

HISTORY OF REDEMPTION

BY

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Lesson 5 The Building of a Nation

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Father, we just want to say thanks this morning. Thanks for waking us up. Thanks for a great day. Lord, we look forward to just walking with You today, realizing and recognizing that You have been working from the beginning of time. You were actually working before time. And You are still all about doing Your will and accomplishing the things You intended to do. And it is just a mystery to us, Lord, why it takes so long in our view. I mean, why are we here today and things are still going on? And who knows, I mean, we have a couple more years or whatever. We think we see things in Your Word concerning prophecy, concerning Your plan that You laid out that You are going to fill the earth with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. And we just want to see Your whole plan and where we fit in and have an impact and take a grip upon our worldview, our thinking, and therefore our action and our behavior. So, we just want to say thanks, Lord, for time to get together and to study and to look at You and what You are doing. Show us these things in Your Word. We ask that You would just give us revelation. Let us see things that we can only see when You show them to us by Your Spirit. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Well, we have got a people with a language. We have got a measure of leadership and we have got laws. One thing we do not have yet, as God is building it, is land. So they need a homeland and God is going to give them a homeland.

So, we begin with Scene Seven in Act One which goes from Genesis 12 all the way up to 1 Kings what?—1 Kings 10. God is doing what in Act One? God is building a nation. And that is what you are seeing Him do, because He is building a nation for a purpose. And the purpose is: He wants to bring His Messiah through that nation to redeem the world. He promised it to Abraham. He said, “I will do it. Abraham, it will come from you. And your seed is going to bless the whole world.” And so, because of this promise to one person, Abraham, it is going to happen. And so let’s look at God building the nation.

Failure to Enter the Land

Numbers 13-36

Moses Sends out the Spies (Numbers 13:1-2)

Moses’ Orders (Numbers 13:17-20)

The Spies Reported on the Land (Numbers 13:25-29)

Remember, they are an untrained, unequipped army going against a walled city.

They spoke the truth. They must trust God.

Their unwillingness to trust God was their sin.

Now, they are out, but God wants to get them into the land. So Moses sends out spies. And you know the report that comes back from the spies. And the report is basically, “We can’t do it.” But you have got to remember they were untrained people. They were unequipped as an army. And they are going to go up against a walled city? No wonder they came back. Did they speak the truth when they said, “We can’t do it”? Were they just being negative? Some people think they were just being negative. I do not think so. Were they just being down and kind of having a narrow view of life? Huh-uh. They came

back and said, “In all reality, we can’t do it.” And they spoke the truth. It was no different from Abraham and Sarah looking at each other at a hundred years old saying, “You know that you are as good as dead. You can’t have a kid. I can’t have a kid. What’s up with God giving us this promise?” And it was the same thing here. They couldn’t do it. So they could not do it unless they trusted God who said He would do it. And so their sin was their unwillingness to trust God. It was not the fact that they looked at it and said, “It is too big for us.”

But isn’t that the same kind of sin that you face today? Your sin is not the fact that you recognize certain limitations in your life. Your sin is that you do not trust God to overcome those limitations. What grace really means is that you are not responsible for what you can do. Grace means you are now responsible for what God can do. That God has given dynamic and power and He can do all things. And “we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us” (cf. Philippians 4:13). So, it is kind of the same thing that we face today is what they were facing then.

But God is going to get them into the land because He is faithful. Now, they are unwilling to trust God. They murmur against Moses and Aaron. Thank God that Moses and Aaron were the kind of leaders at that time to just bow humbly and say, “God, forgive them. They do not know what they are doing. They do not understand the plan.”

And that happens so many times in your life too. When you do not understand God’s plan, you murmur, you complain, you gripe. You say, “I do not understand that.” You just start like, “Oh, blah blah blah!” And life is all this and it is because you do not understand how wise God is in working things out in your life.

Now of course Joshua and Caleb have faith because their eyes are on God. And they are trying to persuade everyone. “Yeah but, let’s trust God. I mean, God took us out of Egypt didn’t He? If He did the big thing, can’t we trust Him for smaller things?”

And it is funny how we can trust Him that He saved our soul for all eternity and is taking us to heaven, but we do not believe He is going to supply our needs on earth. It just does not make spiritual sense to say God did the big thing for you but He won't do the little things. Of course He will!

So, they are going to be destroyed because God is upset with them. Except Moses prays and intercedes. And there he is definitely a type of Christ in his mediation. But God is going to set him aside because He says, "I swear in My wrath." He says, "These people will not enter rest. I swear in My wrath these people will not go into the land." It is not going to happen because they would not do it God's way. They had to do it their way. And God says, "I want total, complete trust in the fact that I do it."

And we know that rest comes at what point? Rest always comes at the point of obedience. The moment you obey there is rest in your life. Until you obey there will be discord. There will be tension. There will be fretting, anxiousness. Rest always comes at the point of obedience, the obedience of faith.

And so if they would step out and trust God, they would get rest. But they did not and so God says, "I am not with them." He puts them aside and He says, "This generation is going to die out in the wilderness."

