

# Seven Bible Studies 2017

## History

### January 3: Joshua 1-5 (Nick Hermon)

#### HISTORY

To start off the history study, we begin in the first 5 chapters of Joshua:

Before Joshua, God chose Abraham and his family to become the children of Israel who are enslaved in Egypt. Through Moses, God rescued Israel out of Egypt and made a covenant with them on Mount Sinai that He would lead them out of Egypt and into the “Promised Land” of Israel. But since Moses and Aaron did not give glory to God in Numbers 20:12, God tells them that it would not be them that entered Israel, but their children.

The book of Joshua picks up right after Moses has died and Israel is ready to enter the land.

Joshua is appointed as Israel's new leader, and it appears Joshua is seen as a new Moses. Like Moses, Joshua calls the people to obey the Torah [refer to Charles Fry's post yesterday] and Joshua sends spies into the land just as Moses did back in Numbers chapters 13 and 14... except it goes way better this time.

In fact, some Canaanites turn and follow the God of Israel. Rahab, a harlot, hides the two spies and they promise her that if she hangs a scarlet ribbon out her window, they will not harm her and whoever is in her house.

Just like the sea parted for Moses in Exodus, the river Jordan parts and priests carry the Ark of the Covenant across on dry ground.

In chapter 5, the people look back to their roots and the new generation is circumcised. They celebrate their first Passover in the land and as they turn prepared to go forward, Joshua encounters a mysterious warrior.

Joshua asks the soldier, “Are you for us? Or are you for our enemies?” It turns out this is an angelic commander of God's army, and the warrior responds, “Neither.”

This shows that the real question here is whether Joshua is on God's side.

It appears that this whole story is not about Israel versus the Canaanites, but rather, this is God's battle and Israel is going to play the role of spectators or sometimes supporters in God's plan.

#### **Comment:**

Steven Wright:

Excellent Summary brother Nick Hermon! Thank you! I especially appreciate your closing statement; something to help us with our perspective in this election year here in our country.

## Replies:

Joanne Caffie:

An excellent summary indeed!!! Great job Nick.

## Comment:

Charles Fry:

Good beginning! I really like the alignment mentioned of the Exodus experience and the arrival experience, including the spies, the "holy ground" reference, the parting of the waters, the resumption of circumcision, the beginning and cessation of manna. There is continuity and there is renewal in a fresh start.

## Comment:

Marc Hermon:

BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS!!!! Joshua is such a good book! Action packed! According to Matt 1:5 Rahab was Ruth's second mother-in-law after Naomi. Perhaps this was why Boaz treated Ruth (a foreigner) so kindly? Rahab is a great example of the courageousness mentioned in chapter 1. I found it ironic that she even mentioned courageousness (or the lack of it in the men of Jericho) in her confession in Josh 2:11 "And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath." Her courageousness gets her mentioned as one of the only two women included in the "cloud of witnesses" mentioned in Hebrews 11. And James goes further to mention that her faith was accompanied by action in James 2:25. At least until tomorrow, this is my new favorite phrase. BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS!!!!

## Replies:

Ginger Hermon:

A mother in the line of the Messiah finding deliverance, physical and spiritual, through the mercy of God!

## Comment:

Wendy Range:

Rahab was given specific instructions for her salvation via a scarlet cord. Jason observed that it sounds like she tied the cord right away after they left. It's so important to follow God's instructions without delay. She surely didn't take her opportunity for granted, especially considering how few would be saved from the fall of Jericho.

## Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks, Nick, for leading our Tuesday studies! You selected a great category. These historical records reflect God's covenant ways and how He fulfills and remains true to His promises. I also appreciate this message, "He (God) did this so that all the peoples of earth might know that the hand of the Lord is powerful and that you might always fear the Lord your God." (Joshua 4:24)

## Replies:

Joanne Caffie:

"Always fear the Lord the Lord your God" should be written on our foreheads and engraved in our hearts.

## Comment:

RichardandJeannie Owens:

Joshua 1:7 It is only by obeying the commandments of the Lord that we shall find success in our lives. Following as closely as we possibly can (not turning to the left or to the right--Matt. 7:13-14) will not only give us a life in heaven, but a fulfilled life here.

## January 10: Joshua 6-10 (Nick Hermon)

Picking up where we left off in the HISTORY study, we move on to Joshua 6-10.

These chapters discuss the Battles with the Canaanites and two main battles in detail: Jericho & Ai

These battles are extremely different in how they are brought forth. As many of us remember from children's class stories, in the battle of Jericho, Israel takes a fairly passive approach.

They marched around the city once every day for seven days with priests and the Ark of the Covenant and on the seventh day, marched seven times around and blew their trumpets... and the walls came tumbling down 🎵🎵🎵

I think it's important to note here that this story shows God will deliver his people if they simply trust and wait. Also, just like Rahab and her family turned to God, the people of Jericho had the opportunity to do the same. (Praise God for the patience He also has in us to repent!)

Now the battle of Ai makes the opposite point.

An Israelite named Achan steals some of the devoted goods that belong to God and lies about it and God punishes Israel for this sin.

After severely dealing with Achan's sin, it appears Israel is going to inherit the land... but they have to be obedient and trust in God's commands.

Chapters 9-10 talks about the Canaanite group called the Gibeonites and, like Rahab, how they turn to the God of Israel.

In contrast, the Caananite kings form alliances to destroy Israel, but Israel engages them in battle and win by a land slide... err, should I say a hail storm? (Joshua 10:11)

## Comment:

Steven Wright:

Thank you brother Nick! I enjoyed reading the KJV on the app this A.M. how the Gibeonites came "Warily"

## Replies:

Steven Wright:

Just saw how my phone changed it! Not KJV literate I guess!? The word I chuckled at was "Wilyly"

## Comment:

Kevin Crittenden:

Joshua 6 starts in a weird place. Anyway, in Josh 5:13, Joshua asks "Are you for us or for our enemies?" and the angel answers "Neither"; then goes on to tell Joshua what the Israelites need to do to take Jericho. It seems that the angel is on the side of the Israelites. What does the answer "Neither", mean?

An observation: Josh 6:21 describes the complete destruction of every living thing in the fallen Jericho. This is hard for modern sensibilities - as a soldier, I could not destroy a 3-year old, frightened and trembling in it's pregnant mother's arms. This had to be a terrible ordeal for soldiers even back in that day.

In Josh 7:1, Achan violates the Lord's Commandments and I am assuming no one else knew about it. Why then does the Lord's anger burn against all Israel? And why would his family have to be stoned? (I'm assuming that his wife was stoned as well although she is not mentioned in Josh 7:24)

## Comment:

Charles Fry:

I have much too much to say about all these things....

But about the answer of "neither", God had chosen Israel for a purpose; and God condemned the Amorites and Canaanites for necessary reasons; but who was he (or the angel he assigned) for or against? When Jesus preached was he for the Pharisees or the Herodians or against them both and only for his disciples? Whose "side" was he on? The Jews or the Romans? The Jews or the Samaritans? Whose King is he?

John 18:37 37 "You are a king, then!" said Pilate.

Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

## Replies:

Kevin Crittenden:

Thanks, Charles. Really, if you have something to say, don't be shy. :-)

God doesn't "take sides." He is the Lord of all who come to Him. So those who today say, "God is on our side" are not in the truth.

Joanne Caffie:

Thanks Kevin for asking the question & Charles for the clarity. That statement "neither" provides more understanding now.

## Comment:

Charles Fry:

Have you ever noticed how Joshua handled the matter of Rahab and her family in 6:22-23? I don't think he was much interested in "the prostitute" or her family as people, and they weren't exactly immediately welcomed into Israel as members of the community, but he and the spies honored the oath she had extracted from them. She didn't have a great reputation.... except that she put her belief into action and chose life instead of death.

"At the north end of the tell of Jericho, archaeologists made some astounding discoveries that seem to relate to Rahab.

The German excavation of 1907–1909 found that on the north a short stretch of the lower city wall did not fall as everywhere else. A portion of that mudbrick wall was still standing to a height of over two meters (eight feet).<sup>7</sup> What is more, there were houses built against the wall! It is quite possible that this is where Rahab's house was.<sup>8</sup> Since the city wall formed the back wall of the houses, the spies could have readily escaped. From this location on the north side of the city it was only a short distance to the hills of the Judean wilderness where the spies hid for three days (Joshua 2:16, 22). Real estate values must have been low here, since the houses were positioned on the embankment between the upper and lower city walls. Not the best place to live in time of war! This area was no doubt the overflow from the upper city and the poor part of town, perhaps even a slum district."

From archaeologist Bryant Wood

<https://answersingenesis.org/archaeology/the-walls-of-gericho/>

"The Walls of Jericho"

## Comment:

Charles Fry:

About Achan, the "troubler of Israel," consider the audacity of stealing any of the forbidden dedicated things from Jericho! Unlike Rahab and the people of Jericho, he hadn't merely heard of what the Lord had done, he had seen it. In recent weeks he'd experienced the last words of Moses (the speeches of Deuteronomy), seen the crossing of the Jordan, seen the cessation of the manna, and seen the fall of Jericho's walls earlier that same day. How blinded by greed did he have to be in those circumstances to steal, not one, but at least three costly items? (Consider too the echo of this story in Acts 5 with Ananias and Sapphira). How could he think that no one, not even the God who was certainly there, would notice?

When God spoke of the sin to Joshua he used plural pronouns, said "they" had sinned, Israel had sinned (6:10). On the one hand, is it credible that no one noticed what Achan did? That his family didn't know he had hidden a bulky Babylonian robe, 200 shekels of silver (about 5 lbs by weight, equivalent to about 10-12 rolls of quarters in weight and bulk), and a wedge of gold? How could he pack those things out of the city and none of his fellow Israelites noticed? How could he hide them under his tent floor in such a way as to keep the robe beautiful and the family not notice? And on the other hand, even if no one at all noticed, shouldn't someone have noticed? Shouldn't someone have been paying attention to see that God's command was followed?

The punishment is severe, but the lesson was a severe lesson. Stealing what was devoted to God within minutes of seeing his power displayed great folly, intolerable greed and self centeredness.

This story happens to also be part of an overarching cycle of stories in the primary history, Genesis through Kings, highlighting the violation of each of the 10 commandments. Prior to this Exodus 32 had the golden calf, commandments 1 and 2. Leviticus 24:10ff had the violation of commandment 3. Numbers told of the Sabbath breaker (15:32ff), Deuteronomy had the 5th commandment (Deut 24:18ff) and now Joshua has the violation of the command against stealing. In each of these stories (one of them hypothetical) people died for their violation of the commandments, to teach the whole community to fear the Lord and obey him.

## Comment:

Kevin Crittenden:

Thank you, Charles. It struck me odd that Achan, obviously aware that he was breaking God's edict, furtively cached his booty in a place where he could not admire any of it. What was he planning to do with it? He could never wear that robe. The gold and silver were probably way

beyond his pay grade. And yes, the amount of dirt displaced would have been obvious to others. Not a great thinker, Achan.

### **Comment:**

Charles Fry:

When you put it that way, I'm reminded of Enron, purportedly smart people who got carried away with greed and couldn't possibly get away with it for long, or Bernie Maddoff. Greed and glitter sure can bring out the folly in people who ought to know better.

### **Comment:**

Kevin Crittenden:

Achan seems to have had a lot more shame about his actions than anybody at Enron. Well, they'll be first against the wall when Christ comes again.

### **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks, Nick! Clear & concise summary of the chapters. Good job. Divine intervention occur throughout the battles. I especially appreciate chapter 10. The Lord fought for Israel in a day that had never been like it before or since. The Sun stood still & the Moon stopped. The Lord hurled hailstones and more men died by this than by sword. It's a blessing when teaching young ones to overshadow evil & gore with God's power & divine intervention.

## **January 17: Joshua 11-15 (Nick Hermon)**

HISTORY: Joshua 11-15

Chapters 10-12 is a summary list of all the victories by Moses and Joshua. These stories contain violence that could seem a little disturbing for a Christian. Didn't Jesus say to love your enemies? Why does it seem like God is declaring war here?

Well, I think it's important to first look at WHO Israel is conquering— the Canaanites. Why them? The main reasons are given in earlier stories. The culture of the Canaanites had become extremely morally corrupt, especially when it comes to sex (Leviticus 18) and they performed child sacrifices (Deuteronomy 12:29-31).

God didn't want these practices influencing the Israelites so He commanded them to destroy these areas.

But this raises a second question (and I'd like to hear some opinions on this)—

Did God command the destruction of all Canaanites like a genocide? The phrases in these stories use language such as "totally destroyed them" & they "left no survivor or anything that breathed."

Due to the moral corruption of the Canaanites, it wouldn't surprise me if it was intended this way but at the same time, I could also see this phrasing as hyperbole and not literal. In Joshua 10:36-39 it says that Israel "left no survivors" in the cities of Hebron and Debir and that "they totally destroyed it and everyone in it", but in chapter 15:13-15 these towns are still populated by Canaanites which leads me to think the phrasing "everyone" refers to the soldiers or unrepentant individuals of the cities.

This is a unique moment in Israel's history and they were commanded by God before wars to pursue peace (Deuteronomy 20).

So the purpose of these battle stories was never to tell you, the reader, to go commit violence in God's name but rather to show God bringing justice on human evil like He did during the time of the flood (refer to yesterday's post).

Lastly, chapters 13-15 discuss how the land of the twelve tribes of Israel are divided... but since it goes to chp. 22, I will save that topic for next week's post.

I'll be interested to hear all your thoughts.

### **Comment:**

Steven Wright:

When God gave the promise to Abraham, he told him that his descendants (grandchildren and great grandchildren) would be in captivity for 400 years and then be delivered to take possession of Canaan. The reason given for the 400 years was "because the sin of the Amorites was not yet full" God gave the Canaanite tribes who were guilty of horrible abominations, child sacrifice to Molech among them, a 400 year grace period to repent, before his judgement fell.

