

Subj: **New Bible Lesson**
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The History Of Israel

1. Abraham came from the country of Sumer, which was in the southern division of ancient Babylonia. This area is now the southern part of modern Iraq. He migrated from the city of Ur in Sumer. Abraham is said to be the forefather of the nation of Israel. In Abraham's later lifetime, he moved to the land of Canaan, which was later known as Israel. It was here where Abraham received God's promise of the land on which he stood. We read in Gen. 12:7: "And the Lord appeared unto Abram (later called Abraham) and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there built he an altar unto the Lord, Who appeared unto Him." And in Gen. 13:12-17 we also read: "Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom. But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly. And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee." And Gen. 15:18-21 also tells us: "In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites." As many of us know, Abraham's great-grandson, Joseph, was later sold by his brothers to Egyptian traders, who took him into the land of Egypt; where he later became second in power to the Pharaoh. And then after this, Joseph's brothers and their descendants were brought into the land of Egypt; where they spent four-hundred years as slaves unto the Egyptians. And then they were led from the land of Egypt by the hand of Moses. This may be read in Genesis Chapter 37-Exodus Chapter 12. And at this time, the descendants of Abraham had begun to be known as the Israelites. This name was probably received after God changed the name of Jacob, Abraham's grandson, to Israel. Jacob was also brought into Egypt as we are told in Gen. 46:1-7: "And Israel (Jacob) took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beer-sheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac. And God spoke unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I. And He said, I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation: I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes. And Jacob rose up from Beer-sheba: and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him. And they took their cattle, and their goods, which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob, and all his seed with him: His sons, and his son's sons with him, his daughters, and his son's daughters, and all his seed brought he with him into Egypt." After Jacob's descendants were delivered from the land of Egypt, by the hand of Moses, there were leaders appointed over what we know as the "twelve tribes of Israel." Israel was to be a holy nation as they were obedient unto the covenant law which God gave unto Moses; and be a witness of God's existence and power unto the neighboring nations. Ex. 19:6 tells us: "And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel." Hebrew-qadoush (qad-oush): sacred, Godly, or to be apart as an example of Godly practice. Unfortunately, much of Israel's history has been marked by periodic disobedience to God's laws and to his leadership. The Israelites had to wander for a generation, or for forty years, in the wilderness, because of their disobedience to God. We read in Num. 14:26-35: "And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, How long shall I bear with this evil congregation, which murmur against me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me. Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith the Lord, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you: Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me, Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I sware to make you dwell therein, save Caleb

the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun. But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised. But as for you, your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness. And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness. After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise. I the Lord have said, I will surely do it unto all this evil congregation, that are gathered together against me: in this wilderness they shall be consumed, and there they shall die.”

A. Murmur-Hebrew-luwn (loo-wn): grumble, fuss, complain, or to continually find fault with.

B. The people of Israel were continually murmuring against God, until He finally began to call them an evil congregation. He was having to hear their murmurings every single day.

C. God declared that as the people of Israel had spoken in his ears, the evil which they had continued to murmur, He would certainly bring upon them. He declared that their carcasses would fall in the wilderness; all of those who were twenty years old and older, who had murmured against Him. God swore that none of them would come into the promised land, except for Caleb and Joshua. And their little ones which they said would be a prey, God would bring in; and they would know the land which their elders had despised.

a. Prey-Hebrew-baz (baze): to be taken away, or separated from; in this case, as a result of sin which has been committed.

b. The land which you have despised. Hebrew-maac (ma-ack): to reject, refuse, or to turn away from.

D. God said that their children would wander in the wilderness for forty years, and bear their whoredoms; and their carcasses would be wasted in the wilderness. Hebrew-zenuwth (zin-u-width): fornications, or acts of sexual sinfulness. In this case, the forty years of wandering in the wilderness by their children, were the results of such committed sins.

E. After having to spend forty years in the wilderness, the Israelites would know God’s breach of promise. Hebrew-tenuwah (ten-u-wah): opposition, alienation, or to withdraw from, or to change one’s mind. God most certainly withdrew from or changed his mind, concerning the promise which He had made unto the nation of Israel, because of their continued walking in sin. He declared that they would be consumed and die in the wilderness. It took the Israelite descendants over forty years to make a journey which should of taken only around eleven days.

2. Joshua was appointed as leader of the Israelites just before Moses died, as we are told of in Deut. 34:9: “And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the Lord commanded Moses.”

3. Jericho was the city which guarded the entrance to the land of Canaan; which would later be known as the land of Israel. Joshua had been ordered by God to go in and attack the city of Jericho, and overthrow it. We read in Josh. 6:12-20: “And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the Lord. And seven priests bearing seven trumpets of ram’s horns before the ark of the Lord went on continually, and blew with the trumpets, and the armed men went before them. But the reward came after the ark of the Lord, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets. And the second day they compassed the city once, and returned into the camp; so they did six days. And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the Lord hath given you the city. And the city shall be accursed, even it, and all that are therein, to the Lord only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent. And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it. But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are consecrated unto the Lord: they shall come into the treasury of the Lord. So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.” The story of how Rahab the harlot hid the two spies and helped them to escape, may be read in Joshua Chapter 2. Joshua later led other military attacks against the other Canaanite cities, which we are told of in the Book of Joshua.

4. After the death of Joshua, the children of Israel called upon the name of the Lord, to see who would continue to lead them in their battles against the Canaanites.

And we read the answer which they received from the Lord in Judges 1:1-10: “Now after the death of Joshua it came to pass, that the children of Israel asked the Lord, saying, Who shall go up for us against the

Canaanites first, to fight against them? And the Lord said, Judah shall go up: behold, I have delivered the land into his hand. And Judah said unto Simeon his brother, Come up with me into my lot, that we may fight against the Canaanites; and I likewise will go with thee into thy lot. So Simeon went with him. And Judah went up; and the Lord delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand: and they slew of them in Bezek ten-thousand men. And they found Adoni-bezek in Bezek: and they fought against him, and they slew the Canaanites and the Perizzites. But Adoni-bezek fled; and they pursued after him, and caught him, and cut off his thumbs and his great toes. And Adoni-bezek said, Threescore and ten kings, having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table: as I have done, so God hath requited me. And they brought him to Jerusalem, and there he died. Now the children of Judah had fought against Jerusalem, and had taken it, and smitten it with the edge of the sword, and set the city on fire. And afterward the children of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites, that dwelt in the mountains, and in the south, and in the valley. And Judah went against the Canaanites that dwelt in Hebron: (now the name of Hebron before was Kirjath-arba) and they slew Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmi.”

