

HISTORICAL BOOKS READING GUIDE AND ASSIGNMENTS

Read Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, and 1 Kings 1-11

Suggestions for Reading:

- ▶ Reading in outlined "chunks"
- ▶ Read quickly for overview (Pentateuch = 187 chapters; this time = 150)
- ▶ Skim certain sections e.g., Miscellaneous accounts in Judges 17-21

INTRODUCTION TO HISTORICAL BOOKS

The Hebrews call the historical books, "The Former Prophets". This is because they have never viewed these books as straight history. Rather, the historical books are theological history, written from a definite point of view and preaching certain messages.

JOSHUA

OUTLINE:

Chapters 1-12 Conquest

- 1:1-9 Commission of Joshua
- 1:10-18 Preparation for Crossing Jordan
- 2:1-24 Spying out Jericho
- 3:1-4:18 Crossing the Jordan
- 4:19-5:12 Camping at Gilgal
- 5:13-15 Commander of the army of the Lord
- 6:1-27 Fall of Jericho
- 7-8 Ai
- 9 Treaty with Gibeonites
- 10 Campaign in the South
- 11 Campaign in the North
- 12 Summary of the Conquest

Chapters 13-24 Division

- 13 Allotment of the Two and a half Tribes
- 14 Caleb
- 15 Judah
- 16-17 Joseph
- 18-19 Remaining Tribes
- 20 "Cities of Refuge" Established
- 21 Cities for the Levites
- 21:43-45 Summary Statement
- 22:1-9 Departure of Transjordan Tribes

22:9-34 Altar by the Jordan
23-24 Joshua's Last Days
23:1-6 First Address
24:1-28 Second Address and Covenant at Shechem
24:29-33 Burials, Bones, and Eleazar

The book of Joshua details the conquest and division of the land.

ASSIGNMENT:

1. What are the "conditions for successful conquest" given to Joshua (1:1-9)? How are these followed up on in the accounts of the book of Joshua?
2. Why did Jericho fall? Why was Israel defeated at Ai?
3. Was the conquest complete? Cite evidence from the book.
4. In five to six sentences, compare or contrast the message of Joshua with that of Deuteronomy.

JUDGES

Now settled in Canaan, the tribes of Israel would ultimately become a nation with a king -- but not for 200 years or more. "The interval, when the tribes were learning to live together and to meet the problems of living with Canaanite cities in their midst and hostile nations on their borders, is known as the period of the judges." (La Sor, Hubbard and Bush, Old Testament Survey, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1982). Don't get hung up on the details of this book. Read it swiftly and get the general facts and flavor.

OUTLINE:

- Chapters 1:1-2:5 Partial account of the conquest of Canaan
 - 1:1-21 Conquest of Judah and Simeon
 - 1:22-26 Capture of Bethel
 - 1:27-36 Canaanite enclaves
 - 2:1-5 Angel of Yahweh at Bochim
- Chapters 2:6-8:35 Israel in the period of the Judges, to the death of Gideon
 - 2:6-10 Death of Joshua: the new generation
 - 2:11-19 Reason for Judges
 - 2:20-3:6 Reason for leaving Canaanites in the land
 - 3:7-11 Oppression by Cushan-rishathaim; deliverance by Othniel
 - 3:12-30 Oppression by Eglon; deliverance by Ehud
 - 3:31 Shamgar and the Philistines
 - 4:1-24 Oppression by Jabin; deliverance by Deborah and Barak
 - 5:1-31 Song of Deborah
 - 6:1-7:25 Oppression by Midian; deliverance by Gideon
 - 8:1-3 Ephraimite Anger against Gideon
 - 8:4-21 Other events involving Gideon

8:22-32 Gideon's rule over Israel
 Chapters 8:33-9:57 Brief reign of Abimelech
 9:7-15 Jotham's fable
 Chapters 10:1-12:15 Israel in the period of the Judges; close of the period
 10:1-5 Tola and Jair, minor Judges
 10:6-12:7 Jephthah's period as leader
 12:8-15 Ibzan, Elon, Abdon, minor judges
 Chapters 13:1-16:31 Philistine oppression and the exploits of Samson
 13:1-25 Annunciation and birth of Samson
 14:1-15:20 Samson and the woman of Timnah
 16:1-3 Samson and the harlot of Gaza
 16:4-31 Samson and Delilah
 Chapters 17:1-20:25 Other events of the period
 17:1-13 Micah and his priest
 18:1-31 Migration of the tribe of Dan
 19:1-30 Outrageous act at Gibeah
 20:1-48 War between Benjamin and Israel
 21:1-15 Reconciliation of the tribes

ASSIGNMENT:

1. In one sentence, what are the facts reported in the book of Judges?
2. In one sentence, what is the lesson being preached in the book of Judges?
3. Articulate, in your own words, the "pattern" of the accounts in the book of Judges? (2:6-3:6)
4. Why were there Canaanites left in the land?
5. In one sentence, what is a "judge"? i.e., What do they do?