Now later in the Psalms God said they should not have died out there. He said, "It was their fault. It was not My fault." And God was mad that they died out there because they should not have died out there. They should have believed God. They should have entered into their rest by simply obeying God through the obedience of faith, but they would not do it.

But if you don't obey, guess what? God says, "I will find someone else who will." And that is always the case as well. God is not going to keep from doing His will because I fail in my own faithfulness. If I fail, God will raise somebody else up. If you fail in what God has called you to do, God will raise somebody else up. God is not limited by our

failure. What happens is we miss out because we are not willing to walk in faith and take those steps into the land that God has provided; into all the promises that are yea and amen in Christ Jesus. And so we see these things happening even in the natural, which we see also in the New Testament in the spiritual realm, mostly in Hebrews and 2 Corinthians. But God is doing a work to build a nation.

Now, Psalm 106 says, “Then they despised the pleasant land [that is what God had provided for them] they did not believe His word, but they complained in their tents and they did not heed the voice of the Lord. “Therefore, He raised up His hand in an oath against them to overthrow them in the wilderness, to overthrow their descendants among the nations and to scatter them in the lands” (cf. Psalm 106: 24-27). It is almost surprising to read that, isn’t it? I mean, you don’t think of God getting so upset at a person—in this case a people in general. He has promised that He is going to take these people and He is going to do all this, but He is at the point right now it is almost like, you know, “I am also entering an oath. I swear in My wrath they won’t get there. I am so mad at these people for not believing Me. I am so upset at these people for not trusting Me.”

And that is the same issue in the New Testament because sin is not an issue anymore, is it? The way I understand it and read Romans, sin is no longer an issue. Jesus Christ took care of sin. Through the obedience of one Man it was taken care of. The only issue now is not sin. The issue is what do you do with Jesus? Will you believe Jesus? Will you receive Jesus? Will you put your faith in the One that God has given to take care of all the problems and issues of mankind? And so it is kind of the same thing here. He is like, “Man, if they would have just believed and trusted we could have gone on.”

So what keeps you out of the land? Well, obviously in Hebrews 3:8-18, He explains it this way: “And with whom was He angry for forty years?” Have you ever been angry at someone for like a couple days? Is there anybody you are angry with right now? How long can you stay angry? You know how much fun it is to be angry? And you see that person and then you just kind of go, “Grrrh.” It is like you don’t even want to see them, do you? I mean, you avoid seeing them because you want to go the other way because

you don't want to be angry because it takes so much emotional energy to stay angry. God was angry for forty years. Of course, He has got more emotional energy than you do. But I just cannot imagine being angry for forty years. That is a long time to be mad. But God is speaking of Himself as a man and relating to us how upset He was. "Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness?" (Hebrews 3:17) He was mad that they died out there. "And to whom did He swear that they should not enter His rest but to those who were disobedient?" (Hebrews 3:18). And so we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief.

And the word for disobedience is the word that we get *pistos* from in the New Testament. It is from *peithōs*. It is the same word that we translate unbelief, but in the old days they translated it disobedience because there is really no difference between disobedience and unbelief. It is the same thing because what God wants in the New Testament is the obedience of faith that points to and sees Christ.

So he says again, "Take care brethren, lest there just be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart [or disobedient heart] in falling away from the living God" (Hebrews 3:12).

So, it is not trusting God that keeps you out of the land. And so many times, in my life, there is unbelief—because I am looking with my head and my own eyes saying: "Well, I cannot do that because I cannot figure out how that can be done." And therefore I go, "I guess it is not going to happen." And I just put it aside because I cannot figure it out. But if God has given me a promise and said He will do it, then He wants me to trust "Him who can do exceedingly abundantly above all I ever think or ask" (cf. Ephesians 3:20) that He will do it.

Just because I cannot figure out how God is going to do something does not mean that God is going to do it or not do it. Because He can make it happen and He can make a way when there is no way. I know that is the big issue in my life in getting into the land of the promise of God is that I just don't believe Him, and so I scheme to get it done my way.

This is not too different from the guys in the early days saying, “Well, okay, it does not look like God is doing it. Why don’t we help God do it?” Then I have directive prayers and I say, “God, why don’t You try this? If You are really smart, God, why don’t You try this?” And I begin to pray certain ways. And all the time I should just be relaxing, entering into belief and trust that God can do it in a way I don’t know about. I just have to keep stepping forward in faith and trust in Him with expectant hope. Oh, that is the Christian life in the New Testament.

Well, they finally get victory. Joshua goes in. There is going to be a conquest of the land because Joshua and Caleb do have faith. And God renews the promise in Joshua 1. And now in Joshua and Caleb, God is happy. And Joshua was a servant, of course, before he became a leader. And that is a great principle in Scripture. You are always to be a servant first and a leader second. And then God gives him the conditions of the new promise and He sends the commander of the Lord’s army, the Captain of the Lord of hosts to do it. They have great victory.

