cp. 13:13-14; 15:28). He now had a growing suspicion that his successor was to be David, the people's favourite. "What can he have more BUT THE KINGDOM?" said Saul (v. 6-8). Saul eyed David from that day forward (v. 9). As the thought of David's threat to his succession grew in his mind, Saul's mental balance became more erratic. The following day, he was very disturbed, and as David played to sooth his troubled mind, Saul suddenly lifted up his javelin and twice hurled it at David, intending to pin him with it to the wall. But David escaped unharmed (v. 10, 11).

Notwithstanding these threats to his life David remained at court. Then Saul conceived a plot whereby the Philistines would be David's executioners. He offered David, Merab, his eldest daughter, to be his wife on the condition that he be valiant and "fight Yahweh's battles." He sent him from the court to the battle field, where, instead of being killed, he acquitted himself well — but Saul's marriage arrangement for David was dishonoured (v. 19). Almost immediately however, another opportunity presented itself. Told that his other daughter, Michal, was in love with David, Saul once more plotted David's death. Saul would this time give his daughter, conditional only upon him providing Saul a dowry of 100 foreskins of the Philistines (v. 20-25). "Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines" (v. 25), but David went forth, slew 200 Philistines, brought back the dowry to the king and claimed Michal as his wife (v. 26-27). David was now son-in-law to the king, but more than that everything he did prospered. Saul's hatred of David grew more intense and all the while, even in the most difficult times, "David behaved himself more wisely than all the servants of Saul; so that his name was precious."

#### **PROTECTION FROM JONATHAN (1 Samuel 19:1-7).**

But the more popular David became, the more intense was Saul's determination to slay him. Jonathan became aware of his father's fierce hatred and immediately set about protecting David (vv. 2-3). He pleaded for him with the king, criticising his father for his injustice, demanding an end to the persecution of David. It was a most unselfish action by Jonathan for it could have cost him his own standing before his father. Under this pressure Saul made an oath before God that David would not be slain (v. 4-6). So David returned, and was re-established in the position he formerly held (v. 7).

## **DAVID FLEES TO SAMUEL AND JONATHAN (1 Samuel 19:1-7).**

As time went by Saul's insanity was becoming progressively worse, and when war once more erupted and David returned victorious, it was too much for the king. Again he sought to pin David to the wall with his javelin and David fled from the court, to his home and Michal advised him to leave immediately letting him down through a window. Michal then planned how she could deceive David's pursuers hiding an image in David's bed (v. 12). When the messengers first came, she pretended that David was sick in bed. When they returned from Saul to take David in bed, she alleged that David had in the meantime threatened her life and so she had no alternative but to let him go (v. 11-17).

Meanwhile David fled to Samuel in desperation. When Saul learnt of his whereabouts he sent his soldiers to take David captive, but the Spirit of God forbade them and turned them from captors into prophets. Three times the hand of God intervened to prevent the intentions of Saul. Then Saul went himself and the same thing happened. He came before Samuel to Naioth in Ramah, and prophesied and felt the influence and spirit of the company there.

David gained a brief respite while Saul prophesied and he returned to Gibeah, where he sought out Jonathan. The friends agreed upon a plan to test Saul's intentions. The feast of the new moon at which all close relatives were to be in attendance, was only a few days away. David would absent himself with Jonathan's permission on the basis of keeping a family feast at Bethlehem. He would remain hidden until he received Jonathan's sign, either to stay or to flee. It is notable that David's ultimate triumph was accepted without question and such was Jonathan's faith that he regarded it as a matter of course. All he asked for was David's continued kindness to himself and his children when he became king, and this was made the subject of a covenant between them.

The plan was put into operation. On the second day Jonathan's defence of David put his father in a rage. "Thou son of a perverse rebellious woman", said Saul. "Wherefore now send and fetch him unto me, for he shall surely die" (v. 30-31).

Jonathan tried to reason with his father but to no avail. Saul was so angry that he cast a javelin at him and Jonathan left, in fierce anger, refusing to eat at his father's table and terribly grieved in heart. The following morning Jonathan's arrow sped past the stone and David was given the prearranged signal to flee. The two friends parted, never to see each other again except for a brief encounter when later Saul pursued David, and Jonathan secretly visited him to strengthen him in Yahweh and to renew the covenant between them (ch. 23:16-18). Jonathan's outstanding loyalty kept him at his father's side, while David now an out-cast, continued seeking refuge from his pursuer, but determined he would

wait patiently upon God, and not under any circumstances lift up his hand against the king who was Yahweh's anointed.

**LESSON FOR US:**

When Jonathan was later slain by the Philistines David lamented and said, "Thy love for me was wonderful passing the love of women" (2 Samuel 1:26). True friendship is just the same today. Friends play a big part in our lives and they influence us for good or evil. We should choose friends in the Truth as our companions in life. Those who love and obey the Lord Jesus are his "friends" and like Jonathan and David they will not fail us in times of trouble. "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (2 Corinthians 6:14).

It was not David's bravery alone that drew Jonathan to him. The reason for David's courage lay in his unswerving trust in God. The two friends had one thing in common — an unwavering belief in the God of Israel, to keep and to save all who trust in Him. It was this that put aside the barriers of age, wealth and rank between them and that made them "one". Jonathan knew no fear in doing what was right. He had courage and generosity and was not tainted by jealousy. He was a devoted and loyal son and patiently endured whatever befell him, ever waiting upon God for his salvation.

