

Tapes For Growing Christians

Study Guide for

I Kings

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lesson 1

The Record of David's Declining Years, and the Plot of His Son Adonijah to Take Over the Throne; The Plan of Bathsheba and Nathan the Prophet to Have Solomon Installed As the Rightful King 1 Kings 1:1-31

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. "Spare the rod and spoil the child."
2. "Ask, and you shall receive."

practical application

1. Are you a Joab or a Benaiah?

questions

1. Who is the human author of 1 Kings?
2. What is the purpose of 1 Kings?
3. What was happening in 1 Kings 1:1-31? Summarize the story.
4. What are two lessons that can be drawn from this account?

answers

1. The author is unknown, but probably it was either Ezra, Ezekiel, or Jeremiah. Jewish tradition goes with Jeremiah as the author.
2. The purpose is not just to teach the facts of history, but to teach the lessons of history as well.
3. King David was advanced in years and not well, so he needed to name his successor. Unknown to King David, his son Adonijah exalted himself, preparing to take over the throne. Adonijah aligned some of his father's top men to help him in this endeavor. However, Nathan, David's prophet, went to David's wife Bathsheba to counter this plot and give the throne to Solomon, whom David previously had vowed would be his successor.
4. Two of the lessons are given as the doctrinal / teaching points: "Spare the rod and spoil the child" and "Ask, and you shall receive."

discuss / consider

1. The key verse in this section is, "His father had not rebuked him at any time." (1 Kings 1:6) David was a great king, but he was not always the greatest father. He had failed to discipline his son Absalom, who committed treason against his father (see 2 Samuel 15), and he had failed to discipline his son Adonijah, who was plotting to take over his father's throne. By their self-exaltation and charisma, both sons gained support from some of David's trusted men. The problem? The sons had never been disciplined. The same is true today, "He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly (early)." (Proverbs 13:24). In other words, "Spare the rod and spoil the child." Children must be disciplined or there will be bad consequences in the future. Are you disciplining your children because you love them, or are you encouraging self-centeredness to the point that they will be disrespectful of others, including you?
2. Adonijah and his supporters were conducting sacrifices and holding a feast and people were proclaiming, "Long live King Adonijah!" It was at this point that Nathan the prophet went to Bathsheba to remind her of King David's vow that Solomon would be his successor. Bathsheba made request to King David to make Solomon the next king. Her request was based on King David's word. As believers, we need to come to our Lord and King Jesus, making requests based on His word. How well do you know the word of God? When you make a request to the Lord, are you sure that your request is based on His word? The principle, "Ask, and you shall receive," comes from our Lord's words in Matthew 7:7.

challenge

1. Joab and Benaiah were both military men who served David. Both had performed mighty deeds. (Read about Joab in 2 Samuel 8:16;10:7-19; 20:23). But when Adonijah declared himself king, Joab forsook David and changed his allegiance to Adonijah. His reasoning was, "What's in it for me?" On the other hand, Benaiah remained loyal and faithful to David. (Read about his mighty deeds in 2 Samuel 23:20-22). When it looked like Adonijah was going to become the next king, Benaiah never wavered. His allegiance was with David, who was still the rightful king. What about your allegiance to the Lord? When times are tough and the crowd is moving in the opposite direction, where is your allegiance? Are you a Joab or a Benaiah?

memorize

- "...Adonijah...exalted himself, saying, 'I will be king...' 1 Kings 1:5
"...his father had not rebuked him at any time..." 1 Kings 1:6
"Assuredly Solomon your son shall be king after me, and he shall sit on my throne in my place." 1 Kings 1:30

lesson 2

The Anointing of Solomon As King Over All Israel, Thus Thwarting the Plans of Adonijah to Become King 1 Kings 1:32-53

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Solomon is a picture of Christ as the rightful king.
2. Solomon is a picture of Christ as the righteous judge.

practical application

1. Do you discern what is really good news?

questions

1. What was Adonijah plotting?
2. Who joined Adonijah's plot and why?
3. Who thwarted Adonijah's plans? How?
4. What was the tabernacle in Jerusalem? Where was the regular tabernacle at this time?
5. What happened when the plans of Adonijah and his friends were thwarted?
6. What is meant by "type"?

answers

1. Adonijah, one of the sons of King David, was plotting to take over the throne when the king died.
2. A number of David's royal servants, including Joab, a military leader and Abiathar the priest, because they thought that Adonijah would be the next king of Israel.
3. Nathan the prophet went to Bathsheba, David's wife and reminded her of King David's vow that Solomon, Bathsheba's son, would be his successor. In turn, Bathsheba reminded the king of his vow. Then King David called for Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah a military commander, to confirm that Solomon should be anointed and set on the throne as king.
4. The tabernacle or sacred tent at Jerusalem was the temporary shelter that David had erected for the ark of the covenant. The regular tabernacle was still at Gibeon.
5. When Adonijah realized what was going on he was afraid of Solomon, so he went and took hold of the horns of the altar, which was an acknowledgment of guilt and a cry for mercy. All the guests who were with him were afraid and each one went his way, leaving Adonijah alone. They knew that the king had the right to put to death all those who had conspired against David to take the throne without his blessing.
6. A "type" (or picture) is an Old Testament person, place, event, or other item which illustrates a New Testament truth.

discuss / consider

1. Solomon is a picture of Christ as the rightful king. Adonijah was not David's choice or God's choice. Solomon was God's choice. See 1 Chronicles 22:6-10. Solomon is a picture of the rightful king and it was the responsibility of the people to recognize him as such.

The lesson for us? Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the anointed one, chosen by God to be your rightful king. Just as it was the responsibility of the people to recognize Solomon as the rightful king, it is our responsibility to recognize Christ as the rightful king. Question: Do you recognize the Lord Jesus Christ as your rightful king? Or, is some Adonijah stealing your affections and allegiance? Adonijah could represent any person or any thing that is taking the place of the rightful king in your life.

2. When Adonijah realized that his conspiracy had failed, he fled to the brazen altar. He grabbed the horns of the altar as an acknowledgement of guilt and a cry for mercy. See Exodus 21:14. Solomon as king had the right to put Adonijah to death because he conspired against David to take the throne without his blessing. It was up to Solomon to show righteous judgment, and at this point Adonijah was shown mercy rather than being executed. Jesus Christ is the righteous judge. We all deserve to die because of our sin against God, but we have been shown mercy and have been given a chance to submit to King Jesus, the righteous judge. Have you submitted to the Lord Jesus Christ, the merciful king and the righteous judge? If so, you have received mercy. If not, judgment awaits you in the future.

challenge

1. Jonathan brought the news to Adonijah that Solomon was the new king. Was it good news? Not for Adonijah and his crowd. But it was good news because Solomon was God's choice for king, and Solomon became one of the great kings of Israel. Do you discern what is really good news? If prayer was allowed back into the classroom in this country, some people would say that it was bad news, but it's really good news. If abortion were to be banned in this country, some people would say that it's bad news, but it's really good news. Do you discern what is really good news?

memorize

"King David said to Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah, 'Take with you the servants of your lord, and have Solomon my son ride on my own mule...anoint him king over Israel' 1 Kings 1:32-34
"...all the people said, 'Long live King Solomon!'... the people rejoiced with great joy." 1 Kings 1:39-40
"Adonijah was afraid of Solomon; so he arose, and went and took hold of the horns of the altar." 1 Kings 1:50

lesson 3

King David's Final Charge to His Son Solomon, the New King of Israel and the Record of the Death of King David 1 Kings 2:1-12

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Good parents give wise counsel to their children.
2. David was a man after God's own heart.

practical application

1. Let's not forget to reward kindness.

questions

1. Three kings ruled the United Kingdom of Israel. Name these three kings.
2. David started out as king in Hebron. Why didn't he stay there?
3. How long did David reign as king?
4. How old was David when he died?
5. Before David died, he gave some sound advice to his son Solomon, the new king of Israel. Name the two themes of this wise counsel.
6. Why wasn't David considered the greatest father? When was he considered to be a good father?
7. David warned Solomon to beware of two men. Who were these two men?

answers

1. Saul, David, and Solomon.
2. Jerusalem was more central than Hebron, and Jerusalem was more easily defended in time of war. It was a diplomatic and wise move on the part of David.
3. David, Saul, and Solomon reigned for forty years each.
4. David was 70 years old when he died. See 2 Samuel 5:4 and 1 Kings 2:10-11.
5. The themes were “a walk” and “a warning.” Solomon was to walk before the Lord and be aware of certain individuals who could cause trouble for him in the future.
6. David wasn’t the greatest father because he failed to discipline his sons Absalom and Adonijah. David was a good father when he gave wise counsel to his son Solomon.
7. Joab, who had served as David’s military commander, and Shimei, who had cursed David.

discuss / consider

1. When Solomon was to succeed David as king, David counseled him about two things: 1) to walk before the Lord (to keep His ways, to put the Lord first in his life), and 2) to beware of certain people who had proved themselves to cause problems. Parents today need to counsel their children to put the Lord first in their lives, and they must warn them about certain people to avoid. Counsel concerning priorities and counsel concerning potential problems is wise counsel. Have you counseled your children in this way?
2. David had committed some terrible sins against the Lord, yet God in His grace looked at the overall life of David and saw a man with a heart for God. See Acts 13:22. Yes, David reaped what he had sown, but God saw the repentant attitude of his heart. There is a good lesson here for us, for we, too, can be men and women after God’s own heart, even though we have sinned. How’s your heart attitude toward God?

challenge

1. David said to Solomon, “Show kindness to the sons of Barzillai.” Read 1 Kings 2:7 and 2 Samuel 17:27-29. How have you shown kindness to those who have shown kindness to you?

memorize

“Keep the charge of the Lord your God to walk in His ways.” 1 Kings 2:3

“Show kindness to the sons of Barzillai...” 1 Kings 2:7

“So David rested with his fathers...then Solomon sat on the throne of his father David.” 1 Kings 2:10-12

lesson 4

The Record of King Solomon's Righteous Purge of All Opposition to the Throne of the Rightful King 1 Kings 2:13-46

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The kingdom of Christ will be established with righteous judgment.
2. The kingdom of Christ will be established in peace.

practical application

1. You cannot know peace in your heart if there is opposition to Christ in your life.

questions

1. When Solomon became king, he had two men executed. Who were they and why were they executed?
2. King Solomon did the right thing in bringing evil doers to justice. Is there a parallel here for today?
3. Why did Adonijah ask for permission to marry Abishag?
4. What was the response to Adonijah's request?
5. King Solomon replaced two traitors. Name them and their replacements.
6. Why did King Solomon show mercy to Shimei, a man who had cursed David? Why did King Solomon later execute Shimei?

answers

1. The two men were Joab and Shimei. Each was guilty of a crime that was punishable by death.
2. Yes. Civil authorities today must deal with wickedness and evil in righteous judgment. Guilty people must be brought to justice. Romans 13:4.
3. Adonijah was making another move to take over the throne. Abishag had been David's concubine. In that culture a king's harem was considered the property of the king, and was passed on to the next king. By obtaining Abishag as a wife, Adonijah would then have two claims to the throne: 1) he was the older brother of Solomon and 2) he would be married to one of the women of King David's harem.
4. King Solomon saw through Adonijah's scheme and brought this traitor to justice.
5. Abiathar the priest was replaced by Zadok, and Joab the military commander was replaced by Benaiah.
6. He showed mercy because his father David had shown mercy to him. Solomon gave Shimei an opportunity to prove his loyalty and live. However, Shimei disobeyed the restrictions of the royal edict, so he forfeited his life.

discuss / consider

1. Upon viewing Solomon's vast and wealthy kingdom, the Queen of Sheba exclaimed, "...indeed, the half was not told me." (1 Kings 10:7). King Solomon is a type of Christ, especially of Christ in His glorious kingdom. When believers view Christ's kingdom in a coming day, so will they say, "The half has not been told." Just as Solomon's glorious kingdom began and was established in righteous judgment, so the earthly kingdom of our Lord will be established in righteous judgment when He returns.
2. Solomon's reign was characterized by peace. When Christ returns and sets up His kingdom on this earth, there will be a time of great peace. As the kingdom of Solomon was established in peace, so the kingdom of Christ will be established in peace, a peace unparalleled. Doesn't this comfort your heart to know God's plan for the future?

memorize

"Solomon removed [Abiathar] from being priest to the Lord, that he might fulfill the word of the Lord." 1 Kings 2:27

"Thus the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon." 1 Kings 2:46

"...indeed, the half was not told me." 1 Kings 10:7

lesson 5

**King Solomon's Request for Wisdom,
and a Demonstration of that Wisdom in a Wise Decision that King Solomon Made
as the New King
1 Kings 3:1-28**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The wisdom of God is available upon request.
2. The wisdom of God always does the right thing.

practical application

1. Count your many blessings, name them one by one.

questions

1. Which king was well known for his wisdom?
2. Where did his wisdom come from?
3. The Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "Ask! What shall I give you?" What did Solomon ask for?
4. Did the Lord grant Solomon's request?
5. Why did Solomon marry an Egyptian princess? What was the fall-out?
6. What were the high places in Israel?
7. Where were the tabernacle and the brazen altar located? Where did Solomon go to sacrifice to the Lord?

answers

1. King Solomon.
2. It was a gift from the Lord.
3. Solomon said, “Give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people.” (1 Kings 3:9)
4. Yes, and more. God said, “I have given you a wise and understanding heart...and I have also given you what you have not asked: both riches and honor...” (1 Kings 3:12-13)
5. For political reasons, Solomon married her. It was not a good decision with reference to Solomon’s walk with the Lord. The Law of God said that Hebrews were not to intermarry with those of foreign pagan cultures, because the false religions would creep into Israel and steal the hearts of the people from the Lord. And that is what happened.
6. The high places were the hilltops where people offered sacrifices to the Lord.
7. The tabernacle and the brazen altar were at the great high place at Gibeon, about six miles northwest of Jerusalem. Solomon went to sacrifice to the Lord at Gibeon, the true altar of the Lord.

discuss / consider

1. At Gibeon, the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night. The Lord said to Solomon, “Ask! What shall I give you?” (1 Kings 3:5). Solomon answered, “Give to your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people” (1 Kings 3:9). Solomon’s request pleased the Lord and he gave Solomon not only what he asked for, but much more. What would you have asked for if you were Solomon? The Lord is pleased when we ask for wisdom. The wisdom of God is available upon request. See James 1:5. If we come to the Lord by faith and ask for wisdom in reference to any situation we are facing, the Lord will give wisdom. How often do you ask the Lord for wisdom instead of trying to solve a problem in your own strength? Seek wisdom!
2. Re-read 1 Kings 3:16-28. What a great Bible story! This is given as one example of Solomon’s wisdom from the Lord. What would you have done if you had been in Solomon’s shoes? Recall examples from your life when you asked wisdom from the Lord and He answered your prayer. There is a way by which we can tell when wisdom is from the Lord. Read James 3:17.

challenge

1. When Solomon asked for wisdom, the Lord was pleased and He gave Solomon not only wisdom, but much more. The same is true for believers today. The Lord gives us more than we ask for. See Romans 8:31-32. Take time out to count your many blessings!

memorize

- “Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of his father David, except...” 1 Kings 3:3
“Give to Your servant an understanding heart to discern between good and evil.” 1 Kings 3:9
“When all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had rendered... they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to administer justice.” 1 Kings 3:28

lesson 6

A Record of Solomon's Administration and a Description of His Prosperity and Wisdom 1 Kings 4:1-34

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The kingdom of Solomon pictures the kingdom of Christ.
2. The wisdom of Solomon pictures the wisdom of Christ.

practical application

1. Examine your biblical role models in the light of all scripture.

questions

1. Where can you find a list of King Solomon's officials? What types of officials did he have?
2. Who was Zabud?
3. How many proverbs did Solomon speak? How many songs?
4. Name the boundaries of Solomon's vast kingdom.
5. God gave Solomon the opportunity to ask of Him anything his heart desired. What was his request? Why did he make this request?
6. Did God grant Solomon's request?

answers

1. 1 Kings 4:1-7 lists King Solomon's officials. They were his priest, scribes, a recorder, supervisor over the officers, head of the household, overseer of the work force and governors.
2. The king's priest and friend.
3. 3,000 proverbs and 1,005 songs
4. From the River Euphrates to the borders of Egypt.
5. Solomon asked for wisdom and understanding in order to be a good and godly ruler over God's people.
6. Yes, and more. God gave Solomon wealth and honor as well as wisdom and understanding.

discuss / consider

1. Both King David and King Solomon typify or picture the greatest king yet to come the greater son of King David and King Solomon, our Lord Jesus Christ. Solomon and his kingdom picture Christ and His future millennial kingdom here on earth. It will be a kingdom of peace, harmony, and prosperity. Compare 1 Kings 4:20-25. Solomon had a vast kingdom, from Dan to Beersheba. Our Lord will rule over the whole earth. See Psalm 2:8. Just as Solomon's kingdom was well organized with designated responsibilities, so the kingdom of our Lord will be well organized and every believer will have a designated responsibility. See Revelation 20. Are you ready for your responsibility when you will reign with Christ?