### **Comment:**

Charles Fry:

Does God have a right to judge individuals, families, cities, nations? He does. Is he in any way arbitrary about that? He is not. We have reference to the pre-flood world being so violent and corrupt it distressed God (Genesis 6:6). Genesis 18-19 describes God considering, examining, testing the cities of the plains, and then rightly destroying Sodom and her sisters. As noted by Steven, God waited 400 years before judging the Amorites, the inhabitants of Canaan, knowing that they would only get worse in those centuries (Gen 15:13-16, Galatians 3:17).

God was serious about the total annihilation of those Canaanite people, their whole population and their whole world view. Israel's failure to do that, allowing them to repopulate and rebuild cities after they were defeated, not conquering all of the cities, those are presented as disastrous failures in Judges 1-2. Israel was to occupy what has been called the "crossroads of the world" and be a light to the nations, to Africa, Asia and Europe, but instead the paganism and immorality of the Canaanites was allowed to persist and infiltrate the Israelite community, and to spread abroad where Israel should have been a beacon for the worship of God alone.

The medical metaphor may be a cliché, but Canaanite corruption was a cancer that needed to be eradicated, but Israel too quickly rested on their initial accomplishments, felt relief and contentment with only a partial victory, and let the cancer persist.

Remember 2 Peter 2:1-22 for context in how important God's interventions in judgment have been, in order that the righteous might persist in this world.

### **Replies:**

Butch O'Neal:

Thank you, Charles Fry!

## Comment:

Jay Graham:

I agree with what has been said, and I would add this-- There is something particularly abhorrent about unrestrained sexual sins, and it seems in particular to be especially harmful to a society and people. (This is why I believe pornography has such a horrible impact on a people.) It was the Lord's will that Israel totally wipe out this abhorrent behavior for it would destroy the people of God. I believe this is what is happening to our own land due to allowing and even lifting such sexual deviancy up as honorable. Such activity will ultimately destroy this society as it did the Canaanite people. I believe this is one of the primary reasons the Lord wanted Israel to totally annihilate the Canaanite peoples. 1 Corinthians 6:18 18 Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.

## Comment:

Marc Hermon:

I know the borders and village names might be kind of dry stuff to some people but I always find it kind of cool. Tolkien and other writers, I would assume, were also inspired by these ancient lands and boundaries.

"Their southern boundary started from the bay at the southern end of the Salt Sea, crossed south of Scorpion Pass, continued on to Zin and went over to the south of Kadesh Barnea." COOL!

Here's a cool interactive map for Joshua 15

[https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?](https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=1BiQioOEsPgWiapDz_nKYmtMFkgM&hl=en_US&ll=30.970697749530295%2C34.92054653417972&z=9)

[mid=1BiQioOEsPgWiapDz\\_nKYmtMFkgM&hl=en\\_US&ll=30.970697749530295%2C34.92054653417972&z=9](https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=1BiQioOEsPgWiapDz_nKYmtMFkgM&hl=en_US&ll=30.970697749530295%2C34.92054653417972&z=9)

## Comment:

Marc Hermon:

15:63 "Judah could not dislodge the Jebusites" Lack of faith? Future use by God to proclaim David king at Jerusalem? or both?

## Replies:

Steven Wright:

I say "both!"

Charles Fry:

If Judah had had the fortitude, faith, determination, to keep Jerusalem or retake it, that wouldn't have hindered God's work through David at all. God wanted Judah to take their whole inheritance. They didn't do it. God worked with what was, not what might have been. A more extreme example, God did not want David to commit adultery with Urriah's wife and murder Urriah. David did those things. That was a great failure on David's part. God worked with the outcome, despite the fact it was definitely in the deficit column, not the asset column. God did use it, and Jerusalem, but that's in spite of human failure.



## Comment:

Charles Fry:

The people described as Nephilim seem to have been particularly targeted by Joshua. Families of large fierce warriors that once inhabited Canaan, including the Anakites and Rephaim. The ones among the Philistines Joshua didn't destroy, which is where Goliath and his kin later came from.

Joshua 11:21 At that time Joshua went and destroyed the Anakites from the hill country: from Hebron, Debir and Anab, from all the hill country of Judah, and from all the hill country of Israel. Joshua totally destroyed them and their towns. 22 No Anakites were left in Israelite territory; only in Gaza, Gath and Ashdod did any survive.(NIV)

## Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks, Nick! I think you covered 7 years. ;-) As I read through passages this evening the phrase which struck me over & over again was, "As the Lord commanded..." In chapter 11 alone there were 4 references (vs. 12,15,20, 23). The Lord commanded Israel to conquer, to utterly destroy, to make no covenant, and to show no mercy. These commands included reasoning for elimination: survival of a new Israel nation. Through Joshua and the Israelites, God cleansed one small piece of land for His name to be honored through a chosen people who were to carry out His perfect will. This would lead to the Messiah who would redeem lost humanity from its self-destructive ways. I'm reminded of the Lord speaking to Joshua in chapter 1, "Be strong & very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or the left, that you may be successful wherever you go." This was a war of obedience to God, a war in which Israel scourged evil from the land. We, too, must be strong & very courageous in order to be obedient and utterly destroy the sin that surrounds us.

## Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Another short lesson... Despite Joshua being well advanced in years, God did not retire His servant. This still holds true to this day. Psalm 92:14, "The righteous shall bear fruit in old age."

## Replies:

Butch O'Neal:

Good point! Ginger Hermon!

## January 24: Joshua 16-20 (Nick Hermon)

Reading for Tuesday, January 24, 2017

History: Joshua 16-20

Joshua 16-17: The people of Joseph, (tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh) are assigned their territories. They go to Joshua and tell him they need more land because they are a numerous people. Joshua says they can clear the forested hill country of the Perizzites and Rephaites.

Joshua 18-19: Judah, Gad, Reuben and Joseph (Ephraim and Manasseh) have received their land. Levi does not get a portion because the priestly service is their allotment. This leaves 7 tribes. Joshua appoints 3 men from each tribe to survey the land and write up a description.

They then returned to the Tabernacle in Shiloh where Joshua cast lots for the 7 remaining tribes. The lot order was Benjamin, Simeon, Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali and then Dan. Dan had trouble taking their land so they traveled north and conquered the city of Leshem and named it Dan. This story can be read in Judges 18 about how Dan struggled with idolatry. Perhaps this is the reason that Dan is replaced with Manasseh in Revelation 7. Joshua also received a city for himself.

Joshua 20: The six "sanctuary cities" :) - cities of refuge are set up so if you accidentally killed someone you could flee to one of these cities and escape the avenger of blood prior to standing trial before the assembly.



## Comment:

Steven Wright:

Growing up in Springfield, Oregon, we had neighbors (friends ) who were from what was then known as , "Yugoslavia " their surname was Babitch. The husband's name was Bela, and his wife's name was Milcah. Now, I have a new sister in Christ named, Tirzah Morris (Josh. 17:3). What an understatement about how the Danites got their city that they named "Dan!" Have to go to the book of Judges for the rest of that story!

## Replies:

Ginger Hermon:

Good Bible trivia question: Who were Zelophehad's daughters?

Steven Wright:

Factors in on the Virgin birth of the Messiah also!

Ginger Hermon:

Steven Wright - I don't think I understand the connection? I understand that if a man died without a son, God allowed his inheritance to pass on to his daughter (giving her inheritance and property rights). Can you please expand on this thought of how it factors in with the virgin birth of the Messiah? I'll probably have an "aha" moment but right now I don't know. Thx :-)

Steven Wright:

sorry Ginger Hermon! did not see your querie! Kimber brought it to my attention. here are some notes i have from a study on that. Revisiting the question: "Why a Virgin Birth?"

1. The problem
  - a. (Genesis 49:10)
    - i. God announced very early that His plan for redemption involved the Messiah coming from the tribe of Judah.
    - ii. Specifically, from the line of David (Ruth 4:22; 2nd Samuel 7:11 – 16)
    - iii. The succession of Kings after David and Solomon however, proved to be for the most part, a pretty dismal line.
  1. Things go from bad to worse and eventually we encounter Jeconiah – upon whom God pronounces a “Blood curse” (Jeremiah 22:30)
    - a. This curse seems to create quite a grim and perplexing paradox:
      - i. The Messiah had to come from the royal line.
      - ii. But there is now a blood curse upon that very line!
    - b. but remember you cannot outmaneuver God – he has a contingency plan for every contingency!
2. The solution
  - a. The answer emerges in the “Differing” genealogies of Jesus Christ recorded in Matthew and in Luke.
    - i. Matthew, in true Levitical fashion, focuses on the Messiahship of Jesus and presents him as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah.

1. So Matthew, (as any Jew would), traces the legal line from Abraham through David, then through Solomon (The royal line) to Joseph, the legal father of Jesus (Mt. 1: 1 – 17).

ii. Luke (on the other hand), as a physician, focuses on the humanity of Jesus and presents him as the Son of Man.

1. Luke traces the blood line from Adam (the first man) through David - - and his genealogy from Abraham to David is identical to Matthew's.

a. But then after David, Luke departs from the path taken by Matthew and traces the family tree through another son of David (the second surviving son from Bathsheba), Nathan, down to Heli, the father of Mary, the mother of Jesus (Luke 3:23 – 38).

iii. But then, how can we have inheritance through a daughter, instead of a son?

1. There are two solutions for that problem:

a. 1st – I think we understand here that Matthew gives the real and actual descent of Joseph, and Luke the real and actual descent of Mary.

i. We can support this understanding/conclusion with the scripture:

1. The most natural meaning of “begat” is preserved in Matthews account.

a. Jesus comes from David's royal line and so fulfills prophecy.

b. It is not elsewhere stated that Mary is of Davidic descent (although the tracing out of the Names AFTER David in Luke's list will bear this out), there is presumptive evidence in the language of the angel to Mary in (Luke 1:32) and as well in the enrollment of Mary in (Luke 2:5).

2. we also note the lack of proper article with Joseph's name in Luke's list, whereas every other name on the list appears with the article.

a. This puts Joseph's name outside of the genealogical series properly so – called.

b. Indicating that Joseph belongs to the parenthesis “As was supposed.”

c. Making it read thus, “being son (as was supposed of Joseph) of Heli.”

3. Luke had already clearly stated the manner of Christ's birth (we shall say some more about this also), so that no one would think he was the son of Joseph.

a. Jesus would then be the grandson of Heli, which also happens to be a perfectly and completely biblically allowable meaning of “son.”

i. (there is just no way of attacking this problem without finding a Biblical resolution – ONLY – the one true God could work such a thing at once so remarkable and miraculous as this!

ii. THEN WE HAVE . . .

3. Zelophehad

a. The law of Moses required inheritance to come through the sons of a father.

b. A notable exception was permitted however, in which inheritance should come through the daughters, if no sons were available and the daughter(s) married within her tribe (Num. 26:33; 27:1 – 11; 36:2 – 12; Joshua 17:3 – 6; 1st Chron. 7:15)

i. The daughters of Zelophehad, petitioned Moses for a special exception, which was granted after they entered the land of Canaan under Joshua.

ii. The claims of Christ can rely solely upon this particular exception granted to the family of Zelophehad.

1. Heli, Mary's father, Like Zelophehad, was without sons, apparently.
2. Mary married within the tribe of Judah.
3. Jesus was born of Mary (though she was a virgin).
4. So . . . Jesus was born of David and carried legal title to that line, but avoiding the blood curse of Jeconiah
5. (Psalm 40:7)

Steven Wright:

can't tell on my end if this came through, please let me know if it did Ginger Hermon?

Ginger Hermon:

Steven Wright - "AHA!!!" :-) Thanks for the time you spent preparing this response! I see the connection you're making now. ;-)

## Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

The nation of Israel has a homeland! The distribution started with Caleb and ended with Joshua. Just think of their testimonies: from Egypt, Red Sea, wilderness & finally to the Promise Land. They had a "different spirit and followed God wholeheartedly!"

## January 31: Joshua 21-24 (Nick Hermon)

"And the children of Reuben and the children of Gad called the altar Ed: for it shall be a witness between us that the LORD is God" (Joshua 22:34 King James Version)

Joshua 21 & 22 continues the discussion of the division of the land. The verse that stuck out to me the most was 21:11 where the land of Hebron was given to the tribe of Judah, the tribe of Jesus's lineage. Lots of things have happened in the area of Hebron. To name a few, it was the burial site of Abraham's family (Genesis 23), where Joseph was living when his father sent him to find his brothers before being sold into captivity (Genesis 37:14), later the place of David's anointing as King of Israel (2 Samuel 2) and the murder place of Abner (2 Samuel 3).

Joshua 23 & 24

Joshua gives two speeches to the people very similar to the final speeches of Moses in Deuteronomy. He reminds them of God's generosity and how they were brought into the land and rescued them from the Canaanites. He calls them to turn away from the Canaanite gods and be faithful to the covenant they made. If they do, it will lead to life and blessing in the land. But if they're unfaithful, Israel will condemn itself to the same judgment as the Canaanites.

So Joshua leaves Israel with a choice:

“So I gave you a land on which you did not toil and cities you did not build; and you live in them and eat from vineyards and olive groves that you did not plant. Now fear the Lord and serve him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”

Amen.

### **Comment:**

Charles Fry:

Thanks, Nick! It is noteworthy that Joshua's expressed choice is, if not the LORD, then choose whatever you want, all of the others are on the same footing. It's God or Not God. People think there are lots of religious options, but there really are just two. The various man made systems of religion are all equivalent. Only what God himself has revealed stands apart.

### **Replies:**

Wendy Range:

Joshua also speaks to God's jealousy about another "third option" that doesn't really exist: God alongside other gods. That, too, is actually Not God.

### **Comment:**

Kevin Crittenden:

Thank you, Nick!

### **Comment:**

Marc Hermon:

1 book down...65 more to go. Remember if you miss a day, just miss the day. Start again the next day and strive to continue in the Word.

### **Replies:**

Kevin Crittenden:

Word!

### **Comment:**

Yvonna Hartman:

I appreciate all the work everyone is putting in on these studies. I look forward to them everyday.

### **Comment:**

Joanne Caffie:

I was wondering why the Israelites got so mad when the Reubenites, the Gadites & 1/2 the tribe of Manasseh built that altar (22:10-12)?