But then they enter into defeat because in Joshua 7 we have this sin there of Achan. And in Joshua 7:20–21 we see what happens with Achan. He said, “I saw. I coveted. I took. And I hid.” And that is usually the way sin works. You see it first. Then you covet it. You have a desire for it in your heart. You want it. Then you go take it. And then you try to hide it because you know it is sin.

And so, although God had brought them in and shown them that He would give them great victory and He would help them possess the land, they entered into a real problem because of the sin of Achan and his tent, the hidden sin. And we see there that you cannot move forward with God until you deal with hidden sin. God can be standing right there all around you saying, “Here you are. I have brought you here. You are at the point of victory. But if you have got hidden sin in your life you will not be able to move forward.” That is just the way it is.

It is the same principle in the New Testament. We read in Galatians 6 that “Whatever you sow, you are going to reap it” (cf. Galatians 6:7). That is just a law and it takes place.

So, here they are and they are in this situation. They are at the driveway. I mean, they are near the front door of the Promised Land. It is like they are ready to pull their SUV right up in the driveway and say, “I’m home. I am in the promised land.” But they cannot quite do it because sin keeps creeping up among the nation. And that is holding them back from the plan of God and the promise of God. And it is so amazing to me.

Entering the Land

- ❖ **God performed a miracle to get them out (Red Sea) and a miracle to get them in (Jordan River).**
- ❖ **Who went into the Promised Land first?**
- ❖ **What did they build first?**
- ❖ **Two things were necessary before engaging the enemy: Purification and Passover**

Then they finally get into the land because God is gracious. He takes them in. Who went in first? The priests. The priests go in carrying the ark because they are following God. And He told them to stay how far behind?—about a half a mile. He said, “I want you guys to stay about a half a mile back from the ark. And I want you to watch the ark and wherever the ark goes, you follow the direction the ark goes.” The ark had the very presence of God.

And that is always the way direction should be. We don't run out ahead of the Lord. We stay back behind the Lord. We watch the ark. We see the presence of God. That is what Proverbs 3:5–6 means when it says, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Don't lean on your understanding because you don't know where to go or what to do. But in all your ways acknowledge Him”—or more literally—“acknowledge His presence and He will direct the path, your path.” So you kind of hang back. You watch where God's presence is going in your life. And wherever God's presence is going and you recognize His presence in your life, that's the way you go. And so God says, “I will lead you in.” And He did.

He performed a miracle to get them out of Egypt and He also performed a miracle to get them in, taking them through the Jordan River as the priests stood there.

Now although the Lord is revealed as Captain of the Lord's host and the symbol now is the sword, the strategy in holy warfare for the soldier of the Lord is to build first, not a fortress, but what did they build first?—an altar, a fortress of worship and prayer. The first thing they did when they crossed over and got into the land was to build an altar and begin to worship God. And that is neat. Because there are two things that are really necessary before you engage an enemy. They have crossed the river. They are going to go in and they are going to do spiritual warfare. They have got to drive these inhabitants out. And you might say, “Well God, why don't You just go drive them out for us? We are tired. We have been walking for a long ways. We have been carrying everything and we crossed the river. And here we are. We don't feel like fighting. We don't want to deal with Moabites and Canaanites and Hittites and Philistines and everybody else. We are just like, why don't You just go do it? You said You were going to do it.” But God says, “No, you are going to have to fight.”

And to be successful in the fight, both in the Old Testament and the New Testament, there are two qualifications. First, they had to be purified by circumcision. Now, that is the craziest thing I have ever heard of. They are getting ready to fight, like in two or three days. And He says, “Get all the men together. All right, guys, we have got to circumcise

you.” I mean, can you imagine? We are getting ready to start the NFL season. Football teams are gearing up. They are getting ready to play maybe for even the Super Bowl. Three days before the Super Bowl they call the whole team and say, “All right guys, we have got to circumcise you.” They are like, “What? How are we going to play the Super Bowl in such a condition?” Well, basically the answer is this: you won’t be able to unless somehow God supernaturally gives you victory. You cannot put a circumcised, freshly circumcised football team out on the field and say, “You guys, go win the Super Bowl.” That is not going to happen.

But God likes to do that kind of thing. But what He wants is for us to trust that He will. That goes against everything my natural mind says. My natural mind, when I go in to fight the enemy says, “No, you don’t do that and then go out and fight. You won’t be in any condition to fight.” But God says, “Wait a minute. Holiness and purification is more important than anything else. And if you will trust Me in that, I will fight for you.” So they had to be circumcised, purified in that way.

Just like in the New Testament what? We are circumcised in our heart. We have the foreskin of our heart moved away so that we can see the Lord and focus on the Lord and walk with Him and be holy as He is holy. And as it says in 1 Corinthians 5, we have got to take out the leaven, remove the leaven, remove the sin” (cf. 1 Corinthians 5:8). We cannot have any of it in our life because if we have sin in our life, we won’t be able to have victory. And we have that ability through the circumcision of Christ, knowing we died with Him that now we can actually put to death the members of our body and walk in victory” (cf. Romans 8:13). And He expects us to do it.