5. Israel went through many wars during their early development as a nation; many which were caused by sin of the people, and their disobedience unto the orders which they received from God. Several of these wars are recorded in the Book of Judges. Although the judges tried very hard to correct the problems which existed among the tribes, they were no match for the increasingly militant Canaanites. The Israelites faced these many troubles because of their rejection to the Covenant Law, and for their falling into various forms of Canaanite idolatry. The religion of the Canaanites was one of the most immoral religions that the world has ever known; which contrasted to a very high degree to the holiness and moral purity of the Sinai Covenant. At the end of the Book of Judges, every one of the children of Israel departed and returned to their own tribe and to their own family. We read in Judges 21:24-25: “And the children of Israel departed thence at that time, every man to his tribe and to his family, and they went out from thence every man to his inheritance. In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.” As we are told in this passage of scripture, at this time Israel had no king; and every man done what seemed to be right in his own eyes. Because of the lack of centralized leadership at this time, as we said before, many turned from the obedience to the Covenant Law, to idolatry.

6. Because of their continued idolatry, the Israelites, who were also known as the Hebrews, continued to receive further punishment by attacks from the Midianites and the Ammonites. But the worst threat to the Israelites came from the Philistines. These were people who enjoyed being engaged in war. The Philistines migrated slowly into Canaan at the time of Abraham. But many more of the Philistines came into Canaan at about 1175 B.C. They settled on the southwest coast of Canaan, and they began to push the Israelites into the hill country. The Philistines were superior in military power because they had a great advantage over the Israelites; this being their great manufacture and sale of iron products, which included weapons. Samson was probably the greatest judge and leader in Israel, as far as giving Israel deliverance from the Philistines. If you will recall, Samson was the one whom God had told not to ever cut his hair; for in it was the secret of his strength. We read in Judges 13:2-5: “And there was a certain man of Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren, and bare not. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, Behold now, thou art barren, and bearest not: but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son. Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and drink not wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing: For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.” But later during Samson’s lifetime, he fell in love with a Philistine woman, who tricked him into telling her the secret of his power. We read in Judges 16:1-21: “Then went Samson to Gaza, and saw there an harlot, and went in unto her. And it was told the Gazites, saying, Samson is come hither. And they compassed him in, and laid wait for him all night in the gate of the city, and were quiet all the night, saying, In the morning, when it is day, we shall kill him. And Samson lay till midnight, and arose at midnight, and took the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them, bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of an hill that is before Hebron. And it came to pass afterward, that he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. And the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and said unto her, Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to afflict him: and we will give thee every one of us eleven-hundred pieces of silver. And Delilah said to Samson, Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth, and wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict thee. And Samson said unto her, If they bind me with seven green withs that were never dried, then shall I be weak, and be as another man. Then the

lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven green withs which had not been dried, and she bound him with them. Now there were men lying in wait, abiding with her in the chamber. And she said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he brake the withs, as a thread of tow is broken when it toucheth the fire. So his strength was not known. And Delilah said unto Samson, Behold, thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: now tell me, I pray thee, wherewith thou mightest be bound. And he said unto her, If they bind me fast with new ropes that never were occupied, then shall I be weak, and be as another man. Delilah therefore took new ropes, and bound him therewith, and said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And there were liars to wait abiding in the chamber. And he brake them from off his arms like a thread. And Delilah said unto Samson, Hiterto thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: tell me wherewith thou mightest be bound. And he said unto her, If thou weavest the seven locks of my head with the web. And she fastened it with the pin, and said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awaked out of his sleep, and went away with the pin of the beam, and with the web. And she said unto him, How canst thou say, I love thee, when thine heart is not with me? Thou hast mocked me these three times, and hast not told me wherein thy great strength lieth. And it came to pass, when she pressed upon him daily with her words, and urged him, so that his soul was vexed unto death; That he told her all his heart, and said unto her, There hath not come a razor upon mine head; for I have been a Nazarite unto God from my mother's womb: If I be shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man. And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, Come up this once, for he hath showed me all his heart. Then the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and brought money in their hand. And she made him sleep upon her knees; and she called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head, and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him. And she said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him. But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house."

7. Just before his death, Samson caused more of the Philistines to die, than he had killed during his entire lifetime. We read in Judges 16:25-31: "And it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he may make us sport. And they called for Samson out of the prison house; and he made them sport: and they set him between the pillars. And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them. Now the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Philistines were there; and there were upon the roof about three thousand men and women, that beheld while Samson made sport. And Samson called unto the Lord, and said, O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes. And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left. And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life. Then his brethren and all the house of his father came down, and took him, and brought him up, and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the burying place of Manoah his father. And he judged Israel twenty years." The Philistines only reason for calling for Samson to be brought down before them, was so that they could mock him, laugh at him, and make fun of him. This is what is meant by the word "sport" in this scripture reading.

8. Religious corruption truly came to a head in Israel at the time of Samuel's childhood. Samuel was the last judge of Israel, as well as the earliest of the great Hebrew prophets after Moses. The Israelite people were very insistent upon being ruled by a king, rather than just living as a holy nation in covenant with God. We read in 1 Sam. 8:19-20: "Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us; That we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles." The first king who was appointed to reign over Israel, was Saul. We are told of Saul's anointing as king in 1 Sam. 10:1: "Then Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it upon his head, and kissed him, and said, Is it not because the Lord hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance?" But Saul desperately failed God in his position as king of Israel; especially in his latter years as king; as we are told of in 1 Sam. 13:13-14: "And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: Thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which He commanded thee: for now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the Lord hath sought Him a man after his own heart, and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou

hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee.” We read of God’s thoughts of Saul as king in 1 Sam. 15:10-11: “Then came the Word of the Lord unto Samuel, saying, It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the Lord all night.” We also read of Saul’s death in 1 Sam. 31:1-6: “Now the Philistines fought against Israel: and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in Mount Gilboa. And the Philistines followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons; and the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Melchi-shua, Saul’s sons. And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him; and he was sore wounded of the archers. Then said Saul unto his armorbearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and abuse me. But his armorbearer would not; for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword, and fell upon it. And when his armorbearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him. And Saul died, and his three sons, and his armor bearer, and all his men, that same day together.”

9. The next king of Israel would be David. The killing of the Philistine champion Goliath caused David to gain much popularity with the Israelites. We read of this in 1 Sam. 17:32-51: “And David said to Saul, Let no man’s heart fail because of him (Goliath); thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine. And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth. And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father’s sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear; And this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. David said moreover, The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the Lord be with thee. And Saul armed David with his armor, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail. And David girded his sword upon his armor, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved it. And David said unto Saul, I can not go with these; for I have not proved them. And David put them off him. And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd’s bag which he had, even in a scrip, and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine. And the Philistine came on and drew near unto David; and the man that bare the shield went before him. And when the Philistine looked about and saw David, he distained him: for he was but a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance. And the Philistine said unto David, Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. And the Philistine said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field. Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand, and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the Lord’s, and He will give you into our hands. And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth. So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David. Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled.” After the killing of Goliath, David was seen to be the king who would save Israel from their enemies. David brought the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem; making the city a religious as well as a political center, where he established his capital. During the remainder of his reign as king over Israel, David fought against the Ammorites, the Syrians, and the Philistines. David always acted with great courage, and managed to always overcome his enemies. Many times, we think of the many in the Bible who were truly a hero for God; and we feel as though they never had any faults, or committed any sins. How wrong we are! Even though David will forever be remembered for the great things which they done for the glory of God; such as the slaying of Goliath, and the writing of most of the Psalms; let us remember that he also committed great sins before God also; such as the time when he had the husband of Bath-sheba deliberately killed on the battlefield, so that he could take her to be his own wife. (2 Sam. 11:14-17) Let us never forget that the men and women in the Bible were only human beings

just like us; who faced every day temptations just as we do ourselves.