### **Replies:**

Ginger Hermon:

Hi, Joanne. I believe it is because the Israelites thought the altar had been set up as a rival to the altar at Shiloh. In verse 16 it's called rebellion and apostasy.

Charles Fry:

Yes, the previous time Israel had set up their own altar without God's command had not worked out well (the golden calf in Exodus 32). In Deuteronomy God repeatedly directed the people to offer sacrifices only in the place he would choose for his name to dwell, where the tabernacle and altar would come to rest. In Joshua's generation, and until the days of Eli and Samuel, that place was Shiloh.

Deut 12:4-7

You must not worship the Lord your God in their way. 5 But you are to seek the place the Lord your God will choose from among all your tribes to put his Name there for his dwelling. To that place you must go; 6 there bring your burnt offerings and sacrifices, your tithes and special gifts, what you have vowed to give and your freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks. 7 There, in the presence of the Lord your God, you and your families shall eat and shall rejoice in everything you have put your hand to, because the Lord your God has blessed you.

NIV

### **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:

Thank you, Nick! You first memorized Josh 24:14 when you were 7. :-) We have no greater joy than knowing you have chosen to serve God. What a great book! Joshua was full of victories & testimony to Israel's faithfulness in that generation. Yet Joshua gives strong warnings that their mission remains: be the people of God's kingdom in the world, be loyal to God's covenant laws, hold fast to the Lord, be careful to love the Lord, fear the Lord & serve the Lord your God. As the Lord instructed Joshua in chapter 1 we must be strong and courageous.

# Seven Bible Studies 2017

## History

### February 7: Judges 1-6 (Nick Hermon)

HISTORY: Judges

The book of Israel's Failures.

The name "Judges" comes from the types of leaders Israel had during this period. They're not exactly like typical "judges" we think of today, but more like tribe leaders. Their stories are most often of going into battles and doing great (or terrible) things.

Chp. 1 starts off with the death of Joshua

Remember, Israel was doing well during the time of Joshua, but that's about to come crashing down when the Israelites start falling away and intermarrying with the Canaanites (which explains why it says God instructed them to "completely destroy" them throughout the book of Joshua).

Chp. 2 gives kind of an overview of the whole book

Israel starts off in sin which (as Joshua warned them) leads to oppression, they repent and ask God for a deliverer (a "judge") who leads to peace, but then they fall right back into the cycle of sin again.

Chp. 3-5 the first four judges: Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar and Deborah, seem to be good leaders. They conquer the Canaanites resulting in:

40yrs peace through Othniel

80yrs peace through Ehud (whose sword was engulfed in Eglon because he was so fat... what a fun children's class story!)

Shamgar striking down 600 Philistines with an oxgoad (which kind of looks like a combination of a shepherd's crook and spear)

40yrs peace through Deborah

Then comes Gideon out of the tribe of Manasseh and the least in his family. He surprised and thankful to God for giving him this task. God tells him he's been chosen to take down the Midianites... so at first it seems like he's going to be an ok judge... but we'll see where he goes from here... [cliff hanger]

### Comment:

Marc Hermon:

Deborah was the first woman judge but Jael took a stab at it.



## Comment:

Marc Hermon:

"After that whole generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation grew up, who knew neither the Lord nor what he had done for Israel." 2:10 #1 priority of a father: Teach your children about the Lord!

## Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks, Nick Hermon. I don't know of any children songs made about Ehud & Eglon, a lefty & a fat man. I do remember some giggles back in the day during children's class, however! :-) I still remember the mnemonic that we created to help remember the Judges' names back when Marc & I were in college. "Oh Ephramites! Some Day The Great Judge Jephthah Is Eventually Asking Shibboleth!" O= Othneil, E=Ehud, S=Shamgar, D=Deborah, G=Gideon, T=Tola, J=Jair, J=Jephthah, I=Ibzan, E=Elon, A=Abdon, S=Samson. (There are more judges but these are the ones in the book of Judges) I think we should start making a list of all the unique weapons that were improvised during the occasion of need. So far oxgoad & tent peg. Coming up jars & torches, woman's millstone, and eventually a donkey's jawbone.

## Replies:

Charles Fry:

Do you know the Judges song, to the tune of "Reuben, Reuben"?

Ginger Hermon:

No, Charles Fry! Please share. :-) P.S. I had to google "Reuben, Reuben!"

Ginger Hermon:

I apologize. On the PHill website I see we do have a song of judges. I just didn't learn it myself. We're grateful Jamie Ingle and her Evans cousins blessed us with these songs!  
<http://www.pleasanthillchurchofchrist.org/songbook.php>

Charles Fry:

That's it, except we do sing the names a bit differently, including Barak with Deborah, but omitting Abimelech, who was not called to be a judge.

To the tune of Reuben, Reuben:

Othniel, Ehud, Shangar, Deborah, Barak, Gideon, Tola, Jair; Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon; Samson, Eli, Samuel.

(repeat tune) God set judges over Israel, one brave woman, 14 men. They helped Israel fight their battles, brought them back to God again.

Ginger Hermon:

Excellent. Thanks for sharing!

## Comment:

Charles Fry:

So much to ponder in these chapters! I especially appreciate in the song, chapter 5, the references to the excellence of those who volunteered, as in Judges 5:2 (NIV)

"When the princes in Israel take the lead,  
when the people willingly offer themselves—  
praise the Lord!"

Similarly in v.9 and the list of volunteers in 11-15, but then in Reuben, there was a lot of thinking about it, but not volunteering, and several others who failed to answer the call are

verbally flailed, v15b-17, and especially the nearby city of Meroz in v23, which was in a position to be a great help, but refused to help. By not helping Barak and Israel, they did not help the Lord, and so were cursed. Then there is that grand contrast between Jael, the tent dwelling woman, and the mother of Sisera waiting for more booty to finance her lavish lifestyle, booty that would never come.

## February 12: Judges 7-11 (Nick Hermon)

History Study: Judges 7-11

As mentioned last week, Gideon starts off as a coward of a man but eventually comes to trust that God CAN SAVE Israel through him. Chp 7 starts off with an incredible story how God tells Gideon that there are TOO MANY men to battle with. Of the 32,000 men, 22k left after Gideon told those who were afraid to turn away. Of the 10k men left, God told Gideon to take them to the river and narrow it down even more. 300 lapped water like dogs from the river and God told Gideon to use those soldiers (which makes it even more impressive since these are the men who let their guard down showing they are not alert of their surroundings).

Gideon takes these 300 men and defeats a HUGE army of Midianites with only three hundred men carrying torches and clay pots.

But Gideon has a nasty temper and murders a bunch of fellow Israelites for not helping him in his battle and then it all goes downhill from there.

He makes an idol from the gold that he won in his battles and then after he dies all Israel worships the idol as a god and the cycle begins again.

In Chp 9, Abimelech becomes a self-appointed ruler. I like how the NIV words that he took 70 shekels of silver and hired "reckless scoundrels, who became his followers". In another story of woman's triumph over evil, as Abimelech approached a city to set it on fire, a woman dropped an upper millstone on his head cracking his skull.

After a few more rulers, Jephthah, the son of Gilead and a prostitute, comes into power at the request of the elders. Jephthah was a very effective leader, winning lots of battles against the Ammonites but he was so unfamiliar with the God of Israel he treats him like a Canaanite god-vowing to sacrifice whatever walks through the door of his house... which ultimately results in him sacrificing his only child- a daughter.

This tragic story it shows just how far Israel has fallen and how they no longer know the character of their own God, which leads to murder and to false worship.

Next up: the story of a strong man with long hair 🤪

### Comment:

Marc Hermon:

Not sure I have the same take on the 300 as you but this passage has always been a little confusing to me so here is my "talk out loud" paraphrase version to demonstrate where my interpretation has landed.

"Separate those who drink the water as a dog laps with his tongue, (quickly and on the run) as opposed to those who remove their armor and kneel down and take their time to drink. Three

hundred men quickly lapped with their hands to their mouths but everyone else settled in down on their knees to drink."

I do admit I interpret it this way based on some strange need on my part for there to be a battle-strategic reason for God to choose them. He whittled down those who were afraid and then those that weren't vigilant.

Perhaps there is no reasoning for either drinking method and the Lord just chose the smaller number, "in order that Israel may not boast against me that her own strength has saved her."

### **Comment:**

Marc Hermon:

A good compassionate Father..."And He could bear Israel's misery no longer." 10:16

### **Comment:**

LuAnn Woody:

Tom could have said this- what I remember is the ones who drank hand to mouth were more vigilant and watchful- can't sneak up on someone who has their head up.

### **Replies:**

Lowell Hermon:

That is how I understood it too..

### **Comment:**

Charles Fry:

I've heard various theories about alertness and preparedness in the selection of the 300. My notion is that God wanted a small but useful number to do the job, knew how many would do what, and selected a test that would produce the number he wanted, regardless of their individual characteristics.

I appreciate that God offered Gideon the assurance of another sign if he wanted it before the attack, didn't chide him for his previous hesitation, but willingly encouraged him to finish the job he had been selected for. I also appreciate that the sign was nothing spectacular or obviously miraculous, but rather the words of a stranger.

And I admire how Gideon reasoned with the hostile Ephraimites, rather than going to battle with them as Jephthah later did.

The upper millstone, in the Abimelech story, would have been about the size and shape of a loaf of French bread. Rubbed back and forth over the flat lower millstone. A prized kitchen tool, or a head bonker as needed. Same kind of grinding when we get that far in the Samson story. Hard, menial labor.

In terms of literary structure, the story of Gideon-Abimelech is the center of the book, and there is parity between Deborah-Barak and Jephthah, and parity between Ehud and Samson.

## February 21: Judges 12-16 (Nick Hermon)

History Study: Judges 12-16

Much like Peter's accent gave him away, Judges chp. 12 tells the story of the men of Gilead recognizing individuals by their speech. If people wanted to cross the river and could not say "Sibboleth" correctly, they would be killed because they knew they were the enemy resulting in 42,000 deaths!

The story of Samson— an angel appeared to a woman unable to give birth and told her she would bear a son whose head should not be touched by a razor since he is to be a Nazirite. She was told he would deliver Israel from the hands of the Philistines.

He had impressive feats of physical strength such as killing a lion with his bare hands, but the recklessness of marrying Philistine women caused issues.

Chp. 15 tells the fascinating story of his revenge from his first marriage on the Philistines by burning down areas with torches tied to foxes and killing a thousand people with a donkey's jawbone.

But once again, Samson makes the same mistake of falling in love with ANOTHER Philistine woman, named Delilah.

Like his first marriage, she presses him to tell her something he's keeping secret. He reveals his hair is the source of his strength and while he is sleeping, Delilah called for someone to shave the seven braids of his hair.

He is taken into captivity and brought in front of three thousand Philistines. He asks to be taken to a pillar so he can lean on it. Then he knocks down the two central pillars in the Philistine temple killing even more when he died than when he lived (v. 30).

Probably the biggest takeaway from these passages (in my opinion) is the importance of choosing your spouse. Not only can it lead to physical death as in Samson's case, but it can also put you in spiritual danger.

### Comment:

Wendy Range:

Thanks, Nick! I also like how Manoah and his wife were so dedicated to raising their son correctly. Prior to his birth, he hounded (in a good way) the angel in order to get as much information as possible on how to raise this son that the Lord had promised. It makes me think of the parent that is constantly seeking out the latest research in child development and diet. You can tell they were still watching obsessively (again, in a good way) when he became a man and decided he wanted to marry a woman not "of his people", disregarding their objections. It's easy to see why God chose them as Samson's parents, and they took on a great deal of suffering for the Lord by accepting the blessing of this son.

## Comment:

Charles Fry:

Interesting side note (to me, anyway), a couple of Philistine temple ruins have been excavated by archaeologists, and have the common feature of a roof supported by two central pillars. The pillars in each were about six feet apart. That suggests to me that Samson probably had a large and imposing physical presence with a long reach.

[https://ferrelljenkins.files.wordpress.com/2010/07/tell-es-safi\\_view-of-philistine-temple-with-pillar-bases-t.jpg](https://ferrelljenkins.files.wordpress.com/2010/07/tell-es-safi_view-of-philistine-temple-with-pillar-bases-t.jpg)



## Comment:

Marc Hermon:

"She cried the whole seven days of the feast"

## Replies:

Ginger Hermon:

I'm surprised no one has yet referenced, "If you had not plowed with my heifer..."

Marc Hermon:

I am well pleased with my heifer so I didn't want to sound offensive. :)

Ginger Hermon:  
Better to be called a heifer than a dripping faucet I suppose. ;-)

### Comment:

Marc Hermon:  
"With such nagging she prodded him day after day until he was tired to death"

### Comment:

Charles Fry:  
Samson was a deeply flawed individual, but used by God to accomplish things no one else in his generation was willing to take on. As with several other Biblical characters, there are intriguing foreshadows of the deliverer who was to come in the record of Samson. It's been a long time since I taught this lesson...

#### Samson's Riddle

Judges 13-14

Parallels to Jesus Christ:

Set aside from birth	Luke 1:35, Galatians 4:4
The angel told the mother first	Luke 1:26ff, Matthew 1:18-21
Came seeking a wife	Ephesians 5:25-27, John 1:10-13
Came looking for a fight	1 John 3:8
Passing through the vineyard parables	Isaiah 5:7; Revelation 14:17-20, various
Confronting a lion	1 Peter 5:8; John 12:30-33
The might of the Spirit	Luke 3:21-22, 4:1, 18-19; Acts 10:38
The defeat of the lion	Hebrews 2:14-15
Safe passage secured for all	Hebrews 10:19-22
The shame (uncleanness) of the dead body	Hebrews 12:2
The joy (sweetness) of the honey	Hebrews 12:2
Who the family really is	Luke 8:19-21
Therefore doers of the word share in the honey of the victory, along with God the father and Jesus the victor	1 Corinthians 15:56-58
But the world finds it a mysterious riddle	1 Corinthians 1:18-25
And tries to corrupt the bride	2 Corinthians 12:1-4, 1 Peter 3:13-17



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Samson broke the gates, Judges 16:3-4

Matthew 16:18

Samson fought alone

Hebrews 13:12

His own people betrayed him, Judges 15:11-15

John 1:11

His biggest victory was in his death, Judges 16:30 1 Corinthians 15:20-21

### **Comment:**

Marc Hermon:

Also interesting, that clearly one of Samson's weaknesses was looking upon and desiring women and what did Jesus say about this?