Of all people, Jonathan, as heir apparent to the throne had most to lose by David's succession to the throne of Israel. He was a shining example of the love in Christ Jesus commended to the Philippians: "Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves" (2:3) (cp. 1 Corinthians 13:1-13).

**REFERENCE LIBRARY:**

- "The Ways of Providence" (R. Roberts)—Chapter 15
- "The Story of the Bible" (H. P. Mansfield)—Vol. 3, No. 9
- "The Man David" (H. Tennant)—Pp. 32-45

**PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:**

1. *Why did Saul seek to kill David and how did he try to bring it about?*
2. *How can the example of David and Jonathan help us to choose our friends?*
3. *Contrast the characters of Jonathan and Saul as revealed in their attitude to David.*
4. *Describe David's and Jonathan's final parting — include in your answer the events that led up to this separation.*

**ESSAY QUESTIONS:**

1. *Show how David's loyalty to Saul was sorely tested by Saul's insanity and how God overshadowed David's life in those crises.*
2. *David and Jonathan's friendship presents guidelines for us in the formation of our friendships. Describe the requirements for true and lasting friendships.*

PARA 1

ESSAY 2

1 SAM 18:3,4,5

## 22. DAVID IN EXILE

**“Saul sought him every day, but God delivered him not into his hand”**

*Saul marshalled all his resources against David who was caused to flee for his life, an exile from family and friend. In the uncertainty of the years that were to follow, David's faith grew even stronger as he learned to depend on God alone.*

*“I looked on my right hand and beheld, but there was no man who would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul. I cried unto thee, O Yahweh: I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living” (Psalm 142:4-5).*

*God's loving care was upon David because of his uprightness and sincerity. Though destined to become king of Israel he was not presumptuous nor did he take God for granted but sought Him in prayer and when answered he obeyed (1 Samuel 23:9-13). Moreover, David respected the life of Saul as God's anointed. David was content to await God's time and God's way. Righteousness would yield its proper reward in God's good pleasure.*

### 1 Samuel 23 & 24

#### **DAVID FLEES FROM SAUL (1 Samuel 21-22).**

On one occasion David fled to Nob, the city of the priests. In the desperation of his plight David feigned that he was on a secret mission from Saul, and so obtained from Ahimelech food and the sword of Goliath which was stored there. He then fled to Achish, the King of Gath where in fear of his life he made out to be mad. This ruse was successful and Achish set him free. He departed from Gath and came to the cave Adullam, where a company of 400 men gathered about him, who were, for various reasons, not satisfied with the reign of Saul (1 Samuel 22:2). Many had come not for reasons of fellowship or sympathy but mutual hostility towards Saul. They were generally a rough company and not in harmony with the principles which governed their leader (cp. Psalm 57:4). Nevertheless among them numbered the priest Abiathar (23:6), through whom David enquired of God. The prophet, Gad, who was a close associate of David's for many years (2 Samuel 24:11) was also with him in his exile.

#### **SAUL SLAUGHTERS THE PRIESTS.**

Meanwhile Saul published his hatred of David and appealed for the loyalty of the Benjamites on the grounds that he would be more favourable to them than the son of Jesse, of the tribe of Judah. Following this appeal, Doeg the Edomite, who had witnessed Ahimelech's

actions toward David, alleged that the priest had assisted David and “inquired of Yahweh for him” (1 Samuel 22:6-10). Saul was furious. Ahimelech and the priests were summoned to his presence and when Ahimelech defended his action, Saul commanded Doeg to slay them. Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech, alone escaped and fled to David. The news of Saul’s massacre confirmed David’s worst fears and he said to Abiathar, “Abide thou with me, fear not; for he that seeketh my life seeketh thy life: but with me thou shalt be in safe guard.” It was now clear to all Israel that the price of helping David was death (1 Samuel 22:11-23).

### **THE UNGRATEFULNESS OF THE MEN OF KEILAH (1 Samuel 23:1-15).**

News reached David that the Philistines, were fighting against Keilah, and robbing the threshing floors. This aroused David’s wrath and putting aside his own problems and confident of God’s help he enquired “shall I go and smite these Philistines?” But other of David’s company did not share his trust or jealousy for the people of God. As they were already in fear of Saul, why should they multiply enemies by engaging the Philistines as well — so they reasoned. Enquiry was again made of God and a positive answer was received with the assurance, “I will deliver the Philistines into thy hand.” So David and his men went to Keilah and with characteristic valour he smote the Philistines and even brought away their cattle. Thus the inhabitants of Keilah were saved (23:1-6).

Reports soon reached Saul that David was in Keilah, a walled city with bars and gates. Saul interpreted this as a God-given opportunity to rid himself of David. Leaving nothing to chance Saul rallied all the army together to besiege Keilah. But such large-scale preparations could not go on unbeknown to David. So David again made enquiry of God. His faithful prayer received immediate response. “The eyes of Yahweh are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry” (Psalm 34:15). David was told that Saul would come and that the men of Keilah would deliver him into their hand. Their trust lay in man and not in God for they would betray the one who had saved them. What base ingratitude there is in the heart of man!