10. David had one son named Absalom, who was very dear unto him; just as our children are very dear to us; even when they do us wrong. We still never cease to love them; regardless of whether or not they follow our advise. Absalom brought much sorrow to his father David; and also to the nation of Israel. Absalom rebelled against his father David, and even attempted to murder him, and to take over his kingdom. We can read of Absalom's rebellious life in 2 Samuel, chapters 14-18. We read of the beginning of Absalom's evil acts, in 2 Sam. 15:1-12: "And it came to pass after this, that Absalom prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him.

And Absalom rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate: and it was so, that when any man that had a controversy came to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto him, and said, Of what city art thou? And he said, Thy servant is of one of the tribes of Israel. And Absalom said unto him, See, thy matters are good and right; but there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee. Absalom said moreover, Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice! And it was so, that when any man came nigh to him to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand and took him, and kissed him. And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment: so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel. And it came to pass after forty years, that Absalom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the Lord, in Hebron. For thy servant vowed a vow while I abode at Geshur in Syria, saying, If the Lord shall bring me again indeed to Jerusalem, then I will serve the Lord. And the king said unto him, Go in peace. So he arose, and went to Hebron. But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, Absalom reigneth in Hebron. And with Absalom went two-hundred men out of Jerusalem, that were called; and they went in their simplicity, and they knew not any thing. And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Bilonite, David's counselor, from his city, even from Giloh, while he offered sacrifices. And the conspiracy was strong; for the people increased continually with Absalom."

A. Absalom had been separated from his father David for a long time. During this time, Absalom had become bitter against his father David, and caused rebellion against him throughout the nation of Israel; causing David to have to flee from Jerusalem. During this time, Absalom appointed himself as the judge over the people's grievances. Absalom made judgments which pleased the people, whether or not his judgments were wise and correct, in order to gain the people's favor. After a period of time, Absalom met face to face with his father David once again. This time Absalom lied to David; telling him that he had made a vow to God in Geshur; so that David would release him to go to Hebron. Absalom was most certainly full of wickedness; continually attempting to deceive his father, and take control of the Kingdom of Israel.

B. Absalom sent spies throughout the tribes of Israel, who declared unto the people that Absalom was to become the king of Israel, as soon as they heard the sound of the trumpet. A ram's horn was used throughout the time of Israel's history; then called a trumpet; to let the people know whenever any important event was about to take place. It was also used during times of war, as signals for attack or retreat. At the time of this sinful act of Absalom, two-hundred men out of Jerusalem followed him out of their simplicity, or their ignorance of the truth. They did not know that this was just an act of rebellion by Absalom against his father David.

11. We read next of how David and all of his servants fled from Jerusalem, and went into a far away place; toward the way of the wilderness; all because of the wickedness of Absalom. 2 Sam. 15:13-37 tells us: "And there came a messenger to David, saying, The hearts of the men of Israel were after Absalom. And David said unto all his servants that were with him at Jerusalem, Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not else escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword. And the king's servants said unto the king, Behold, thy servants are ready to do whatsoever my lord the king shall appoint. And the king went forth, and all his household after him. And the king left ten women, which were concubines, to keep the house. And the king went forth, and all the people after him, and tarried in a place that was far off. And all his servants passed on beside him; and all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, six-hundred men which came after him from Gath, passed on before the king. Then said the king to Ittai the Gittite, Wherefore goest thou also with us? Return to thy place, and abide with the king: for thou art a stranger, and also an exile. Whereas thou camest but yesterday, should I this day make thee go up and down with us? Seeing I go whither I may, return thou, and take back thy brethren: mercy and truth be with thee. And Ittai answered the king, and said, As the Lord liveth, and as my lord the king liveth, surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also will thy servant be. And David said to Ittai, Go and pass over. And Ittai the

Gittite passed over, and all his men, and all the little ones that were with him. And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people passed over: the king also himself passed over the brook Kidron, and all the people passed over, toward the way of the wilderness. And to Zadok also, and all the Levites were with him, bearing the ark of the covenant of God: and they set down the ark of God; and Abiathar went up, until all the people had done passing out of the city. And the king said unto Zadok, Carry back the ark of God into the city: if I shall find favor in the eyes of the Lord, He will bring me again, and show me both it, and his habitation: But if He thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I, let Him do to me as seemeth good unto Him. The king said also unto Zadok the priest, Art not thou a seer? Return into the city in peace, and your two sons with you. Ahimaaz thy son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar. See, I will tarry in the plain of the wilderness, until there come word from you to certify me. Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the ark of God again to Jerusalem: and they tarried there. And David went up by the ascent of Mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people that was with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up. And one told David, saying, Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O Lord, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness. And it came to pass, that when David was come to the top of the mount, where he worshipped God, behold, Hushai the Archite came to meet him with his coat rent, and earth upon his head: Unto whom David said, If thou passest on with me, then thou shalt be a burden unto me: But if thou return to the city, and say unto Absalom, I will be thy servant, O king; as I have been thy father's servant hitherto, so will I now also be thy servant: then mayest thou for me defeat the counsel of Ahithophel. And hast thou not there with thee Zadok and Abiathar the priests? Therefore it shall be, that what thing soever thou shalt hear out of the king's house, thou shalt tell it to Zadok and Abiathar the priests. Behold, they have there with them their two sons, Ahimaaz Zadok's son, and Jonathan Abiathar's son; and by them ye shall send unto me every thing that ye can hear. So Hushai David's friend came into the city, and Absalom came into Jerusalem."