Secondly, was the Passover because this was a covenant that they entered into with God and the victory had to come, really, through Jesus Christ. And so that is going on. So it was a strange way to enter the land, but that is God’s way to enter the land.

And if you are having any problem with entering the land, even today, it is probably because of a lack of purification in terms of the circumcision of your heart, or a lack of

relationship through the Passover or through communion, in that every time we remember communion we judge ourselves and we put our sin away and we stand holy and righteous before God completely. And if we keep entering into the righteousness that is ours in Jesus Christ, and the sanctification that is ours in Jesus Christ, we are going to see the life of Jesus Christ and the victory and God is going to be glorified.

Division of the Land

Joshua 13-21

**East Canaan: Half tribe of Manasseh,
Reuben and Gad
(Joshua 13)**

**West Canaan: The rest of the tribes of Israel
(Joshua 14-21)**

**What God said He would do, He did
(Joshua 21:43-45)**

So, they get into the land. But what do they do when they get into the land? First thing is they divide the land. Joshua says, "We are here. We are in it. Let's divide it up into east Canaan and west Canaan." And so that is what they did. Half the tribe was Manasseh, Ruben, and Gad; they went to east Canaan. And then the rest of the tribes in Joshua 14-21, they went and settled in west Canaan. The east Canaan guys were mostly cattle herders and things like that. They had a lot of cattle. They needed a lot of water. They stayed in the areas where they could get grass and water and all that kind of stuff. They had to be there. And then the other tribes said, "Well, we will go further in toward the west."

So, what God said He would do, He did do. He brought them into the land and they are there. And Joshua 21:43-45 says,

So the Lord gave Israel all the land which He had sworn to give to their fathers and they possessed it and lived in it. And the Lord gave them rest on every side according to all that He had sworn to their fathers. And not one of all their enemies stood before them. The Lord gave all their enemies into their hand. Not one of the good promises which the Lord had made to the house of Israel failed. All came to pass. (NASB)

Now, that is amazing to read. Well, if that is the case then why don't we just close the Bible? I mean, has God had a plan? Well, it sounds like he is saying here He has just about finished His plan. And Joshua and all these guys got rest. The enemies were, you know, what does it mean when it says this? Is God through with His plan? No. And did they possess all the land? No, they didn't. Then why does the Bible say they did, when they didn't? Is the Bible lying? Is the Bible telling something false? No, you are the problem. The way you read it is the problem and the way I read it is the problem. He does not mean all exclusively. You know, you have got to decide. Is it all inclusively or all exclusively? When you see the word *all* you have to decide what the word *all* means. And here, it means in general.

In other words, in general they were possessing most of the land and most of the enemies were destroyed. But we know for a fact, that not all of the enemies were destroyed were they? No. And one of the big failures in Joshua's life was what? Perhaps his biggest failure in his life was what, as a military commander and general? What city did he not take? He did not take the Jebusite city, which God wanted that as His capital. God wanted that to rule from. He wanted to rule out of Mount Zion in Jerusalem, which was the Jebusite city. Joshua never took it. He tried and then he just failed. He could not do it.

So when it says they got in there and had rest in all the land, it does not really mean all. It means in general all, but not every point. So sometimes the way we read the Bible can kind of mess us up. And then you will have some liberal scholar come along and say, “Okay, there is a problem in the Bible. This did not happen and that did not happen. And see...” And it has to do with the way we read it.

And so they got in and they mostly had victory but there were still problems. And they were not really in possession of the land, in total possession. Though they were there and they possessed certain parts of the land and they were all over the land possessing certain parts of the land, they did not possess all of the land. Okay?

Joshua’s Farewell Address

**Observe the commandments given by Moses
(Joshua 22:5)**

**A warning to continue
and the results if they do not
(Joshua 23:14-16)**

**A challenge to serve the Lord
(Joshua 24:14-15)**

So Joshua gives his farewell address. And he says, “Observe the commandments given by Moses.” He takes them back and says, “Remember what Moses said? We’ve got to do it.” He warns them to continue and tells them the results if they don’t continue. And he challenges them to serve the Lord. He says, “As for me and I my house we are going to serve the Lord” (cf. Joshua 24:15). I don’t know what the rest of you people are going to

do, but my house is going to serve God. And I hope that your house will serve God.”
And he challenges them as they have gotten into the land.

Now, Joshua 24:14-15 says,

Now therefore, fear the Lord, serve Him in sincerity and truth. And put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the river and in Egypt.

Serve the Lord! Put these gods away!

And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served which were on the other side of the river, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

He says, “I am putting away all those gods and I am serving the Lord.” So, they are in the land.

Now, what happens after they get into the land? They divide it into east and west. How are they doing? Well, we find out they are not doing that well. Joshua told them, look you have got to get rid of all the idols and the gods. But they just would not do it. His house served the Lord. Other people served the Lord a little bit. Some served the Lord more than others. But a lot of people did not serve the Lord at all. And what happens is we have the time of the judges.