David and his men, now numbering 600, escaped and dwelt in a stronghold in the wilderness of the rugged Judean hills, while Saul and his men sought and searched for him. But though he eluded Saul’s trap Jonathan found him easily and desired to “strengthen his hand in God.” There in the solitude of the wood the two friends united their hearts and hopes in the fear of Yahweh: “Fear not: for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee; and that also Saul my father knoweth.” But these hopes were not to be realised. This was to be their last contact with each other. Jonathan died in battle on the mountain of Gilboa without ever meeting



David again. But in the Kingdom the God in whom they trusted will raise them both to be united again in the service of Christ, the greater son of David.

### **THE TREACHERY OF THE ZIPHITES (1 Samuel 23:19-28).**

The men of Ziph came to Saul telling him that David was in their midst. Saul told the Ziphites to make sure of their facts for he had not found David very easy to track down in the past and “he would search him out throughout all the thousands of Judah.” The Ziphites returned but David was now in the wilderness of Maon. Saul and his men came down and pursued him there. A crisis had come and David was in imminent danger. “Saul went on this side of the mountain, and David and his men on that side of the mountain; and David made haste to get away for fear of Saul; for Saul and his men compassed David and his men round about to take them” (23:26). All appeared to be lost”. David was about to be captured at last. But God did not intend that this would happen, and an urgent message diverted Saul’s campaign.

A messenger arrived at the camp of Saul with the news that the Philistines had invaded the land. Saul was obliged to retire immediately to face the threat from Israel’s enemies.

### **DAVID SPARES THE LORD’S ANOINTED (1 Samuel 24).**

As soon as Saul had dealt with the Philistines he returned to pursue David. David had by this time removed to the wilderness of Engedi, for the large caves there afforded better protection. It so happened that weary Saul went to rest in the very cave where David and his men were hiding. This provided an occasion where the true character of David was shown. To David’s men the occasion provided an ideal opportunity to do away with a hated enemy. Surely this was the will of God, but David restrained his men and crept forth and cut off the skirt of Saul’s robe. His conscience even smote him for presuming to do this. He held back his men with the words, “Yahweh forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, Yahweh’s anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of Yahweh”.

In due course Saul arose and went on his way but he was stopped by the cry of David, saying, “My lord the King”. Saul looked behind him and saw the figure of David stooping with his face towards the ground. Here the power of righteousness in a God-fearing man was seen. Holding up the piece of his skirt, David showed Saul that his life was in his hand that day (v. 9-10). He rebuked Saul for his continued unwarranted persecution (v. 14), and reminded him that ultimately God would judge between them and plead his cause.

Saul was humbled by David’s honesty and experienced a moment of sanity. He acknowledged that David was more righteous than he in

rewarding him good for evil (cp. Matthew 7:12). Saul called upon God to bless David, and went on to declare his conviction that David would succeed to the throne of Israel. The king requested from David that he would protect those of his (Saul's) house at that time (24:16-21).

Following this amazing encounter Saul returned from pursuing after David.

#### **LESSON FOR US:**

Because of the extreme pressures brought about by his exile David was caused to rest heavily on God for vain was the help of man. David placed no trust in princes or sons of men but committed his cause to the Righteous Judge of all the earth just as did his glorious Son many centuries later (1 Peter 2:23). The wise heart will learn to trust in the God of heaven, and like David, learn to say, "This poor man cried, and Yahweh heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles" (Psalm 34:6).

David's self control in the midst of trial and temptation to seize power strikes us as truly remarkable. His faith in God's care made him refuse every evil way even when it contained the promise of immediate gain of the goal God had promised him. Even so we must wait patiently and faithfully for the day of Christ's return for the fulfilment of our hopes. Vengeance and reward belongs unto God (Romans 12:19-21).

#### **REFERENCE LIBRARY:**

"The Ways of Providence" (R. Roberts)—Chapter 16

"The Story of the Bible" (H. P. Mansfield)—Vol. 3, No. 10

"The Man David" (H. Tennant)—Pp. 46-66

#### **PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:**

1. *Describe the terrible incident committed by Saul that showed all Israel that the price for helping David was death.*
2. *Outline what happened to David at Keilah.*
3. *Why did David spare Saul in the cave of Engedi?*

#### **ESSAY QUESTIONS:**

1. *Show how God delivered David from Saul's pursuit whilst in exile.*
2. (a) *Why did David spare Saul in the cave at Engedi?*  
(b) *What lessons can we learn from David's attitude of respect for Saul and patient awaiting the outworking of God's will?*

## 23. THE DEATH OF SAUL

**“And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him”**

*In this lesson we see Saul finally turning completely from God and seeking out the witch of Endor. This is followed by his defeat and death, at the hands of the Philistines. He refused to accept the will of God in his life and putting aside the opportunities to repent he went from bad to worse, finally bringing shame on the Name of God, Israel and himself.*

*On the other hand David continued throughout the persecutions of Saul to endure the trials and hardship of exile. He had not forsaken the principles of righteous living and he placed his cause before God in prayer. It was during this period that he wrote many of the Psalms which point forward to the innermost thoughts of Christ. Suffering and trial have a place in the purpose of God and those called upon to endure them for righteousness' sake can be assured that they are in the company of the heroes of faith (cp. Matthew 5:10-12; Acts 5:41; 1 Peter 3:14; 4:12-14).*

### **1 Samuel 26-31; 2 Samuel 1**

#### **DAVID IN ZIKLAG (1 Samuel 27).**

The Ziphites again tried to betray David into Saul's hands, but instead Saul was for the second time placed at David's mercy. Again David refused to touch Yahweh's anointed. When Saul awoke he saw his spear and cruse of water in David's hand and confessing that David was more righteous than he returned to his home (1 Samuel 26).