2. The kingdom of Solomon was not only peaceful and prosperous, but there was a moral glory associated with it because of the wisdom of Solomon. Wisdom involves moral discernment. Because of his God-given wisdom, Solomon was not only well organized and efficient in his delegation of authority, but he also applied moral discernment to all aspects of his kingdom. See 1 Kings 4:29-31. Thus Solomon brought a moral glory to his kingdom.

challenge

1. God gives us a lot of godly role models to follow throughout the Bible, but no human role model is perfect. Only Christ is the perfect model. We note Solomon as a good role model, but we also read about his temptations and downfalls. It is not improper to set up biblical models, but be aware of their shortcomings.
2. Read the book of Proverbs to appreciate Solomon's God-given wisdom and moral discernment. Read also 1 Corinthians 1:30 and Colossians 2:3. One day the wisdom of Christ will be fully seen and appreciated. How great is your appreciation of Christ's wisdom right now?

memorize

"Judah and Israel dwelt safely, each man under his vine and fig tree, from Dan as far as Beersheba, all the days of Solomon." 1 Kings 4:25

"God gave Solomon wisdom and exceedingly great understanding, and largeness of heart."

1 Kings 4:29

"Solomon spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were 1005." 1 Kings 4:32

lesson 7

King Solomon's Preparations for Building the Temple 1 Kings 5:1-18

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God will provide the right people for His work.
2. God will provide the right material for His work.

practical application

1. Do you know the Lord as Jehovah Jirah?

questions

1. Why would God refuse King David's request to build the temple?
2. What preparations did David make for the building of the temple?
3. Was the building of the temple David's idea alone?
4. Should the glory for building the temple belong to Solomon?
5. God provided plans and materials for the temple. What else did God do in preparation for the work?
6. Who were the Gebalites?

answers

1. Because David was a man of war, and God wanted the country to be at peace when the temple was built.
2. David had already brought the ark of the covenant up to Jerusalem, and he had already given his son Solomon the plans and material for the temple. See 1 Chronicles 28:11-19.
3. No. God had given David the plans for the temple. It was God's work.
4. No. The building of this great temple brought fame to Solomon, but this work was for the glory of God.
5. God had arranged that there would be a good relationship between Solomon and King Hiram of Tyre.
6. They were Gentiles from Northern Phoenicia who helped in the building of the temple.

discuss / consider

1. Just when Solomon needed some help to get the temple project going, God provided Hiram. Hiram was just the right person to help Solomon at this point. Hiram had known and loved King David, and this good relationship continued between Hiram and Solomon. Hiram had the knowledge and the means to help Solomon build the house of the Lord. Read in 2 Chronicles 2:11-14 how Hiram sent skillful men and master craftsmen to help Solomon build the house of the Lord. God will provide the right people for His work. Just as the Lord provided Hiram for Solomon and the temple project in that day, so the Lord will provide the right people to help you in the work of the Lord now. Wait on the Lord. He will provide.
2. Not only did the Lord provide the right people for Solomon, He also provided the needed material. Hiram supplied the cedar and cypress wood for the building of the temple. God will do the same for us today. Are you in some ministry or some project for the Lord? If it is really of the Lord and not just for your own glory, you can be sure that the Lord will provide whatever is needed for the work. God will provide. Trust Him.

challenge

1. Read Genesis 22:13-14. When God provided the lamb in the thicket to take the place of Isaac on the altar, Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah Jirah. Jehovah Jirah means, "God will provide." Do you have any needs right now – financial, emotional, spiritual? Do you have an important decision to make? Look to the Lord and trust Him, and you will find that He will provide just what you need. Do you know the Lord as Jehovah Jirah?

memorize

- "Solomon said, 'I propose to build a house for the name of the Lord my God, as the Lord spoke to my father David.'" 1 Kings 5:5
- "Hiram gave Solomon cedar and cypress logs according to all his desire." 1 Kings 5:10
- "The Lord gave Solomon wisdom, as He had promised him; and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon." 1 Kings 5:12

lesson 8

The Description and the Construction of the Temple of the Lord in Jerusalem Built by King Solomon 1 Kings 6:1-38

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The temple was the focus of God's relationship with Israel.
2. The temple was a figure of God's fellowship with the church.

practical application

1. Finish the work that God gives you to do.

questions

1. How does 1 Kings 6:1 help us calculate the date of the Exodus?
2. How long did it take to build the temple in Jerusalem?
3. Is it proper to refer to the temple as Solomon's temple?
4. How long is a cubit?
5. What is a theocracy?
6. In the theocracy of Israel at this time, who was God's representative?
What was the representative's responsibility?
7. Refer to 1 Kings 6:23-38. Were the angelic cherubim mentioned here the same as the two cherubim of the ark of the covenant?
8. What does gold represent in the Bible?
9. What was the purpose of the temple?

answers

1. Since we know the date of Solomon, we can subtract the length of time since the Israelites left Egypt to arrive at a date of the Exodus about 1446 B.C.
2. Seven years.
3. Solomon is well known for the building of this temple, but it is more proper to refer to it as the Lord's temple.
4. 18 inches
5. A theocracy is a God-governed nation.
6. King Solomon. The king was to lead the nation to carry out God's will.
7. No. The ones mentioned in these verses were two large olive wood figures covered with gold that dominated the Holy of Holies where the ark of the covenant was placed.
8. Gold in the Bible represents God's divine righteousness and glory.
9. The purpose of the temple was for God to dwell in the midst of His people and have fellowship with them.

discuss / consider

1. Not only was the temple a beautiful building, it was the focus of God's relationship with Israel. The temple was the center and focus of the government of Israel and the center of worship. This was where the people brought their sacrifices and where the singers and musicians praised the Lord with song and music. The temple was where the blood of the atoning sacrifice was brought into the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement, and placed on the Mercy Seat of the Ark of the Covenant. Thus the sins of the nation were covered and the relationship between God and Israel was maintained. The purpose of the temple was for God to dwell in the midst of His people and have fellowship with them. The Spirit of God indwells His spiritual temple, the Church today. In His living Church there is fellowship between God and His people. Do you realize the importance of being part of a local church?

2. The temple of Solomon's day prefigured the spiritual temple that God is building today. See 1 Corinthians 3:16. The Spirit of God dwells in the church. Many aspects of the church are pictured here in the description and the construction of the temple. Believers are living stones, shaped by God for their special function, and added to the spiritual house that God is building. See 1 Peter 2:5. You are a living stone!

challenge

1. Solomon finished the work that the Lord gave him to do. Are you finishing the work that God has given you to do? This can be applied to your life's work (Colossians 4:17) and to our day by day Christian service. Are you committed to God's work? Finish the work that God gives you to do.

memorize

"Solomon began to build the house of the Lord...he built the temple and finished it." 1 Kings 6:1, 14
"The Lord said, 'I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake My people.'" 1 Kings 6:13
"...the house of the Lord was finished in all its details and according to all its plans. Solomon was seven years in building it." 1 Kings 6:38

Lesson 9

The Construction of Other Buildings in Solomon's Royal Complex As Well as Details Concerning the Furnishings of the Temple 1 Kings 7:1-51

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The importance of Solomon's temple prefigures the importance of the Lord's work.
2. The pillars of Solomon's temple prefigure the pillars of the Holy Spirit's temple.
3. The glory of Solomon's temple prefigures the glory of Christ's kingdom.

practical application

1. Let's use our skills and talents for the Lord.

questions

1. Describe Solomon's royal complex.
2. Can you name some of the buildings in the royal complex?
3. Is the Hiram of 1 Kings 7:13 the same person as the Hiram of 1 Kings 5:1?
4. Two large pillars were made to go right at the entrance of the temple. These pillars were named Jachin and Boaz. See 1 Kings 7:21. What is the meaning of the names of these pillars?

answers

1. Solomon's royal complex was comprised of a number of interconnected buildings, surrounded by a great court which included the temple.
2. The Lord's temple, Solomon's house (or palace), the House of the Forest of Lebanon, the Hall of Pillars, the Hall of Judgment, a house for Pharaoh's daughter (Solomon's wife).
3. No. Hiram was king of Tyre and Hiram was a master craftsman.
4. Jachin means "He will establish," and Boaz means "in Him was strength."

discuss / consider

1. The Lord's temple, built by Solomon, was the focal point in the building complex. The importance of this temple prefigures the importance of the Lord's work. Question: Where does the Lord's work go on your priority list? How important, for example, is your daily Quiet Time? What impact does this time alone with the Lord have on your day-by-day activities and involvement with people and projects?
2. The pillars, Jachin ("He will establish") and Boaz ("in Him was strength"), testify to the fact that God had established the nation of Israel. He dwelt in their midst and He was their strength. These two pillars prefigure the pillars of the Holy Spirit's temple today. See 1 Corinthians 3:16. Believers together as the church are the temple of the Holy Spirit. The Lord Himself, not man, has established the church and every living stone in it. Pillar #1 – the Lord Himself, not man, has established the spiritual church, and Pillar #2 – the Lord Himself, not man, is the strength of the church. Do you see this picture? The Lord has established you as part of the spiritual church and He is your strength.
3. All of the grandeur and glory of Solomon's temple prefigures the glory of Christ's kingdom. In Ezekiel Chapters 40-48, we read that when the Lord returns to this earth and sets up His headquarters in Jerusalem, there will be a new temple and the glory of the Lord will return. Are you anticipating the return of Jesus Christ as King over all the earth? By the way, is He your king right now?

challenge

1. "Hiram was a bronze worker; he was filled with wisdom and understanding and skill..." (1 Kings 7:14) Who filled Hiram with wisdom and understanding and skill? Obviously, the Lord. But the Lord used Hiram's background as well. "Hiram finished doing all the work that he was to do for the house of the Lord." (1 Kings 7:40)

What is the lesson here for us? The Lord has sovereignly planned your particular skills, talents, and knowledge. See 1 Corinthians 4:7 and Ephesians 2:10. Your responsibility is to use these skills, talents, and knowledge for the Lord. Look around you – there's work to be done, and your abilities are needed. Use your skills, talents, and knowledge for the Lord, and give Him the glory. "Hiram finished doing all the work that he was to do for the house of the Lord." Can the same be said of you?

memorize

- "Hiram was filled with wisdom and understanding and skill...So he came to King Solomon and did all his work." 1 Kings 7:14
- "Hiram finished doing all the work that he was to do for King Solomon for the house of the Lord." 1 Kings 7:40
- "So all the work that King Solomon had done for the house of the Lord was finished." 1 Kings 7:51

lesson 10

**Solomon's Dedication of the Temple to the Lord
1 Kings 8:1-43**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. When the ark is in its rightful place, the glory of the Lord will be seen.
2. When the ark is in its rightful place, the prayers of God's people will be answered.

practical application

1. Let's not limit God.

questions

1. In which section of 1 Kings do we learn of the construction of the temple and its furnishings?
2. What occurs in 1 Kings Chapter 8?
3. Where was the Ark of the Covenant placed?
4. What was in the ark at the time of King Solomon?
5. What articles were missing from the ark? What happened to them?
6. What happened when the ark was at rest in its rightful place? See 1 Kings 8:11.

answers

1. Chapters 6 and 7
2. The Ark of the Covenant is brought into the temple, and the temple is dedicated to the Lord.
3. In the Holy of Holies in the temple, under the wings of the large golden cherubim.
4. The two tablets of stone which Moses put in the ark.
5. The golden pot that held manna and Aaron's rod that budded. See Hebrews 9:4. (Remember, the writer to the Hebrews was speaking of the ark as it was in the tabernacle). We don't know what became of them.
6. The glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord.

discuss / consider

1. When God's people Israel came into the Promised Land, the ark was to come to rest in the central sanctuary in the location that God would choose. That time now had come. God chose Jerusalem and the temple. When the ark of the Lord came to its rightful place, the glory of the Lord filled that place. The Ark of the Covenant is a type or picture of Christ. The ark in the Holy of Holies was the meeting place between God and man. This pictures the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Mediator between God and man. See 1 Timothy 2:5. The blood of the atoning sacrifice was placed on the mercy seat of the ark so there could be a relationship between God and His people. This is a picture of the shed blood of Christ and His finished work on the cross for our sins that makes it possible for us to have a relationship with God. So the ark is a picture of Christ, and when the ark is in its rightful place, the glory of the Lord will be seen. When the Lord has His rightful place in our lives, the glory of the Lord will be seen in us – people will see God's glory in our lives. Do people see God's glory in your life?

2. In Solomon's great prayer of dedication we see that he made a number of requests from the Lord. All of these requests were in line with the word of God. After acknowledging God's greatness and thanking Him for His faithfulness, Solomon prayed, among other things, for God's continued presence with His people, and that God would forgive them when they confessed their sins. As we follow Israel's history, these requests and more were answered. Why did God answer these prayers? Solomon had honored God's desire to have the Ark of the Covenant in His temple in Jerusalem – in its rightful place. Question: Are your prayers being answered? Are they in line with the word of God? Is Christ at the center of your life? When the ark is in its rightful place, the prayers of God's people will be answered.

challenge

1. Solomon prayed, "Will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built?" (1 Kings 8:27) King Solomon realized that God's presence was not limited to a temple in Israel. What is your view of God? We need to realize that while God is pleased to be in the center of our lives, including our fellowship and ministries, He is not limited thereby. He is a transcendent God. Don't limit God.

memorize

"Then the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the Lord, to its place, into the inner sanctuary of the temple, to the Most Holy Place, under the wings of the cherubim." 1 Kings 8:6

"... the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord." 1 Kings 8:11

"Solomon prayed, 'Will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built?'" 1 Kings 8:27

lesson 11

The Continuation of King Solomon's Great Prayer at the Time of the Dedication of the First Temple 1 Kings 8:44-66

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God disciplines His people.
2. God keeps His promises.

practical application

1. Pray in any position.

questions

1. Where was the Ark of the Covenant brought to rest?
2. There were so many sacrifices at the dedication of the temple that a place had to be set aside for them. Where was this place?
3. There were thousands upon thousands of sacrifices. Was this a waste?
4. What does the account of Mark 14:3-9 teach us about worship?
5. Twenty-two thousand bulls and One hundred and twenty thousand sheep were sacrificed during the temple dedication. How many sins did all of these sacrifices take away?
6. What was the purpose of the Old Testament sacrifices?

answers

1. The ark was brought up to Jerusalem and into the Holy of Holies in the temple.
2. King Solomon consecrated part of the temple courtyard for sacrificing at this time.
3. No. The great majority of these sacrifices were peace offerings. According to the Law, in the case of peace offerings the meat of the slain animals was given to the priests and to the people who brought the offerings. Only the fat portions were burned on the altar.
4. Although criticized for this “waste,” Mary’s heart showed true worship. Worship is never a waste if it is from a heart that is right before the Lord.
5. None. Not a single sin was removed. See Hebrews 10:11-12.
6. To show the seriousness of sin and that the penalty of sin was death. They all looked forward to that great sacrifice to come – the Lamb of God.

discuss / consider

1. After Solomon’s request for God’s help in battle, he prayed for God’s discipline when the people sinned and for God’s forgiveness when they repented. This prayer was answered when the Jews returned from their captivity in Babylon and it will be fully answered when the Jews return to the land and to the Lord in the future. Read Romans 11.

God not only had to discipline His Old Testament people, but He has to discipline us as well. Why? Because He loves us. Don’t be discouraged when the Lord has to discipline you. See Hebrews 12:5-6, and be thankful for His discipline.