Tribes Established in the land **(Judges)**

**Tribes take their inheritance,
but they were incomplete.
(Judges 1)**

**There was a lack of unity in the land.
They are not a nation, but 12 states.
Because of this, they are constantly
hounded by other nations.**

They have a bunch of tribes all around the land. And the tribes take their inheritance but in an incomplete way. So they did not possess all the land. There was a lack of unity in the land. They are not a nation. They are twelve states but they do not really have a federal union. It is like with the United States we have a federal union among the states and we are truly united in that way.

So because of this they (God's people) are constantly hounded by other nations. Because what happened was, they attack your state over here. They come against you. But the people over here, way out with the half tribe of Manasseh they are like, "Well, that is their problem. We are handling our state over here. You guys, sorry, you will have to handle whoever is attacking you over there." And so in a sense it is like when Jesus said, "Don't think on your own things, but think on other people's things." That was their sin. They were in disunity and they were not in brotherly love because everybody was doing what was right in their own eyes and concerned about their own life and about their own battles and about their own victories. And they did not care about other people across the land who were having problems. Is that true in the church today? In many ways it is.

We are concerned about our little group. Sorry, that the other little group is having some battles. And often times we do not run to their aid. And why don't we?—because of the lack of unity. There is no coherence sometimes. There should be because we have it. We are just disobedient to it, which is a worse sin than theirs. They did not have it. We do have it. We have one Lord, one faith, one hope, one baptism, one calling, one Spirit, one goal, one plan. And it is a greater sin today for us not to go to the aid of all who name the name of Christ, than it was for these guys in the book of Judges and just out in their little areas of the land doing their own thing. But that was what was happening.

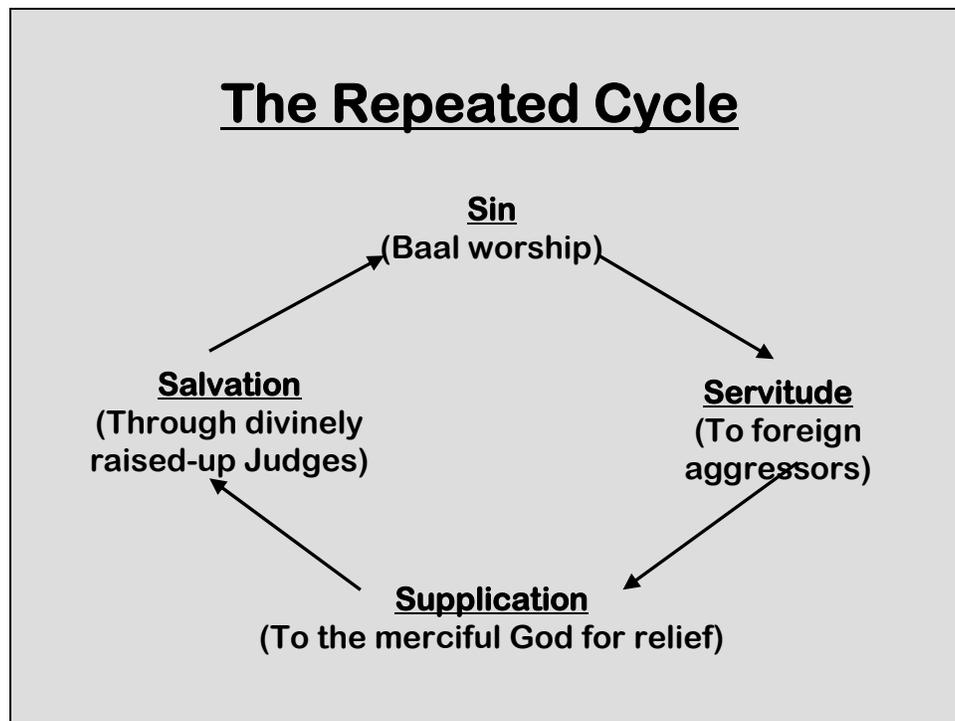
So the problem—Moses gave the people three commands when they entered the land. Deuteronomy 7:1–5. He says, “When you get there, there is three things you have got to do.” He says, “First, you've got to destroy all the inhabitants of the land.” What did they do? You can read it in Judges. They did not do it. They said, “Oh, we like you guys. You have got some neat things. We could learn something from you.” And so they would keep certain people. They did not destroy all the inhabitants of the land.

Secondly he said, “You have got to shun the false gods.” Well, that did not happen either, largely because they like a lot of the foreign women, the guys did. And they said, “Oh man, she is cute.” “Yeah, but she worships Ashteroth.” “I know, but she is still cute. Big deal.” So they married women and the women brought in the false things because the guys were walking in the flesh. That's what they did. And he says, “Don't intermarry with the pagan neighbors.” They did it.