David thought that he would be safer in the land of the Philistines and so he and his men went and dwelt with Achish in Gath. Thereupon Saul sought David no more (1 Samuel 27:1-5). Achish gave David Ziklag where he dwelt for 16 months. Now David was free to please himself and from this place he and his men invaded the peoples south of Judah as far as Egypt. They left none alive to tell what had happened. Achish, naturally curious, enquired where David had made his raids. David replied, “Against the south of Judah. . .,” and Achish assumed that he had therefore totally forsaken his people. He thought that he could now place full confidence in David.

#### **SAUL AND THE WITCH OF ENDOR (1 Samuel 28).**

It came to pass that the Philistines gathered themselves to battle against Israel. Achish invited David to participate in the battle. David complied and marched with the Philistine host up the coastal plain of Israel to Shunem, while Saul gathered Israel together upon the mountains of Gilboa. There can be no question that David would have proved an adversary to the Philistines had he been permitted to remain with them. His respect and love for the people of God and his contempt for the

Philistines was unchanged (cp. 17:16, 45-47). Moreover, his bitter lament upon hearing of Israel's defeat show plainly where his allegiance lay (2 Samuel 1:19-21). When the other lords of the Philistines learned that David was marching with them they summoned Achish and told him to send David back. When Achish protested David's loyalty, they were unimpressed (29:1-5). Besides fearing his valour, they would not trust him — perhaps they had heard that he would not touch Yahweh's anointed. Their fears were well grounded. Half apologetically Achish informed David of the decision and so the Philistines proceeded to Jezreel to confront Saul (29:6-11).

The sight of the gathering Philistines struck fear in the heart of the King of Israel. He hurriedly searched for consolation and strength from God "but Yahweh answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by vision, nor by prophets" (28:4-6). Saul had completely estranged himself from God and his prayer reflected only himself and no thought for God at all. To whom could he go? Samuel was dead and he himself had banned the use of witchcraft. Yet in his desperation he even sought a woman with a familiar spirit. He found one nearby at Endor and with tragic hypocrisy the king of Israel disguised himself, and went to her house at great risk, having to creep past the enemy's lines. She was at first reluctant to comply with his wishes, remembering the law regarding wizards and those with familiar spirits, and thinking they had come to trick her. With the confusion that belongs to those who forsake God, Saul reassured her with an oath sworn in the name of Yahweh, cp. 1 Samuel 28:3, 10; Lev. 19:31; Deut. 18:9-14.

The woman prophesied of Saul's death on the battlefield which confirmed in his mind the forebodings that he had held. Saul collapsed on the floor of her house.

When the witch saw Saul fallen upon the floor she told him that she had only obeyed his request. Perhaps she thought she would suffer on account of the bad news. She suggested that Saul eat a morsel of bread to strengthen himself, but at first he refused. At length he was persuaded to eat. Soberly Saul and his servants rose up and went their way in the night with the fears of the morrow pressing heavily upon them (28:21-25).

### **SAUL'S DEATH (1 Samuel 31).**

On the next day the battle raged and Israel fled before the Philistines. The Philistines were determined to secure victory by slaying the royal family of Israel: they "followed hard upon Saul and upon his three sons" (30:1-2). At length his three sons fell and he became the chief mark of the archers, and was sore wounded. Death was now very close to Saul. Rather than giving the "uncircumcised" the satisfaction of slaying or mocking him, he called upon his armour bearer to "thrust him through." When he refused, Saul took a sword and fell on it. The sight of his lord

slain upon the field of the battle, caused Saul's armour bearer to do likewise (30:36).

The news soon spread abroad bringing panic and despair to Israel, but rejoicing to the Philistines. They cut off Saul's head and paraded it among their peoples and the victory was attributed to their gods. His armour was put on display in the house of Ashtaroth while his headless body was fastened to the wall of Bethshan. How the glory of Israel was departed! Saul's defiance of God had brought shame upon the whole nation and the Name of Yahweh. How different was this day to the one in which faithful David had slain Goliath.

But not all Israel had fled. The valiant men of Jabesh Gilead, whom Saul in earlier days had saved from the Ammonites (1 Samuel 11), arose and recovered the bodies of Saul and his sons from the wall of Bethshan and gave them an honourable burial in Jabesh.