2. “Blessed be the Lord, who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised. There has not failed one word of all His good promise...” (1 Kings 8:56). God had kept all His promises to His people Israel and there was great joy in the land. God’s promises are as true today and He continues to keep His promises to His people. Do you believe this? Do you, for example, believe that Jesus has gone to prepare a place for you in heaven? See John 14:3. Believe Him and rest on all the promises of God.

challenge

1. What position are you in when you pray? There are biblical examples of men and women sitting, kneeling, or standing, with hands up or clasped, and heads lifted up to heaven or bowed down toward earth. In this portion of scripture, we see Solomon kneeling before the altar and then standing. He lifted his hands toward heaven. Position is not important – the attitude of the heart is what is important. Keep the communication lines open between yourself and the Lord. A good challenge as you are reading the Bible, would be to make note of the prayers. As you read, note not only their position but also the content and intent of their prayers. Study the context as well and look for answers. This could be a long but profitable study.

memorize

“When Your people go out to battle...wherever You send them, and when they pray...then hear from heaven...and maintain their cause.” 1 Kings 8:44-45

“When they sin against You...yet when they repent...and return to You with all their heart...then hear in heaven...and maintain their cause...and forgive them.” 1 Kings 8:46-50

“They are Your people and Your inheritance...listen to them whenever they call to You.” 1 Kings 8:51-52

lesson 12

**The Lord's Second Appearance to King Solomon,
and Solomon's Activities to Strengthen the Kingdom of Israel
1 Kings 9:1-28**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God's promises are unconditional and conditional.
2. Man's disobedience is tolerated, but not overlooked.

practical application

1. Will people scoff at the Lord's things because of you?

questions

1. Refer to 1 Kings 9:15 and 9:24. What is the Millo? What is the literal meaning of the word Millo?
2. Archaeologists who have done excavations in this geographical area believe that the places mentioned here in this section of scripture go back to King Solomon's time. Check out these places in 1 Kings 9:15 and 9:26. How has archeology confirmed I Kings 9:15?
3. What was King Solomon's purpose in giving Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee?
4. What does the term Cabul mean? (1 Kings 9:13)
5. Where is Ophir located?

answers

1. Excavations in the palace area of Jerusalem have revealed a large step-stone structure, which they believe is the Millo built in King Solomon's day. The word Millo literally means landfill, and this stone structure served as a retaining wall for ground which supported the royal buildings.

2. 1 Kings 9:15 – archaeology has confirmed a section of the wall

1 Kings 9:15 – archaeology has confirmed building activity at Hazor, Megiddo and Gezer 1 Kings 9:26 – archaeology has shown that there was building activity in Eilon Geber

3. Most likely these cities were put up as security for the gold Solomon was borrowing from King Hiram.

4. Cabul means “good for nothing.”

5. At this time, we don't know where Ophir is located.

discuss / consider

1. The Lord appeared to Solomon a second time and made some promises to the king and the nation Israel. The Lord promise that His eye and heart would be continually focused on the place and purpose of the temple. God's intent was for His name to be always in the midst of His people. As such, this promise was unconditional. Although there is no temple in Jerusalem now, a temple will be rebuilt in the future. In the meantime, God's eye is still on that people and that place. The conditional promise was an if /then. If you walk before Me in integrity of heart...then I will establish the throne forever. But if you turn from Me and serve other gods...then I will cut off Israel from the land. A blindness has happened to Israel, but there will be a spiritual revival of Israel in the future before the Lord returns to this earth.

The same is true in our lives. The promise of salvation, for example, to any believer is unconditional and conditional. Once you are in God's family, you are there unconditionally. The Lord has promised that anyone who comes to Him will not be cast out (John 6:37). But God's promise of fellowship with the believer is conditional. Our close fellowship with the Lord depends on our walk with Him.

Have you received Jesus Christ as your Savior? If so, you are unconditionally promised that you are in God's family forever. Are you walking with the Lord? Are you in close fellowship with Him?

2. Israel prospered and reached its greatest glory under King Solomon, but he was not a perfect king. He disobeyed the Lord in a number of areas. How can this be? God's patience and longsuffering tolerated Solomon's wrongdoing, but it was not overlooked. Solomon reaped what he had sown. The same is true today. Just because a wayward believer is prosperous is not a sign of God's approval. God's discipline is not always immediate. Man's disobedience is tolerated, but not overlooked. How are you doing in the obedience to the Lord department?

challenge

1. It was a sad thing when people scoffed at the Lord's land and at the Lord's house because of Israel's disobedience. Think of the mockery and ridicule that takes place when a Christian is involved in an affair or a financial scandal. When God's people profane His name, others will scoff at the Lord's things. Don't let people scoff at the Lord's things because of you. Honor His name in all that you do.

memorize

“When Solomon finished building...the Lord appeared to him the second time...” 1 Kings 9:1-2

“The Lord said to Solomon, ‘I have heard your prayer...I have consecrated this house...to put My name there forever, and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually.’” 1 Kings 9:3

“As for this house which is exalted, those who pass by will scoff...” 1 Kings 9:8

lesson 13

**The Queen of Sheba's Visit to King Solomon,
and a Further Description of the Wealth of Solomon
1 Kings 10:1-29**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. All our questions will be answered by the wisdom of the King.
2. All our desires will be met by the wealth of the King.

practical application

1. Don't think that God's blessing on your life means that you are perfect.

questions

1. Where is Sheba located?
2. How did the Queen of Sheba hear about Solomon's fame?
3. How far was it from Sheba to Jerusalem, the distance traveled by the queen?
4. Did the queen travel by car? What was her mode of travel?
5. What was the purpose of the queen's journey?

answers

1. In the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula, where Yemen is located today.
2. Most likely from traders that traveled throughout the known world at that time. See Ezekiel 27:22-23.
3. More than 1,200 miles.
4. No, not by car, but by camelback.
5. To check out for herself the wisdom and wealth of Solomon.

discuss / consider

1. Jesus said, "The queen of the south...came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here." (Matthew 12:42) The Lord drew a parallel between King Solomon and Himself. As the queen of Sheba had all of her hard questions answered by King Solomon, so we will have all our difficult questions answered by the Lord, the greater son of Solomon when He returns as the glorious King.

Do you have any difficult questions? Many of our questions are answered as we study the word of God, but when we're with the Lord all our questions will be answered. "In Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (Colossians 2:3)

2. "King Solomon surpassed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom." (1 Kings 10:23) As the queen of Sheba observed the wealth of King Solomon, she said, "It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom. However I did not believe the words until I came and saw with my own eyes; and indeed the half was not told me. Your wisdom and prosperity exceed the fame of which I heard." (1 Kings 10:6-7)

What is the spiritual picture here, the application to us? All our desires will be met by the wealth of our King, the Lord Jesus Christ. We, too, will say that the half has not been told. When the Lord sets up His kingdom here on earth there will be world-wide material and spiritual blessing. Of course, at that time all our desires will be godly and in line with the program of our King. How do your desires line up now?

challenge

1. Solomon was greatly blessed by God with wisdom and wealth. But it would be a mistake to assume that this was because Solomon was a perfect king. Actually, he was disobedient to God's law on more than one occasion. We, too, experience the gracious blessing of God on our lives, but let's not assume that this is God's stamp of approval on every aspect of our lives. Our lives and lifestyles must line up with the word of God. How does your life and lifestyle line up with the word of God?

memorize

"When the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to test him with hard questions. Solomon answered all her questions." 1 Kings 10:1, 3

"When the queen of Sheba had seen all...she said, 'I did not believe the words until I came and saw with my own eyes; and indeed the half was not told me. Your wisdom and prosperity exceed the fame of which I heard.'" 1 Kings 10:4, 7

"King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba all she desired..." 1 Kings 10:13

lesson 14

**The Reasons Given for King Solomon's Downfall,
As Well As the Lord's Pronouncement that the Kingdom of Solomon Would Be
Divided Because of Solomon's Disobedience
1 Kings 11:1-13**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Disobedience to the Lord results in departure from the Lord.
2. Disobedience to the Lord results in discipline from the Lord.

practical application

1. Remember the downfall of Solomon.

questions

1. How many wives did Solomon have? How many concubines did he have?
2. Solomon was known for his wisdom. When was he not wise concerning his wives?
3. Solomon not only disobeyed the Lord in multiplying wives for himself, but he also disobeyed the Lord in the kind of wives he married. Explain.
4. By His word, God had warned Solomon about taking many and foreign wives. God also told Solomon what would happen because of his disobedience. What did God say would happen?
5. Solomon's wisdom was one thing. His will was another. How does this apply to believers today?

answers

1. 700 wives, 300 concubines

2. He was not wise in his actions because he willfully disobeyed the Lord. God's word had clearly and specifically said that kings were not to multiply wives for themselves. See Deuteronomy 17:17 and 1 Kings 11:3.

3. The Lord had given Solomon another clear and direct command, "You shall not intermarry with foreign women." Read Deuteronomy 7:1-4 and 1 Kings 11:2.

4. God said first, that these wives would turn his heart away from Him and toward other gods. Secondly, God said that He would destroy Solomon suddenly.

5. Believers may be gifted with wisdom and have a lot of knowledge, even about God and the Bible, but their will must be submissive to the Lord and in line with His word.

discuss / consider

1. Re-read this portion of scripture and note the downward steps of Solomon's disobedience that resulted in departure from the Lord. Remember how Solomon began his reign by asking for wisdom to lead God's people. It's a sad thing to note the wisdom and the will of Solomon. Despite all his wisdom, we read, "Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord..." (1 Kings 11:6). This is a great lesson for us. Stay in the word and submit to God, lest you begin downward steps of disobedience that result in departure from the Lord. Little by little disobedience to the word of God will result in a major departure from the Lord's will. Be sure that both your wisdom and your will are aligned with God's word.

2. The Lord was angry with Solomon for his deliberate sin, and the Lord pronounced judgment upon him and his kingdom. Solomon would suffer far-reaching consequences for his disobedience. God must discipline His people when they sin – then and today. See, for example 1 Corinthians 11:32. Are you disobeying the Lord in some secret area of your life? Be thankful for God's discipline, and heed it. See Hebrews 12:5-6, 11.

challenge

1. Read Psalm 72 to see Solomon's love and reverence for the Lord. But little by little Solomon's disobedience caused him to turn away from the Lord. It could happen to any believer. It could happen to you. Are you speaking psalms to the Lord to show your love and reverence to the Lord? Stay in this mindset to keep your heart pure toward the Lord and to maintain your walk before Him. Remember the downfall of Solomon.

memorize

"Solomon's wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not loyal to the Lord his God." 1 Kings 11:4

"Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord" 1 Kings 11:6

"I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of my servant David." 1 Kings 11:13

lesson 15

**Some of the Consequences of Solomon's Sin that God Used to Discipline the Backslidden King
1 Kings 11:14-43**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God may raise up adversaries against the backslidden believer.
2. God may take away territory from the backslidden believer.

practical application

1. What is our reaction to God's discipline?

questions

1. Name the three adversaries against King Solomon.
2. Who raised up these adversaries against King Solomon?
3. Why were these adversaries raised up against King Solomon?
4. Was God the source of the evil of these adversaries?
5. What was Solomon's sin?
6. Who wrote the book of Ecclesiastes?
7. Refer to Ecclesiastes 12:13-14. What was Solomon's conclusion concerning man's attitude toward God?

answers

1. Hadid, Rezon, and Jeroboam.
2. God raised them up.
3. For the purpose of disciplining Solomon for his disobedience to the word of God.
4. No, but God used the evil to discipline the backslidden king.
5. Solomon not only allowed idolatry to enter Israel, but he himself actually followed after foreign gods.
6. Solomon.
7. Solomon concluded, “Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man’s all.”

discuss / consider

1. God raised up adversaries against King Solomon. He used their evil to discipline the backslidden king. The same is true today. God may raise up adversaries against the backslidden believer. True believers who backslide can expect to find adversaries that trouble them. God can use adversaries in your life to keep you close to Himself.
2. Review 1 Kings 11:29-39 to see the dramatic way in which the Lord spoke to Jeroboam through the prophet Ahijah. As God took away territory from King Solomon because of his backslidden state, so may He take away spiritual territory from the backslidden believer today. Spiritual territory of the believer includes areas of service and responsibility and reward in the kingdom of God. What is your desire – to have territory taken away because of a backslidden condition or to gain more territory for the Lord?

challenge

1. Consider Solomon’s reaction to God’s discipline. Solomon tried to kill Jeroboam. Solomon did not repent and he did not humble himself or submit to God’s authority. Instead, he tried to overturn God’s will. As for today, God disciplines believers because of sin in their lives. Is God disciplining you right now? Do you become angry and upset and try to escape, blaming others for your situation? Or do you repent and submit in humility and learn the lessons that God has designed personally for you? What is your reaction to God’s discipline?

memorize

“Now the Lord raised up adversaries against Solomon, Hadad...Rezon...and Jeroboam.” 1 Kings 11:14, 23, 26
“Behold I will tear the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to [Jeroboam].” 1 Kings 11:31

“To Solomon’s son, I will give one tribe, that My servant David may always have a lamp before Me in Jerusalem.” 1 Kings 11:36

lesson 16

**The Record of the Division of the United Kingdom of Israel Into the Northern Kingdom Under King Jeroboam I and the Southern Kingdom Under King Rehoboam, the Son of Solomon
1 Kings 12:1-24**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God can accomplish His purposes through the foolish counsel of people.
2. God can accomplish His purposes through the wise counsel of people.

practical application

1. Practice soft answers.

questions

1. Name the kings of the united kingdom of Israel.
2. How long did the united kingdom last?
3. What were the division of the united kingdom of Israel?
4. Who were the kings of the divided kingdom?
5. After gathering an army of 180,000 troops to attack the northern kingdom, why did Rehoboam call off the battle?

answers

1. Saul, David, and Solomon.
2. 120 years, from 1051 B.C. to 931 B.C.
3. It was divided into the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah. The northern kingdom consisted of ten tribes and the southern kingdom consisted of the tribe of Judah and the closely associated tribe of Benjamin.
4. Jeroboam became the first king of the northern kingdom of Israel. Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, became the first king of the southern kingdom of Judah.
5. Because Rehoboam wisely listened to the voice of the Lord brought to him through the prophet Shemaiah.

discuss / consider

1. King Rehoboam was not wise when he went along with the counsel of his young friends instead of following the wise advice of the elders. However, it is recorded that “the turn of events was from the Lord, that He might fulfill His word.” (1 Kings 12:15) The Bible clearly teaches that we should follow wise counsel and God will use it to guide us. When people follow foolish counsel they do so by their own will and they suffer the consequences. But God can use the foolish counsel of people and its unfortunate results to accomplish His purposes. See Ephesians 1:11. As for today, we see foolish counsel and its sad results in the Middle East situation. But God is using all these events to accomplish His purposes. The groundwork is being laid, and the way is being paved for events of the last days and the return of the Lord.