"And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell."  
Matt. 5:29

Quite literally in Samson's case.

### **Comment:**

Charles Fry:

One more interesting bit. Not evidence as such, but interesting.

<http://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/biblical-artifacts/artifacts-and-the-bible/lion-seal-from-beth-shemesh-sparks-samson-discussion/>

### **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks, Nick! I love all 7 days of Bible studies but History is one of my favorites. Thanks for keeping us on track and guiding our conversations. It's so nice to have everyone's perspective. Really appreciated Wendy's thoughts on Manoah and his wife being determined to raise their son in the Lord. Although Samson displayed weaknesses he finished strong and is listed in the hall of faith (Hebrews 11:32).

### **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:

Two sets of questions: 1.) who all were Nazirites? Aside from Samson I can think of Samuel and John the Baptist. 2.) how many births were divinely announced? I can think of Isaac, Samson, Jesus, John the Baptist. Just curious if there are more in either situations. Thanks, all!

### **Comment:**

Charles Fry:

Ginger, most Nazirites took the vow for a set limited period of time. The only one specifically called a Nazirite from birth is Samson, but Hannah's vow of dedication including no razor for Samuel sounds like a Nazirite vow, and the command that John drink no wine or fermented drink also sounds like a Nazirite vow. I have wondered if Elijah might have been a Nazirite, partly from 2 Kings 1:7-8, depending on which translation one follows. If any others were lifelong Nazirites, I'm unaware.

## Replies:

Ginger Hermon:  
Thanks, Charles!

## February 28: Judges 17-21 (Nick Hermon)

### HISTORY:

“In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit”

This is how chapter 17 starts and how it ends in the very last verse of Judges.

Chapter 17-21 shows how bad things have gone for the Israelites. At this point, you can't even tell them apart from the Caananites anymore.

There are two tragic stories in these passages: the story of Micah and the Levite & his concubine.

Micah built a private temple to an idol and gets plundered by a private army sent by the tribe of Dan. They come and steal everything and then they go and burn down the peaceful city of Laish murdering all of its inhabitants.

The final story of the book is even worse. It is a shocking tale of sexual abuse which leads to violence and Israel's first civil war.

It's very disturbing and that's the point.  
These stories are meant to serve as a warning.

The line “In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit” is repeated four times in the final chapters of this book and for good reason.

It goes to show that when we do what we see fit, we are going to be in the wrong. Bad things happen when we follow our own choices instead of the laws God has purposefully given us.

How different things would have been if they simply followed the final words of Joshua!

But as with the pattern of Israel, after their low-points, they eventually come back around... and this lack of a king sets the stage to the origins of King David.

Next week's study—> Ruth! 👍

## Comment:

Steven Wright:

Yes "tragic" is the right word. A lot of important instruction here though. When the kingdom divides, there is already a false priesthood in place in the North that has been there since the time of the judges. (18:30). When I teach the Book of Judges I always teach these last chapters first. Together with this statement that we find early in the book about there was no judge in Israel and everyone did what was right in their own minds etcetera to show how things were at the time. Chronologically chapters 18 through 21 belong at the beginning of the story. So looking forward to the Book of Ruth!



### **Comment:**

Charles Fry:

The account of the sin and decimation of the tribe of Benjamin is an important epilogue, linking us forward to the first king of Israel, his family, his connection to Jabesh Gilead, and his method of rallying his first army.

### **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks, Nick! Throughout Judges the fundamental issue is the lordship of God in Israel and acknowledging His rule and Kingship. Unfortunately, Israel rejected this over & over. Only by the mercy of God was Israel not overwhelmed and absorbed by pagan nations. I'm looking forward to studying David's great grandmother! :-) History of redemption.

### **Replies:**

Joanne Caffie:

You make some good points Ginger and they remind me that we are a modern day Israel that continues to reject God AND His Son

### **Comment:**

Joanne Caffie:

Nick why would the tribe of Dan burn down and murder the inhabitants of a "peaceful" city?

# Seven Bible Studies 2017

## History

### March 7: Ruth 1-4 (Marc Hermon)

Today's reading is the wonderful book of Ruth. The description of Boaz as a redeemer from Bethlehem makes this book a great Messianic story. Remembering that Boaz's mother was Rahab from Jericho, makes Ruth's question to him in Ruth 2:10 all the more wonderful. "At this, she bowed down with her face to the ground. She asked him, "Why have I found such favor in your eyes that you notice me—a foreigner?" Enjoy the reading. It's one of the best page turners in the Bible in my opinion.

#### **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:

Ruth is one of my favorite books in the Bible. Ruth's selfless devotion to Naomi and her God exemplifies the truth that Christ's Kingdom is not by blood or birth but by obedience that comes from faith. Redemption!

#### **Comment:**

Joanne Caffie:

I must agree Marc...one of the best page turners in the bible

# Seven Bible Studies 2017

## History

### March 14: 1 Samuel 1-5 (Nick Hermon)

HISTORY: 1 Samuel 1-5

To recap history so far, the Israelites left slavery of Egypt and made it into the Promised Land in the book of Joshua. They did well under Joshua, but in the book of Judges, they failed miserably. Now we're diving into the book of 1 Samuel which focuses on three main individuals — Samuel, Saul, and King David.

First, the book starts off with a woman named Hannah who was grieving about not being able to have a child. After petitioning and presenting her request to God in prayer (see Philippians 4:6), she promises to raise a child who would serve God.

God grants her the ability to have a child and she has a boy who she names Samuel, which means "God has heard."

The second chapter is Hannah's song which is a poem exalting God and how He is proud of the humble and that He will raise up a king.

The end of the second chapter talks about how Eli's sons were "scoundrels" (according to the NIV) and the prophecy on the demise of Eli's house including that Hophni and Phinehas will die on the same day.

Chapter three is on God calling Samuel. He tells him the house of Eli will fall and Samuel warns Eli of the disaster to come. This leads to chapter four where perhaps the most devastating thing in Israelite's history (up to this point) occurs— the Philistines capture the Ark of the Covenant. The news of the death of 30,000-foot soldiers including Hophni and Phinehas and the capture of the ark was too much to bear for Eli. At 98-years-old, he falls over dead. Phinehas's pregnant wife, also couldn't handle the news and dies in labor.

Chapter 5 is an interesting story on the power God shows. As referenced in Chapter 4, the Philistines knew of the ark and how the God of Israel helped them in many battles. But after capturing the ark, they weren't sure what to do with it. They put it in the house of the idol Dagon... but the following morning, Dagon's face had fallen on the ground before the ark of the Lord. They put him back in his place, but next day Dagon fell before the ark again with his hands and head broken off and only his body remaining. Needless to say, this scared the Philistines and knew they had to do something with the ark. They tried moving it to Ashdod, Gath, and Ekron but with each place they moved it, bad things happened to their people.

It was so bad, the leaders of the Philistines gathered together and decided it would just be best to return the ark to the children of Israel.

### **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks, Nick! Great job highlighting these 5 chapters. Hannah has been a source of encouragement to me - and so many other women. She teaches pouring your soul out before the Lord. Pain & sorrow finds refuge in prayer.

## March 21: 1 Samuel 6-10 (Nick Hermon)

HISTORY: 1 Samuel 6-10

Chp 6:

Philistines return the ark of the covenant to the Israelites by putting it on a cart with two cows that walk the trail to Beth Shemesh. With the suggestions of priests and diviners, they sent it back with gifts of five gold tumors and five gold rats which represent the plagues the ark brought on each Philistine city. The Israelites made a sacrifice to God since the ark is returned but the chapter concludes with 70 Israelites being struck down because they looked into the ark.

Chp 7:

The ark is moved from Beth Shemesh to Kiriath Jearim and stays there 20yrs. Samuel convinces the children of Israel to turn away from their idols and to serve God only (which they do for the rest his life).

Chp. 8:

When Samuel was old, his sons were selfish and accepted bribes. Instead of allowing them to rule, the elders of Israel pressed Samuel to appoint a king.

Chp 9-10:

Samuel meets a tall, handsome man who stood a head over everyone named Saul. God told Samuel to appoint him king and in chapter 10, we're told how Saul is insecure about becoming king. His uncle asks him what Samuel talked to him about but all he mentioned was the donkeys. Then when Samuel summons the people of Israel to announce the new king, Saul is hiding in the supplies.

Kind of a funny start for the person we know Saul ends up becoming.

### Comment:

Steven Wright:

I have always thought it significant when Samuel tells Saul "you will be changed into another man" From the luggage incident forward there are clues to the fact that Saul just did not have the "Stuff" God's Spirit is what made the difference. After God took that away from Saul because of his flagrant and repeated disregard for righteousness, what remained was the burdened shell of the mere and severely limited man of poor character.

### Comment:

Steven Wright:

Thanks Nick!

### Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thank you, Nick! Excellent paragraph summaries from these chapters. Moses anticipated a time when people would ask for a king, contrary to the Lord's ideal for them. So Moses gives guidance in Deut. 17:14-20. -Appoint a king who God chooses - Among your own brothers -

King must not become greedy or take many wives -Each day the King is to write for himself a scroll copy of the law so it is with him and read all the days of his life so he will learn to revere the Lord and follow this law and decrees.

## **Comment:**

Charles Fry:

Saul's self deprecating words are a good reminder of the setup for the story we had in Judges 19-22, when the tribe of Benjamin was decimated a few generations earlier.

1 Samuel 9:21 (NIV)

21 Saul answered, "But am I not a Benjamite, from the smallest tribe of Israel, and is not my clan the least of all the clans of the tribe of Benjamin? Why do you say such a thing to me?"

Samuel's instructions to Saul include the prelude to Saul's first great failure as king.

1 Samuel 10:8 (NIV)

8 "Go down ahead of me to Gilgal. I will surely come down to you to sacrifice burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, but you must wait seven days until I come to you and tell you what you are to do."

## **March 28: 1 Samuel 11-15 (Nick Hermon)**

HISTORY: 1 Samuel 11-15

Leaving off last week, chapter 10 talked about Saul hiding with the supplies when Samuel was about to announce him as the new king. Chapter 11 is vastly different. The City of Jabesh Gilead is besieged by the Ammonites with the threat that they will gouge out the right eye of every person.

When Saul heard the news, it says "the Spirit of God came powerfully upon him, and he burned with anger". He led an attack against the Ammonites with 330,000 men and crushed them.

The end of the chapter concludes with the Israelites having a great celebration about Saul becoming king... an 180-degree flip from chapter 10!

Chapter 12 is a farewell speech from Samuel. He is old and on the edge of death. His final requests are much like Joshua's— that they make God their king and to serve Him to the best of their abilities and avoid idols.

In chapter 13-15, Samuel rebukes Saul for not being faithful to God and Jonathan (Saul's son) acts rebelliously towards Saul. Samuel told Saul that God commanded him to completely destroy the Amalekites and everything they owned, but Saul disobeyed and spared the King Agag and the best of the livestock. Samuel once again confronts him and informs Saul that God is going to raise up a new king in place of him. This is the beginning of Saul's downfall.

The reading concludes with, "And the Lord regretted that he had made Saul king over Israel."

But on the bright side, next week we are introduced to a new king who is considered a man after God's own heart (1 Samuel 13:14).

## Comment:

Charles Fry:

Thank you Nick. These stories are rich, told briefly but full of nuggets of insight into human nature, and power, and the structure of Scripture. There is quite a contrast between Saul acting in the Spirit of the Lord, and Saul acting in the spirit of Saul.

A few footnotes on some of my favorite bits of this story:

Jabesh Gilead -- Saul was related to those folks, due to the war against the tribe of Benjamin, Judges 21:6ff. It is ironic that wives from Jabesh Gilead had been procured for the surviving men of Benjamin because Jabesh Gilead had not joined the assembly, and now no one from Israel was joining the battle to protect Jabesh Gilead. When Saul cut up the oxen and sent the pieces throughout Israel, that echoed the action of the Levite whose dead concubine precipitated the civil war, Judges 19:29.

It is also ironic that old Samuel lived through most of the reign of Saul, not quite as near death's door as some thought. Reminiscent of Isaac who thought he had a foot in the grave, and blessed his sons, only to live more than 20 years and see Jacob and family return home again.

The incident of Saul's presumption in 13:7-14 looks back to instructions in 10:8.

13:32-35 is also incredibly ironic. Zeal for one commandment, oblivious to the spirit of obedience.

Though not obvious in most translations, 14:41 seems to be the clearest example in the Bible of using the Urim and Thummim. If your English version has the word "perfect" or "right" that is the Hebrew word transliterated as "Thummim."

1 Samuel 14:41 (ESV)

41 Therefore Saul said, "O Lord God of Israel, why have you not answered your servant this day? If this guilt is in me or in Jonathan my son, O Lord, God of Israel, give Urim. But if this guilt is in your people Israel, give Thummim." And Jonathan and Saul were taken, but the people escaped.

Another ironic comment, 15:23 points up the progression of how disobedience slips into a downward spiral, that Saul would eventually slide downslope into literally trafficking with a witch/fortune teller.

## Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

1 Samuel is one of my favorite books! Action packed; great lessons. Looking forward, Lord willing, to more of your insight on these passages, Nick. Thanks for being faithful to the study! Next week's lesson will be especially good in my opinion. For tonight's reading I will ponder upon this verse, " But be sure to fear the Lord and serve Him faithfully with all your heart; consider what great things He has done for you!"

## April 4: 1 Samuel 16-20 (Nick Hermon)

1 Samuel 16-20

What an action-packed reading! First, we start off with Samuel anointing David. God tells Samuel to go to the house of Jesse and that He'd tell him which one to choose as the new king. Samuel sees Eliab and thinks "Surely the Lord's anointed stands here before the Lord."