### **TIDINGS OF SAUL'S DEATH REACH DAVID (2 Samuel 1).**

Meanwhile David and his men returned from the Philistines to find Ziklag burned to the ground and all the people taken away captive. Despair overcame his men, but David strengthened himself in his God and all was recovered. Two days later a man wandered into his camp with clothes rent and earth on his head. On learning that he came from the camp of Israel, David immediately asked how the battle went. David sought news of the death of Saul and Jonathan. The Amalekite (which nation Saul was commanded to eradicate, 1 Samuel 15:3), told the story saying that he was responsible for finally killing Saul. He handed David Saul's crown and bracelet as evidence, obviously hoping to find favour of David. But David was smitten with sorrow not joy. He and his men "mourned and wept and fasted until even, for Saul and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the LORD, and for the house of Israel" (2 Samuel 1:1-12). The young man was slain for daring to "stretch forth his hand to destroy Yahweh's anointed."

David extolled Saul's prowess in war and remembered only his virtues. "Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives and in their death they were not divided; they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions." His final words relate to his beloved friend Jonathan and were filled with anguish and tenderness. He spoke as though Jonathan was yet alive, "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful passing the love of women." And then accepting the tragic reality, "How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished."

David's lamentation reveals the greatness and graciousness of his character, as well as where his allegiance lay. He felt the same for Israel personally. The Truth had been crushed before the enemy. There is a

lesson in this. We should avoid bringing shame upon the great name we bear. The people in the world should never be placed in the position of gloating over the faults of those who bear Christ's name.

### **LESSON FOR US:**

It was because Saul refused to obey the Word of God that he was forsaken and perished, so bringing shame upon himself and Israel. Had he allowed the will of God to be his guide, this would not have happened. In the hour of his greatest need, God had departed from him (1 Samuel 29:16). If we draw near to God, He will draw near to us (James 4:8). There is no better time than youth to learn to trust and obey God. Then the mind is unclouded with evil thoughts and habits and readily receives the impressions of the Word. Thus the foundations for a life of godliness and self denial, are firmly laid. Then our heavenly Father will not depart from us in the hour of our greatest need, but rather draw near and bestow the crown of life (2 Timothy 4:8).

David's lamentation for both Saul and Jonathan reveals a lovely quality about David's character. We should seek to follow that same love and tender feeling for our loved ones in the truth, even towards those who dislike or even hate us. We should always be on the alert to see the best in people, always ready to respond to a repentant, godly attitude and to feel genuinely sorry for any hardship or tragedy they may experience. We should also note the deep and abiding friendship between David and Jonathan. Such friendships in the Truth will strengthen our faith in times of trouble.

### **REFERENCE LIBRARY:**

- "The Ways of Providence" (R. Roberts)—Chapter 16
- "The Visible Hand of God" (R. Roberts)—Chapter 23
- "The Story of the Bible" (H. P. Mansfield)—Vol. 3, No. 11
- "The Man David" (H. Tennant)— Pp. 67-87

### **PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:**

1. *Why was Saul's visit to the witch of Endor wrong and hypocritical?*
2. *What was so tragic about the death of Saul and his sons on Mount Gilboa?*
3. *What was David's reaction to hearing the news of the death of Saul and Jonathan? What lesson can we learn from David's attitude at this time?*

### **ESSAY QUESTIONS:**

1. *Tell the story of Saul's visit to the witch of Endor.*
2. *Give an account of David's thoughts and actions when he heard that Saul and Israel had been defeated by the Philistines.*

## 24. DAVID — THE KING

“Then came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron”

*In this lesson we have to consider the slow but sure progress of divine plans, and the faith and patience required of those subject to them. Many years had passed since David had been anointed by Samuel as King over the whole house of Israel. We might imagine that the anointing meant David would immediately be placed on the throne. Instead of that, David the shepherd next became the popular head of the army, then the king's son-in-law, next an exile under royal disfavour, next a mountain chieftain, next a fighter with the Philistines, then the accepted monarch of a small section of the Kingdom of Israel before the full development of the divine purpose was reached.*

*We learn the lesson that God knows when it is necessary to move quickly and when it is necessary to develop His plans more slowly. David's patience was tried and David's faith was rewarded. "David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker," until at last the Kingdom of Saul collapsed and David's authority was established in all the land. The principle has not changed with the passing of time. "Tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience, and experience, hope" (Romans 5:3, 4). "Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake, but he that endureth unto the end shall be saved" (Matthew 10:22). A place in the same throne as David occupied is offered to the faithful, by the King who shall reign on it forever, "To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my throne" (Revelation 3:21; Luke 1:32).*

### 2 Samuel 2-5

#### DAVID, KING OVER JUDAH IN HEBRON (2 Samuel 2:1-7).

David took Saul's death as a sign that the time had come to take the throne (cp. 1 Samuel 26:10). Even so he did not take matters into his own hands, but enquired of God, "Shall I go up unto any of the cities of Judah?" Having received an answer of God he and his men went up to the cities of Hebron, where they dwelt. Israel was without a king and the nation was in a state of confusion. On hearing that David had returned from exile and knowing God's promise to him, the men of Judah anointed him king over Judah (2 Samuel 2:1-4).

David considered at what point of time would all Israel be gathered to him? When he learned that the men of Jabesh-gilead were responsible for giving Saul an honourable burial, he blessed them in the name of God. He also reminded them that Saul was dead and that he was now King in Judah. Plainly he was implying that they should take the lead and join

forces with him. But this was not to be at that stage.