2. Shemaiah, the man of God, gave Rehoboam some wise counsel about not going up to fight Jeroboam. How do we know it was wise counsel? Read 1 Kings 12:24. It was from the Lord. God’s purposes were accomplished through wise counsel. Anyone who looks to the Lord for the wisdom from above will give wise counsel to others. Let’s pray that our nation’s leaders will follow wise counsel. See James 1:5 and 3:17.

challenge

1. “A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.” (Proverbs 15:1). Solomon wrote this proverb, but unfortunately his son Rehoboam did not follow its wise counsel. Rehoboam responded to the people with harsh words, and anger was stirred up. How do you respond to people’s concerns? Do you respond with soft answers or harsh words? Soft answers do not come automatically, but they come with practice and by refraining from harsh words. Can you speak from experience about this proverb?

memorize

“Your father made our yoke heavy; now therefore, lighten the burdensome service of your father...and we will serve you.” 1 Kings 12:4

“Rehoboam consulted the elders...they said, ‘If you will be a servant to these people today and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever.’ But he rejected the advice.” 1 Kings 12:6-8

“You shall not go up nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel. They obeyed the word of the Lord.” 1 Kings 12:24

lesson 17

**The Record of the Ungodly Deeds of Jeroboam I,
the First King of the Northern Kingdom of Israel
1 Kings 12:25-33**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Leaders of the people of God must be measured by scripture.
2. Changes in the worship of God must be monitored by scripture.

practical application

1. Watch out for incremental departure from the Lord.

questions

1. Name the two kingdoms of Israel when the monarchy came to an end. Who were the first kings of this divided kingdom? Throughout their history, how many kings ruled in each of these kingdoms? How many were good kings and how many were bad kings?
2. What other name did the northern kingdom go by in the Old Testament? Why was it sometimes known by this name?
3. Why did some of the Jews continue to worship at the temple in Jerusalem when there were altars in the north?
4. Define "worship."

answers

1. Jeroboam I was the first king of the northern kingdom of Israel. Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, was the first king of the southern kingdom of Judah. Nineteen kings would come to the throne in the northern kingdom. They were all bad kings. Twenty kings would reign over the southern kingdom. Most of these were bad kings, but eight were good.
2. The northern kingdom of Israel was sometimes known in the Old Testament as Ephraim. It was known as Ephraim because Ephraim was the largest tribe in the north.
3. Because they set their hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel at the true temple of the Lord in Jerusalem.
4. Worship is defined as praising and thanking God for who He is and what He has done, is doing, and will do.

discuss / consider

1. The secular press of the day and secular historians would have considered Jeroboam a pretty good king. He successfully rallied ten tribes in Israel and started the northern kingdom, reigning for twenty-one years and founding a kingdom that would last for 200 years. But the secular media is not the last word – then or today. God has the last word and good leaders are determined by how they measure up to scripture. Jeroboam was a terrible king when measured by scripture. He sponsored and condoned idolatry; he kept people from going up to the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem; he made the golden calf idols. Israel was God's people, but Jeroboam led them into sin. How about the leaders of God's people today? Many are considered good leaders because of their large following, but how do they measure up to scripture? Do they preach the true gospel of Jesus Christ or do they water it down to please the people? Do they discipline sin in their churches or ministries? Are they above reproach when it comes to sexual conduct? Are they free from the love of money and the sin of materialism? Measure the leaders of the people of God by scripture.

2. If the changes in worship initiated by Jeroboam had been monitored by scripture, they would never have continued. The shrines would have been closed down; sacrifices would have ceased; the new feast would not have been celebrated; the priests would have been thrown out of office. All of these changes in worship were contrary to the scriptures. Unfortunately, Jeroboam's changes in worship were not monitored by scripture, and the northern kingdom continued on their downward departure from the Lord. How about today? Are changes monitored by scripture? Worship can be defined as praising and thanking God for who He is and what He has done and is doing and what He will do. Think of the many areas and forms of worship – praying, singing, meditations of scripture. Some are structured and some are not. Some are traditional and some are spontaneous. Be sure that changes in worship are monitored by scripture – that they give God the glory. Remember, idolatry is not only the worship of false gods, but the unscriptural worship of the true God. And remember that God gives latitude to those worshipping with a true heart.

challenge

1. When King Jeroboam I set up golden calf shrines at Dan and Bethel, he probably did not issue a command that all worship of the Lord should cease. But this was a step of departure away from the Lord. He continued to lead the people away from the Lord with his idolatrous "worship." Step by step the northern kingdom continued their downward slide. Departure from the Lord is usually not in one big step, but little by little. Do you continue to start each day with a Quiet Time? Do you love meeting with other believers? Are you moving from a robust service to the Lord to token service, or even perhaps no service? Where are you now in your worship of the Lord? Watch out for incremental departure from the Lord.

memorize

"If these people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn back." 1 Kings 12:27

"...the king made two calves of gold, and said to the people, 'Here are your gods, O Israel', and he set one in Bethel and the other in Dan." 1 Kings 12:28-29

"Jeroboam made shrines on the high places...and made priests who were not of the sons of Levi...and he ordained a feast like the feast that was in Judah, and he offered sacrifices on the altars to the calves he had made." 1 Kings 12:31-33

lesson 18

**A Most Unusual Story about Two Prophets: The Prophet from Judah at First Obeyed the Lord and Pronounced Judgment on the Golden Calf Shrine at Bethel, but then because of an Older Prophet from Judah Who Lied, the Younger Prophet from Judah Disobeyed the Lord and Was Killed by a Lion
1 Kings 13:1-34**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. A servant of the Lord must speak the word of the Lord.
2. A servant of the Lord must do the will of the Lord.

practical application

1. Beware of a believer who says, "The Lord told me..."

questions

1. Jeroboam sinned greatly by making two calf idols. Who pronounced judgment on this sin?
2. What prophecy was made by this messenger of God?
3. What immediate sign did this messenger of God give?
4. How was this sign seen?
5. What gracious act was performed by this messenger?
6. What effect did this have on the king?

answers

1. God sent a prophet from Judah up to the golden calf idol in Bethel to pronounce judgment.
2. The prophet said that a king from Judah named Josiah would actually burn the bones of the false priests on this idolatrous altar. This remarkable prophecy was fulfilled about 300 years after the time of the pronouncement. See 2 Kings 23:15-16.
3. That the idolatrous altar at Bethel would split apart.
4. When Jeroboam tried to catch the prophet, his outstretched arm became paralyzed, and the idolatrous altar at Bethel split apart before his very eyes.
5. The prophet graciously healed Jeroboam's arm.
6. The king did not turn back to the Lord. Notice what he said to the prophet, "Please entreat the favor of the Lord YOUR God..." (1 Kings 13:6)

discuss / consider

1. The prophet refused any reward from the ungodly king, saying, "It was commanded me by the word of the Lord." The mission of this prophet from Judah was to come to the shrine and pronounce the word of the Lord and to return home. He was not to be sidetracked by any offer of reward.

The same is true today, a servant of the Lord must speak the word of the Lord. See 2 Timothy 4:2. This is our mission. The Lord Jesus said that we are in this world, but not of it. We are to be salt and light in this world. We are to separate from the evil of this world, but not from the needs of this world. Are you a servant of the Lord, speaking the word of the Lord without being sidetracked?

2. Re-read the story of the prophet of Judah who was killed by a lion for stopping to have a meal with the old prophet. Although our sympathies are with this prophet, we must realize the seriousness of any sin that is in direct disobedience to the command of the Lord. God must judge disobedience to His word.

See 1 Peter 4:17.

How about you? Are you disobeying the Lord in any area of your life right now? Do you really want to be a servant of the Lord? A servant of the Lord must do the will of the Lord.

challenge

1. Have you ever had a fellow believer say to you, "The Lord told me..." Or, "The Lord showed me that you should..." This is what the older prophet said to the younger prophet, perhaps out of jealousy. There's always a danger of this happening in the church today. Fellow believers may have all kinds of agendas. Believers of all generations should watch out for this pitfall. Balance this with godly counsel to guide you.

memorize

"The king offered the man of God a reward. But the man of God refused, saying, 'It was commanded me by the word of the Lord...'" 1 Kings 13:7-9

"The old prophet said, 'I have been told by the word of the Lord...'" 1 Kings 13:17

"Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way..." 1 Kings 13:33

lesson 19

The Predictions of the Prophet Ahijah that King Jeroboam's Son will Die, and that His Dynasty Would Be Removed, and that the Northern Kingdom of Israel Would Fall because of the Sins that Jeroboam Had Introduced into Israel 1 Kings 14:1-20

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God speaks to individuals in times of personal tragedy.
2. God speaks to nations in times of national crisis.

practical application

1. Don't compromise God's message because of gifts.

questions

1. Prince Abijah, King Jeroboam's son, trusted the Lord. How do we know this?
2. Why are Sunday School ministries important?
3. King Jeroboam had plenty of false prophets around that would gladly tell him what he wanted to hear. Why, then, did he go to Ahijah, the true prophet?
4. How did the prophet Ahijah know the identity of King Jeroboam's wife, even though she was disguised?
5. What had Ahijah predicted before this to Jeroboam? What method did he use to reveal it to him?

answers

1. "...because in him (Prince Abijah) there is found something good toward the Lord God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam." (1 Kings 14:13) The Lord knew the heart of this young boy.
2. Because there are many young children trusting in the Lord, even though their parents may not be saved.
3. Jeroboam knew that his false prophets would not speak the truth, and he wanted to know what would become of his son.
4. The Lord gave him insight as to her identity as well as the coming death of Jeroboam's son.
5. He predicted that Jeroboam would become king. Ahijah's new garment was torn into twelve pieces and ten of them were given to Jeroboam, representing the ten tribes of the northern kingdom.

discuss / consider

1. Jeroboam's son did not get sick by chance. God was giving Jeroboam a chance to repent of his proud and idolatrous ways. Jeroboam, known as the king who made Israel sin, had been spoken to by the Lord through the illness and death of his son. Even the hardest of men sometimes soften when a personal tragedy takes them by surprise. But Jeroboam, in spite of this tragedy, did not listen to the Lord. He did not change his ways for the rest of his life. Refer to 2 Chronicles 13:20. Has the Lord spoken to you through a personal tragedy? Is He speaking to you right now? Are you listening or are you like Jeroboam? God speaks to individuals in times of personal tragedy.

2. Not only would the dynasty of Jeroboam be brought down, but the whole northern kingdom of Israel would be removed. Both the nation and the king were held accountable for this coming crisis. Nineteen kings would come to the throne in northern Israel, but none would turn the heart of the nation back to God. The Lord would send prophets specifically to the northern kingdom, but the people would not listen. Finally, the Lord would bring on the armies of Assyria and they would strike Israel as a reed shaken in the water. Samaria and the northern kingdom of Israel fell to the Assyrians in 722 B.C. God is speaking to Israel right now. The secular state of Israel is facing a national crisis today. We know from end-time biblical prophecies that the national crisis in Israel will get worse before it gets better. But out of the nation of Israel will come a believing remnant of Jews who will prepare the nation for the Lord's return. In view of our own nation and recent tragedies, is God speaking to this nation? Is He sending us a wake-up call? Are we listening?

challenge

1. Jeroboam sent gifts to the prophet Ahijah, hoping for a pleasant message. But the prophet did not compromise God's message because of gifts. He told the whole message, even though it wasn't pleasant to hear. We must do the same by not obscuring the fact that unbelievers are bound for hell, and that hell is a real place. Unbelievers use a number of tactics to try to get Christians to compromise this unpleasant message. Unfortunately, many Christians have given in in this area. Pray that you will stand firm by never compromising the word of God.

memorize

"Abijah the son of Jeroboam became sick, and Jeroboam sent loves, cakes, and honey to the prophet Ahijah, to ask about his son." 1 Kings 14:1-3

"Ahijah said, 'Arise, go to your house. When you enter the city, the child will die.'" 1 Kings 14:12

"The Lord will strike Israel as a reed is shaken in the water. He will uproot Israel from their good land which He gave to their fathers, and will scatter them...and He will give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, who sinned and who made Israel sin." 1 Kings 14:15-16

lesson 20

**The Record of the Reign of King Rehoboam of Judah
Including the Attack on Judah by Pharaoh Shishak of Egypt
1 Kings 14:21-31**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Mothers have a great effect on one's character.
2. Obedience has a great effect on one's protection.

practical application

1. Go where the Lord has chosen to put His name.

questions

1. What was the wrong counsel that King Rehoboam followed when he first came to the throne?
2. What was the result of this policy?
3. Describe the reign of King Rehoboam, the first king of the southern kingdom of Judah.
4. Associated with the idolatry in the land were perverted sexual practices. How did this moral decline come about?
5. Why did God allow Pharaoh Shishak of Egypt to attack Jerusalem?
6. Why did the Lord prevent Shishak from taking Jerusalem?
7. What is meant by "there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all their days" (1 Kings 14:30)?

answers

1. Instead of easing the burden on the people, Rehoboam followed the ill-advised counsel that the king should tax the people more heavily than his father Solomon had taxed them.
2. The united kingdom of Israel divided into two kingdoms – the northern kingdom and the southern kingdom.
3. King Rehoboam allowed idolatrous shrines to be built through the land, “and they also built for themselves high places, sacred pillars, and wooden images on every high hill and under every green tree. And there were also perverted persons in the land.” (1 Kings 14:23-24)
4. Departure from the Lord and His word always leads to moral decline.
5. Because Israel had transgressed against the Lord.
6. Because there was a temporary humbling on the part of Rehoboam and his officials.
7. There were constant border clashes between the northern and the southern kingdoms.

discuss / consider

1. The name of Rehoboam’s mother is mentioned twice in this passage (1 Kings 14:21, 31). This is significant because mothers have a great effect on one’s character. Naamah, the Ammonitess, was Rehoboam’s mother. She was one of Solomon’s wives and it was because of her that Solomon went after another god. With a mother like Naamah, Rehoboam’s character was bound to be affected. Read 2 Chronicles 12:13-14 on this subject. Rehoboam did evil because he did not prepare his heart to seek the Lord. Mothers can prepare the hearts of their children to seek the Lord or not to seek the Lord. Unlike Naamah, read about Timothy’s mother and grandmother and their influence on him in 2 Timothy 3:15. Were you one of the fortunate children to have a godly mother who molded your character for the Lord? Are you a godly mother (or father) preparing the hearts of your children to seek the Lord?
2. When Rehoboam forsook the Lord and transgressed against Him, he lost protection from the Lord and Jerusalem became vulnerable to attack. When people turn away from the Lord and disobey His word, they are wide open to attacks from the world and Satan. As we walk with the Lord, obey His word, put on the whole armor of God, and stop practicing sin, we are protected from Satan. Attacks will come, but we will not be defeated as Rehoboam was. Nor will we be robbed of blessing, as Rehoboam was.

challenge

1. Jerusalem was the city on which the Lord had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel to put His name. God’s presence was in the temple, in the midst of His people. Today, God dwells in the midst of a spiritual temple, namely, the church, the people of God. This is where God has chosen to put His name. Read Matthew 18:20. Read also Hebrews 10:25.

memorize

- “Jerusalem...the city which the Lord had chosen to put His name there.” 1 Kings 14:21
“Judah did evil in the sight of the Lord, and provoked Him to jealousy with their sins...” 1 Kings 14:22
“Rehobam’s mother’s name was Naaman, an Ammonitess.” 1 Kings 14:21, 31

lesson 21

**Abijam, King of Judah
Focus: The Set of the Heart
1 Kings 15:1-8**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The overall pattern of a person's life exposes the heart.
2. God's promise of a dynasty to David should not be allegorized.

practical application

1. How many exception clauses are there in your Christian record?
2. Don't mar your Christian record by a moment of sinful pleasure.

questions

1. What happened to the united kingdom of Israel after the reigns of Kings Saul, David and Solomon?
2. Who was Abijam (Abijah)? What was his ancestry? What was he like?
3. What does it mean, "The overall pattern of a person's life exposes his heart?" Recall examples from scripture.
4. Should God's promise of a dynasty to David be taken literally or allegorically? Explain.
5. "David followed the Lord all the days of his life, except..." Think about and discuss this statement.

answers

1. The united kingdom of Israel split into two kingdoms: Israel, the northern kingdom, and Judah, the southern kingdom. A state of war existed between these two kingdoms under the reigns of Jeroboam I, Rehoboam and Abijam.

2. Abijam was the second king of Judah, the southern kingdom. He was the son of Rehoboam (the first king to rule over the southern kingdom) and Maachah, the granddaughter of Absalom. From both his mother and father's side he was in the house of David. He walked in the sins of his father. His heart was not right toward God.

3. The overall pattern of a person's life is a good indication of the set of his heart, or his heart's attitude. David's adultery with Bathsheba and subsequent murder of her husband Uriah were exceptions to the general pattern of David's life (1 Kings 15:5), and he reaped what he had sown. But the set of his heart was toward God, as can be seen readily in the Psalms and in the historical records of his life. On the other hand, Abijam proclaimed the word of God to Jeroboam, but the overall pattern of his life was not pleasing to God (2 Chronicles 13:4-12). What does this mean? It means that our daily, habitual actions are indicative of the set of our hearts.

4. It should be taken literally. God told David that he would have an unending dynasty. (1 Kings 15:4; 11:36; 2 Samuel 7:16). There will be a coming day when Christ, who is in the line of David, will reign over a kingdom on earth, literally fulfilling this prophecy.