INTRODUCTION TO 1 AND 2 SAMUEL, 1 AND 2 KINGS AS A WHOLE

PLEASE NOTE: At this time, read only up through 1 Kings, Chapter 11.

Looking at these books as a unit -- which some scholars feel they originally were -- is helpful. They tell us the story of:

1 Samuel The Birth of the Monarchy

Chapters 1-12 The Life/Rule of Samuel

1-7 Samuel's Judgeship

8-12 Clamoring for a King

Chapters 13-31 The Life/Rule of Saul

2 Samuel- 1 Kings 11 The Golden Age of the Monarchy

2 Samuel The Life/Rule of David

1 Kings Chapters 1-11 The Life/Rule of Solomon

▶ ▶ ▶ ▶ ▶ DO READING ONLY TO THIS POINT ◀ ◀ ◀ ◀ ◀
1 Kings 12 - 2 Kings 18:12 The Division of the Monarchy
2 Kings 18 - 25 Judah Alone (Alone?)...and Destroyed

(Our next reading will take us through these last two periods. At that time also we will begin plotting the various prophets in their proper places and looking at what they said.)

The first 12 chapters of 1 Samuel revolve around the life of Samuel, opening with his birth and closing with his farewell speech. The beginning of Saul's reign is introduced in the pattern which will later be used for each successive king (13:1). The record of his death in 1 Sam. 31 and 2 Sam. 1 provides a transition into the de facto reign of David. Likewise, the grouping of David's last days with the Solomon material in 1 Kgs. 1ff. provides for a transition in focus to the reign of Solomon. The division into north (Israel) and south (Judah) and the fall of the northern kingdom to Assyria in 721/722 B.C. is the subject of 1 Kgs. 12 through 2 Kgs. 18:12.

From then on, we read only of Judah until she falls to Nebuchednessar and is deported to Babylon c.586 B.C.

The Books of 1 and 2 Chronicles cover essentially the same material as the Books of 1 and 2 Kings, albeit with a bit sharper theological edge. While we will not read 1 or 2 Chronicles, I will make comments on their particular historical and theological angle in class.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL AND 1 KINGS 1-11

This period of Israel's history displays sweeping changes. Israel begins as a twelve-tribe confederacy, amid the chaos and degradation of the Judges period, and ends up under Solomon as the strongest nation in western Asia! This section of Scripture revolves around the lives/rules of Samuel (1 Sam. 1-12), Saul (1 Sam. 13-31), David (2 Sam. 1-24) and Solomon (1 Kgs. 1-11). It also contains many classic and significant passages, stories, and accounts.

OUTLINE:

1 Samuel Chapters 1-12 The Life/Rule of Samuel

Chapters 1:1-3:21 Childhood

1:1-2:11 Pious Hannah

2: 12-56 Eli's wicked sons

3:1-21 Samuel's call

Chapters 4:1-7:17 The Philistines and the Ark

4:1-7:2 The Capture of the Ark

7:3-17 Samuel as Judge (reads like passage from Judges!)

Chapters 8:1-12:25 Quest for a King

ASSIGNMENT:

1. In three sentences, summarize the life of Samuel.
2. Does 1 Samuel Chapters 7-15 favor or oppose the idea of a king for Israel?

OUTLINE:

1 Samuel Chapters 13-31 The Life/Rule of Saul
Chapters 13:1-14:52 Military Exploits
Chapter 15:1-35 Fatal Choice
Chapters 16:1-31:13 Saul and David -- Struggle for Power
16:1-20:42 David, Court Favorites
21:1-27:12 David, The Hunted Refugee
28:1-31:13 The Decline of Saul

ASSIGNMENT:

1. How are the principles and proclamation of Hannah's Song (1 Sam. 2:1-10) illustrated in the life of David? (five sentences)
2. Were David's tactics toward Saul aggressive or defensive? In two to three sentences, defend your answer.