So they didn't do the three things that Moses said you have got to do this if you want to have victory. If you want to get into the land and possess the land, you have got to destroy every enemy. You have got to destroy every fleshly sin. You have got to destroy fornication. You have got to destroy uncleanness. You have got to destroy drunkenness. You have got to destroy obsessions. You have got to destroy evil thoughts. You have to destroy everything that comes against the knowledge of Jesus Christ. And you have to shun every false god. Every form of covetousness that might be in your heart, every desire that is beyond what God has provided you, you have to destroy it. You have to do

away with it. And you cannot be unequally yoked. He says, “And then you can walk in victory.” But they did not do it.

Well, so what do they need? They need deliverers in the book of Judges. And these guys are temporary local leaders. God uses a pagan nation to discipline His people. And you kind of go, wow, that is amazing! You mean God lets these pagan, idolatrous sinners whip His own children? God says, “Yep, I will.” God likes to work through natural means. He is supernatural and He is using these super means through nations in a natural way to discipline His own children because He loves them and cares about them.



So judges keep getting appointed and empowered by God. They are just crisis leaders. It is nothing but total crisis management in their lives. I know Christians like that. Their whole life is total crisis management. They go along until there is a crisis. “Oh God, help me! Deliver me, God! Oh God, if You deliver me I will do this.” And their whole life is just crisis management. They do not have a steady, disciplined walk of obedience, following God’s plan.

So the repeated cycle goes on. They start with sin and Ba'al worship—things like that. They go into servitude because of it. Then they supplicate and cry out to God and say, “Be merciful. Relieve us, God.” And then God brings salvation through a judge. That cycle continued during the time of the judges. It was quite amazing.

So, and how long did that time last, the time of the judges? We know slavery lasted 400 years. The time of the judges lasted 330 years. So for 330 years they just went through this cycle. They would enter into sin. That would bring them into servitude. They would finally go, “Oh, sin is bad! And it hurts!” And then they would cry out and say, “God, help me!” And then God would deliver them. And then they would go right back into it again—over and over—the cycle.

The Judges of Israel

| | | |
|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Othniel | Ehud | Shamgar |
| Deborah | Gideon | Tola |
| Jair | Jephthah | Ibzan |
| Elon | Abdon | Sampson |
| | Samuel | |

And you see some of the judges that were raised up. They were really cool. I kind of like Ehud—because he was left handed. When he went into Eglon's little palace there in Moab and Eglon is sitting up on the cool of his roof and everything. Ehud strapped a dagger on his right thigh. And he went over and locked the door. He said, “I have got some secret news to tell you from God, Eglon.” He says, “But I need everybody to

leave.” And Eglon says, “Yeah, everybody get out of here!” And he went over and he locked the door. And he pulls a dagger out with his left hand. He sticks it in and Eglon was a very fat man. And he stuck his hand, the knife into where the blade went all the way into him. It says, “And the fat came around the blade and you could not see the blade.” And then it says, “But the refuse ran out.” So in other words—and then the people outside were going, “Hey Eglon, what is going on?” And they started saying, “Well, maybe he is taking a nap.” And it says in Judges 3, “Well maybe he is relieving himself.” So they thought he was up on the roof using the restroom or whatever. And they waited until they got anxious and finally there was no answer. So they went to get a key and they opened the door and they go in and the guy’s dead! And of course, Ehud split during that time and he is gone. He has got the army and he comes back down and they slay them. They killed like 10,000 of them just in one day.

I mean, so they would match up with these nations that God said you are not supposed to have anything to do with these guys. And then God would raise up a deliverer. And he would deliver them. And this just happened over and over and over again.

Of course the ladies like Deborah, I am sure. And you know that Deborah is the only judge that was both a prophetess and a judge. There was only one other judge that was both a prophet and a judge and who was that? Samuel. So Deborah and Samuel were kind of on the same wavelength there. Who was the prophetess in the New Testament that kind of I always think corresponds to Deborah. Anna. Remember, in Luke 2:35, Anna was a prophetess. And so, I mean, God raised up this woman and she encourages Barak. She prophesies and tells him, “The Lord has given you the victory, Bud. Get out there and fight.” And he would not have done it. I mean, he would not even go out and he said, “You come with me.” She said, “Yeah, I will come with you.” And then she prophesies because the Spirit of God comes on her. And that prophesy encourages him to go out and fight.

And during that fight you know what happens. Cicero starts heading back home and another woman, Jael, who was the wife of Heber the Kennite, she is out there. She brings

him in. He is all tired. He is exhausted from the fight. He lies down. She covers him up. She goes and gets a tent peg while he is sleeping, drives it through his temple all the way into the ground. And it says, "And he died." Imagine that.

So, I mean, it is like, look what God is doing. God would just show up and deliver them through all these natural but supernatural means. And it is quite neat to see this time.

Well, you know, I would study Deborah, Gideon, and Samson. They are all great. We do not have time to go into them. But each of the judges was tremendous.