5. David's overall life pattern pleased God, but there were exceptions which marred his record. See another man's life pattern in Hebrews 11:24-25.

discuss/consider

1. What did you learn from the lives of Abijam and David?
2. How important is it to you that your heart-set is right in the eyes of the Lord?

challenge

1. Write a one-sentence overview of your life from God's eyes. How many exceptions would follow?

memorize

"Abijam's heart was not loyal to the Lord his God" 1 Kings 15:3

"David did what was right in the eyes of the Lord...except..." 1 Kings 15:5

"As a person thinks in his heart, so is he." Proverbs 23:7

lesson 22

**Asa, King of Judah
Focus: God Comes First
1 Kings 15:9-15**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. God comes before family.
2. God is a gracious grader.

practical applications

1. Let's use our time wisely for God.
2. Let's use our things wisely for God.

questions

1. How many good kings were there in the northern kingdom? In the southern kingdom?
2. Who was Asa? What was his ancestry? What was he like?
3. What does Asa illustrate concerning a godly life?
4. Who should come first - God or family? How was this shown by King Asa?
5. What does it mean, "God is a gracious grader?"

answers

1. None in the northern kingdom (Israel). Most of the kings in the southern kingdom (Judah) were evil (but there were eight good kings).
2. Asa was the first good king of Judah. He did not have a godly heritage, for he was the son of Abijam, an evil king, and the grandson of Maachah, the evil queen mother. Asa, however, walked in the ways of his ancestor David, and his heart was loyal to the Lord all of his days. He banished the perverted persons from the land, and brought reform to the land, including cutting down idols.
3. A godly heritage is not necessary in developing and maintaining a godly life.
4. God comes before family, as a guard against ungodly families. Asa removed Maachah, his grandmother, from being queen mother because she did wickedly against God. Generally, however, your family is to have your love and respect. Putting God first encourages us to love and respect them.
5. God does not lower His standards, but He is gracious. For example, King Asa was not perfect, nor did he do all that was needed for total reform, but he was graded with the comment, "Nevertheless, his heart was loyal..." (1 Kings 15:14).

discuss / consider

1. How do you use your time and all that you have? Which do you consider first - God or your own interests? Cite examples.
2. Sometimes it seems easier to confront strangers about ungodly behavior than to confront family. Why is this? Discuss how to guard against ungodly families while still showing love and respect.

challenge

1. Keep a diary of how you use your time (especially your free time) and your things (home, car, computer, TV, etc.) this coming week. Would God have been honored?
2. Review the verse to be memorized. Could this be said of you? Is there a "nevertheless" clause in your life?

memorize

"Asa did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, as did his father David." 1 Kings 15:11
"Nevertheless, Asa's heart was loyal to the Lord all his days." 1 Kings 15:14

lesson 23

**Asa, King of Judah; Nadab and Baasha Kings of Israel
Focus: Using God's Gifts, and God Can Use Evil for Good
1 Kings 15:16-34**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. God's gifts are not to be used to gain support of the enemy.
2. God can use evil to accomplish His purposes.

practical applications

1. Don't let success go to your head.
2. Don't lead people into sin.

questions

1. Who was Ben-Hadad? Why was he important in this story?
2. Who were Nadab and Baasha?
3. How did Asa try to secure Ben-Hadad's help and alliance?
4. How are God's gifts to be used?
5. Can God use evil to accomplish His purposes?

answers

1. Ben-Hadad was a pagan king of Syria. King Asa asked for his help to counter King Baasha's fortification and control of trade routes and migration of godly people to the temple in the south.

2. Nadab and Baasha were the second and third kings of Israel, respectively. They followed Jeroboam 1, and were both evil kings.

3. He used moneys from the treasury of the temple, and he reminded him of a former treaty between Judah and Syria.

4. To honor Him, not in soliciting help from the enemy as Asa did with Ben-Hadad.

5. Yes. "God makes the wrath of man to praise Him" (Psalm 76:10). King Baasha's acts of assassination and murder were evil, but God used them to accomplish His purposes. The greatest demonstration of this truth was the cross.

discuss / consider

1. List some of the gifts that you have received from God. Are you using them to honor Him, or to accomplish your own agenda?

2. Jeroboam not only sinned, but he opened doors for others to sin in Israel. Is it possible that you could be leading people into sin? If so, how? Some of the common ways of leading people into sin are through complaining and gossiping, but there are other ways as well.

challenge

Perhaps because of his former successes, King Asa turned to the enemy for help instead of turning to God. Is there a warning here for you?

memorize

"Asa took all the silver and gold that was left in the treasuries of the house of the Lord ...and sent them to Ben-Hadad, saying 'See, I have sent you a present of silver and gold.'" 1 Kings 15:18-19

"So Asa rested with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the City of David his father." 1 Kings 15:24

lesson 24

Baasha and Elah, Kings of Israel
Focus: No Impunity and Ignoring God's Proverbs
1 Kings 16:1-14

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. There is no impunity for God's instruments of judgments.
2. To ignore God's prophets and proverbs is stupid.

practical applications

1. Don't commit the same sins as your predecessors.
2. Let's not provoke the Lord's anger with our idols.

questions

1. Who assassinated King Nadab and why did God allow it?
2. Who was King Elah? What was he like?
3. Define impunity. What does it mean, "There is no impunity for God's instruments of judgments?"
4. Can God teach us through prophecy and proverbs?
5. Why did judgment come upon Baasha?

answers

1. God allowed Baasha to assassinate King Nadab because of his wickedness.
2. Elah was the fourth king of Israel, son of King Baasha. Both were wicked kings. Elah reigned for two years in the capital city of Tirzah, then he was assassinated by his servant Zimri.
3. "Impunity" means exemption or immunity from punishment when a law is broken (seen today with diplomats, for example). King Baasha was an instrument of God's judgment to remove the evil dynasty of Jeroboam 1. Baasha, however, committed the same sins as the house of Jeroboam and killed all of those of the dynasty. Even though God had raised him up and used him, yet Baasha was held responsible. He was not in this for God's glory; he wanted the throne. He was a calculating conspirator, and he was held responsible for his actions.
4. Yes. Elah ignored God's word to his own demise. We should learn from God's lessons. Elah not only was a wicked king, but he ignored God's prophets and proverbs, continuing in the evil ways of his forefathers. He was assassinated when he was drunk. There is a clear directive to kings that they were not to drink (Proverbs 31:4-5).
5. Judgment came upon Baasha because he was like those of the house of Jeroboam, committing the same sins. He did not learn any lessons from history.

discuss / consider

1. Elah ignored God's word, and Baasha committed the same sins as Jeroboam. One failed to learn from God's prophecies and proverbs, and the other failed to learn from the example of his predecessors. What are you learning from God's word and by observing others who have gone before you? Be specific.
2. Is God number one in your life? Does He come before anything and anyone? Remember, you are accountable to Him for all of your actions. There is no impunity for God's instruments.

challenge

An idol is anything that takes the place of God. List some of the idols in your life. Now get rid of them.

memorize

"You have made My people sin..." 1 Kings 16:2

"They provoked the Lord God of Israel to anger with their idols." 1 Kings 16:13

lesson 25

Zimri and Omri, Kings of Israel
Focus: You Reap What You Sow and God's View of Greatness
1 Kings 16:15-28

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. "Whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap."
2. God's view of greatness is different than man's view of greatness.

practical applications

1. Expect your position of power to be short-lived if wrongfully gained.
2. Are you great in God's eyes?

questions

1. Who was Zimri? How long did he reign? What did he do?
2. Who was Omri? What were the circumstances of his reign?
3. "Whatever a man sows, that he will also reap." Give an example of this from the lesson. Is this applicable today?
4. Explain the difference between God's view of greatness and man's view of greatness.
5. Explain, "Expect your position of power to be short-lived if wrongfully gained."

answers

1. Zimri was a wicked king, the fifth king of the northern kingdom of Israel. He only reigned for seven days. He assassinated King Elah while most of the army was down in Philistine territory besieging the city of Gibbethon. Zimri did not have the support of the military; they sided with General Omri and made him king. When Zimri saw this, he burned the palace down around him rather than being taken alive.

2. Omri was the sixth king of the northern kingdom of Israel, the father of the notorious King Ahab. When Zimri's short reign came to a disastrous end, there was civil war in the northern kingdom. Half of the people followed General Omri and half followed Tibni, trying to make him king. Tibni was finally overpowered by Omri. Omri was the beginning of the fourth dynasty in the northern kingdom, and became the most powerful of all the dynasties. After reigning for six years in Tirzah, Omri moved the capital to Samaria, seven miles west. He probably did this for several reasons: it would be a new capital on neutral political grounds, and the hill of Samaria would be more easily defended. Also, Zimri had burned the palace, so he needed a new one.

3. Zimri quickly reaped what he had sown. Seven days after he committed treason and usurped the throne by assassinating King Elah, he was dead. Yes, we still reap what we sow today.

4. Omri became a very powerful king, and was able to bring a measure of peace and prosperity to Israel. He is mentioned on the Moabite Stone, dating to the 9th century, B.C., and there are references to him in the ancient Assyrian records, showing that he was known internationally in that day. He was great in the world's eyes. But God said, "He did evil in the eyes of the Lord, and did worse than all that were before him" (1 Kings 16:25). Herod was known as Herod the Great in secular history, and his building projects (including the Wailing Wall) stand today, but in the Bible he is known as the king who killed the babies of Bethlehem.

5. There will be a day of reckoning when power has been wrongfully gained by stepping on others, either in secular or sacred positions. Look at the life of Zimri.

discuss / consider

1. Compare Omri's epitaph (1 Kings 16:25) with Asa's epitaph (1 Kings 15:14b). What kind of an epitaph might God write for you?

2. Write out what you would like to have as your epitaph. How can you live so that this will be true?

challenge

"Whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap." Have you found this to be true in your life? Give specific illustrations.

memorize

"Omri did evil in the eyes of the Lord...he made Israel sin, provoking the Lord God of Israel to anger with their idols." 1 Kings 16:25-26

"Whatever a man sows, that he will also reap." Galatians 6:7

lesson 26

**Ahab, King of Israel
Focus: Man's Sin, God's Wrath
1 Kings 16:29-34**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / learning points

1. God is faithful to His promises of judgment.
2. God is provoked to anger by man's sin.

practical applications

1. Who you follow will have a great effect on your life and lifestyle.
2. Who you marry will have a great effect on your life and lifestyle.

questions

1. Who was Ahab? Compare him to Jeroboam I.
2. What was God's promise of judgment concerning Hiel?
3. Is God provoked to anger by man's sin? Was this true for Ahab? What about an unbeliever today?
4. Role models can influence another's character. Cite biblical examples of good and bad role models.
5. What effect did Jezebel have on Ahab?

answers

1. Ahab was one of most evil kings of Israel. Although King Jeroboam I is referred to in scripture as "the king who made Israel to sin," King Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all of the other kings before him. He married a pagan; he worshipped Baal and built a temple and altar in Samaria for this pagan god. He allowed a man to rebuild the walls and gates of Jericho in direct defiance of God's word.
2. God had promised through Joshua that whoever rebuilt Jericho would lay its foundations with his firstborn, and with his youngest set up the gates. Five hundred years later God's promise of judgment came true. Abiram, the firstborn son of Hiel, died when the foundations were laid, and Segub, Hiel's youngest son, died when the gates were hung.
3. Yes, God is provoked to anger by man's sin. "Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him" (2 Kings 16:33). Concerning the unbeliever, "He who does not believe in His Son, the wrath of God abides on him" (John 3:36). Why? Because of sin. God hates sin, but He gave His Son to die on the cross that whoever would believe in Him would not die. God's wrath is necessary because of sin, but He is gracious, merciful and loving, slow to anger and not willing that any should perish.
4. Ahab followed Jeroboam I, walking in his sins (2 Kings 16:31). Paul, on the other hand, was a good role model for Timothy.
5. Jezebel, a pagan Phoenician princess, persuaded Ahab to plunge himself into the idolatrous and immoral worship of Baal.

discuss / consider

1. How aware are you of God's promises of judgment? How conscious are you of walking on hallowed ground in His presence? Do you strive to avoid any hint of sin in your life?
2. Who you follow will have a great effect on your life and lifestyle. Do you see this happening? List some of your role models.

challenge

1. What kind of a role model are you? How have you influenced the lives of others?
2. Recall Jezebel's effect on Ahab. Be in prayer about the one you choose to marry, that you may honor the Lord together.

memorize

"Ahab did evil in the sight of the Lord...he did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him." 1 Kings 16:30, 33

lesson 27

**Elijah Confronts Ahab
Focus: The Power of Prayer
1 Kings 17:1**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The secret of public power is private prayer.
2. God answers prayer that is in line with His word.

practical application

1. Let's remember that we speak for the living God.

questions

1. Who was Elijah?
2. Describe Elijah's first confrontation with King Ahab.
3. How was it that Elijah could claim such power from God?
4. God answers prayer that is in line with His word. How did this apply in Elijah's case?
5. Let's remember that we speak for the living God. What does this mean?

answers

1. Elijah was one of the great early prophets of the Old Testament. He came as a spokesman for God. He was a Tishbite of the inhabitants of Gilead. He dressed in a simple way, in a garment of camel's hair, with a big leather belt.
2. He confronted wicked King Ahab with a short and direct message, "As the Lord God of Israel lives, before Whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, except at my word" (1 Kings 17:1). Then he disappeared.
3. Elijah could claim power from God because he made the statement in God's name. Elijah prayed that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and one-half years. The fervent, effective prayer of a righteous man avails much (James 5:16-17). Elijah had been praying for six months before he confronted Ahab. There was private prayer before public power.
4. Elijah knew from God's word that if the people did not follow Him, He would not bless them or their lands. See Deuteronomy 11:11-17.
5. Elijah stood before the living God and spoke for Him. We stand before the living God today, and we speak for Him (2 Corinthians 5:20), both by our lives and our words.

discuss / consider

1. Do you have public power because of private prayer? How effective are your prayers?
2. Do you persevere in prayer, even when there seems to be no answer?
3. Do you pray in line with God's word? Give examples.

challenge

See 2 Corinthians 5:20. Do you speak for the living God? Give examples.

memorize

"As the Lord God of Israel lives, before Whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, except at my word" 1 Kings 17:1

lesson 28

**God Provides for Elijah
Focus: Cherith Before Carmel
1 Kings 17:2-7**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God uses both supernatural and natural means to accomplish His purposes.
2. Cherith must come before Carmel.

practical applications

1. God may permit your brooks to dry up.
2. What grades are you getting at Cherith College?

questions

1. Why did Elijah disappear for more than two years after his first confrontation with Ahab? Where was he? How was he provided for?
2. When providing for Elijah, how did God use both supernatural and natural means?
3. What does it mean, "Cherith must come before Carmel"?
4. When God stopped the rain on the land because of Israel's sin, why didn't He keep the Brook Cherith flowing for Elijah's sake?
5. What lessons did God teach Elijah at the Brook Cherith?

answers

1. God hid him so there would be time for the message to sink in. He was hidden alongside the Brook Cherith. God provided for Elijah by sending ravens with meat and bread twice a day, and the brook gave water.

2. God's purpose here was to provide for His servant Elijah. The birds were a supernatural means. It was unnatural for ravens, of all birds, to drop off bread and meat right on schedule twice a day - it was a miracle. The brook was a natural means for drinking water. In the same way, God can provide for us, either by supernatural means, as in miracles or by direct healing; or by natural means, using doctors and medicines.

3. Elijah had lessons to learn about provision, protection, and dependence on the Lord, which had been accomplished at Cherith. Then came Carmel, the great confrontation and victory over the prophets of Baal. It's the same with us – we need to learn how to walk by faith before we can claim great victories for the Lord.

4. God's punishment of Israel affected the whole land, including the Brook Cherith (although God could have kept it flowing). The rains fall (or fail to fall) on the just and the unjust (Matthew 5:45), and when our nation comes into hard times, Christians are not exempt, as in economic depressions.

5. Lessons that God was teaching Elijah at "Cherith College" included courses in protection, dependance, walking by faith, handling solitude, and humility.

discuss / consider

1. Recall some of God's provisions for you. How thankful are you? How have you shown it?

2. "Cherith must come before Carmel." Have you learned lessons in your life that prove this to be true?

challenge

1. Have some of your brooks dried up? How real is your faith that the Lord can and will meet all of your needs? Do you see God's hand in both the dry brooks and the rain?