12. Our next reading will be of the death of Absalom, and the grievance of David, when he heard of the death of his dear son. We read in 2 Sam. 18:1-9: "And David numbered the people that were with him, and set captains of thousands and captains of hundreds over them. And David sent forth a third part of the people under the hand of Joab, and a third part under the hand of Abishai the son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and a third part under the hand of Ittai the Gittite. And the king said unto the people, I will surely go forth with you myself also. But the people answered, Thou shalt not go forth: for if we flee away, they will not care for us; neither if half of us die, will they care for us: but now thou art worth ten-thousand of us: therefore now it is better that thou succour us out of the city. And the king said unto them, What seemeth you best I will do. And the king stood by the gate side, and all the people came out by hundreds and by thousands. And the king commanded Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom. And all the people heard when the king gave all the captains charge concerning Absalom. So the people went out into the field against Israel: and the battle was in the wood of Ephraim; Where the people of Israel were slain before the servants of David, and there was there a great slaughter that day of twenty-thousand men. For the battle was there scattered over the face of all the country: and the wood devoured more people that day than the sword devoured. And Absalom met the servants of David. And Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him went away." Absalom's head became stuck between the branches of an oak tree, and his mule continued moving ahead; causing him to be hung by his head. And this is the way Absalom's wicked life ended. We now read of David's sorrow, once he heard of the death of his son Absalom. 2 Sam. 18:31-33 tells us: "And, behold, Cushie came; and Cushie said, Tidings, my lord the king: for the Lord hath avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee. And the king said unto Cushie, Is the young man Absalom safe? And Cushie answered, The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young man is. And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son, Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

13. Before his own death, David proclaimed his son Solomon to be his successor. We read of Solomon's anointing in 1 Kings 1:39: "And Zadok the priest took an horn of oil out of the tabernacle, and anointed Solomon. And they blew the trumpet; and all the people said, God save king Solomon." Solomon was a very popular king because of the wisdom which he gained. We read of Solomon's request for wisdom in 1 Kings 3:2-12: "Only the people sacrificed in high places, because there was no house built unto the name of the Lord, until those days. And Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David his father: only he

sacrificed and burnt incense in high places. And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there; for that was the great high place: a thousand burnt offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar. In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, Ask what I shall give thee.

And Solomon said, Thou hast showed unto thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. And now, O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people? And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing. And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee." Solomon's building projects in and around Jerusalem were very expensive. This included the building of the temple in Jerusalem. He put taxes on the industrial caravans which passed through his country. He also attempted to pay the high costs by increasing the mining industry, and by building a fleet of ships for trading purposes. We read in 1 Kings 9:26-28: "And king Solomon made a navy of ships in Ezion-geber, which is beside Elath, on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom. And Hiram sent in the navy his servants, shipmen that had knowledge of the sea, with the servants of Solomon. And they came to Ophir, and fetched from thence gold, four-hundred and twenty talents, and brought it to king Solomon." In desperation, Solomon began a program of forced labor which involved at least thirty-thousand men; making them work under very harsh conditions. As Solomon grew older, he began to get involved in many marriages due to political reasons, and with women who were not Israelites. Many of these women also brought with them the gods of their native lands. We read in 1 Kings 11:7-8: "Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods." Even though a great king and man of God at one time, Solomon also fell into sin in many different ways. Much can also be read about the lives of Saul, David, and Solomon, in the books of 1 & 2 Chronicles.

14. The next king of Israel was Solomon's son, Rehoboam. After he became king, the ten northern tribes of Israel met with him; seeking relief from the heavy work burdens, and from the high taxes. Rehoboam followed bad advise which was given to him, and refused to give the people any relief. Therefore, the ten northern tribes revolted against Rehoboam, and formed a separate kingdom which was led by Jeroboam. The kingdom of these ten northern tribes continued to be called Israel, and the two separate southern tribes was called Judah. We may read this story in 1 Kings 12:1-24: "And Rehoboam went to Shechem: for all Israel were come to Shechem to make him king. And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who was yet in Egypt, heard of it, (for he was fled from the presence of king Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt;) That they sent and called him. And Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came, and spake unto Rehoboam, saying, Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee. And he said unto them, Depart yet for three days, then come again to me. And the people departed. And king Rehoboam consulted with the old men, that stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, and said, How do ye advise that I may answer this people? And they spake unto him, saying, If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever. But he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, and which stood before him: And he said unto them, What counsel give ye that we may answer this people, who have spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke which thy father did put upon us lighter? And the young men that were grown up with him spake unto him, saying, Thus shalt thou speak unto this people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou it lighter unto us; thus shalt thou say unto them, My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins. And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions. So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had appointed, saying, Come to me again the third day. And the king answered the people roughly, and forsook the old men's counsel that they gave him; And spake to them after the counsel of the young men,

saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions. Wherefore the king hearkened not unto the people; for the cause was from the Lord, that He might perform his saying, which the Lord spake by Ahijah the Shilonite unto Jeroboam the son of Nebat. So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? Neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents. But as for the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them. Then king Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was over the tribute; and all Israel stoned him with stones, that he died. Therefore king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem. So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day. And it came to pass, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was come again, that they sent and called him unto the congregation, and made him king over all Israel: there was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only. And when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin, and hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel, to bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam the son of Solomon. But the Word of God came unto Shemaiah the man of God, saying, Speak unto Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and unto all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the remnant of the people, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel: return every man to his house; for this thing is from me. They hearkened therefore to the Word of the Lord, and returned to depart, according to the Word of the Lord.”

A. Jeroboam had fled into Egypt, in order to escape the grievous, or heavy hand of Solomon. But after the death of Solomon, the people of Israel called Jeroboam to return to Israel. And he went with the people of Israel to speak with king Rehoboam.

B. Jeroboam and the people of Israel pleaded with Rehoboam to lift the heavy yoke of bondage from their shoulders which his father Solomon had placed upon them.

C. Rehoboam sought the advise of the older, wise men, who had sat with his father Solomon. They gave him advise of wisdom, but he ignored their advise and went to the younger men with whom he had known since his childhood. But they gave him ungodly advise; to make the yoke upon the shoulders of the people even much heavier; and to chastise them critically if they refused to obey his orders. Therefore the ten northern tribes revolted against Rehoboam.

D. Then Rehoboam sent Adoram who was over the tribute, to the people of Israel; and they stoned him to death. And then Rehoboam wasted no time in fleeing to Jerusalem. Hebrew-mac (mack): a body or crew of forced laborers, taskmasters, servants, slaves, or workers under conditions of bondage.

E. The people of the ten northern tribes then called for Jeroboam to become their new king. And the capital of the ten northern tribes was at this time moved to Samaria. The tribes of Judah and of Benjamin continued to follow Rehoboam as their king. And Rehoboam called all the people of these tribes; which was called Judah at this time; to come together to fight against the northern tribes of Israel; so that he might regain his authority over the entire kingdom of Israel. But God sent word through the servant Shemaiah to the tribes of Judah and of Benjamin; to return to their own houses, and to not fight against their brethren of the northern tribes; and they done as the Lord had said. Jeroboam is remembered as the one who made Israel to sin. This is because of his legalization of the worship of idol gods. We read of Jeroboam’s work in this area in 1 Kings 12:28-29 & 31: “Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Beth-el, and the other put he in Dan. And he made an house of high places, and made priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi.”