OUTLINE:

2 Samuel Chapters 1-24 The Life/Rule of David
Chapters 1:1-8:18 David's Powerful Reign
1:1-4:12 King Over Judah At Hebron!
5:1-8:18 King Over All Israel at Jerusalem!
Chapters 9:1-24:25 David's Ambitious Sons
9:1-12:31 David's Strengths and Foibles
13:1-18:33 Absalom's Lust for Power
18:1-24:25 David's Last Days

ASSIGNMENT:

1. What are some of the key elements in the promise given to David in 2 Sam. 7?
2. One writer sees 2 Sam. 2-5 as "David under the Blessing" and 2 Sam. 9-24 as "David under the Curse". Do you agree with the characterization? In four to five sentences, why or why not?
3. How does the Psalm recorded in 2 Sam. 22 function as a theological commentary on the entire history of David? (five to six sentences)

OUTLINE:

1 Kings Chapters 1-11 The Life/Rule of Solomon
Chapters 1:1-2:46 Death of David and Struggle For Succession
Chapters 3:1-10:29 Solomon's Reign and Achievements
Chapters 11:1-43 The Dark Side of Solomon's Reign

ASSIGNMENT:

1. List the pros and cons of Solomon's life and rule

INTRODUCTION: “THE FORMER PROPHETS”

(As the Hebrew Bible calls the “Historical Books)

- Not just history, but theological history
- Former and Latter Prophets both demonstrate the great Prophetic themes:

Reminders of the Divine Rescue in Exodus

Reminders of the Gift of the Land

Reminders of the Covenant Obligations

Reminders of the Covenant Sanctions

REFLECTION: ISRAEL AND THE LAND (from W. Brueggemann, The Land, Fortress, 1977)

One way to organize or conceptualize the Old Testament is to view it in terms of Israel’s relationship to Land:

Eden > > > Expulsion

Abraham in Ur > > > > Wandering, landless Pilgrims

Wandering, landless pilgrims > > > > Someone Else’s land (Egypt)

Wilderness > > > > Conquest/Landedness

Exile > > > Return

Dispersion (70 A.D.) > > > > 1948 (Or the Church Age?)

JOSHUA

Chief Purpose: To show one phase of promises fulfilled (Gen. 12:1-3)
Land key element.

Gen. – Josh. Promise/fulfillment scheme

Chief Lessons:

Careful, complete obedience (Look at Josh. 1:1-9)

God’s Performance (Miracle, not military achievement)

Jericho ch. 6

Ai chs. 7-8

Covenant Renewal Ceremony ch. 24

Here, in retrospect, is perhaps a high point for Israel. Sinai was marred (golden calf). Moses himself fell, and after Joshua was to come the Judges and the Kings; but there is no mar on

Joshua's character. This is "what Israel might have been".

The Book of Joshua as a picture of:

Conquest (chs.1-12)

We have an "inheritance" or "land" in Christ which is given as a free gift but which must be apprehended through aggressive conflict, the essence of which has to do with careful, complete obedience. Cp. Phil. 3:12 apprehending that for which we are apprehended by Him.

Also, there is the idea of "Rest", i.e., Joshua as a foreshadowing of True "Rest". Cp. Heb. 3:7-4:10

Division of Land (chs. 13-24)

Concept of "portion". The tribes and even each family had a place, a portion, a lot. Cp. Levi, the Lord was his "portion"

The Completeness of the Conquest

In Joshua it seems complete for the most part, whereas Judges shows the incompleteness.

Conquest happened/happens in stages. (Jerusalem not possessed until time of David!)

The Problem of Killing in the Name of the Lord

Heb. Herem: "devoted to the Lord for destruction" Cp. Josh. 6:17
In Joshua, God commands total destruction.

Possible Factors:

- Progressive Revelation
- Punishment for Abominable Practices
- Religious Survival (The Seed)

Clarification: The Lord did not direct Israel to kill all Gentiles, only the Canaanites. Also, this policy was not permanent, but for the immediate situation when Israel was occupying the land God had promised to her fathers.

Ultimate Answer: The Goodness and Justice of God.

JUDGES

Cp. 2:6-23 Power of Covenant Renewal/Peril of New Generation

Origins of Canaanite Enclaves

Human Side: Josh. 9:14-15 Treaty with Gibeonites (Cp. Dt. 20:15-16 Violation of Herem)
Divine Purpose: Ju. 2:21-23

Central Problem: Israel's forsaking of the Lord and turning to gods of Canaanites.

The Pattern of Judges

The people "do evil" by serving other gods.
The Lord sends a nation to oppress them.
The people cry to the Lord.
He raises up a deliverer.
The oppressor is defeated.
The people have rest.