But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." (Lesson to be learned right there!)

So seven sons pass by, but the youngest, David, is tending the sheep. They bring him in and Samuel anoints him in the presence of his brothers.

Meanwhile, a harmful spirit is tormenting Saul. His attendants tell him to bring in David to play the harp so he'd feel better. They do so and Saul grows fond of David; even promoting him to be one of his armor-bearers.

Chapter 17, we have the widely known story of David and Goliath.

Goliath is a massive individual from the enemy camp of the Philistines who issues a challenge to the Israelites— a fight to the death against their strongest warrior with the losers becoming subject to the winning side.

With Goliath standing ≈9'9", wearing 125lbs of bronze armor, wielding a spear with a 15lb iron point, nobody seemed to stand a chance in a one-on-one battle against him. He taunted the Israelites 40 days, but the whole army was fearful and nobody rose up to challenge him.

Jesse instructs David to take supplies to his three older brothers who were serving under Saul and when David hears Goliath taunting the Israelites, he questions why the Israelites will not stand up to the Philistine defying the army of God.

News of this spreads to Saul, who calls for David. David tells Saul he will fight Goliath and Saul is skeptical of the idea. David makes the pitch to Saul that as a shepherd he has killed both a lion and bear to rescue sheep and that Goliath would be no different. Saul agrees.

As David steps forward from the camp, Goliath is offended they chose such a young boy and that he only has a staff, sling, and bag. After taunting, Goliath rushes at him and David takes out one of the five stones from his bag and slings it into Goliath's forehead. Goliath falls face-down and David takes Goliath's sword and cuts off Goliath's head. All the Philistines flee in fear of the death of their hero.

Chp. 18

Saul hears people singing that he's slain thousands, but David has slain tens of thousands... so Saul begins to grow jealous/scared of David and plans to kill him. Interestingly enough, Saul's daughter Michal is in love with David and Saul thinks this is an perfect opportunity to kill him. He tells David in exchange for his daughter's hand in marriage, he has to kill a bunch of

Philistines which David does. This makes Saul even more scared of him since he knew God is on his side.

## Chp 19

Jonathan, Saul's son warns David that Saul is out to kill him and while David is playing the harp, Saul tries to pin David to the wall with a spear, but he escapes and Michal (now David's wife) tells him he needs to run for his life because they will kill him in the morning if he stays.

Michal pulls off the trick many kids try today by stuffing the blankets and Saul becomes angry.

He gets word that David ran to Samuel so he sent troops not once or twice but THREE times because the troops he sent saw the prophets and the Spirit of God came on them so they started prophesying too. Finally, Saul goes there himself and the Spirit of God comes on him too so even he strips naked and starts prophesying all day & night.

## Chp 20

Jonathan and David devise a plan to see if Saul has is willing to accept David back. Jonathan tells Saul David has gone to a sacrifice during the feast he was supposed to be at. This makes Saul very angry and he even throws a spear at his son Jonathan (he must have really bad aim because he's missed a couple times now!). So the next morning, Jonathan goes out and shoots his bow and arrow to warn David it's still not safe.

### **Comment:**

Kelly Harvey:

Currently this is Colton's favorite part of the Bible. Great recap!

### **Comment:**

Charles Fry:

These chapters are indeed loaded with drama, pathos, heroism, faith, and inspiration. Prophetic types and shadows abound, and roots are put down for the king and kingdom that will be.

David states two of the great purposes of his foray against the Philistine champion in 17:46b-47 (NASB), "that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, 47 and that all this assembly may know that the Lord does not deliver by sword or by spear; for the battle is the Lord's and He will give you into our hands."

Testimony to the world, and a reminder to Israel of something many, especially including Saul, had forgotten.

### **Comment:**

Marc Hermon:

I think you hit the mark with your synopsis. When God is with us we have good aim.

### **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:

Thank you, Nick! Love, LoVe, LOVE these chapters! I appreciated you mentioning here & in your talk Sunday night how music calmed Saul. It is true in our lives today as well. I often ponder the almost unfathomable compliment the Lord singles out toward David: a man after



God's own heart. Two times David is honored with this title. 1 Sam 13 & in the book of Acts. Here the Apostle Paul is speaking before the men of Israel, and tells them of God's feelings toward King David. Paul wrote God, "raised up for them David as king, to whom also God gave testimony and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will' " (Acts 13:22). To God the heart - a person's innermost motivation and attitude - is of prime importance: "But on this one will I look: On him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word" (Isaiah 66:2). Eliab's regal appearance didn't qualify him. David's heart did.

## **April 11: 1 Samuel 21-25 (Nick Hermon)**

1 Samuel 21-25

HISTORY: Saul's hunt for David and the trust David puts in God

In escape from Saul, David comes across the priest Ahimelek and tells him he is on a secret mission from Saul. He eats the consecrated bread and is given the sword of Goliath. He goes to the king of Gath (the tribe of Goliath) and the servants of the king tell him that he is the David who people sing has slain tens of thousands.

This makes David nervous so he "acted like a madman, making marks on the doors of the gate and letting saliva run down his beard." (That would have been a site!)

And the king replies, "Am I so short of madmen that you have to bring this fellow here...?"

Chp 22

David leaves Gath and escapes to the cave of Adullam. His household and those in distress (about four hundred men) meet him there and David takes them to the king of Moab for protection.

Then Saul receives word of Ahimelek's assistance in David's escape. He orders his officials to kill the priests, but they refuse and Doeg kills eighty-five priests and those in the town of Nob. One of Ahimelek's sons escapes and warns David.

Chp 23-24 consist of a wild goose-chase with Saul in pursuit of David. Saul goes to relieve himself in one of the caves David is hiding in and instead of killing him, David cuts off a piece of his robe without him noticing. David announces himself to Saul and lets him know that he could have killed him.

Chp 25

Samuel finally dies and all Israel mourned for him and we have the story of Nabal- a foolish and selfish man who rudely refuses to help David and his men. David angrily plans to kill all the men, but Nabal's wife Abigail is an "intelligent and beautiful woman" who brings a plethora of supplies to David and apologizes profusely over her feeble-minded husband. David spares the family of Nabal, but God strikes Nabal down dead ten days later.

When David hears of Nabal's death, he requests Abigail to become his wife who agrees. David also marries Ahinoam and his first wife Michal is given away by Saul to another husband.

Next week will be the final chapter five chapters in 1 Samuel so I hope to do another video overview like I did with the Book of Ruth.

## Comment:

Steven Wright:  
Thanks brother! Looking forward to next week!

## Replies:

Ginger Hermon:  
Yes! Thank you, Nick! So looking forward to your video. 😍

## Comment:

Charles Fry:  
I saw this video a couple of weeks ago, and offer it as an addendum here. The tour guide has some good thoughts, and gives a glimpse of the sort of caves David retreated into at Adullam.  
<https://www.facebook.com/211088945658734/videos/993500820750872/>

## Replies:

Ginger Hermon:  
Psalm 34 is definitely an excellent read linking back to 1 Samuel 21.

## Comment:

Kevin Crittenden:  
I like the conversation in 23:11-12. David and the god of Laconia.

11 Will the citizens of Keilah surrender me to him? Will Saul come down, as your servant has heard? Lord, God of Israel, tell your servant.”

And the Lord said, “He will.”

12 Again David asked, “Will the citizens of Keilah surrender me and my men to Saul?”

And the Lord said, “They will.”

## Comment:

Kevin Crittenden:  
So why did David go to Achish? What did he want?

## Replies:

Charles Fry:  
I think he thought he could be unnoticed, just a stranger among the Philistines. A refugee seeking asylum. He was wrong though, it was a potentially fatal error in judgment.

Kevin Crittenden:  
I guess that Goliath's sword on David's person would have been a dead giveaway because, as David said "There is none like it." Given the large size and weight of Goliath's other accoutrements, I'm thinking the sword must have been rather large as well. It would stand out.

## April 18: 1 Samuel 26-31 (Nick Hermon)

HISTORY: 1 Samuel 26-31

Once again, we are reminded why David is a “man after God’s own heart”. As Saul is in pursuit of David in the wilderness, David’s spies report to him that Saul is pitched in the trenches. In the middle of the night, David, Ahimelech, and Abishai sneak into the camp while Saul is asleep and instead of killing Saul, David takes his spear (possibly the same one he’s thrown at him multiple times!). When Saul wakes up, David once again announces to him that he had the opportunity to kill him, yet chose not to.

In chp. 27, David decides to align himself with the Philistines in an attempt to escape from Saul. With 600 hundred men, he dwells in the land of Gath under the rule of Achish. This works for a year and four months.

Then in chp 28 the Philistines gathered together to wage war on Israel. Saul, fearful for his kingdom, enquires of God but receives no answer and turns to the witch of Endor. She calls upon Samuel who informs him that he and his sons will fall to the Philistines.

Chp 29-30, the leaders of the Philistines inform David they don’t want him involved in the battle and he returns home... which had been attacked and burned down. As with every major decision he makes, he enquires of God what to do and God tells him to pursue the Amalekites.

The last chapter in 1 Samuel is on the tragic death of Saul and his sons. The archers from the Philistines severely wound Saul and Saul told his armorbearer to kill him so he does not fall into the hands of his enemy. The armorbearer refuses and Saul falls on his own sword killing himself. The armor bearer does the same and all the men (including Jonathan) died together the same day.

This concludes the book of 1st Samuel. I was hoping to make a video, but the week snuck up on me quicker than expected. Lord willing, I’ll post a video review with next week’s 2nd Samuel post.

### Comment:

Marc Hermon:

I get the impression the "witch of Endor" was surprised to actually see Samuel. Also, pretty depressing message for Saul. "Tomorrow you will be dead!"

### Replies:

Steven Wright:

Right, because, God made it so, THAT time, for his purposes which hinges upon that truly depressing message!

### Comment:

Butch O’Neal:

Thanks, Nick! I certainly understand time sneaking up on one.

Kevin Crittenden:

I find it interesting that Saul enquired of the Lord in 28:6 but did not get an answer. So what does he do? He goes to a medium! Did Saul think that God would speak through such a person?

### **Replies:**

Ginger Hermon:

Finding God's will any "Witch" way you can. :-P In all seriousness, it's mysterious but the medium conveyed to Saul the impending battle which would bring death. His hopes for a dynasty would end in a devastating defeat at the mercy of the Philistines, the very people he had struggled with all his reign. As Samuel warned this came as a result of Saul's unfaithfulness to the Lord.

### **Comment:**

Charles Fry:

1 Samuel 15:23 (NKJV)

23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft,  
And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.  
Because you have rejected the word of the Lord,  
He also has rejected you from being king."

Saul had continued the downward trajectory Samuel described years before.

### **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks, Nick. I look forward, Lord willing, to the video! 1 Samuel was action packed.

### **Comment:**

Marc Hermon:

Every time I read about Endor I want to go watch, "Return of the Jedi" or "Lord of the Rings"

### **Replies:**

Kevin Crittenden:

Do you think she originated Endorphins?

### **Comment:**

Steven Wright:

Thank you Nick! Keep up the good work! Looking forward to the video!

# Seven Bible Studies 2017

## History

### April 25: 2 Samuel 1-4 (Nick Hermon)

HISTORY: 2 Samuel 1-4

As Joshua Riggins pointed out earlier this month, it does not pay to lie. 1 Samuel ends with Saul taking his own life by falling on his sword in battle. However, in the beginning of 2 Samuel, David encounters an Amalekite who tells him about the death of Saul... but his story doesn't completely match up. He said he came across Saul who was fatally injured and that he [the Amalekite] put Saul out of his misery. Then he took Saul's crown and bracelet to David and reported that he killed him. (As Charles Fry pointed out in Josh's post, there is quite a bit of irony that this individual is an Amalekite... interesting stuff- go read it!)

David replies, "How was it you were not afraid to put forth your hand to destroy the Lord's anointed?" and the Amalekite executed.

It does not pay to lie.

Chps. 2-4, we finally have KING David! He is anointed king of Judah and one of Saul's sons, Ishbosheth, is made King of Israel.

Over time, Israel and Judah engage in war and Abner joins forces with David... but is later murdered by Joab. Rechab and his brother Baanah kill the king of Israel, Ishbosheth, and bring his head to King David.

They proudly proclaim to David they killed the ruler of Israel and son of David's enemy, Saul. But much to their surprise, David is not happy. He tells them the story of the Amalekite and has them killed too.

Even though Saul was David's enemy, it is incredible how much respect he showed to him because he was God's anointed.

Psalm 37:1-4

Of David. Fret not yourself because of evildoers; be not envious of wrongdoers! For they will soon fade like the grass and wither like the green herb. Trust in the Lord, and do good; dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness. Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.

### **Comment:**

Charles Fry:

Abner Vs Asahel, and Joab Vs Abner... Don't underestimate your opponent.

## **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:

Thank you, Nick! David expresses incredible love for his friend/brother, Jonathan, in chapter one's lament. Jonathan recognized the Lord's choice for David to succeed Saul rather than himself and was wise to make an oath with David in 1 Sam. 20. David honors his oath and repays great kindness to Jonathan through his son, Mephibosheth.

## **May 2: 2 Samuel 5-9 (Marc Hermon)**

Reading for May 2nd, 2017: 2 Samuel 5-9

Ch 5: David becomes king in Hebron at the age of 30 years old and reigned for a total of 40 years. 7 years from Hebron and 33 years from Jerusalem. David conquered Jerusalem (the city of David) and was very successful because he constantly "inquired of the Lord"

Ch 6: The children of Israel forgot how to carry the ark and put it on a nice new shiny cart instead which cost the life of Uzzah. Eventually, they got the ark into Jerusalem and David was a dancing machine! Michael complained about him not being "kingly" and David said he will always debase himself before the Lord who easily took the kingdom away from her father because he wouldn't humble himself. Michael had no children because of her disdain for the Lord's anointed.

Ch 7: David feels bad that he lives in a nice house and wants to build one for God. God tells him that the house building job will fall to his son. There is also some Messianic prophecies about the Kingdom of David and his lineage. David praises God for his goodness.