So, what is the need? Well, the book of Judges is characterized by just gross idolatry and gross immorality. "In those days there was no king in Israel. Every man did what was right in his own eyes" (Judges 17:6). So, what is the need? The need is for a king. There has to be some unity brought to this nation. They are in total disunity during the time of the judges. Do you see it? There are twelve different states. They don't care about anybody else but their own little state. And there is no real unity. Everybody is just—every man for himself.

But God is faithful during this time and keeps raising up deliverers. Why does God do it? It is because He cannot deny Himself. He looks down and He says, "This is all I have to work with?" Sometimes He probably does that at Bible College here. God is in devotions this morning. He is looking out and goes, "This is all the devotion I got?" But guess what? He cannot deny Himself. And so He will work in spite of what He has to work with. He does that in my life.

But what He really wants is somebody that will be king, somebody that will rule for Him. And that will rule in faith and trust Him. So, you come at the end of the book of Judges, to Ruth. And I love this because this Moabite Gentile becomes the grandmother of the King. And you know she is just a faithful woman.

Ruth
**The Moabite Gentile becomes
Grandmother of the King**
(Ruth 4:18-22)

In the Days of the Judges
(Ruth 1:1)

The Faithfulness of Ruth
(Ruth 1:16-18)

The Grandmother of David
(Ruth 4:13-17)

In the Lineage of Christ
(Matthew 1:5)

Now I like Vance Havner's description of Ruth, the book. He says, "Ruth is a lily pad or a lily in the mud pond of Judges." And it is so true. You go through Judges and it is just like this big mud pond. There is just sin and servitude, you know, and failure over and over again. Of course, God has given victory. But all of a sudden there is this little lily just floating out in the middle of the mud pond. And the lily is Ruth. And it is a beautiful story because—you know the story. If you have ever seen the shepherds' fields outside of Jerusalem, there in Bethlehem (which means house of bread) a famine comes on the nations. And you have got Naomi and her husband Elimelech and they got two kids, Mahlon and Chilion. And they decide, "Well, we cannot starve to death." But they are off in the shepherds' fields. And they are looking off and you can see in the distance the mountains of Moab because they always have snow on them. And the snow melts and they have water over in that area, so they are able to grow things.

But there in Bethlehem it is just as dry as it is up in Twin Peaks and Running Springs and all of that area right now where the fires are breaking out. And there is just no hope for them there. So they said, "We have got to leave what is called the house of bread, ironically, and head over to Moab." And they do. Well, they get there. Elimelech dies.

But then Chilean takes Orpah to be his wife. And Mahlon takes Ruth to be his wife. Then those guys die. And then poor Naomi, she is just left there and she decides after a few years, “Things are better back in Bethlehem. I don’t have anything here. I am going to go back to my people.” And she returns back to Bethlehem but she changes her name to Mara, which means bitterness, because she says, “The Lord sent me out full, but I came back empty.” But in the process Ruth is faithful and she says, “I won’t leave you. I have got to be here with you. Entreat me not to leave you.” She says, “I want to go with you. Your God will be my God. Your people will be my people. (cf. Ruth 1:16). I am staying. I am hanging around” (cf. Ruth 1:16). And she did.

And so this Gentile girl comes back. But they have got to get out into the fields. It is harvest time and the poor get to glean in the fields. They go out. She starts gleaning in the field. It happens to be the field of Boaz. And Boaz takes a liking to her. Even tells the men, give her a little extra. I think he was impressed. I don’t know if it was because of the way she looked. But he tells her later he was impressed with her because of her faithfulness to Naomi. He said, “Here you are a foreign woman and your heart is so right.” He said, “You are a great woman. Who wouldn’t want a woman that has this kind of heart and faithfulness and loyalty?” He said, “Man there was something that was just beautiful in her.” And he noticed it. And so he was blessing her and Naomi says, “Stay in that field cause that guy is going to keep blessing us.”

And sure enough she finds out Boaz is a kinsman or literally a *goel*, which the word *goel* is like thirteen times in the book of Ruth. He is the kinsman redeemer and he can redeem the land. He can purchase back what they had lost. And so Naomi says, “You hang in with him. Matter of fact, while he is on the threshing floor, I want you to go down at night and I want you to uncover his feet—because that is our custom. If you go down and the poor guy is trying to sleep, pull the covers off his toes and lay down at his feet.” She thought, “Have you ever smelled the feet of a guy working in the fields during harvest?” But she goes down, she uncovers his feet with the blanket that was there and she lays down at his feet. Well, in the middle of the night, he wakes up. Well, I would too if somebody uncovered my feet probably.

Anyway, back to Boaz and his cold feet. So he is startled. He wakes up in the middle of the night and it is like, “What is going on?” And she says, “Well, will you be the kinsman?” And he is like, “Yeah. I would love to.” So he goes to the gate, gets ten guys at the city gate. And he says, “I want to redeem this field for Naomi. I want to marry Ruth, this Gentile, take her as my bride. But you are the nearest kinsman so I have to have an okay from you.”