The Purpose of Judges

- To demonstrate the grace and judgment of God in the period of settlement.
- To show how He uses saviors to administer that grace and judgment.
- To justify the monarchy by attributing the chaos to its absence.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL AND 1 KINGS 1-11 (The United Monarchy)

(Basic outline is from David Hubbard)

Introduction:

- A landmark period in biblical history
Forever shaped Israel
Provided metaphors for God's people (Kingdom, Messiah, David, Solomonic Splendor)
- Story that centers around lives of figures, real but larger than life.
Samuel (1 Sam. 1-12)
Saul (1 Sam. 13-31)
David (2 Sam. 1-24)
Solomon (1 Kings. 1-11)

(In Scripture, proportion means emphatic purpose).

- Marks transition from rustic charismatic leadership among 12 scattered tribes to a centralized monarchy like the ones in other oriental nations.

The TENSION of Kingship

- While some passages seem to oppose the idea of kingship (8:1-22; 10:17-19; 12:1-25), others seems to favor or at least endorse it (9:1-10:16, 10:20-11:15). Look at 8:1ff.

Class Source Hypothesis (Wellhausen)
 Pro-Monarchical (A)
 Anti-Monarchical (B)

But notice the “editor” has not sought to either suppress or harmonize the two strands of tradition. (Except perhaps for minor alterations to preserve the continuity of the narrative cp. 11:14). He has, however, arranged the material in a particular way:

11:1-22	9:1-10:16	10:17-27	11:1-15	12:1-25
B	A	B	A	B

(B. Childs, Old Testament as Scripture, Fortress, 1979)

“B” is given preeminence, now enclosing the “A” source. The dominant note is the prophetic warning of Samuel against the dangers of becoming “like other nations”.

It’s basically a negative thing, but God is going to use it. (cp. 12:20-25!) They request a king out of a false sense of need, and in so doing “reject” the Lord. He’s going to go ahead and use it, but there are now great dangers. Nevertheless, they can still obey the Lord and experience blessing.

- So, there is an ambivalence, mixed emotions. 1 and 2 Samuel accurately reflect both the need and the dangers of kingship.

a. The Need

- _____
- _____
- _____

b. The Dangers

- _____

- _____
- _____

The QUESTION then is, how can Israel have a king like their neighbors (1 Sam. 8:5) without the loss of freedom inherent in such centralization (vv. 10-18)?

Cp. Dt. 17:14-20 A Different Kind of King
 King was not elevated to divine status; rather, he is viewed as God's representative charged with the responsibility of enforcing (and embodying) the covenant. A servant.

The CHARACTER of the Kingship

Politically

Conquest of Jerusalem and Jebusite hill country 2 Sam.5

Meeting of Philistine threat 2 Sam 5:17-25

Subduing of other neighbors 2 Sam. 8

Administratively

David's Emerging Bureaucracy 2 Sam. 8:15-18

- Role of Joab as general
- Beginning of scribal and administrative functions
- Political and religious roles being brought together

David's Struggle with THE ABUSE OF POWER

- The Bathsheba Story
- David using his "rights" to abuse Bathsheba without her resistance
- David using his "rights" to position the troops wherever he willed (Uriah)
- The infection of this in other stories (Tamar and Amnon – rape, Absalom)

Solomon's Weaknesses Flowed out of His Strengths

- Good administration led to forced labor and heavy taxes 1 Kgs. 5:13; 1 Kgs. 9
- Divine blessing led to royal lavishness 1 Kgs. 4
- Solomon's fatal flaw
Basically a compromise with foreign worship, but related to his lavish life and use of power.

INTERLUDE: CONFLICT BETWEEN "ROYAL CONSCIOUSNESS" AND "PROPHETIC IMAGINATION" (From W. Brueggemann, THE PROPHETIC IMAGINATION, Fortress, 1978)

Pro's and cons, Developments and Dangers.

The LEGACY of the Kingship

A dynasty in Judah (931-586 B.C.)

A well-fortified capital

An oppressive centralization

A paradigm of faithfulness

Role of Prophet as conscience to the king

- Samuel, Nathan (in Egypt, Nathan would have never gotten in again!)

The Messianic Foundation

- Celebrated in the worship Cp. Royal Psalms
- Anticipated by the prophets Cp. Isaiah, Amos, Hosea, Micah

Conclusion: Out of the ambivalence of monarchy, God brought the expectation of a greater king and a more righteous and powerful kingdom.