Ch 8. David went on a conquering tour and the Lord was with him in all that he did. Members of David's cabinet are listed at the end of the chapter.

Ch 9. David keeps his promise to Jonathan and takes in his son Mephibosheth who was lame in the feet.

## **Comment:**

Butch O'Neal:

Thank you, Marc!

## **Comment:**

Charles Fry:

### **Replies:**

Marc Hermon:

I appreciate your comments and was interested in looking at the story from that perspective. Here is another perspective to consider. It's hard to know since we might not have the entire picture but I've always believed that David was doing nothing wrong here. Clearly he was clothed with a linen garment and the ephod over that so why did Michael in her anger accuse him of being naked? This seems to me to be a really good foreshadowing of Christ and the Pharisees. All Israel was rejoicing, celebrating and worshipping God with the return of the ark with it seems the exception being Michael looking down on everyone from her queenly perch. A king's daughter and now a king's

wife. Could it be perhaps that her high estate had lifted her up with pride? The Pharisees likewise couldn't stomach the lowliness of the Messiah from Nazareth. Michael was outraged that David would trade in his more noble kingly garments to humble himself to join the common people and wear the same garments that all the priests were wearing as they came with the ark. She seemed to be jealous also that he was worshipping God down on the same level as the servant girls and how embarrassing that they would see him as equal worshippers. But David is clearly here being a type of Christ. He is our king and our priest. He shed his royalty and humbled himself to come down among the people and the Pharisees as the elite ruling class stood up in the window and accused him and his followers of being of the Devil, breaking the Sabbath by healing people or eating a handful of grain, not washing their hands and speaking blasphemy against God. Michael seems to be like the Pharisee that shouts out, "I thank you that I'm not like this sinner." This I believe is why David basically says, "You are not humbling yourself before God EXACTLY like your father which is why God took the kingdom away from him and gave it to me." David indeed was not perfect but I don't see this particular event as an indictment on him. It does seem to me that Michael is the person with the problem. I also think that probably after this David had very little to do with her which is why she probably had no children rather than God punishing her as He did her father but I can't be sure of that. I just don't get the impression that David and Michael were very equally yoked when it came to worshipping and serving God.

### **Comment:**

Butch O'Neal:

I like this interpretation, Charles!

### **Comment:**

Lowell Hermon:

Something I never understood.

### **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:

I really appreciate the example David gives to us with Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth. There could be a parallel made between Mephibosheth's actions and ours before our royal King. Mephibosheth bowed and asked why David would "notice a dead dog like me?" in verse 8, chpt. 9. He is an example of the redemption available to those who humbly come before the King. David's love for his brother Jonathan foreshadows Christ's love for us. Mephibosheth had been reduced to having nothing but he ate at the King's table thanks to the King's great love. We can too!

## **May 7: 2 Samuel 10-14 (Nick Hermon)**

HISTORY: 2 Samuel 10-14

Sad Stories We Can Learn From

1) Bad assumptions can lead to destruction

With the death of the king of the Ammonites, his son Hanun succeeded him as king. David wanted to show kindness to him so he sent delegates, but King Hanun assumed he was using the death of his father to spy on the land. King Hanun seized David's envoys and embarrassed

them by shaving half their beards and “cut off their garments at the buttocks”. After realizing their obnoxiousness, they prepared for war but David defeated the Ammonites.

## 2) Lust causes MANY issues

Upon seeing Bathsheba bathing from his rooftop, David sent messengers to bring her to him. He sleeps with her and becomes pregnant. To cover his tracks, he sent her husband into battle to be killed. I think there are two lessons of David that stick with people the most- the story of Goliath and this one. The good & the bad.

Often we sing a song with the lyrics “sin will take you farther than you want to go.” This is an example of that. When we make poor choices, it’s hard to admit you are wrong instead of digging yourself into a deeper hole of sin.

## 3) Sometimes God’s answer is “No”

Nathan confronts David. Because David had sinned, the child became sick and (although David mourned and fasted) died. As Tad Morris recently spoke about, sometimes the answer from God is “No” and it is our duty not to blame God, but to accept his decision (as David does here). After he is informed the child has died, he gets up from fasting and weeping, comforts Bathsheba and has another child called Solomon.

## 4) Every family has their issues

Even King David... and his was bad! One of David’s sons, Amnon, rapes his sister Tamar. Another of David’s sons, Absalom, has Amnon killed for doing such a terrible thing. Absalom runs away, but David permits him to return to Jerusalem.

## **Comment:**

Butch O’Neal:  
Thanks, Nick!

## **Comment:**

Charles Fry:  
David and Nathan... Remarkable interaction, more than once.  
David's own judgment - fourfold restitution. Note the infant, then Amnon, then Absalom, and finally Adonijah.

Matthew 12:36-37 (NIV-WS)

36 But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken. 37 For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.”

## **Comment:**

Kevin Crittenden:  
I wondered at first why, when Uriah was killed in battle, Bathsheba did not become the wife of one of Uriah's brothers (assuming he had one.) Then Kathleen reminded me that Uriah was a Hittite and probably did not follow that custom. However, if Bathsheba had been a Jew, would she have needed to follow Jewish custom? One might think that, being a woman, her cultural traditions didn't count for anything but yet Jewish men were repeatedly warned not to take foreign wives.



Tamar presents another - actually several questions. Where is David's grief for his daughter and where is his punishment of Amnon? What was Tamar's fate? And supposing she had had a son by Amnon. What would be that son's inheritance?

## Comment:

Charles Fry:

The same question about levirate marriage might have been asked regarding Abigail widow of Nabal back in 1 Samuel 25. No doubt there were many instances where widows had no kinsman redeemer near at hand, or no one to arrange the marriage, or the arrangement was ignored. In the present case, Uriah had been with David from his days as a fugitive and exile (he was one of "the Thirty", 2 Samuel 23:24, 39), and probably had no family, or no one in Jerusalem anyway. But having indulged in adultery and a coverup that called for murder, I doubt David was too concerned about levirate marriage even if there was a potential redeemer, which there probably wasn't. It is notable in Nathan's rebuke of David that Bathsheba is pictured as a stolen and slaughtered lamb, with David receiving the full force of the rebuke for his heavy handed acquisition and use of her.

Bathsheba surely was an Israelite. Her father Eliam had also been one of David's mighty men before David was crowned (2 Samuel 11:3, one of "the Thirty" along with Uriah, 2 Samuel 23:34). Her grandfather, Ahithophel the Gilonite (2 Samuel 23:34) was one of David's wisest advisers. Giloh was a town in Judah. In a wretched turn of events Ahithophel joined Absalom's rebellion and attempted to destroy David (2 Samuel 15:12, 31, etc) and was the one who advised Absalom to make a public display of sleeping with the 10 concubines David left behind to tend the palace when he abandoned Jerusalem to his rebellious son. Later, when Absalom disregarded critical advice from Ahithophel, the man went home and hanged himself (2 Samuel 17:23). My suspicion is that he never forgave David or his granddaughter Bathsheba for their offense, an embarrassment to the family. But, as far as being an Israelite, of the tribe of Judah, I'm sure Bathsheba's credentials were secure.

The Amnon-Tamar story initiates the recurring cycles of violence that would plague David's house after his egregious sins, as Nathan had predicted, "the sword will never leave your house." Part of the problem in the rape of Tamar, for David, is that his moral standing was undermined in his own eyes, and the eyes of others, particularly his own sons. What could he say to Amnon after what himself had done? There is an answer to that, but people often have trouble speaking clearly to sin and rebellion when they are very cognizant of their own failures in the same area. David was furious (2 Samuel 13:21) but took no action as father or king, a wretched failure set up by the knowledge of his own previous moral lapse, but he was also limited by the fact that he only "heard about all these things." There was no charge brought against Amnon, no formal complaint. Absalom took his sister in as though she were a widow with no one to care for her (2 Samuel 13:20) and told her to hush it up. So David was hindered from acting both by his own issues and the lack of charges being brought against Amnon.

Tamar had no child from that union, the actual word describing her condition in Absalom's household, "desolate woman," precludes husband or progeny.

## Replies:

Kevin Crittenden:

Thank you, Charles!

Marc Hermon:

It seems David's initial plan was to get Uriah to lay with Bathsheba so that Uriah would think that the child was his. Of course this would mean that Bathsheba would be

complicit in the plan by not telling Uriah what had happened. David's plan was foiled by Uriah's goodness. As far as the Levirate law is concerned, Samuel had told the people that if they wanted a king instead of God that kings would do things just like this..take what they wanted.

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks for sharing Bathsheba's lineage, Charles! It was good for me to read. :-) Also, thanks for pointing out there was no formal complaint made against Amnon. Makes me think of the situation a little differently. However, although I do now consider that point, I do feel this incident is an example of very poor parenting and kingship in behalf of David. His discipline leniency is unfortunate. David gives us a good (actually poor example) of how sexual sin often goes without punitive action with children from parents b/c their own memory of sin adversely affects handling of the matter. :-(

### **Comment:**

Charles Fry:

No one needs a friend or cousin like Jonadab.

### **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:

An especially appreciative thank you, Nick. We're grateful for your example of being God's servant even when you are very ill. <3

## **May 14: 2 Samuel 15-19 (Nick Hermon)**

HISTORY 2 Samuel 15-19

David's Family Issues Continue

Following his return after killing his brother Amnon, Absalom devised a conspiracy to overthrow David. However, word of the conspiracy gets to David and he flees with his men to the Mount of Olives... weeping along the way.

As they continue their travel, David encounters a man by the name of Shimei who is of Saul's family. He throws stones at David, cursing him along the way. David is advised to strike Shimei down, but instead, allows persecution to happen.

Eventually, Absalom begins a pursuit of David. The armies engage in battle "spread out over the whole countryside, and the forest swallowed up more men that day than the sword."

While riding a mule, Absalom's hair got caught in the thick branches of an oak tree. He was hanging in midair while the mule kept going. David's men did not kill him because David instructed them to protect him. But Joab took three javelins and plunged them into Absalom's heart while still alive in the oak tree.

Messengers deliver the news to David and he mourns the loss of his son. David is rightfully restored as king and Shimei comes to David in repentance for what he had done.

My two cents on these chapters: (1) I think these stories of David show a clear parallel to the stories of Christ and His attitude towards things and (2) these chapters are much like the story of David's relationship with Saul in 1 Samuel... except this time David is not an innocent being. He is a broken man with a broken family followed by the downfall of his lust for Bathsheba. It

shows even a “man after God’s own heart” can [and will] fail... but it is important to persistently try to do what is correct and acceptable in God’s eyes and to LOVE your enemy even when they do not do so to you.

### Comments:

Butch O’Neal:  
Thanks, Nick!

### Comments:

Steven Wright:  
Thanks brother Nick! The Bible is oh so very, very, true!

### Comments:

Cherris Lehman:  
Very good perspective! Some of our families think we have problems. If we can learn from King David we don't stop looking for solutions.

### Comments:

Charles Fry:  
Among the many things to appreciate in this story, I note how David prayed that God would confound the advice of Ahithophel (15:31, Bathsheba’s paternal grandfather) and then he seized upon the opportunity afforded by encountering Hushai the Arkite shortly after praying, and sent him back to Jerusalem to frustrate the counsel of Ahithophel (2 Samuel 15:32-36). He prayed, he acted in concert with his own prayer.

David and Absalom, father and son  
Amasa, commander of Absalom’s army, was son of Abigail  
Abigail was sister of Zeruiah (17:25, 1 Chronicles 2:16-17)  
Abigail and Zeruiah were sisters of David and his brothers (1 Chronicles 2:13-17). The name Nahash in 2 Samuel 17:25 may indicate there was a levirate marriage involved.  
Joab, son of Zeruiah, and Absalom, son of David, and Amasa, son of Abigail, were 1st cousins, David’s son and nephews.  
A house divided, indeed

### Comments:

Ginger Hermon:  
Thanks, Nick! I appreciate your insights. There are many significant ways David’s life foreshadowed Christ’s! Thanks for pointing it out here. Anyone have insight how the forest swallowed up men? I’m thinking they got lost or wild animals?...

### Replies:

Marc Hermon:  
I think it was more like this...<https://youtu.be/3q73Kvsll1s>

Charles Fry:  
Lost, pitfalls, Absalom himself could be said to have been devoured by the forest, hanging from a tree.

(From the Expositor’s Revised Bible Commentary)The Hebrew sentence rendered “the forest claimed more lives . . . than the sword” may be literally translated as “the forest

was greater to devour among the people than that which the sword devoured” (for the image of the devouring sword, see comments on 2:26; 11:25). Natural phenomena are often more deadly than human enemies (cf. Jos 10:11; cf. Conroy, 59 n. 54). Of the many suggestions concerning what it means that the forest “claimed/devoured” more than the sword, McCarter’s (II Samuel, 405) seems best: The dense “forest of Ephraim” (v.6), characterized by uneven and dangerous terrain, was a battleground “where the numerically superior force of [Absalom’s] conscript army would be at a disadvantage against David’s more skilled private army, with its considerable experience of guerrilla warfare” (see also comment on v.17).

## May 21: 2 Samuel 20-24 (Nick Hermon)

1 Samuel recap  
<video link>

### Comments:

Ryane Audra Needham:  
Please do this for everything

### Comments:

Nick Hermon:  
Today's reading is 2 Samuel 20-24. I'm hoping to make the 2 Samuel video tonight and get it up tomorrow.

### Comments:

Steven Wright:  
Great! And, "anyways" Thanks!

### Comments:

Marc Hermon:  
cool

### Comments:

Fonda Spencer:  
Marc, several years ago I used an old window shade for the younger class, I drew the pictures as I told the story and then they colored it. Every class we just continue on. It is great for a complete outline and visual at a glance....Your drawings are great, good job!

### Replies:

Steven Wright:  
Nic;)

### Comments:

Yvonna Hartman:  
Excellent!

### Comments:

Ginger Hermon:

I especially loved your drawing of David as a crazy man. 😂 I can't wait to show the boys this. Great job!