2. What grades would you receive at Cherith College?

memorize

"you shall drink from the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there." 1 Kings 17:4

"He went and did according to the word of the Lord." 1 Kings 17:5

"And it happened after a while that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land." I Kings 17:7

lesson 29

**Elijah and the Widow
Focus: God's Leading and Testing
1 Kings 17:8-16**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God leads one step at a time.
2. God provides one way at a time.

practical applications

1. Expect to be tested in the domestic area.
2. Expect to be dependent on others.

questions

1. When Elijah left the Brook Cherith, where did the Lord direct him to go? Who did he meet there?
2. What was the purpose of this new venture?
3. Did God provide a complete road map for Elijah? Why or why not?
4. "God provides one way at a time." What does this mean?
5. We should expect to be tested in the domestic area. Why is this so difficult?

answers

1. Elijah was led by the Lord to go to Zarephath, on the Mediterranean Coast between Tyre and Sidon, about 75 miles from Cherith. He was directed to a widow, and he was to ask her to provide for him.
2. Elijah was taught to be dependant on another person, and the widow was taught lessons in faith.
3. No, Elijah was led one step at a time. God does the same for us. The Bible contains promises that God will guide us as we take the one step He has asked from us. We have lessons to learn from each step of the way (Cherith before Carmel).
4. God provides physical and spiritual needs one day at a time. The provisions are different in each setting, and the amount of time is different, too. Some lessons take longer to learn than others, and God's pattern is both the best way and sufficient for each situation.
5. It is difficult because of our lack of privacy and space. "Our" priorities and activities must give way at times for the sake of harmony and in deference to others. We need to learn sensitivity to the needs of those with whom we live.

discuss / consider

1. Do you respond to God's directions? Be specific (how, when, how quickly).
2. Are you willing to be led one step at a time? And in God's way? Check this out by recalling past experiences.
3. What happens when you refuse God's way? (Recall Jonah's experiences).

challenge

1. Are you being tested in the domestic area? How are you doing? What needs to be worked on?
2. Do you find it difficult to depend on others? Do people tell you that you are too independent? Does this tell you something?

memorize

"Arise, go, and dwell there...so he arose and went..." 1 Kings 17:9-10

"Do not fear; go and do...So she went and did..." 1 Kings 17:13, 15

"The bin of flour was not used up, nor did the jar of oil run dry, according to the word of the Lord which He spoke by Elijah." 1 Kings 17:16

lesson 30

**The Widow's Son Raised
Focus: Crisis and Faith
1 Kings 17:17-24**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God's care is larger in scope than just meeting a person's need.
2. God's crises are larger in scope than just testing a person's faith.

personal applications

1. Are we willing to help people who falsely accuse us?
2. Are we willing to help people we don't like?

questions

1. Discuss the death of the widow's son at Zarephath.
2. What does it mean, "God's care is larger in scope than just meeting a person's need"?
3. What does it mean, "God's crises are larger in scope than just testing a person's faith"?
4. How did Elijah respond when the widow blamed him for the death of her son?
5. How did Elijah respond to God when the widow's son died?

answers

1. The widow blamed Elijah for the death of her son. Elijah disregarded the comment, and through prayer and by God's grace took the son and brought him back to life. It was a great step for Elijah, touching a dead Gentile body. The widow acknowledged Elijah as a man of God when he brought the boy to her.

2. God had Elijah stay with the widow to provide for both his and her needs, but it was greater than that. In Baal country, this woman was being witnessed to, cared for, and challenged in her faith. Others were being witnessed to, and furthermore, God was proving to Elijah that He could take care of him and protect him right in Jezebel's back yard. In the New Testament, we see God's larger scope in His care for Elijah when the Lord Jesus rebuked the people at Nazareth for their unbelief (Luke 4:25-26).

3. God allows crises to come into our lives to build up our faith and to awaken our conscience, even as God tested the widow when her son died. We see here significant steps in faith in both the widow and in Elijah.

4. Elijah responded in two ways – he ignored the blame placed upon him by the widow, and he did something to help the situation.

5. Elijah blamed God in turn (1 Kings 17:20), but then he turned to the Lord and cried for help (1 Kings 17:21).

discuss / consider

1. Do you tend to limit the scope of God's working in your life, perhaps through unbelief? How can you expand your vision in this regard?

2. Has your faith been tested lately? To whom do you turn in times of crises? Has your faith grown because of a crisis? Be specific.

challenge

1. Are you willing to help those who falsely accuse you? Are you thin skinned? What can you do to be more gracious to an "enemy"?

2. Do you tend to blame others, or even God, for some things that happen in your life? How can you overcome this tendency?

memorize

"What have I to do with you, O man of God?" 1 Kings 17:18

"He cried out to the Lord...the Lord heard his voice..." 1 Kings 17:20-22

"Now I know that you are a man of God." 1 Kings 12:24

lesson 31

Ahab, Elijah, and Obadiah
Focus: Commitment
1 Kings 18:1-6

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching point

1. God is looking for fully committed believers.

practical application

1. Are you a partially committed believer like Obadiah?

questions

1. Why was there no rain in Israel for a period of three years?
2. Where was Elijah between his two confrontations with Ahab?
3. For what were Ahab and Obadiah searching?
4. Discuss the levels of commitment in the three characters in this lesson - Ahab, Elijah and Obadiah.
5. What did Obadiah do that showed his fear of the Lord?

answers

1. The Lord God had dried up the land because of the disobedience and rebellion of His people Israel, as He had warned them.
2. He lived for a short time by the Brook Cherith, and for a longer time in Zarephath.
3. King Ahab and his servant, Obadiah, were searching for grass for the horses. (1 Kings 18:5-6)
4. Ahab had no commitment to the Lord. He knew about the Lord, but he was weak-willed, self-centered, and self-indulgent. He even promoted idolatry in the land, and allowed Queen Jezebel to massacre prophets of the Lord. In Elijah there was full commitment and obedience to the Lord, even if it would have cost him his life. He courageously and boldly confronted Ahab about his sin. Obadiah showed partial commitment, but he was a secret believer, and stayed in the service of the wicked king.
5. "Obadiah feared the Lord greatly" (1 Kings 18:3). Obadiah took one hundred prophets of the Lord and hid them in a cave and fed them so they wouldn't be massacred by Jezebel.

discuss / consider

1. "Obadiah feared the Lord greatly." What does it mean to fear the Lord? How do you show your fear of the Lord?
2. Are you more concerned about "grass" or God? Give some illustrations from your life. List your primary values.

challenge

Review the levels of commitment studied here. How would you describe your level of commitment to the Lord?

memorize

"Go into the land to all the springs of water and to all the brooks; perhaps we may find grass to keep the animals alive." 1 Kings 18:5

"Obadiah feared the Lord greatly." 1 Kings 18:3

lesson 32

**Elijah and Obadiah Meet
Focus: Partial Commitment
1 Kings 18:7-15**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching point

1. Partial commitment has tell-tale symptoms.

practical application

1. God will test our commitment to Christ.

questions

1. Describe the meeting between Elijah and Obadiah.
2. What were some of the tell-tale signs of Obadiah's partial commitment?
3. Why did Elijah meet Obadiah on the road and ask him to announce his presence to the king?
4. Did Obadiah trust Elijah?
5. How many times in this passage did Obadiah say that he would be killed if he aligned himself with Elijah?
Was he killed?

answers

1. Suddenly Elijah met Obadiah on the road, and it appeared that it wasn't a pleasant meeting. Obadiah was out looking for grass for the king's horses because of the severe famine. Elijah was coming from Zarephath. As a secret believer, Obadiah recognized Elijah and asked if it was really he. Elijah affirmed that it was. An international search did not produce Elijah, for God had hidden him from King Ahab and Queen Jezebel. The ensuing conversation shows Obadiah's reluctance to identify with Elijah. However, in the end, Obadiah agrees to take Elijah's message to Ahab.

2. Obadiah compromised his position as a believer because he could have left the employment of the king. He did not have a clear conscience. He had a loss of courage, being afraid of the king's wrath. He exhibited a rest-on-your-laurels mentality, telling Elijah how much he had done for the Lord. He did not trust Elijah.

3. Elijah was testing Obadiah's commitment. Would he become an out-and-out believer or would he remain a secret believer? Would he risk his life to announce the arrival of Elijah? His commitment was being tested.

4. No. See 1 Kings 18:12.

5. See 1 Kings 18:9, 12, 14. No, he was not killed.

discuss / consider

1. Ask yourself these questions concerning partial commitment:

a. Do I have a guilty conscience about my commitment?

b. Do I show a loss of courage, running scared?

c. Do I exhibit a rest-on-my-laurels mentality? Do I try to justify my commitment by telling people what I have done for the Lord?

2. If your commitment has been tested lately, how has it been tested?

challenge

Do you trust fellow-believers? Can they trust you?

memorize

"How have I sinned, that I will be delivered to be killed? Haven't you heard what I did?" 1 Kings 18:9,12,13
"Then Elijah said, 'As the Lord of hosts lives, before whom I stand, I will surely present myself to [Ahab] today.'" 1 Kings 18:15

lesson 33

**Mount Carmel Preparations
Focus: Two Opinions
1 Kings 18:16-24**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The believer will be blamed for many of this world's problems.
2. The unbeliever should be confronted.
3. The truth is not decided by numbers or home court advantage.

practical application

1. How long will you falter between two opinions?

questions

1. What did Elijah tell Ahab to do when he met him? What was Elijah's purpose?
2. What was the agreement between Elijah and the false prophets on Mount Carmel?
3. Why is it that believers often get blamed for the world's problems?
4. Should unbelievers be confronted about their relationship to God?
5. Does God tolerate luke-warmness? Support your answer with Scripture.

answers

1. He ordered him to assemble the false prophets of Baal to Mount Carmel for a showdown. All of Israel was to be assembled to observe the results. Elijah's purpose for the confrontation was to prove who was really God, Baal or the Lord God of Israel.
2. They agreed that two bulls would be prepared for sacrifice, and that the God who answered by fire was truly God.
3. People need a scapegoat for their wrong doing and wrong thinking. Elijah was blamed for withholding the rain, but Ahab and Israel had stopped following the Lord. The Roman Emperor Nero blamed the early Christians for the fire in Rome. Today Christians are blamed for impeding progress because of their old-fashioned moral convictions, such as counter-attacks on abortion or moral decadence in films.
4. Yes, for God commands all men everywhere to repent. Elijah confronted unbelieving Ahab, the unbelieving prophets and unbelieving people. Paul confronted unbelievers in Athens and elsewhere. We are to contend earnestly for the faith (Jude 3).
5. No. Read Revelation 3:16 and Joshua 24:15. God wants you to choose to serve His Son. Do not falter between two opinions.

discuss / consider

1. As a Christian, have you been accused of causing some of the world's problems? If so, what was your response?
2. As a Christian, do you enjoy the pleasures of sin? Have there been times when you have been enamored with the riches of the world?

challenge

1. Are there times when you falter between two opinions? Are there times when you are luke-warm?
2. Try to confront an unbeliever this week about his relationship to the Lord. Pray about it beforehand, and seek the Lord's direction and help.

memorize

- "I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father's house have." I Kings 18:18
"How long will you falter between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him." 1 Kings 18:21
"The God who answers by fire, He is God." I Kings 18:24

lesson 34

**The Prophets of Baal
Focus: Sincerity is not Salvation
1 Kings 18:25-29**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. There is a time for holy ridicule.
2. Sincerity is not salvation.
3. Religious zeal and fervor are not the key.

practical application

1. Idols will not answer you in your time of need.

questions

1. On what does the Bible focus concerning the Mount Carmel confrontation?
2. Is there ever a time for holy ridicule?
3. Is sincerity enough for salvation? Explain.
4. If enough religious zeal and fervor are shown, people will make it with God. True or False?
5. Idols will not answer you in your time of need. Elaborate on this point.

answers

1. The failure of Baal to answer, paving the way for God's dramatic answer.
2. Yes, Elijah mocked the false prophets. Sometimes it may help people get the point more clearly, but don't make a habit of this technique.
3. No. Many people are deluded into thinking that if they are sincere they will get to heaven. But apart from Christ, there is no salvation. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14:6)
4. False. The prophets of Baal had plenty of both, but they were without faith in the true and living God. On the wrong basis, fervor and zeal accomplish nothing.
5. Christians, as well as unbelievers, sometimes pursue idols – power, money, pleasure. These idols will not answer them when they stand before God; earthly idols will be silent. "Keep yourselves from idols," (1 John 5:21) is addressed to Christians.

discuss / consider

1. Do you recall meeting someone who was sincere, but not saved? Did you confront him? Would you confront someone like this now? How?

challenge

1. Is there an idol in your life? (An idol is anything that takes priority over God). Think seriously about this, and do what you need to do to make the Lord number one.

memorize

"O Baal, hear us! But no one answered." 1 Kings 18:26, 29

lesson 35

**The Great Confrontation
Focus: The Fire of the Lord
1 Kings 18:30-40**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Public prayer does not have to be long to be effective.
2. The fire of the Lord must fall before the refreshing rains can come.

practical application

1. Let's repair the altars of the Lord.

questions

1. What did the prophets of Baal do to entice their god to answer them?
2. What did Elijah do to prove that God was the true and living God?
3. Does public prayer have to be long to be effective?
4. "The fire of the Lord must fall before the refreshing rains can come." What does this picture for the believer?
5. What does it mean that the altars of the Lord must be repaired?

answers

1. They ranted and raved and called continuously on Baal. They mutilated themselves and they danced in ecstatic frenzy. But the heavens were silent.
2. First, Elijah repaired the altar of the Lord. Then he made a large trench around the altar. He put the wood on the altar, then placed the bull on the wood. Four waterpots were filled three times and poured over the sacrifice and the wood. Then he prayed to the Lord God of heaven, that the people might know that He is God.
3. No. Elijah's prayer was short, to the point, and effective (1 Kings 18:36- 37). On the other hand, the prophets of Baal prayed for hours, mutilated themselves, and ranted and raved. But they were praying to a false god. Our prayers should be sincere, and we must realize that we are praying to a living and concerned God.
4. The fire of the Lord speaks of Calvary, an event which also took place at the time of the evening sacrifice. As the fire of the Lord fell on Elijah's sacrifice, so the fire of God's judgment fell on Christ at the cross for us. By believing, we now can have the refreshing rain of the Holy Spirit.
5. God wants us to repair His altars, even as He commanded Elijah to do. Altars speak of testimony to the Lord, and of worship. Don't tear down altars, and don't quit and walk away when the going gets tough. Pitch in, repair and build up altars (ministries, for example). Recall the incident when Jesus cleansed the temple. Is there some cleansing for us to do?

discuss / consider

1. What kind of a public pray-er are you? Do you try to impress people or do you seek God's glory alone?
2. What are you doing to prove by your life that God is the true and living God?
3. Have you experienced the fire before the refreshing rains?

challenge

1. What are you doing to repair and build up altars for the Lord?

memorize

"He repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down." 1 Kings 18:30

"Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that You are the Lord God." 1 Kings 18:37

"The Lord, He is God! The Lord, He is God!" 1 Kings 18:39

lesson 36

**The Rains Return
Focus: Spiritual Sensitivity
1 Kings 18:41-46**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Spiritual people are sensitive to the sound of rain.
2. Faith sees God's hand behind man's hand.

practical applications

1. Do you have eyes of faith that see God's hand behind man's hand?
2. Let's pray as if the outcome depended on us.

questions

1. How had God shown His power over the pagan gods at Mount Carmel?
2. What effect did this have on God's people, Israel?
3. "Spiritual people are sensitive to the sound of rain." What does this mean? What did this mean to Elijah? What does this mean to us today?
4. "Faith sees God's hand behind man's hand." What does this mean? What did this mean to Elijah? What does this mean to us today?
5. Why did Elijah pray with such perseverance when he already knew that God had promised to send the rain?

answers

1. The false prophets of Baal were defeated and eliminated. In no uncertain terms God had shown His power over pagan gods by sending fire down upon Elijah's sacrifice.
2. They were impressed by this display of power, and temporarily turned back to the Lord, proclaiming, "The Lord, He is God." But their change of heart was short-lived.
3. It means that there is sensitivity to what God is going to do. Elijah knew God's word. He knew the problem that had caused God to stop the rains had been dealt with, and he knew God had promised that the rains would return. When we know the word of God, we are sensitive to the conditions that are necessary for God's blessings to come on His people. Spiritual people are in tune with the plans and purposes of God.
4. Faith sees events more than on the surface; faith sees God's hand in everything. When Elijah saw a small cloud the size of a man's hand, he knew this was the return of the rains that had been promised by God. We've seen the break-up of the Soviet Union and the dismantling of the Iron Curtain. The world sees this as man's hand, a combination of foreign policies. Faith sees doors open to the gospel after years of prayer.
5. Elijah continued to pray as if the outcome depended on him. Although we do not know how prayer works, we know that it does work, and God is pleased when we pray in line with His promises.