And you know the story there in Deuteronomy where it tells the story, if you have a family, have a brother, he dies, you have a responsibility to raise up seed to the family. I think it is Deuteronomy 17. And if you won't raise up seed to the family, what is supposed to happen is the person that will raise up seed to the family he comes, you have to take your sandal off. Loose your sandal, give it to him and he spits in your face. And why does he spit in your face and you have to loose your sandal? And you are known as the guy who loosed his sandal and had his face spit in because it was selfishness. That is why. And what God was hinting at in Deuteronomy was you can't be selfish. It is not just about us four and no more. You have got to be concerned about the rest of the nation. You have got to be concerned about the rest of the tribes. You have got to be concerned about the rest of the states. You can't just live for yourself. And so they had this custom developed for people that were selfish.

And that is what Boaz basically said to him. “Look, you know, you can redeem the thing. But you are not going to get anything from redeeming this field because it is going to go back to Naomi. And then like, whoever Ruth connects with, if she marries a guy from here or whatever, either way it is going to go to Naomi. But if she marries a guy it is going to go to him and it is going to stay in the family.” And so this guy is thinking, “Man, I have already got enough kids to feed. I have got a wife. I have got to work.” He says, “Sorry, can't do it. It is just too much—you are asking too much.” So he says, “Fine. You spit in my face. I will loose the sandal.” I think by this time they had quit the spitting in the face and they just loosed the sandal. But initially in Deuteronomy you had to spit in their face too because of selfishness, really.

But here is Boaz. He does not care because he is thinking, “I want this Gentile bride.”
And he takes a Gentile bride.

Now, who is Boaz? What is his background? What nation was he from? He was a Canaanite. His mother was Rehab the harlot. His mama was Rehab. He was Canaanite, well, half Canaanite. And who was Ruth?—Ruth, the Moabite. And the Canaanite and the Moabites were not supposed to have anything to do with God’s people. But Boaz the Canaanite and Ruth the Moabite come together and have a baby. His name is Obed. Obed has a baby. His name is Jesse. Jesse has a baby. His name is David the king. And we see when Samuel anoints him it is from Jesse the Bethlehemite. You know, the son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, from Bethlehem. So they started out in Bethlehem. They ended up back in Bethlehem, just like we read in Revelation 5 that He is the root of David, Jesus Christ. He was before David. He is actually David’s root. That is why he could call him his son. It says, “How can he call him his son. I thought he was his lord. Is he his lord or is he his son? How can you be both?” Well, how can you be the root of David when you come after David? Well, unless you are God. And He was the seed of Abraham.

Same parable Jesus told in Matthew 13:44, right? Remember the parable of the treasure that was in the field? And the guy buys the field to get the treasure. And Boaz married the Gentile woman. He bought the field to get the woman that he loved.

So, what is going on? What is needed at this point? What is happening here? I think that was Deuteronomy 25:5–10, the custom of removing the sandal. If you want to read that, it is kind of cool.

Unity

- ❖ **There are 12 separate states.**
- ❖ **There is not a nation.**
- ❖ **They need a king, a political leader.**

So they are in the land but do they really possess all the land? No. Joshua did not take the Jebusite city. God had promised what? In Genesis 17:6 what did God promise Abraham? Do you remember? He said, “From your loins will come forth [what?] kings.” He said, “Abraham, I promise that you are going to have kids down the generations and some of them are going to be kings.”

So, is it wrong for God to give a king? No, because God promised kings to Abraham. So you see how God is working. God is doing this, isn't He? It amazes me how God does this. If I was God, I would not have done this. If I was God I would have just said, “Enough of this mess. Let's just do it. Either let's just save these people or kill these people. I am tired of messing with these people.”

But God goes through all this history. That is why I am convinced—and that is why I want you to go through it because there are people today who say all this stuff is spiritualized and God is not going to bring His kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. I think that is a total lie. I believe God is going to bring His kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. I believe the waters of this, you might say, the kingdom of God on this earth will be as the

waters cover the sea. He promised it in Numbers and Habakkuk 2:14. God has a goal. God has a plan. And He is going to establish this perfect theocracy on earth. And we are headed there. And we will finish up. Actually we are going to finish up the rest and nail down the theocracy in the next lesson.

Father, we thank You for the fact that You are working. We thank You that You work in spite of our unfaithfulness, our unbelief. You work, in fact, when we fail one time. And then You would think we would learn it, and we go back and we fail again. And You would think we would learn and then we fail again. And it is like You to just keep going seventy times seven. And we are amazed at what You did in history, Lord. But aren't You still doing it right now in my life and in the life of everyone here? You began a good work in us. You have a plan and You will complete it. And I am sure of it. And I am more sure of it the longer I look at Your Word, the longer I see the real truth in the history of what took place here, Lord. I am so sure that nothing, nothing, nothing will thwart Your purpose. Nothing. And nothing can separate us from the great love that You have for us in Christ. Because I have seen what You have done in the past and I know that You are going to finish it in the future. And we are part of it right now. We thank You, Lord. Show us more of what we are as we go through too and how we can be used by just trusting You, through Jesus Christ our Lord, in whose name we pray, amen.

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