15. About two years after the death of King Jeroboam, his son, Nadab; who was then king of Israel; was murdered by a man named Baasha. This was around 908 B.C. Baasha then conquered a site down close to Jerusalem, which we are told of in 1 Kings 15:17: “And Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah, and built Ramah, that he might not suffer any to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah.” Baasha caused many problems for the people of Judah. And at the same time, the people up in Syria, north of Israel, were becoming powerful, and were beginning to become a threat to the northern tribes of Israel. Judah’s king, Asa, appealed to the people of Syria for help against Baasha. After Baasha’s death, his son, Elah, reigned for about two years, and then was murdered by Zimri; who committed suicide about a week later, and caused the nation to go into a civil war. There was an army general of Israel, who’s name was Omri. About four years after the death of Zimri, Omri gained full control of Israel. (Remember that at this time, we are speaking of Israel as the ten northern tribes.) Omri moved the capital of Israel to Samaria. Omri became a close allie

with Phoenicia; and he arranged a marriage between his son Ahab, and a princess of Tyre, named Jezebel, . Later when Ahab became king of Israel, he continued to be resistant against Syria; just as his father Omri had done. But he also began to support pagan religion in Israel; which drew much criticism from the prophet Elijah. Famine came upon the nation, but this had very little effect upon putting a stop to the widespread spiritual and social corruption which was being practiced in Israel. Ahab was truly a rotten king. We read in 1 Kings 16:29-33: "And in the thirty and eighth year of Asa king of Judah began Ahab the son of Omri to reign over Israel: and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty and two years. And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him. And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him. And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him." You can also read more of Ahab's evil actions in 1 Kings Chapters 18-22. We read of his death in 1 Kings 22:29-40: "So the king of Israel (Ahab) and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth-gilead. And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, I will disguise myself, and enter into the battle; but put thou on thy robes. And the king of Israel disguised himself, and went into the battle. But the king of Syria commanded his thirty and two captains, saying, Fight neither with small nor great, save only with the king of Israel. And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, Surely it is the king of Israel. And they turned aside to fight against him: and Jehoshaphat cried out. And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it was not the king of Israel, that they turned back from pursuing him. And a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness: wherefore he said unto the driver of his chariot, Turn thine hand, and carry me out of the host; for I am wounded. And the battle increased that day: and the king was stayed up in his chariot against the Syrians, and died at even: and the blood ran out of the wound into the midst of the chariot. And there went a proclamation throughout the host about the going down of the sun, saying, Every man to his city, and every man to his own country. So the king died, and was brought to Samaria; and they buried the king in Samaria. And one washed the chariot in the pool of Samaria; and the dogs licked up his blood; and they washed his armor according unto the Word of the Lord which He spake. Now the rest of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, and the ivory house which he made, and all the cities that he built, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? So Ahab slept with his fathers; and Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead." One very important principle which we must never forget, which we learn from the story of Ahab's death, is that we can never escape the hand of God. For He knows exactly where we are at. And just as Ahab thought that he could escape the wrath which he had brought upon himself, God knew exactly where he was, and exactly how to would bring him down.

16. Ahaziah was also an evil king over Israel, just as his father Ahab had been. We read in 1 Kings 22:51-53: "Ahaziah the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned two years over Israel. And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin: For he served Baal, and worshipped him, and provoked to anger the Lord God of Israel, according to all that his father had done." We also read of the tragic accident which king Ahaziah had shortly after he became king of Israel, in 2 Kings 1:1-18: "Then Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab. And Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber that was in Samaria, and was sick: and he sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron whether I shall recover of this disease. But the angel of the Lord said to Elijah the Tishbite, Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say unto them, Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that ye go to enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? Now therefore thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die. And Elijah departed. And when the messengers turned back unto him, he said unto them, Why are ye now turned back? And they said unto him, There came a man up to meet us, and said unto us, Go, turn again unto the king that sent you, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that thou sendest to enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? Therefore thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die. And he said unto them, What manner of man was he which came up to meet you, and told you these words? And they answered him, He was an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins. And he said, It is Elijah the Tishbite. Then the king sent unto him a captain of fifty with his fifty. And he went up to him: and, behold, he sat on the top of an hill. And he spake unto him, Thou man of God, the king hath said, Come down. And

Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty. Again also he sent unto him another captain of fifty with his fifty. And he answered and said unto him, O man of God, thus hath the king said, come down quickly. And Elijah answered, and said unto them, If I be a man of God, let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And the fire of God came down from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty. And he sent again a captain of the third fifty with his fifty. And the third captain of fifty went up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and besought him, and said unto him, O man of God, I pray thee, let my life, and the life of these fifty thy servants be precious in thy sight. Behold, there came fire down from heaven, and burnt up the two captains of the former fifties with their fifties: therefore let my life now be precious in thy sight. And the angel of the Lord said unto Elijah, Go down with him: be not afraid of him. And he arose, and went down with him unto the king. And he said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Forasmuch as thou hast sent messengers to enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron, is it not because there is no God in Israel to enquire of his Word? Therefore thou shalt not come down off that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die. So he died according to the Word of the Lord which Elijah had spoken. And Jehoram reigned in his stead, in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat; because he had no son. Now the rest of the acts of Ahaziah which he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?"

17. Moab was overcome in a battle against Jehoram, king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, as the prophet Elisha had prophesied in 2 Kings Chapter 3. And about two years later, Jehu became king of Israel. Jehu purged the nations of Israel of the pagan religions which Ahab had brought into the land. At this same time, Judah had a queen who's name was Athaliah. She cleaned out the royal house except for Jehoash; who became king of Judah six years later. We read of how Jehu destroyed the Baal worshippers in 2 Kings 10:18-36: "And Jehu gathered all the people together, and said unto them, Ahab served Baal a little; but Jehu shall serve him much. Now therefore call unto me all the prophets of Baal, all his servants, and all his priests; let none be wanting: for I have a great sacrifice to do to Baal; whosoever shall be wanting, he shall not live. But Jehu did it in subtilty, to the intent that he might destroy the worshippers of Baal. And Jehu said, Proclaim a solemn assembly for Baal. And they proclaimed it. And Jehu sent through all Israel: and all the worshippers of Baal came, so that there was not a man left that came not. And they came into the house of Baal; and the house of Baal was full from one end to another. And he said unto him that was over the vestry, Bring forth vestments for all the worshippers of Baal. And he brought them forth vestments. And Jehu went, and Jehonadab the son of Rechab, into the house of Baal, and said unto the worshippers of Baal, Search, and look that there be here with you none of the servants of the Lord, but the worshippers of Baal only. And when they went in to other sacrifices and burnt offerings, Jehu appointed fourscore men without, and said, If any of the men whom I have brought into your hands escape, he that letteth him go, his life shall be for the life of him. And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, that Jehu said to the guard and to the captains, Go in, and slay them; let none come forth. And they smote them with the edge of the sword; and the guard and the captains cast them out, and went to the city of the house of Baal. And they brought forth the images out of the house of Baal, and burned them. And they brake down the image of Baal, and brake down the house of Baal, and made it a draught house unto this day. Thus Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel. Howbeit, from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from after them, to wit, the golden calves that were in Beth-el, and that were in Dan. And the Lord said unto Jehu, Because thou hast done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in mine heart, thy children of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel. But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord God of Israel with all his heart: for he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin. In those days the Lord began to cut Israel short: and Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel; From Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer, which is by the river Arnon, even Gilead and Bashan. Now the rest of the acts of Jehu, and all that he did, and all his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? And Jehu slept with his fathers: and they buried him in Samaria. And Jehoahaz his son reigned in his stead. And the time that Jehu reigned over Israel in Samaria was twenty and eight years."