discuss / consider

1. Consider the short-lived repentance of the Israelites, even after such a miraculous display of God's power. Does this ever happen in your Christian circles? After seeing a miracle or an outpouring of God's grace, do you drop to your knees acknowledging the sovereignty of God? But then, do you soon go about business-as-usual?
2. How sensitive are you to "the sound of rain"? Do you know God's word well enough to read the conditions around you concerning His promises?

challenge

1. Do you see God's hand behind man's hand?
2. Do you persevere in prayer? Does this mean you have to pray a certain length of time?

memorize

"Go up...for there is the sound of the abundance of rain." 1 Kings 18:41

"There is a cloud, as small as a man's hand..." 1 Kings 18:44

lesson 37

**A Change in Elijah
Focus: From Courage to Cowardice
1 Kings 19:1-8**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching point

1. "Let him who thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall." (1 Corinthians 10:12)

practical application

1. Let's follow God's method of restoration.

questions

1. What did Jezebel do when she heard what had happened to the prophets of Baal?
2. What did Elijah do then?
3. How did an angel minister to Elijah in these circumstances?
4. What happened to Elijah when it appeared that he went from courage to cowardice?
5. How did God restore Elijah? How did the Lord restore Peter?

answers

1. She threatened to take Elijah's life.
2. He fled to Beersheba, about 100 miles south of Jezreel, then went yet another day's journey further into the wilderness.
3. He fed him with a cake baked on coals and gave him a drink from a jar of water. Elijah rested and ate, then was prepared for the journey ahead of him.
4. Elijah took his eyes off the Lord. He was sucked into the vacuum that comes after a spiritual victory. He experienced unfulfilled expectations (a great revival in Israel, which didn't happen), and he was physically exhausted.
5. Elijah was allowed to rest after being tired; he was fed and given instructions from the Lord; he was not rebuked or reprimanded at this point (God remembers our frailty when we need to be restored). Peter took his eyes off the Lord, and the Lord put out His hand to help him.

discuss / consider

1. After having experienced a great victory for God, have you then known defeat and discouragement to follow? Was this the reason in line with the Doctrinal Point, "Let him who thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall" (1 Corinthians 10:12)?
2. Have you ever fled from a "Jezebel's" threats?

challenge

Have you known the ministry of an angel? Elaborate.

memorize

"Elijah arose and ran for his life. He prayed that he might die. He said, 'It is enough!'" 1 Kings 19:3-4
"He arose, and ate and drank; and he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, to the mountain of God." 1 Kings 19:8
"Let him who thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall" 1 Corinthians 10:12

lesson 38

**Teaching Elijah
Focus: Patience
1 Kings 19:9-14**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The ways of the Lord are more than spectacular.
2. The works of the Lord are more than judgment.

practical applications

1. What are you doing here?
2. Let's listen for God's still, small voice.

questions

1. Our passage begins with Elijah hiding in a cave. What was he doing there?
2. What is significant about the cave where Elijah hid?
3. Describe the object lesson God gave Elijah.
4. The ways of the Lord are spectacular. Review some of the spectacular things Elijah had seen God do.
5. What is meant by "Let's listen for God's still, small voice."?

answers

1. Elijah had just experienced a great victory over the prophets of Baal. He saw the return of the rains after a long drought. Now he is running away in fear from wicked Queen Jezebel, who threatened his life.
2. It may have been the cleft in the rock where God placed Moses when he revealed His glory to him.
3. As Elijah was hiding in the mountain, God sent a strong wind, then an earthquake, then fire. Finally God spoke to him in a still, small voice.
4. Elijah saw God stop the rains; the fire of the Lord come down from heaven; and the rains return suddenly after the three and a half year drought.
5. This is an encouragement to take time to let God speak to you. Take time not only to read God's Word, but to reflect on what He is telling you. Watch for God to work in small ways in your life.

discuss / consider

1. The ways of the Lord are more than spectacular. God can do the spectacular, but He also works in less spectacular ways. He also works in gentle ways. We love to see God's dramatic answers to prayer; tremendously successful ministries. These are works of God. But God works in less dramatic ways as well. Praise the Lord that He is working in small ways in your life and in your church.
2. Sometimes we may wish God would "get things over with" and judge this world. But we should praise the Lord that His works are more than judgment. He is graciously withholding His judgment today in order to allow more people to come to salvation.

challenge

Elijah went to Mt. Sinai, hoping God would speak to him – and He did. He sought to understand what God was doing. Instead of reprimanding Elijah, God patiently taught Him. He will do the same for you if you seek to understand His will.

memorize

"But the Lord was not in the wind... in the earthquake... in the fire." 1 Kings 19:12-13
"What are you doing here, Elijah?" 1 Kings 19:13

lesson 39

**Recommissioning Elijah
Focus: Restoration
1 Kings 19:15-18**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God graciously restores His servants.
2. God uses unbelievers to accomplish His purposes.

practical applications

1. Talk to God about your hang-ups.
2. Are you a member of the secret 7,000 club?

questions

1. How did Elijah show his willingness to be recommissioned by God?
2. How did God restore Elijah to his walk of faith?
3. Does God use unbelievers to accomplish His purposes? Support your answer.
4. What happened when Elijah talked to God about his questions?
5. What is the secret 7,000 club?

answers

1. He showed a reverent attitude by wrapping his face in his mantle and coming out of the cave to listen to the Lord. He responded to the still small voice of God.
2. The Lord said to Elijah, "Go, return..." That is a renewed commission right there. God answered Elijah's questions and told him about His future judgment on Ahab and Jezebel. He was given insight concerning the legacy of his prophecy to be continued by Elisha.
3. Yes. In this record, God used two unbelievers to punish and discipline His people Israel. Sometimes He does this today.
4. Elijah could not understand why God let Ahab and Jezebel remain in power. He wrongly thought that God was allowing all believers to be killed, and that he was left alone to stand for God. But when he talked with God, even with a bitter attitude and with reluctant reverence, God graciously answered.
5. The Lord had to tell Elijah that there were other believers, because they had not identified with him, nor made themselves known (See 1 Kings 19:18). God takes note of the fact that there are believers who are timid or ashamed, for whatever reason. God knows each heart, and whatever evidence of faith there is, God takes note of it. However, it is important that Christians share Christ and the good news of the gospel, so desperately needed by the world. Remember what Christ did on the cross for everyone who will believe, and that an eternity awaits.

discuss / consider

1. Are you willing to be used by God, whatever the cost? What does it cost you to serve Him?
2. When it seems as if justice is put on hold, talk with God. Then listen. When you have questions about what is going on in your life, talk to God. Then listen.

challenge

Are you a member of the secret 7,000 club? Do you know Christians who belong to this club? What should be done about it?

memorize

"Go, return...and when you arrive..." 1 Kings 19:15

"Yet I have reserved seven thousand... all whose knees have not bowed to Baal." 1 Kings 19:18

lesson 40

**Elisha Commissioned
Focus: God Calls Busy People
1 Kings 19:19-21**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The Lord calls busy people.
2. There is a time to pass on the mantle.

practical application

1. Burn your bridges behind you.

questions

1. Discuss God's role and Elijah's role in the commissioning of Elisha.
2. How do we know that Elisha came from a wealthy family?
3. When God wants a job done, He calls busy people. How does this relate to Elisha? What does this say to us?
4. "There is a time to pass on the mantle." What does this mean?
5. We often hear the phrase, "Don't burn your bridges behind you." But here we are told, "Burn your bridges behind you." Why? When is the latter phrase applicable?

answers

1. In the previous lesson, Elijah was recommissioned; now Elisha is commissioned. One of God's first assignments after Elijah's restoration was to anoint Elisha as the prophet who would take his place. Elijah retraced his footsteps from Mount Sinai to a place called Abel Meholah, and there he saw Elisha. He threw his mantle on Elisha, which meant that Elisha was to take Elijah's place as prophet.
2. He was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen, which meant he would have eleven servants in front of him, each with a plowing team, and he would be the twelfth. It would be like having twelve tractors in a large field today, one behind the other, each with a hired driver.
3. Elisha was not just sitting around doing nothing. He was directing a sizeable farm operation, but when he was called to serve the Lord, he responded immediately. People who are busy before their call will be busy after their call.
4. Passing on the mantle means to pass your responsibilities on to someone who can take your place. In passing on the mantle, there should be a joy in teaching another to take your place. There should be no jealousy, bitterness, or reluctance when that time comes. It does not mean that you are no longer useful. The Lord has something else for you to do at that point.
5. When it comes to committing to what God calls you to do, burn your bridges behind you. There should be no turning back, but 100% commitment. Elisha burned his equipment as a symbolic gesture that he was fully committed to the call of the Lord.

discuss / consider

1. Are you busy in your work? Has the Lord called you to be busy for Him? How have you responded?
2. Have you been called to pass on the mantle? If so, have you done it with a good spirit and willingness of heart? Are you open to whatever the Lord has in mind for you, especially in the transitions of life?

challenge

Have you burned the necessary bridges? Are you 100% committed to the Lord?

memorize

"Elijah passed by Elisha and threw his mantle on him." 1 Kings 19:19

"Elisha arose and followed Elijah, and became his servant." 1 Kings 19:21

lesson 41

**Israel Attacked
Focus: Tactics of the Enemy
1 Kings 20:1-12**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The enemy always looks for vulnerable areas.
2. The enemy always demands more.
3. The enemy always attacks the family.

practical application

1. Godly counsel can help you make the right decision.

questions

1. Discuss Ben-Hadad's attack on the Northern Kingdom of Israel.
2. The only reason that God included this section in the Bible was so we could have an accurate historical record of the wars between the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the nation of Syria. True or False?
3. List the three tactics of the enemy of God's people shown in this passage.
4. How did Ben-Hadad use these tactics against Israel? How does Satan use these tactics against Christians today?
5. Should Christians seek counsel in decision-making?

answers

1. Ben-Hadad, King of Syria, gathered all his forces together and went up to make war against Samaria. The time was circa 850 B.C. Ben-Hadad and the Syrians were able to put together a coalition of thirty-two kings. From this superior position, Ben-Hadad continued to threaten King Ahab of Israel to the point where he boasted that he would annihilate Samaria.
2. False. There are lessons here to be learned about spiritual warfare, too. Ben-Hadad was an enemy of God's people, Israel, and as such pictures Satan, the enemy of our souls. Here we see Ben-Hadad's tactics in warfare, which are typical of Satan's strategy in spiritual warfare.
3. The enemy always looks for vulnerable areas, demands more, and always attacks the family.
4. Ben-Hadad saw the vulnerability of Israel in its weakened condition after it had suffered drought and famine. Ben-Hadad made increasing demands on Israel, first demanding that Ahab and Israel be a vassal state, paying annual tribute. Then the demands increased, making the people subject to Ben-Hadad and his people. Finally, Ben-Hadad demanded the wives and children of Israel. Satan uses these tactics today. He looks for vulnerable areas in our churches and in our ministries, in our families, and in our personal lives. Satan always demands more from us. We cannot compromise with Satan in any area of our lives, for he will exact more and more of our time and energies. Satan attacks the family because the family is God's basic social unit. God ordained the family, so Satan tries to destroy it in any way that he can. Look at the inroads he has made by undermining the biblical concept of the family. Where is the authority structure in the home today? Look at the way Hollywood and TV fit into this picture.
5. Yes. Godly counsel can help in making right decisions. But always seek God primarily.

discuss/consider

1. Have you compromised your stand for Christ, only to find that the enemy demands more and more? If so, go back to the point of compromise and seek wise counsel, both from God and Christian elders or friends.
2. Are you prone to read the Bible mainly for its historical authenticity? When you focus on this, also focus on what the lessons have for you doctrinally and practically.
3. How could you counter the three attacks of Satan? Consider them one at a time.

challenge

As you seek to live for Christ, are there things that you cannot do?

memorize

"...this thing I cannot do." 1 Kings 20:9

lesson 42

**Israel's Victory
Focus: God's Strategy
1 Kings 20:13-21**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God is patient and long-suffering.
2. God is a master strategist.

practical applications

1. If you want to be a winner, be an obeyer.
2. Make sure you have a better thanksgiving record than Ahab.

questions

1. When Ben-Hadad threatened to storm the city of Samaria, what did Ahab do?
2. A prophet came to Ahab with a word from the Lord. What was that word?
3. Describe God's patience and long-suffering with King Ahab.
4. How did Ahab know what strategy to use in the battle against the Syrians?
5. Why did Israel win over the Syrian forces at this point? What does this say to us?

answers

1. Uncharacteristically, he told him (in effect), "Don't count your chickens before they're hatched." The battle wasn't over yet.

2. That the Syrian forces would be delivered into Israel's hands (1 Kings 20:13).

3. Ahab had not repented and turned to the Lord in spite of experiencing drought and famine, in spite of observing the defeat of the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel; or even when the rains returned. Then God sent a prophet to tell him about his impending victory.

4. The Lord told him through His prophet. While the Syrian army was getting drunk in the middle of the day, Israel was to surprise them. No one in the Middle East starts a war in the heat of the day, but God used this strategy. Satan thought he had won the victory in the Garden of Eden. Not so. God used unusual strategy and has conquered Satan by the cross and the resurrection of His Son.

5. They obeyed God's orders. Throughout the history of the nation of Israel, they never lost a battle when God's orders were followed. The lesson for us? When Satan ensnares us in spiritual warfare and we are sensing defeat, we need to listen to God's orders and obey them.

discuss / consider

1. Recall some of the times when the Lord was patient and long-suffering with you. Did you thank Him for His patient leading?

2. Are you prone to plan your own strategies, or do you take your cues from God?

challenge

Are you obeying God's word in every detail? If not, seek Him, ask His forgiveness, listen to Him, and obey.

memorize

"Thus says the Lord, 'Have you seen all this great multitude? Behold, I will deliver it unto your hand today, and you shall know that I am the Lord.'" 1 Kings 20:13

"Then the king of Israel went out and attacked the horses and chariots, and killed the Syrians with a great slaughter." 1 Kings 20:21

lesson 43

**Ahab's Second Victory
Focus: Murphy's Law
1 Kings 20:22-30**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Unbelievers have strange ideas about God.
2. Murphy's law is not in the Bible.

practical applications

1. Depend on God, but do your part.
2. When you feel like a goat, remember the Shepherd.

questions

1. Discuss King Ahab's reign.
2. Explain, "Unbelievers have strange ideas about God."
3. What is "Murphy's Law"? Is it in the Bible?
4. Israel, and Christians today, can just sit back and depend on God to do everything. True or False? Support your answer.
5. What is meant by, "Israel's army was like two little flocks of goats"?

answers

1. Ahab was the seventh king of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, reigning in the 9th Century, B.C. He was not a good king, but God graciously gave him many opportunities to repent.

2. When the Syrians were defeated, they concluded that it was because Israel was protected by the gods of the hills (1 Kings 20:23). The ancient pagans had all kinds of strange ideas about God. Today, many think of God as an impersonal being, a celestial killjoy, or a heavenly Santa Claus. Right ideas about Him come only through revelation.

3. Murphy's Law means that if something can go wrong, it will. It is not in the Bible. Have you ever felt that Murphy's Law was operative in your life? Actually, God controls all events.

4. False. God promised victory to Israel, but He also required specific actions on Israel's part. The same is true in spiritual warfare - the Christian is to depend on God and be strengthened by knowing and obeying God's word. The one who seeks God's will and way will have victory in his life.