**Comment:**

Joanne Caffie:

Malachi joined me this morning as I was watching it and he thought it was fascinating as well. I'm definitely gonna play it again for the rest of the kids. A job WELL done!

**Comment:**

Randy Ingle:

Nice work. I don't know how you do those but I'd like to try it

**Comment:**

Marc Hermon:

At the end of the year when we conclude the 7 Bible Studies you should do a recap of the whole Bible. :)

# Seven Bible Studies 2017

## History

### May 30: 1 Kings 1-4 (Nick Hermon)

HISTORY: 1 Kings 1-4

The first half of 1 Kings traces the life of Solomon. Under his leadership, Israel rises to the peak of her size and glory.

Chp. 1 In David's old age, Adonijah declares himself ruler of Israel, but David declares Solomon as the new king.

Chp. 2 David prepares Solomon how to handle the relationships with those he will be surrounded by. He spared Adonijah at first for declaring himself king but had him put to death when he oversteps his boundaries and requests Solomon's mother to ask him for Abishag to be given to marriage to him. He also has Shimei (the man who cursed David) to be put to death after he disobeyed his orders to remain in Jerusalem.

Chp. 3 is the infamous story of Solomon. He walks according to the instructions of David. He sacrifices a thousand burnt offerings on the altar at Gideon and in a dream God tells Solomon to ask for whatever he wants to be given.

Solomon, a humble young ruler, asks for a discerning heart and wisdom to rule over God's people. This pleases the Lord and his request is granted. God says, "I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be."

Solomon's wisdom is then tested. Two women come before him claiming the same baby. Solomon threatens to cut the child in two and the true mother begs to spare the child. Solomon gives the child to the correct mother and Israel is in awe of Solomon's "wisdom from God to administer justice."

Chp. 4 talks about Solomon's officials, governors, daily provisions, and especially Solomon's wisdom—

His wisdom was "greater than all the wisdom of Egypt. He was wiser than anyone else..." and "his fame spread to all the surrounding nations. He spoke three thousand proverbs and his songs numbered a thousand and five. He spoke about plant life, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of walls. He also spoke about animals and birds, reptiles and fish. From all nations, people came to listen to Solomon's wisdom, sent by all the kings of the world, who had heard of his wisdom."

### Comment:

Butch O'Neal:  
Thanks, Nick!



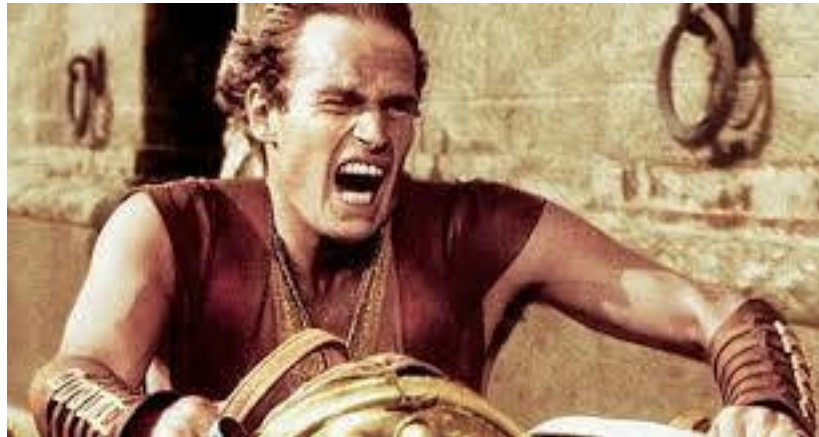
## Comment:

Steven Wright:

Thank you Nick! I believe Solomon demonstrates for us the clearest example of how a person can be the epitome of everything worldlywise (especially "smarts") and still be lacking in Spiritual discernment and/or commitment.

## Comment:

Marc Hermon:



## June 6: 1 Kings 5-9 (Nick Hermon)

HISTORY: 1 Kings 5-9

The Building of the Temple

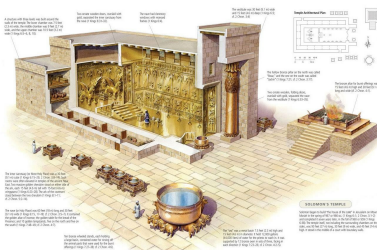
In chapter 5, Solomon prepares to build the temple for God. To do so, he arranges peaceful relations with surrounding areas. Chapters 6-7 go into detail on the aesthetic appeal of the temple (refer to the attached image as a general idea of what it'd look like). Here's also a video of a 3D model someone made: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oiF-wObznds>

As you may notice, some of the descriptions of the temple can also be found in 2 Chronicles 4.

Chap. 8, the ark is brought to the temple and Solomon offers a prayer of dedication to God. He cries, "But will God really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built!..."

He then has a festival in dedication to the completion of the temple. 22,000 cattle & 120,000 sheep and goat are sacrificed as they celebrated fourteen days.

Chp. 9, God reminds Solomon that the temple will stand as long as he and his descendants follow and serve Him only. Unfortunately, we know the temple is not still here today... so when was it destroyed? Well, we will get to that in 2 Kings 24.



## Comment:

Marc Hermon:

I Kings 8: 23

<https://youtu.be/K9Gi94AbkkA>

“Covenant of Love”

## Comment:

Marc Hermon:

In reference to Esau's wife (Gen 26:34) let's do some "basic math". In regards to the Sea in 7:23 it had a diameter of 10 cubits and a circumference of 30 cubits. Mathematicians long ago tried to calculate how many of a circle's diameter you could wrap around the circle's perimeter. This number is always a little more than 3 or what we call pi. (3.14.....) So how come if you calculate pi with the given dimensions of the Sea above you get exactly 3 and not pi out to some decimal place? Because both the diameter and the circumference are listed with only 1 significant digit which means they are not very precise estimates. Since both measurements are only listed with one sig fig when you divide 30/10 you can only write your answer to 1 sig fig also which means  $\pi = 3$ .

Also in 6:20 notice the shape of the inner sanctuary, The Holy of Holies. It is a perfect cube. 30 ft x 30 ft x 30 ft. Notice also the church/holy city of heaven in Rev 21 is also represented by a perfect cube. 12,000 st x 12,000 st x 12,000 st.

And finally the amazing math of Jesus: He chose to become nothing and thereby became our everything! Phil 2:7-10

## Replies:

Charles Fry:

And the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle Moses built on Monday was also a cube, on a smaller scale. Nice to finish the tabernacle and build the temple in the same week. 🤔

The proportionality of the dimensions, the symmetry and uniformity are, are sometimes overlooked or missed, but do reflect The mind and purposes of God.

## Comment:

Marc Hermon:

Also interesting Solomon named one of the pillars after his great, great grandfather.

## Comment:

Butch O'Neal:

Thanks, Nick! I appreciate the illustration.

## Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Such fond memories of building this with you and other kids from church. As always good job on the summary from our reading today. Thanks, Nick!



## June 13: 1 Kings 10-13 (Nick Hermon)

HISTORY: 1 Kings 10-13  
Everyone Has Their Weaknesses... even Solomon

In chp. 10 we have the Queen of Sheba visiting Solomon. She is in awe of Solomon's wisdom and gifts him bountifully. He receives 666 talents (or 25 tons) of gold per year and "King Solomon was greater in riches and wisdom than all the other kings of the earth" (10:23). I looked around and a couple websites estimate his worth today would be in the \$1-3 trillion range... making him the wealthiest individual to have ever lived (which makes sense in reference to 2 Chronicles 1:11-12)

Shockingly, it appears Solomon's major flaw isn't in Earthly riches, but in a different form of temptation... his love for foreign women

Chp 11 says Solomon had 700 wives of royal birth and 300 concubines. These women led him following idols and God became angry with him.

God decides He will cause Solomon's kingdom to fall (with the exception of one tribe), but not during his lifetime for the sake of David. Solomon dies after reigning 40 years and his son Rehoboam succeeds him as king.

Israel inquires of Rehoboam to lighten the tax. However, instead of following the advice of the elders who consulted Solomon, he foolishly chooses to follow the advice of his peers.

This causes a rebellion and Israel falls under the rule of Jeroboam instead, who builds two golden calves at Bethel and Dan.

### Comments:

Butch O'Neal:  
Thanks, Nick!

### Comments:

Randy Ingle:  
So we'll pleased with the roles you are taking on in the church! Keep up being a Christian role model.

### Comments:

Kevin Crittenden:  
The story of the man of God in Chapter 13 leaves me wondering what purpose the prophet had in lying to him. It brings to mind the temptations of Christ by the devil, the father of lies. Did the prophet not believe the man of God, that he was not to eat or drink in Bethel? Even after what happened with the altar? The man of God was a trusting soul, as we are as well, and believed the prophet when he said an angel had countermanded God's instruction. Is the lesson here to trust no one, especially one that claims godly authority?

On a completely different note, Solomon wrote Proverbs and in it, he writes about a father passing on godly wisdom to his son. I wonder if that conversation was a recording of an actual conversation between Solomon and Rehoboam. If so, it didn't take because Rehoboam acted

so foolishly although v 12:15 makes it seem like this was God's Will and Rehoboam was an actor playing his role.

### Replies:

Charles Fry:

The old prophet wanted the "honor" of hosting the young man if God. I've seen similar name dropping and political maneuvering numerous times. The young man was naive, willing to think the best of others, but no one should ever lightly accept a contradiction to God's known command lightly. Probably the stricture against eating seemed too restrictive to him, and he welcomed a more comfortable message.

Charles Fry:

Oh, and Rehoboam, not fate or destiny. Prophetic judgment can be forestalled or delayed by wise responses to the message, as illustrated in Ex 32, in Jonah, and in the story of Ahab after the unjust death of Naboth. Prophecy is not necessarily destiny. Repentance changed outcomes many times.

### Comments:

Kevin Crittenden:

Solomon is an interesting character. Here is a guy who lived better than anyone, always had food on the table (in abundance), entertainment, posh surroundings, hot and cold running women, and, for all I know, indoor plumbing. WHY would he be making sacrifices to idols? What did he lack in his life that he felt some god could provide? And why would his wives/concubines also be worshipping idols? Did they not already have everything they could want? Maybe children? Long life? Less competition?

## June 20: 1 Kings 14-18 (Nick Hermon)

HISTORY: 1 Kings 14-18

You can't disguise yourself from God

Chp 14- The wife of Jeroboam goes to Ahijah in disguise because of their ill child. God forewarns Ahijah what is to come and the prophecy against Jeroboam is not good news for him- "you have done more evil than all who lived before you. You have made for yourself other gods, idols made of metal; you have aroused my anger and turned your back on me." Disaster is to come on the house of Jeroboam...

Chp 15 "David had done what was right in the eyes of the Lord and had not failed to keep any of the Lord's commands all the days of his life— except in the case of Uriah the Hittite"

Because of this, his descendants still ruled Judah after him- Solomon, Absalom, Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa, Jehoshaphat.

They did evil, although Asa did well in the eyes of the Lord (with the exception of not taking down the high places).

Chp 16- Israel also has issues with bad leaders. Eventually getting to Ahab who "did more evil in the eyes of the Lord than any of those before him." He married Jezebel and set up Asherah poles to arouse the anger of the Lord.

Chp 17- God provides!

Elijah announces a great drought to come. He drinks from a brook and is fed by ravens. But when the brook runs dry, he goes to a wide at Zarephath. He asks for a drink and bread and she tells him she only has enough for her and her son so "that we may eat it- and die."

But Elijah lets her know God will provide flour in her jar and oil in her jug until the rain comes again. Later on, the child dies, but Elijah cries to the Lord and stretches himself out on the boy THREE times (refer to @John Morris's post a few days ago for interesting stories on the number three in the Bible) and the boy's life returns to him.

Chp 18- A Challenge for the Ages!

Jezebel had been killing the prophets, yet Elijah presents himself to Ahab. He challenges him to bring 450 prophets of Baal to call fire down upon an altar. They cried and cut themselves pleading to their god, "But there was no voice; no one answered, no one paid attention."

Elijah the had men pour water over the altar he built (once again) THREE times and when he prayed to God, not only did altar catch fire... it burnt the wood, the stones, the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

### **Comment:**

Butch O'Neal:  
Thanks, Nick!

### **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:  
Love these last two chapters which give testimony of God's power! He is our God; worthy to be worshipped and praised!!! Thanks, Nick! Great summaries of each chapter.

## **June 27: 1 Kings 19-22 (Nick Hermon)**

HISTORY: 1 Kings 19-22  
You Are Not Alone

19- Following the unbalanced match between Elijah and the prophets of Baal, Elijah runs for his life from Jezebel. He comes to a cave and God asks Elijah what he is doing there. Elijah responds that he's been zealous for God but they've killed His prophets with the sword. He says, "I alone am left, and they seek to take my life."

God tells him to go out and stand on the mountain. A strong wind breaks the rocks, "but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice."

And God tells him, there are seven thousand in Israel whose knees have not bowed to Baal.

Do you ever feel lonely like Elijah?  
Even in the wickedest of times and places, you are not alone.

So Elijah is told by God to go and appoint Elisha as prophet in his place. So as Elisha is plowing in the field, Elijah throws his mantle on him.

## 20-22 Every Knee Will Bow

Ahab Defeats the Syrians twice but is then tested and condemned by one of the prophets. He's also bummed Naboth would not sell him his vineyard... so his wife Jezebel devises a plan and has Naboth murdered so they could get his vineyard.

Elijah tells Ahab the dogs will lick his blood in the same place as Naboth and his wife Jezebel will be eaten by dogs by the wall of Jezebel. Ahab tears his clothes, fasts, and mourns.

Three years later, they went to war and even though Ahab is in disguise, is hit by an arrow drawn by a bow at random and dies.

His son Ahaziah takes over Israel after him while Jehoshaphat rules Judah.

Thus concludes the book of 1 Kings.

### **Comment:**

Marc Hermon:

Micaiah is one of my favorite prophets. I wonder how long he had to stay in jail since Ahab never came back safely.