### **DIVISION IN ISRAEL (2 Samuel 2:8-32; 3:1).**

Abner, Saul's uncle, forestalled David's hopes of uniting Israel by installing Ishbosheth, Saul's son, upon the throne. Abner had been Saul's captain and he was a powerful figure in Israel's politics. Civil war broke out between both houses of Israel. Joab, the son of Zeruiah, led the servants of David, and Abner, the servants of Ishbosheth. Both sides faced each other about the pool in Gibeon and a token force of 12 men from each group clashed but all perished in the fight that followed. How tragic and futile was this strife between brethren!

In the major battle that followed, Abner's men were put to flight. Asahel, Joab's youngest brother, pursued after Abner. Ignoring Abner's repeated warnings to turn aside, Asahel perished by the skilful spear of the older soldier. Joab and Abishai set off in vengeful pursuit of Abner and his host into the wilderness of Gibeon. There Abner received help from the Benjamites and the battle was stopped. Abner called out to Joab from his vantage point, reminding him that they were brethren and that the sword could only produce bitterness in the latter end. Joab accepted the plea for peace and withdrew his army.

### **DAVID WAXES STRONGER AND ISHBOSHETH WEAKER (2 Samuel 3)**

The strength of David's position as king in Hebron continued to grow and six sons were born to him during the 7 years in Hebron (3:1-5). But in the house of Saul there was division. Abner had taken Rizpah, Saul's concubine, and when Ishbosheth, charged him with a fault concerning the woman, his pride was offended and he vowed to pass the northern kingdom into the hands of David. He also declared that in this he would be doing the will of God who had sworn to give David the throne over Israel from Dan to Beersheba (3:6-11). But David refused to make an agreement with him until his wife Michal was restored to him (3:12-16).

Abner conferred with the elders of Israel and later the Benjamites. They were pleased with his decision to transfer the northern kingdom into the hands of David. David received Abner and his men with festivity and they were sent away in peace with the purpose of uniting Israel under David (3:17-21).

But Joab had other ideas. At the time of the agreement he was away fighting the King's battles. When he heard what had happened he rebuked David for making an alliance with his enemies. Unbeknown to David he sent for Abner, who did not suspect his malicious intentions and as a result perished by Joab's deceitful plan. Joab had taken his revenge for the death of his brother Asahel. But God has declared, "Vengeance is



mine I will repay.” At a future time, in the wisdom of God, Joab too, would become the victim of the sword because of his treachery (1 Kings 2:28-34).

Joab’s action was foolish indeed. Israel was about to unite under David. David pronounced a bitter curse upon the house of Joab and wisely made it plain that he disapproved of Joab’s action and was not party to it. He caused the people to rend their clothes and he personally accompanied the bier. He made a public lamentation over Abner, extolled his virtues, and refused to eat till the sun went down. David was a king with a wise and understanding heart and his actions showed his largeness of heart. His people were impressed and pleased.

### **ISRAEL CONFUSED.**

Upon hearing the news of Abner’s death, Ishbosheth’s “courage failed” (R.S.V. 4:1) and Israel was confused. Two brothers, Rechab and Baanah, slew Ishbosheth while he slept on his bed, and brought his head to David as the evidence that the day of God’s vengeance upon the house of Saul had come. David did not condone this murderous act. Ishbosheth had actually been forward in returning Michal to David (3:15) and had no doubt that the Kingdom would have been transferred to David peaceably. David was troubled and not jubilant and the two men were swiftly slain and hung over the pool at Hebron as a public witness that King David was a just man, believing the law of his God, “Thou shalt not kill,” and would not tolerate iniquity (4:5-12). Their hands and feet were cut off, for “hands that shed innocent blood. . . and feet that be swift in running to mischief” are an “abomination” to Yahweh (Proverbs 6:16-18). How severe will be the judgments of God upon this world for its violence and crimes.

### **ISRAEL AND JUDAH UNITED UNDER THE ANOINTED (2 Samuel 5:1-10).**

The need for David’s firm but merciful rulership became vital. All the tribes rallied to David in Hebron and came and willingly offered allegiance. They pleaded 3 points—

1. “we are bone of thy bone;
2. also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel,
3. and Yahweh said to thee thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be captain over Israel” (5:1-2).

with such ready support expressed, a covenant was made and David was anointed King over Israel. He was 30 when anointed King over Judah. Now seven and a half years later he was made king over all Israel and his reign extended over 40 years (5:1-5). Thus God’s word of promise came to pass in a remarkable way — without David presuming to grasp

power. Truly God could later say, “I gave thee the house of Israel and Judah” (2 Samuel 12:8).

David next took the city of Jerusalem from the hands of the Gentiles. Jerusalem (or Jebus) was situated in Benjamin on the border with Judah and so it was an appropriate place for him to use as the city from which to reign over all the tribes. The nation of Israel was now about to move into the most glorious period of its history. The Philistines challenged David and they were soundly beaten in battle on two successive occasions with God’s assistance. Other military campaigns followed to secure his borders from enemies and to extend his territories on all sides — Syria in the north, Edom, Moab and Ammon in the south and east.

David also installed the ark in Jerusalem, making it the centre of worship.

So the real purpose of the Kingdom was being fulfilled and all the people were united with God in fellowship, in worship and praise (2 Samuel 6:17-19) and His glory filled the land.