18. The next king of Israel which we read about was Jehoahaz. He reigned over Israel for about seventeen years. We read of him in 2 Kings 13:1-9: "In the three and twentieth year of Joash the son of Ahaziah king of Judah Jehoahaz the son of Jehu began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned seventeen years. And he done that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, and followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat,

which made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and He delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria, and into the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael, all their days. And Jehoahaz besought the Lord, and the Lord hearkened unto him: for He saw the oppression of Israel, because the king of Syria oppressed them. (And the Lord gave Israel a savior, so that they went out from under the hand of the Syrians: and the children of Israel dwelt in their tents, as beforetime. Nevertheless they departed not from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, who made Israel sin, but walked therein: and there remained the grove also in Samaria.) Neither did He leave of the people to Jehoahaz but fifty horsemen, and ten chariots, and ten-thousand footmen; for the king of Syria had destroyed them, and had made them like the dust by threshing. Now the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz, and all he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? And Jehoahaz slept with his fathers; and they buried him in Samaria: and Joash his son reigned in his stead.”

A. Jehoahaz reigned from Samaria, which was then the capital of the ten northern tribes of Israel. He also continued in the sins of Jeroboam, which was setting up idol gods for the people to worship; which caused God to be angry with Israel. And He delivered them into the hands of the Syrians, and into the hands of Ben-hadad, for their idol worship.

B. The king of Israel besought the Lord God for mercy, and God heard his plea; because He saw the oppression under the hand of the Syrians. Yet they still did not forsake their sinful worship of the idol gods. Therefore the grove, which was the Ashtoroah pole; or an idol of Baal's female consort; remained there. The worship of these idol gods included animal sacrifices, male and female prostitution, and sometimes human sacrifices.

C. The king of Syria had killed all the people under the reign of king Jehoahaz except for fifty horsemen, ten-thousand footmen, and ten chariots.

D. Jehoahaz was killed and was buried in Samaria; and Joash his son became king over Israel.

19. The rule of Israel under the hand of king Joash is told of in 2 Kings 13:10-25: “In the thirty and seventh year of Joash king of Judah began Jehoash (Joash) the son of Jehoahaz to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned sixteen years. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord; he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin: but he walked therein. And the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, and his might wherewith he fought against Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? And Joash slept with his fathers; and Jeroboam sat upon his throne: and Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel. Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died. And Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And Elisha said unto him, Take bow and arrows. And he took unto him bow and arrows. And he said to the king of Israel, Put thine hand upon the bow. And he put his hand upon it: and Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands. And he said, Open the window eastward. And he opened it. Then Elisha said, Shoot. And he shot. And he said, The arrow of the Lord's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria: for thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have consumed them. And he said, Take the arrows. And he took them. And he said unto the king of Israel, Smite upon the ground. And he smote thrice, and stayed. And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice. And Elisha died, and they buried him. And the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year. And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band of men, and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood up on his feet. But Hazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz. And the Lord was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Issac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, neither cast He them from his presence as yet. So Hazael king of Syria died; and Ben-hadad his son reigned in his stead. And Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz took again out of the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael the cities, which he had taken out of the hand of Jehoahaz his father by war. Three times did Joash beat him, and recovered the cities of Israel.”

A. There were about eight men in the Old Testament who had the name Joash. There was a Joash who was king in Judah, and also a Joash who was king in Israel. So do not be confused by the use of this name. We are now speaking of the Joash who was king of Israel, or the ten northern tribes. We are told of his sins first of all, in verses 12-13. He evidently condoned and allowed the practice of the idols of Baal to continue.

B. Just before the death of Elisha, Joash came down and wept over him; and declared with the statement, “O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.” Elisha was the strongest

instrument of God's power in Israel; just as Elijah had been, back in Elisha's early years; just as the chariot was the strongest military weapon of the nation.

C. Elisha used the demonstration of the bow and the arrows to illustrate the deliverance of Israel by God's mighty hand. However, Israel was invaded by the Moabites at the beginning of the following year.

D. After Elisha had died, a man was cast into his sepulchre; and after he touched the bones of Elisha, he was revived back to life. This was to confirm Elisha's promise to Joash of his victory over Syria.

E. Israel was oppressed by Hazael the king of Syria during the days of Jehoahaz. But God saw fit to give them deliverance from the Syrians. This was because of God's promise that He gave to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Whether we realize it or not, the main reason why the nation of Israel still stands today, is because of God's promise to Abraham. If we recall, God promised to give unto Abraham's descendants all the land of the Canaanites. Even though Israel may have lost much of its territory over the centuries to oppressing enemies, we need not worry about Israel ever being destroyed any further. And any nation that ever attempts to destroy the nation of Israel, shall be in serious trouble. Every nation should stand up and support the nation of Israel; including the United States of America; for Israel is God's chosen people. Israel became a free nation in 1948, and God will see that they remain as such.

F. Joash the king of Israel recovered the cities which were taken from his father Jehoahaz by king Ben-hadad, king of Syria; and beat him three different times.

20. We may read of the kings of Judah named Jeroboam the 2nd, Zechariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, and Pekah, in 2 Kings 14:23-2 Kings 16:20. But let us remember that they only controlled the two southern tribes of Judah and Benjamin. The next king of Israel which we read of is king Hoshea, in 2 Kings 17:1-41: "In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah began Hoshea the son of Elah to reign in Samaria over Israel nine years. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, but not as the kings of Israel that were before him. Against him came up Shalmaneser king of Assyria; and Hoshea became his servant, and gave him presents. And the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea: for he had sent messengers to the king of Egypt, and brought no present to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year: therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound him in prison. Then the king of Assyria came up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it three years. In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. For so it was, that the children of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God, which had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods. And walked in the statutes of the heathen, whom the Lord cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made. And the children of Israel did secretly those things that were not right against the Lord their God, and they built them high places in all their cities, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city. And they set them up images and groves in every high hill, and under every green tree: And there they burnt incense in all the high places, as did the heathen whom the Lord carried away before them; and wrought wicked things to provoke the Lord to anger: For they served idols, whereof the Lord had said unto them, Ye shall not do this thing.