5. Israel's army was like two little flocks of goats, compared to the Syrian army, which filled the countryside (1 Kings 20:27). The opposition was all around and seemed to be great, and the problems seemed insurmountable. But one little goat plus God is a majority.

discuss / consider

1. What is your idea of God? How would you describe Him to someone?

2. Do you have a balance in your life concerning dependence on God and doing things on your own?

challenge

When problems seem to overwhelm you, and you feel insignificant, remember the Shepherd.

memorize

"Go, strengthen yourself; take note, and see what you should do..." 1 Kings 20:22

"Their gods are gods of the hills. Therefore they were stronger than we; but if we fight against them in the plain, surely we will be stronger than they." 1 Kings 20:23

"The children of Israel killed one hundred thousand foot soldiers of the Syrians in one day." 1 Kings 20:29

lesson 44

**King Ahab's Disobedience
Focus: Unholy Alliances
1 Kings 20:31-34**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The enemy will try to take advantage of Christian attitudes.
2. The enemy will try to bribe the Christian.

practical application

1. Be careful about who you call "my brother".

questions

1. Did God continue to show grace and tolerance toward Ahab in spite of his lack of repentance and thankfulness?
2. Why did Ben-Hadad try to take advantage of Israel?
3. Christian attitudes are sufficient to repel the enemy. True or False? Explain.
4. Does the enemy ever try to bribe Christians?
5. We should be open, calling everyone "my brother." True or False?

answers

1. Yes. God had granted Ahab two great victories against Ben-Hadad of Syria, and He delivered Ben-Hadad into the hand of Ahab. Ahab should have removed him according to God's word (and with good reason), but he was disobedient and let him go free.

2. Because of Ahab's lenient attitude.

3. False. Just as Ben-Hadad tried to take advantage of God's people, so Satan and his emissaries will try to take advantage of the Christian. An example of this is the Church being drawn into schemes by unscrupulous people.

4. Yes, just as Ben-Hadad tried to bribe Ahab. Ben-Hadad promised to return some of Israel's territory, to let Israel set up market places in Damascus, and to reduce trade tariffs. It worked because of the appeal to Ahab. But his bribery ended with an unholy alliance.

5. False. Ben-Hadad, an enemy of God's people and devoted to their destruction, invited Ahab to come up into his chariot. We should be willing to extend the right hand of fellowship to every true believer, but we need to be careful about welcoming unbelievers (and getting into their chariots). There is a distinction between fellowship with believers and evangelism with unbelievers.

discuss / consider

1. Are you able to stand against the wiles of the enemy, even when he looks to you for mercy? Do you give mercy so that the enemy will not think you are too dogmatic?

2. Have you found yourself compromising with the enemy, thinking that it would make him go away?

challenge

Have you made unholy alliances? What were the results? Would you make them again?

memorize

"They were watching closely to see whether any sign of mercy would come from him." 1 Kings 20:33

"And he said, 'Is he still alive? He is my brother.'" 1 Kings 20:32

"So he made a treaty with him." 1 Kings 20:34

lesson 45

**Prophecy of Ahab's Death
Focus: Vulnerability to Satan
1 Kings 20:35-43**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The will of the Lord may be unpleasant at times.
2. Lying for a good purpose is not taught in the Bible.

practical application

1. Are you vulnerable to satanic attack?

questions

1. One prophet said to another prophet, "By the word of the Lord, 'Strike me.'" When the second prophet refused, he was killed by a lion. The same request was made of a third prophet, and he struck him and injured him. What's going on here?
2. Who were the "sons of the prophets"?
3. Did Ahab repent because of the prophecy on himself and on Israel?
4. Is the will of the Lord ever unpleasant?
5. It could be OK to lie if it is for a good purpose. Right?

answers

1. This was a role play or an object lesson given by the student prophets to show Ahab that he was guilty of letting King Ben-Hadad go free. When the prophet took off his bandage, Ahab recognized him as a prophet. Ahab had judged himself. See 1 Kings 22 for the fulfillment of this prophecy.
2. They were the students in the “Bible colleges” of those days. This school of prophets probably went back to Samuel’s time, and was carried on by Elijah and Elisha.
3. No, instead he went home sullen and displeased. (Do Christians ever behave like this?)
4. Yes. The will of the Lord was for the second prophet to strike the first prophet. This was unquestionably the will of the Lord. Why did he refuse? Probably he didn't want to hurt him. The will of the Lord may not always be pleasant. To tell someone that he is going to hell is not pleasant, but if he is an unbeliever, it could be a stepping stone for him to hear and accept the gospel of salvation.
5. Wrong. Situational ethics says it's OK, particularly if you don't want to hurt someone by telling them a little white lie. But lying, for any reason is wrong. In the case of the prophets enacting an object lesson, the Bible is not condoning lying. If we were to have a dramatic presentation in our church, and we had one of the players lie or steal, we would not assume that the church was condoning lying or stealing, but rather teaching a lesson.

discuss / consider

1. Do you avoid the will of the Lord when it is unpleasant or difficult?
2. Do you try to justify lying if it is “for a good purpose”? Discuss why this is not appropriate.

challenge

Are you vigilant in obeying the Lord in the little things as well as in the big things? Or are you vulnerable to a satanic attack because of your disobedience?

memorize

“...you have not obeyed the voice of the Lord...” 1 Kings 20:36

“Thus says the Lord: ‘Because you have let slip out of your hand a man whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore your life shall go for his life.’” 1 Kings 20:42

lesson 46

Naboth's Vineyard
Focus: Innocent People Suffer
1 Kings 21:1-16

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. God allows innocent people to suffer.
2. The pleasures of sin are only for a season.

practical applications

1. How much money would it take to get you to compromise?
2. Are you a wife like Jezebel?

questions

1. Why wouldn't Naboth sell his vineyard to King Ahab?
2. What was the result of Naboth's refusal to sell his vineyard?
3. Does God allow innocent people to suffer? Was Naboth an example of this? Explain.
4. Did Ahab enjoy the "fruits of his labor" concerning Naboth's vineyard?
5. Does everyone have a price? Does everyone sell out or compromise?

answers

1. Under the Law the land was to remain in the family, never to be sold outside the tribe. See Numbers 36:9. Naboth was a godly Hebrew, and he would not sell or exchange his land for any price, even for the king.
2. He was killed as a result of a conspiracy by Queen Jezebel. She arranged for false witnesses to accuse Naboth of blasphemy and treason. He was taken out and stoned, and Ahab took possession of his vineyard.
3. Yes, God allows the innocent to suffer, and we don't always know why. Sometimes people suffer because of their own fault, and sometimes God is using the suffering for discipline. In the case of Naboth, it would seem that God used his suffering as an object lesson for those of us who follow. The truth in this lesson is that the king and queen committed a wrongful act because of their selfishness, callously hurting an innocent person. Because of their desire for immediate gratification, however, they suffered far more in the end than did Naboth. Naboth was faithful to God's word and will receive his reward (Matthew 5:10).
4. "Ahab went down to take possession of the vineyard" (1 Kings 21:16). But the pleasures of his sin were only for a season. See Hebrews 11:25- 26. Ahab received his first just reward during battle (1 Kings 22:34-38). And he will receive his final just reward when he stands before God.
5. Naboth could have lived richly by selling his vineyard, but the word of the Lord meant more to him than earthly riches, and he stood firm. He did not have a price, or sell out or compromise.

discuss / consider

1. When you see innocent people suffering, do you ever blame God?
2. Ponder what Ahab and Jezebel did to Naboth. Have you observed a similar situation?
3. Are you harboring some secret sin in your life? Is the pleasure worth it? Think of this in light of eternity.

challenge

1. What kind of a spouse (roommate, friend) are you? How do you influence those who are close to you?
2. What it would take for you to sell out or compromise the word of the Lord? There will be any number of temptations along the way with friends and family, at work, and in other situations, even within the church.
3. What is your response when you don't get your way? Are you like Ahab? (See 1 Kings 20:43; 21:4)

memorize

"The Lord forbid that I should give the inheritance of my fathers to you!" 1 Kings 21:3
"Ahab went to his house sullen and displeased..." 1 Kings 20:43; 21:4

lesson 48

**Ahab's Final Battle; Micaiah, A True Prophet
Focus: A Foolish Alliance; Hating the Truth
1 Kings 22:1-9; 22:10-18**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The unbelieving world hates believers because of their message of truth.
2. The unbeliever would rather feel good than hear the truth.

practical applications

1. Don't make foolish alliances.
2. Watch out for the world's pressure to conform you to their way of thinking.

questions

1. What happened after Ahab's victory in the two battles against Ben- Hadad?
2. Who was the true prophet of the Lord during this incident? Why did Ahab dislike him?
3. Good King Jehoshaphat made an alliance with wicked King Ahab. What is the lesson here for us?
4. What kind of pressure was put on Micaiah, the true prophet of the Lord?
5. What was Ahab's reaction when Micaiah told him the truth? What are the implications for us today?
6. Micaiah resisted the pressure to conform to the world. How does this truth affect us?

answers

1. Ahab made a treaty with the enemy and granted him amnesty. Ben-Hadad reneged on the treaty, so Ahab decided to regain Ramoth Gilead by fighting for it. Ahab asked King Jehoshaphat of Judah to fight with him.
2. Micaiah. His message was one of truth, and as such, his prophecy was not good concerning Ahab. Ahab wanted to hear only what he wanted to hear. The unbelieving world hates believers because of their message of truth, that there is only one way to God, and that is through His Son Jesus Christ.
3. Re-read 1 Kings 22:4 and compare it with the parallel passage in 2 Chronicles 19:2. Jehoshaphat blindly and naively walked into a situation declared by God to be wrong, and he helped those who hated the Lord. As believers, we can make foolish alliances with unbelievers, but we live to regret them. This is especially true concerning marriage vows. See 2 Corinthians 6:14.
4. The false prophets were telling the king what he wanted to hear, and they pressured Micaiah to do the same. Also, he knew that the king hated his messages of truth.
5. He turned to the King of Judah, saying, "Didn't I tell you that he would not prophecy good unto me, but evil?" (1 Kings 22:18). He didn't want to hear the truth, and the same is true today. People would rather hear pleasant things than the truth, especially concerning hell.
6. Even the religious world will try to pressure you into its own way of thinking. Do not capitulate to erroneous doctrines that would conform you to the world's way of thinking.

discuss / consider

1. When God gives you a victory, do you thank Him?
2. Have you ever hated the word of God because it convicts you? What did you do about it?
3. Have you ever entered into an unholy alliance? What were the results?

challenge

Are you prone to fall in with the crowd concerning popular beliefs? Or are you able to stand for Christ? Read Romans 12:2.

memorize

"Is there a prophet of the Lord here, that we may inquire of him?" "There is, but I hate him because he does not prophecy good concerning me" 1 Kings 22:7-8

"All the prophets prophesied, 'Go up and prosper.'" 1 Kings 22:12

"Micaiah said, 'As the Lord lives, whatever He says to me, that will I speak.'" 1 Kings 22:14

lesson 49

**A Lying Spirit; The Battle - Israel and Syria
Focus: Beware False Prophets; Random Events
1 Kings 22:19-28; 22:29-40**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God permits but controls the activities of evil spirits at the present time.
2. God uses random events to accomplish His purposes.

practical applications

1. Watch out for false prophets who claim to speak by the Spirit of God.
2. How stupid can you get?

questions

1. Why was Micaiah thrown into prison?
2. Micaiah saw in a vision all the host of heaven standing before the Lord. This included good and bad angels. He said that one of the angels came forward and put a lying spirit in the mouth of Ahab's false prophets, persuading Ahab to go against God's word. Does God permit the activities of evil spirits at this present time?
3. What did the false prophets tell Ahab? Are there false prophets today?
4. When Ahab was dying, how did he show some courage?
5. Can God use random events to accomplish His purposes? How did He illustrate this point in this lesson?
6. Why did King Jehoshaphat do the things that he did for King Ahab (like changing robes)? How does this type of action apply to us?

answers

1. Because he had told the truth, declaring the word of the Lord, which King Ahab did not want to hear.
2. Yes, the Lord permitted the fallen angel or lying spirit to do what Micaiah said (1 Kings 22:23), but God also controlled their activities. Evil spirits now have a measure of freedom to do evil, but God is able to take even this evil activity and use it for His purposes.
3. The false prophets told Ahab that he would win the battle, and they were claiming that the Spirit of the Lord God of Israel had given them that revelation. There are false prophets today, claiming to speak by the Spirit of God. David Karesh, for example, of the Branch Davidian cult was a contemporary false prophet, claiming to speak in the name of the Lord. But he was wrong and led many people to an untimely death.
4. He had himself propped up in his chariot to face the Syrians, but he never submitted to the word of God.
5. Yes. Ahab was killed by a random arrow, but it was not by chance. God uses random events today to accomplish His will. See Ephesians 1:11. From God's perspective, there is no such thing as a random event, even though it might appear so at times.
6. The Lord miraculously preserved Jehoshaphat's life in spite of his naivety. And God bails us out of some of the predicaments of our own making at times. We can become entangled and ensnared in wrong associations and do things that we would not dream possible. But even though God bails us out, we should be more thoughtful and careful about being drawn into wrong relationships or associations.

discuss / consider

1. Look up 1 John 4:1. Listen carefully to discern the true word of the Lord, and learn to shun false prophets and false doctrines. Spend time in God's word.
2. Have you become aware of a random event in your life, when you were in the right (or wrong) place at the right (or wrong) time? Perhaps this event was not as random as it seemed.

challenge

Have you become entangled in a wrong association, doing things that you would not believe that you could do? If so, get out of it, lest you become blinded and lose all sense of right and wrong.

memorize

"Hear the word of the Lord." 1 Kings 22:19

"The Lord has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these prophets." 1 Kings 22:23

"Let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall." 1 Corinthians 10:12

lesson 50

Good King Jehoshaphat; Wicked King Ahaziah
Focus: A Good or a Perfect Record; Christening or Salvation
1 Kings 22:41-50; 22:51-53

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. There is a difference between a good record and a perfect record.
2. Christening is not a ticket to heaven.

practical applications

1. How many times does God have to speak before we listen?
2. Don't be a mother like Ahaziah's mother.

questions

1. Discuss the kings around the time of Jehoshaphat.
2. What is the difference between a good record and a perfect record, as illustrated during the reign of Jehoshaphat?
3. How many times does God have to speak before we listen? Illustrate from this lesson.
4. How long did King Ahaziah reign? What did he do as king?
5. How were most of the kings christened at birth? Is christening a ticket to heaven?
6. What lessons can we learn from Ahaziah's mother?

answers

1. Jehoshaphat's reign was from 875-850 B.C. At this time, Israel was a divided kingdom. Nineteen kings reigned in the north and they were all bad. The biblical record says that they did evil in the sight of the Lord. Twenty kings reigned in the south, and only eight are listed as good in the biblical record. King Jehoshaphat was one of those good kings.
2. Jehoshaphat did that which was right in the sight of the Lord (1 Kings 22:56), and he was commended for this good record. However, three items in this portion of Scripture show that he did not have a perfect record.
 - 1) The high places were not taken away, 2) he made peace with the king of Israel and approved of a political marriage, and 3) he made an alliance with wicked King Ahaziah.
3. The alliance made between the two kings was near the end of Jehoshaphat's reign. But he blindly went ahead with yet another alliance. This king ended up with broken ships, and we risk shipwreck if we will not listen to what God is trying to tell us. Did Jehoshaphat finally learn his lesson? See 1 Kings 22:49.
4. Two years. He provoked the Lord to anger.
5. Christening is the ceremony of baptizing and naming a child. Most of the kings of Israel and Judah were christened with names of the Lord, but they did not come to faith by this. Ahaziah was given his name, which means "the Lord holds", or "the Lord sustains." One must come by faith in Christ alone to get into heaven.
6. Ahaziah did evil in the sight of the Lord, walking after both his parents. His mother was the wicked Queen Jezebel. Mothers have great influence on the moral characters of their children. Likely Jezebel, even more than Ahab, taught her son the finer points of idolatry. Mothers today can teach their children idolatry by both their words and their attitudes. That is, they teach priorities where God is not number one.

discuss / consider

1. Consider your record in the eyes of the Lord. (Good/perfect)?
2. Are you a person who has to be spoken to by God time after time?
3. What moral influence did your parents have on you? What kind of a parent are you? What kind of a parent would you like to be?

challenge

Have you ever provoked the Lord to anger by disobeying Him?

memorize

"Jehoshaphat, son of Asa, walked in all the ways of his father. He did not turn aside from them, doing what was right in the eyes of the Lord. Nevertheless..." 1 Kings 22:43

"Ahaziah, son of Ahab, did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of his father and his mother...for he served Baal and worshipped him, and provoked the Lord God of Israel to anger." 1 Kings 22:52-53