#### **LESSON FOR US:**

David’s troubles appeared to be at their greatest when he returned to Ziklag to find it burnt with fire and all the families missing. Yet at this distressing time his long exile was nearing its end. He had waited patiently for God to act and in the process of time Saul was removed along with the other obstacles which lay in the path to the throne. Like David we are to be tried by affliction and problems that will try our patience. Now is not the day of our exaltation and glory. Sacrifice and self-denial are required now in order that we can develop a character pleasing to God. Then in His good time He will establish His Kingdom and if we have been faithful (like David) then glory, honour and immortality will be granted unto us.

#### **REFERENCE LIBRARY:**

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- “The Story of the Bible” (H. P. Mansfield)—Vol. 3, No. 12
- “The Man David” (H. Tennant)—Pp. 88-105

#### **PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:**

1. *Show how God gave Judah and Israel to David.*
2. *What was David’s reaction to the death of Ishbosheth?*
3. *Describe Israel’s support for David at Hebron.*

#### **ESSAY QUESTIONS:**

1. *David had to patiently wait for many years before he was made king over all Israel and Judah. How was his character developed in those years? What lessons can we learn from this?*
2. *Describe the character of David as shown in his reaction to the deaths of Abner and Ishbosheth.*

## 25. GOD'S PROMISE TO DAVID

**“I will stablish the throne of his Kingdom for ever”**

*This promise to David is the 3rd of the three great “Seed” Covenants.*

*The first—was the covenant in Eden recorded in Genesis 3:15. In this promise the “seed” of the woman is spoken of as the one who would redeem mankind from sin. Therefore it is styled the covenant of “Redemption”.*

*The second—was the covenant made to Abraham in which his “seed” is promised eternal inheritance in the land, not only to Abraham but to all those who have the faith of Abraham. This is the promise of “Inheritance”.*

*The third is the covenant made to David which we are about to study. In this promise the “seed” is shown as offering positions of royal authority to those who are of the “House of David”. He is revealed as the one who will rule upon David’s throne forever. This is the covenant of “Authority”.*

*All of these covenants find their fulfilment in Jesus Christ. He is the seed of the woman (Luke 1:30-33; Galatians 4:4) who is also the son of Abraham (Galatians 3:16) and son of David (Matthew 1:1; Luke 1:31-33; Romans 1:3). How essential it is then, that we understand the three covenants and what they mean to each one of us personally.*

### 2 Samuel 7

#### DAVID'S DESIRE.

David was very conscious of the fact that while he dwelt in a House of Cedar, the Ark, the token of God’s presence among the nation, dwelt only in a tent (tabernacle) (2 Samuel 7:1-2). He desired therefore to build an house for God (v. 3). But God intervened. Through Nathan the prophet God told David that he was not to build God a house. Instead, God said “I will build thee (David) a House” (v. 11). This is the key to the promise which follows. God is not so much speaking of a literal house, for David already had one. This is mainly speaking of a house of “living stones” (1 Peter 2:5; Ephesians 2:19-22) — a place for God to “dwell in”. It will be a royal “house” made up of rulers. These being the glorified saints of the kingdom of Christ.

#### THE PROMISE.

##### 1. A Great Name in the Future for David—Verse 9.

“I have made thee a great name”. Most translations put this phrase in the future tense “I will make” e.g., R.V., R.S.V., Roth. So then it is in the kingdom age that David will be exalted and all men will praise him.

## **2. Israel is to enjoy a Glorious Future—Verse 10.**

It is interesting to note the future tense of this verse which indicates that Israel would yet be scattered before God finally restores them to their land to be moved no more. This has never yet been fulfilled. David would have noted the contrast with the settled and prosperous conditions that his kingdom was then experiencing. Here God is warning of a future scattering of Israel before a final gathering and settling down under the rule of the Lord Jesus Christ.

## **3. There is to be a Glorious Multitudinous Seed or House—Verse 11.**

David was greatly moved as he contemplated this aspect of the promise. He realised what a great honour God was bestowing upon him and he realised his own unworthiness to receive such honour. What a moving prayer of gratitude and thanksgiving is in these verses (vv. 25-29).

God will build David both a spiritual and literal house. The spiritual house will be comprised of persons (Hebrews 3:1-6; Eph. 2:19-22; 1 Pet. 2:5; 2 Cor. 6:16) and the literal house is the Temple described by Ezekiel, to which in the kingdom age all nations will flow (Ezekiel 40:48; Isaiah 2:23). See note 4.

## **4. The Establishment of the Throne and Kingdom Forever—Vv.12-13.**

This is carefully stated to be after David's death indicating that Solomon was not the one spoken of. Although there was a partial fulfilment in Solomon as recorded in 1 Chronicles 22:9-10).

The literal throne will be established in God's house, which will be a magnificent temple, 1 mile square (see note 3). It is called by Isaiah "an house of prayer for all people" (Isaiah 56:7), which will be built by Gentiles under the supervision of Christ (Isaiah 60:7-13). Jesus too, made mention of this glorious house (Matthew 21:12-13; Mark 11:17). What a magnificent building the Temple will be, a fitting place from which the glory of Yahweh shall radiate out to fill the whole earth.