Yet the Lord testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep thy commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets. Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the Lord their God. And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that He made with their fathers, and his testimonies which He testified against them; and they followed vanity, and became vain, and went after the heathen that were round about them, concerning whom the Lord had charged them, that they should not do like them. And they left all the commandments of the Lord their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger. Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only. Also Judah kept not the commandments of the Lord their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made. And the Lord rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until He had cast them out of his sight. For He rent Israel from the house of David; and they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king: and Jeroboam drove Israel from following the Lord, and made them sin a great sin. For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them; Until the Lord removed Israel

out of his sight, as He had said by all his servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day. And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof. And so it was at the beginning of their dwelling there, that they feared not the Lord: therefore the Lord sent lions among them, which slew some of them. Wherefore they spake to the king of Assyria, saying, The nations which thou hast removed, and placed in the cities of Samaria, know not the manner of the God of the land: therefore He hath sent lions among them, and, behold, they slay them, because they know not the manner of the God of the land. Then the king of Assyria commanded, saying, Carry thither one of the priests whom ye brought from thence; and let them go and dwell there, and let him teach them the manner of the God of the land. Then one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria came and dwelt in Beth-el, and taught them how they should fear the Lord. Howbeit every nation made gods of their own, and put them in the houses of the high places which the Samaritans had made, every nation in their cities wherein they dwelt. And the men of Babylon made Succoth-benoth, and the men of Cuth made Nergal, and the men of Hamath made Ashima, And the Avites made Nibhaz and Tartak, and the Sepharvites burnt their children in fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim. So they feared the Lord, and made unto themselves of the lowest of them priests of the high places, which sacrificed for them in the houses of the high places. They feared the Lord, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations whom they carried away from thence. Unto this day they do after the former manners: they fear not the Lord, neither do they after their statutes, or after their ordinances, or after the law and commandment which the Lord commanded the children of Jacob, whom He named Israel; With whom the Lord had made a covenant, and charged them, saying, Ye shall not fear other gods, nor bow yourselves to them, nor serve them, nor sacrifice to them: But the Lord, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt with great power and a stretched out arm, Him shall ye fear, and Him shall ye worship, and to Him shall ye do sacrifice. And the statutes, and the ordinances, and the law, and the commandment, which He wrote for you, ye shall observe to do for evermore; and ye shall not fear other gods. And the covenant that I have made with you ye shall not forget; neither shall ye fear other gods. But the Lord your God ye shall fear; and He shall deliver you out of the hand of all your enemies. Howbeit they did not hearken, but they did after their former manner. So these nations feared the Lord, and served their graven images, both their children: as did their fathers, so do they unto this day.”

A. King Hoshea reigned over Israel for nine years, and he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord; but evidently, not to as evil of an extent as the king which reigned before him.

B. We are told that Shalmaneser the king of Assyria came up against Hoshea. But Hoshea became a servant unto Shalmaneser, and gave him presents.

C. But the king of Assyria found king Hoshea guilty of conspiracy. Hebrew-qesher (qe-shir): treason, or unlawful association with the enemy. Evidently, Hoshea had been sending presents to king Shalmaneser each and every year. And then Hoshea sent messengers to the king of Egypt, and sent no more presents to king Shalmaneser. Therefore the king of Assyria had Hoshea shut up in prison.

D. Then the king of Assyria came throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it for three years. Hebrew-tsuwr (t-su-wer): to bind, conquer, confine, enclose, show hostility towards, put in bondage, or to bring under one's own control.

E. After king Hoshea had reigned for nine years, the king of Assyria overtook Samaria, and carried away the people of Israel to Assyria. He placed them in Halah and in Habor by the Gozan River, and in the cities of the Medes. Hebrew-maday (may-day): speaking of the people of the “middle lands,” or a creed of people who were descendants of Japheth; who occupied the land of Media; northwest of Persia, and southwest of the Caspian Sea.

F. For the children of Israel sinned against God, Who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, and had feared other gods. Hebrew-yare (yair): to stand in awe of, show respect or reverence towards, or to give honor to.

G. Israel had walked in the statutes or in the practices of the heathen; whom the Lord had cast out of Israel; and also from the kings of Israel.

H. The children of Israel committed sins against the Lord which they thought were not noticed by God. But let us never forget that God has an all-seeing eye. Nothing is ever hidden from his eyes. And they built fences all around their cities; including towers for their watchmen, or city guards.

I. Israel became guilty once again of idol worship; setting up images and groves, or wooden images of the female deity; in every high hill and under every green tree. They burnt incense in all the high places, and

wrought wicked things to provoke the Lord to anger. They continued serving idols, even though the Lord had warned them to stop these evil practices.

J. The Lord had sent prophets as well as many others into the land of Israel and Judah also; telling them to turn from their wicked ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes; just as He had commanded their fathers to do. But yet they would not listen, but stiffened their necks; just as their fathers had done; and would not believe in the Lord their God.

K. The Israelites rather than obey the statutes and laws of God, rejected the covenant of God which He had made with their fathers, and his testimonies which He testified against them, and chose to follow vanity and become vain. Hebrew-hebel (heb-el): evil, sin, unrighteousness, ungodliness, or anything wrong in the eyes of God. The Israelites chose to follow the ways of the heathen that were all around them; in spite of the fact that the Lord had commanded them not to be as the heathen.

L. The Israelites completely forsook the commandments which they had been given by the Lord God, and made molten and wooden images; and made Baal the god of the land. They worshipped the sun, the moon, and the stars. They caused their sons and daughters to pass through the fire; or dedicated them to their idol gods.

M. They used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger.

a. Divination-Hebrew-qecem (qe-sim): witchcraft.

b. Enchantments-Hebrew-nachash (nach-ash): fortunetelling, or evil works of any kind.

N. God was extremely angry with the nation of Israel, and He removed them from his sight; or turned his eyes of mercy from them. Of course God can see us no matter where we may be; we cannot hide from God. We know this from the story of Adam and Eve in the very beginning; when they tried to hide from God after they had committed sin. He knew exactly where they were. (Gen. 3:6-8) God's Word tells us in verse 18 that He left only the tribe of Judah. But then the Word of God tells us that even Judah did not keep his commandments; but also walked in the statutes, or the evil rules which Israel had made. So the Lord rejected all of the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hands of the spoilers, until He had cast them out of his sight.

a. God afflicted them. Hebrew-anah (an-aw): to oppress, humble, to bring down, depress, or to bring to weakness.

b. Spoilers-Hebrew-shacah (sha-kaw): the enemy who takes possession or control of.

O. God declared Israel to no longer be a part of the house of David. The Israelites chose to make Jeroboam their king; and he in turn caused them to stop following the ways and commandments of the Lord; causing them to sin against the lord in an awful way. They chose to walk in the sins of Jeroboam; which was to serve idol gods and worship Baal. This is once again why Jeroboam is referred to as the one who made Israel to sin. Therefore, Israel was carried away into the land of Assyria, to be in bondage unto the king of Assyria.

P. The king of Assyria replenished the land of Israel with men from Babylon, from Cuthah, from Ava, from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim; and placed them in the cities of Samaria; rather than the children of Israel. They possessed Samaria, and lived every day in the cities thereof. When they first began to possess the cities of Samaria, they had no fear of the Lord whatsoever. Therefore the Lord sent lions among them, which destroyed many of them. And the people whom the king of Assyria had sent to possess the land of Samaria sent and informed him of his lack of knowledge of what the God of Israel was allowing to take place in the land of Samaria. God was not at all pleased with the Assyrians taking possession of the land of Israel. Even though the Israelites throughout the centuries have sinned and allowed their enemies to take possession of their land, God is not at all satisfied with this fact. Even though it may be true that this has happened, God is not at all satisfied with the fact that Israel has become a very small nation. And even though they are small now, they have learned to trust in God throughout the centuries; and are determined that no enemy shall take any further possession of their land. This is why they are having war with the Lebanese Army, as well as others around them. God promised Abraham that his descendants would have the land of Canaan, and He will see to it that they lose no more of it.

Q. The king of Assyria then agreed to allow the people to take one of the priests who had been taken captive from Israel, back to Israel with them, to teach the people the ways and commandments of the Lord God of Israel. Then came one of the Israelite priests to live in the land of Beth-el; to teach them how they should fear the Lord God of Israel. However, the people of all the different nations made gods of their own, and put them in the houses of the high-places which had been made by the Samaritans, or the Israelites; every nation in the cities where they were sent to dwell. The men of Babylon made Suttoth-benoth, which was called the

“daughters booth,” which was the deity of the Babylonians who dwelt in Samaria. The men of Cuth made Nergal, which was one of the chief deities of Assyria and Babylon. It’s nickname was the “Prince of fire.” The men of Hamath made Ashima, which was called a buttress, or a god of support. The avites made Nibhaz, or the deity introduced into Samaria in the time of Shalmaneser, who had the figure of a dog. And they also made Tartak, or one of the deities which was worshipped in the form of a donkey. And the Sepharvites actually burnt their children as sacrifices to Adrammelech and Anammelech; the gods of Sapharvaim. God’s Word also tells us that even unto the day of this writing, that they had no fear of the Lord; nor did they ever obey the statutes, the ordinances, the law, or the commandments which the Lord God gave unto Jacob, whom He named Israel; and with whom He made a covenant, and commanded them, saying that they should not fear other gods, nor bow themselves to them, nor serve them, nor sacrifice to them. But it was made clear to them that they were to fear, to worship, and to give sacrifice, unto the Lord God who had brought them out of the land of Egypt with great power and a stretched out arm. These commandments were to be obeyed forevermore; and they were to never fear any other gods. They were to never forget the covenant which God had made with them. He promised that if they would do so, that He would deliver them out of the hand of their enemies. Yet they still did not hearken unto the voice of their Lord God; but continued to serve graven images; not only them, but their generations which followed. Israel faced hardships and fought wars from the very beginning of the time that they entered into the promised land. They were constantly going through struggles with the Assyrians, the Philistines, and other surrounding nations. And it was usually caused by sinful actions of their people; either because of serving idol gods, or failing to be obedient unto the Lord God who had brought them into the land which He had promised them. Israel was eventually attacked by the Assyrians in 722 B.C., and the Israelite tribes were taken captive to Assyria, and their kingdom came to an end. There was never any record of the Israelites returning to their land. About 650 B.C., Palestine, in a treaty with the Egyptians, revolted against the Assyrians, but the Assyrians crushed them both. In 626 B.C., the Babylonian Empire declared it’s independence; and the battles of the next sixteen years resulted in a complete collapse of the Assyrian Empire. And in 597 B.C. the Babylonians and Chaldeans attacked Jerusalem, and this was the beginning of the Babylonian captivity, which lasted for seventy years. In addition to all this, various groups of the Jews had deserted their homeland throughout the years, and had become scattered in various nations throughout the world.

21. After the Israelites were released from Babylonia by the hand of Cyrus, king of the Persian Empire, the land of Israel was once again divided into the three sections which we know of as Judah, Samaria, and Galilee. The land of Samaria was filled with Jews who had become entangled with or married to the people who had been sent into Samaria by the king of Assyria; for the purpose of trying to control the land after he had taken many of the people into captivity, and carried them off to Assyria. As we read earlier in the lesson, the Lord had chosen to send in lions, which brought about the destruction of many of them. These Samaritans later tried to assist the Israelites after their return from their captivity in Babylonia; when they began to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem. But the Israelites rejected their help. The Samaritans also gave the Israelites trouble when Nehemiah began to build the wall around Jerusalem. And later, the Samaritans built a rival temple at Gerizim; claiming Shechem, rather than Zion, (or Jerusalem, which was the site traditionally chosen and blessed by God), as the true house of God. This was the real breaking point between the people of Samaria and those who had returned from Babylonian captivity.

22. When Jesus came to the earth as the Messiah, after being born in Bethlehem, and as He carried out his ministry throughout Israel, many of the Jews, or the Israelites, refused to believe that He was the true Messiah. Israel was divided into two kingdoms; Judea and Galilee. Both these kingdoms were ruled by the Roman Empire; who became rulers over them at approximately 63 B.C. But after Jesus had gone away, and returned to the Heavenly Father, Rome eventually lost control of Israel at about 70 A.D. This is when it is believed that the city of Jerusalem was burned by the Romans, and then the Romans returned to their own homeland. The Jews then began to be scattered all across Europe and Asia. Jesus also talked much about the twelve tribes of Israel. He said that in Heaven, his twelve disciples would judge the twelve tribes of Israel. (Luke 22:30) He also said that in Heaven there would be gathered one-hundred forty-four thousand from the twelve tribes of Israel. (Rev. 7:4) Jesus also said that in Heaven there would be a great wall which would have twelve gates; and upon them would be written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. (Rev. 21:12)

Conclusion:

Israel began as a very large nation when they first came in and conquered the Promise Land, or the Land of Canaan. But throughout the centuries, they gradually became smaller, and began to lose their land to foreign

enemies; all because of their devotion to idol gods, and their disobedience unto God. Many were conquered and destroyed by the Assyrians, as well as many by the Babylonians. After the return to their own land from Babylonia, they began an attempt to build a wall around the city of Jerusalem, and rebuild a temple there. They were taken captive by the Roman Empire at about 63 B.C., which lasted until about 70 A.D.; when the Romans burned the city of Jerusalem. Then the Israelites were scattered throughout the world. In 1948, Israel became a free nation once again; which was prophesied to happen before the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth. But even though Israel has reestablished it's country, it is not nearly as large a country as it was at the very beginning of their release from captivity in Egypt.

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