## **5. David's Seed would also be God's Son—V.14.**

Only Jesus can fulfill the terms of this verse. The angel Gabriel told Mary that Jesus would be "the son of the Highest and the Lord God would give unto him the throne of his father David" (Luke 1:30-33). David's seed, by his birth of Mary, would be Son of Man as well as Son of God and able to bear the iniquity of those he came to save. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5).

## **6. David would have a Personal Resurrection from the Grave—Vv.15-16**

David would witness the fulfilment of this promise which would be established forever "before him" i.e. after his own resurrection th

kingdom will be handed over to Christ in the presence of David and all the worthies of old. Verse 15 indicates that God's mercy would stay with David's seed and bring him from the grave (see Psalm 16, Acts 2:25-31; Isaiah 55:3 and Acts 13:34). God would then be able to save to the uttermost all those who like David, come unto him in faith.

### **BASIC DOCTRINE OF THE DAVIDIC COVENANT — RESURRECTION.**

God gave the promise knowing that the resurrection would be essential for its fulfilment (just as He gave promises to Abraham which required the resurrection);

1. The promised king was to be David's son and hence a mortal man and yet his throne was to be established **forever**. How? Through the resurrection. David worked this out and spoke accordingly in Psalm 16:8-11. Peter and Paul both explain that this psalm teaches the resurrection of the Christ (Acts 2:24-31; 13:35-37).
2. David is told that he will die ("sleep with his fathers"), but he is also informed that his son will reign forever "before him" or in his presence. The question arises — how? Besides appreciating that his seed would have to be a resurrected man, he realised that he, too, would have to be raised if he were to witness Christ's kingdom: "Thou . . . shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth" (Psa. 71:20-21).

### **SEALED BY DIVINE OATH.**

Another important feature of the promise to David is God's oath confirming it: "The LORD hath sworn in truth unto David; he will not turn from it" (Psa. 132:11). Like the Abrahamic covenant, the promise to David is irrevocable and unchangeable (Psa. 89:3-4, 34-36; Jer. 33:20-26; cp. Luke 1:69-74).

### **A NATIONAL HOPE.**

The promise to David has become the basis of the hope of Israel. Although the throne was overturned in the days of Zedekiah, a promise was given to that wicked king which is important (see Ezekiel 21:25-27). In this passage in Ezekiel it is stated that there is one to come "whose right it is" and God "will give it him". This speaks of Jesus who is coming to sit on David's throne in Jerusalem to fulfil the words of so many scriptures (cp. Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Luke 1:30-33; Romans 1:3-4; Revelation 3:7).

### LESSON FOR US:

God selected David to be the recipient of this promise because "he was a man after God's own heart" and because he was so much like the Son of God in character.

David will be blessed to be in the kingdom helping the Lord Jesus Christ rule the world (Hebrews 11:32), and so too will all the faithful whom Jesus will glorify at his coming. Like David we should be humbled to realise that God has so graciously called us out of the millions on this earth. We should be over-awed at this opportunity to be part of that wonderful company of people: part of the spiritual house of David.

Jesus is styled "son of David" and perfectly revealed the character of David. We too must learn to be more like David who maintained his faith in times of bitter persecution from Saul as also in times of greatness as king over Israel. We must develop his frame of mind which wondered at God's goodness toward him, and strove to make himself worthy of it.

### REFERENCE LIBRARY:

- "The Ways of Providence" (R. Roberts)—Chapter 17
- "Elpis Israel" (J. Thomas)—Pp. 302-307
- "Christendom Astray" (R. Roberts)—Pp. 197-212
- "The Story of the Bible" (H. P. Mansfield)—Vol. 4, Pp. 20-29
- "The Man David" (H. Tennant)—Pp. 119-124
- "First Principles Bible Marking Course" C.S.S.S., Pp. 63-66

### PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:

1. *God told David that He would build him an house. Explain the two-fold meaning in this promise.*
2. *In God's promise to David what details are given of Israel's future?*
3. *Show how resurrection is basic to the fulfilment of the Davidic covenant.*

### ESSAY QUESTIONS:

1. *Explain how the covenant made to David refers to Jesus Christ.*
2. *List four aspects of the promise made to David and explain their fulfilment.*

## DAVID A TYPE OF CHRIST

In many ways the accession of David to the throne was typical of the Lord Jesus Christ.

	DAVID	CHRIST
1. Both were shepherds— David literally and Jesus shepherded the people.	Psa. 78:70-72	Matt. 26:31
2. Both were exiled and rejected by their countrymen.	1 Sam. 26:19	John 11:53-54; Isa. 53:3
3. Both were honoured and loved for their integrity and righteousness and were followed by men.	1 Sam. 18	Mark 3:7-9
4. Both were promised the throne of Israel.	1 Sam. 16:1, 13	Luke 1:30-33
5. The Lord Jesus will, like David, save Judah first.	2 Sam. 2:1-4	Zech. 12:7
6. The Lord Jesus, will, like David, unite both houses of Israel.	2 Sam. 5:3	Ezek. 37:22
7. Like David, Christ will redeem Jerusalem from the treading down of the Gentiles (Jebus = "trodden down", Young) and rule therefrom.	2 Sam. 5:7	Luke 21:24; Jer. 3:17; Joel 3:16