### **Comment:**

Charles Fry:

I appreciate Elijah (a man like us, James reminds us) exemplifying how quickly we can turn from the heights of victory to the depths of despair. I appreciate how God's answer for Elijah included "get back to work", albeit tenderly directed. I appreciate how Elijah, not overly enthusiastically, recruited Elisha as his helper (and still made it challenging for Elisha in 2 Kings 2). And I appreciate how God took Elijah home to heaven after he had only done one of the three things God told him to do.

And then there's Ahab. <http://www.livwat.com/articles/10038.html>

### **Comment:**

Butch O'Neal:

Thanks, Nick!

### **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:

1 Kings would make a great video! ;-) Action-packed, that's for sure. Thanks for leading the study on history each week, Nick. P.S. Everyone!... We're halfway through the year! It's Week #26. :-)

# Seven Bible Studies 2017

## History

### July 4: 2 Kings 1-5 (Nick Hermon)

HISTORY: 2 Kings 1-5

1- Elijah confronts the king and his commanders and twice he calls down fire on the fifty

2- Elijah is taken up to heaven in a chariot of fire. Elisha picks up his mantle and quickly demonstrates his authority. As he is mocked "Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head," he sends two she bears after the childish individuals

3- Moab fights with Israel and the king of Moab sacrifices his son as a burnt sacrifice on the wall

4- Elisha does a list of things including: helping a widow and her sons, bringing a boy back to life, making an inedible meal safe to eat, and miraculously feeds a hundred people

#### Comment:

Butch O'Neal:

Thank you, brother Nick!

#### Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Glad you were able to post during the week, Nick! I love the lesson we receive from Elijah and Elisha in chapter 2. Let me inherit a double portion! Elisha's desire to carry on Elijah's ministry is commendable. May we all pick up the mantle as our leaders in the Kingdom wait for us on the other side.

### July 11: 2 Kings 6-10 (Nick Hermon)

HISTORY: 2 Kings 6-10

Chp. 6: As the sons of the prophets and Elisha are cutting down trees near the Jordan, an ax head falls into the water and Elisha throws a stick into the water and makes the iron float / Blinded Syrians are captured and Syria besieges Samaria in famine

Chp. 7: The Syrians flee as four lepers approach their camp (thinking it was kings of the Hittites and Egyptians)

Chp. 8: The king restores the land of the woman whose son Elisha had restored to life / Death of Ben-Hadad / Jehoram and then Ahaziah reign in Judah

Chp. 9: Jehu is anointed king of Israel / Joram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah are killed / and the prophecy from 1 Kings 21:23 finally comes true with the violent death of Jezebel

Chp. 10: Ahab's seventy sons, Ahaziah's forty-two brothers, the rest of Ahab's family, and the worshipers of Baal are all killed / Jehu dies and Jehoahaz reigns in his place

### Comment:

Charles Fry:

One thing I take delight in with the story of the ax head, God and the man of God have time and attention to deal with the little upsets in life, not just the big ones.

### Comment:

Butch O'Neal:

Thanks, Nick!

### Comment:

Paul Rutherford:

Ole' Archimedes had to take a backseat on that one! 🤔

### Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

I love this example of how liberal kindness and hospitality was more becoming and effective with the Syrians. Moral conquest gained for Elisha. Thx, Nick.

## July 18: 2 Kings 11-15 (Nick Hermon)

Sorry about the late post. In these chapters, we have a list of kings. It can be confusing since the list interweaves between Israel & Judah, the names of the kings are very similar, and they sometimes go by multiple names. Hopefully the following makes sense and please correct me if you notice anything off.

HISTORY: 2 Kings 11-15

Judah- Athaliah reigns and is killed, Joash (aka Jehoash) reigns and repairs the temple  
Israel- Jehu reigns, Jehoahaz reigns, Jehoash reigns

Chp. 13: Elisha becomes sick. Joash (aka Jehoash), one of the better kings of Judah, visits him and Elisha give an interesting and strange demonstration with bow and arrows in regards to the Syrians. Elisha dies and Joash mourns over him.

Judah- Joash (aka Jehoash) is murdered by servants, Amaziah (Joash's son) avenges his dad's murder and reigns... interesting reference to the Mosaic law (2 Kings 14:6 ref. Deuteronomy 24:16) and is captured by Jehoash (king of Israel), Amaziah's son- Uzziah (aka Azariah) reigns in place of his dad at the age of 16 and is later struck by God with leprosy, Uzziah (aka Azariah)'s son- Jotham reigns

Israel- Jehoash captures Amaziah (king of Judah) and dies, Jehoash's son- Jeroboam II reigns, Jeroboam II's son- Zechariah reigns six months and is killed, Shallum reigns a month and is killed, Menahem reigns, Pekahiah reigns two years and is killed by his officer Pekah, Pekah reigns and is killed by Hoshea, Hoshea reigns

Interesting notes: all the kings of Israel do evil and the kings of Judah in these chapters do well in the eyes of God. The approximate timeline of these kings are 850-750BC

## Comment:

Butch O'Neal:  
Thanks, Nick!

## Comment:

Charles Fry:  
Yes, the cast of characters and timeline does get busy! I do think it was the king of Israel, not Judah, who paid his respects to Elisha in his last days.  
2 Kings 13:14 (CSB)

### Elisha's Death

14 When Elisha became sick with the illness from which he died, King Jehoash of Israel went down and wept over him and said, "My father, my father, the chariots and horsemen of Israel! "

Interesting expression, "the chariots and horsemen of Israel," reflecting back on previous episodes.

## Replies:

Nick Hermon:  
Ah, good catch. Thanks Charles! I probably assumed it was the king of Judah since they seemed to do better than the kings of Israel.

Charles Fry:  
The interaction of Elisha with the Kings of Israel is intriguing. He seldom has an approving word, but nevertheless he several times provides assistance or direction or opportunity.

Joanne Caffie:  
Wasn't that part of his job as a prophet (to provide assistance, direction or opportunity)?

## July 25: 2 Kings 16-20 (Nick Hermon)

HISTORY: 2 Kings 16-20  
ISRAEL TAKEN CAPTIVE

Last week we left off with the list of kings of Israel and Judah.

16- Ahaz reigns in Judah and does bad things. His son, Hezekiah, becomes the new king  
17- Hoshea reigns in Israel and does poorly. The king of Assyria uncovered a conspiracy by Hoshea and has him thrown in prison. Israel does not heed God's commands and makes a molded image and two calves made of wood, worshiped it, and served Baal. They did child sacrifices and practiced witchcraft so God gave them over to Assyria. They did not fear God, so He sent lions among them.

"But the Lord, who brought you up from the land of Egypt with great power and an outstretched arm, Him you shall fear, Him you shall worship, and to Him you shall offer sacrifice." (v. 36)

18- Hezekiah reigns in Judah and gives the king of Assyria all the silver in the treasury and stripped the gold from the doors and pillars of the temple

19- Isaiah ensures deliverance from the Assyrians and an angel of the Lord killed the camp of 185,000 Assyrians. Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, is killed and Esarhaddon, his son, reigns in his place

20- "Set your house in order" is the words of Isaiah as God allows Hezekiah's life to be extended 15 years. He shows the Babylonians all the treasuries in his kingdom and he is told all of it will someday be carried away to Babylon. Hezekiah, who apparently made a pool and a tunnel and brought water into the city, eventually dies.

### **Comment:**

Charles Fry:

"All this took place because..." (2 Kings 17:7ff). This is the fundamental message of Kings, the reason for failure and condemnation, unfortunately not well heeded by the remnant in Judah.

As a historical footnote, we know of exactly one city that was besieged by Assyria in that time period of the 8th century BC and survived, and that is Jerusalem. Other than the Biblical answer (the hand of God) there is no plausible reason for the survival of Jerusalem and Hezekiah, but it was documented (without explanation) in the Assyrian annals as well as the Bible.

### **Comment:**

Butch O'Neal:

Thanks, brother Nick!

## **August 1: 2 Kings 21-25 (Nick Hermon)**

HISTORY: 2 Kings 21-25

Chp. 21- The Evil 12yr Old

Manasseh, at the age of twelve, becomes king over Judah. "He built up again the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; and he reared up altars for Baal..." (v3) and held child sacrifices. He did many bad things and his son, Amon, doesn't do much better. Amon only reigns two years before being assassinated.

Chp. 22- The Impact of the Book

Josiah, son of Amon, becomes king at only eight years old. In the eighteenth year of King Josiah, Hilkiah, the high priest find the book of the law in the House of the Lord. Shaphan, the scribe, brings it to Josiah and reads it to him. Josiah rents his clothes and repents before God.

Chp. 23- King Josiah Institutes Religious Reform

He tore down the high places and turned them into dust. He destroyed the altars and the bones of the false prophets. He reconstituted the command of the Passover.



“And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him” (v25).

After Josiah, his son, Jehoahaz, reigned in Judah three months and did evil and died. So Jehoiakim, one of Josiah’s other sons took reign and did poorly as well.

#### Chp. 24- A Series of Bad Kings

Jehoiakim becomes a servant to Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. Jehoiachin, Jehoaiakim’s son, becomes king, but is overruled by Nebuchadnezzar. In v13, the prophecy of the gold being taken over by the Babylonians (2 Kings 20:17) is fulfilled.

Following Jehoiachin is King Zedekiah, the uncle of the king of Babylon.

#### Chp. 25- Destruction of Solomon’s temple

When Zedekiah rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, Babylong besieged Jerusalem and burned down the temple and “Judah was carried away captive from its own land” (v21).

Gedaliah is made governor of Judah... until he is struck dead

Jehoiachin, the king of Judah, is released from prison by the Evil-Merodach king of Babylon

#### **Comment:**

Butch O’Neal:  
Thank you, Nick!

#### **Comment:**

Steven Dallas Thompson:  
Great job Nick.

#### **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:

I lost my Bible in the church building once. 🤔 You automatically think of this history when/if it happens to you. Of course it wasn't 100 years. More like 7 days. Every time I read about Josiah the more I love him and his zeal to call all the people to read from the Word and renew their spiritual life. You did a good job keeping jehoiachin and jehoiakim straight, Nick! Thanks for the good study 😊

#### **Comment:**

Lori Watt:

Even though Josiah did all the great things he did, he still didn't have a particularly long reign or have a good exit from this life. And his son didn't seem to have gotten any wisdom from him. Yes, Josiah was a man who followed the Lord with zeal, but that didn't mean his life was sunshine and roses (the same goes for us, too.)

#### **Replies:**

Butch O’Neal:  
AMEN!

# Seven Bible Studies 2017

## History

### August 8: 1 Chronicles 1-4 (Nick Hermon)

HISTORY: 1 Chronicles 1-4

Last week we finished 2 Kings and this week we dive into the book of 1 Chronicles. The start of this letter truly fits the historical category as it simply lists the genealogical record.

Chp. 1- Lists those from Adam to Abraham to Mizzah, the family of Seir, and the kings of Edom

Chp. 2- Lists the sons of Israel & Judah

Chp. 3- Lists the sons of David, kings of Judah, and the royal line after exile

Chp. 4- Lists the other clans of Judah & descendants of Simeon

#### Comment:

Charles Fry:

Important connective tissue, especially for the exiles returning to Jerusalem from the Babylonian dispersion. Interesting historical tidbits here and there, like the notice of Jabez, the scribes, the linen workers, the potters...

#### Comment:

Butch O'Neal:

Thanks Nick!

#### Comment:

LuAnn Woody:

I enjoyed reading this passage out loud. a mother lode of baby names!

#### Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

I'm not sure why this didn't post last night? Wanted to say happy born again birthday, Nick! Truly there's no greater joy than witnessing your child obey the gospel and continue to grow in spirit and truth! This list we read for Tuesday's study makes me ponder how important our lineage is. Teach it to your children and to their children so they may be added to the Book of Life!

#### Comment:

Kevin Crittenden:

Thanks Nick! In looking at the sons of David in Chpt 3, I noticed all the different mothers who were wives and concubines. It makes me wonder if there were any proscriptions in Mosaic Law against marrying more than one woman. 1 Cor 7:2 says " But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband." This New Testament teaching pretty well tells us God's take on the subject of multiple wives. And in Genesis, God made 1 woman (Eve) to be Adam's wife. So my question is why was bigamy allowable in those times? Did not this custom of multiple wives and various concubines disturb God?

## Comment:

Charles Fry:

Kevin Crittenden, did polygamy disturb God? Surely it did, but as in Jesus' comment about Moses (the Law) allowing divorce, it was tolerated because of hard hearts (Matt 19:8... "but it was not this way from the beginning"). Polygamy originates in the lineage of Cain in Genesis 4 (not a happy indicator!), and every time it turns up we see it created problems, conflict, distress. The family conflicts are highlighted with Abraham, Jacob, Gideon, Elkanah, Saul, David, Solomon, Rehoboam, etc. There were some restraints in the Law, as in not marrying living sisters, Lev 18:18. And then there was this bit for the king, which David pushed, and Solomon smashed:

Deuteronomy 17:17 (NIV-WS)

17 He must not take many wives, or his heart will be led astray. He must not accumulate large amounts of silver and gold.

That list of David's sons by various wives, 3 of the eldest 4 died in internecine conflict. Not a great endorsement for the practice.

## Replies:

Kevin Crittenden:

Thank you! I guess I'll take finding concubines off of my To-Do list.

Charles Fry:

Good choice!

1 Timothy 3:12 (CSB)

12 Deacons are to be husbands of one wife, managing their children and their own households competently.

Kevin Crittenden:

Ummm . . . How competently?

## August 15: 1 Chronicles 5-9 (Nick Hermon)

HISTORY: 1 Chronicles 5-9

Chp. 5- Reuben was the firstborn, but as but when he defiled his father's marriage bed (Genesis 35:22), he lost his firstborn status. The chapter goes on to list the Gadites, Reubenite & half tribe of Manasseh who came together for battle. And lastly, in verse 23 we have the name of the coolest mountain.

Chp. 6- Is a list of: the sons of Levi, temple musicians, descendants of Aaron, and locations of settlements.

Chp. 7- Lists the sons of lots of individuals - most notably - Isaachar, Benjamin, Naphtali, Manasseh, Ephraim, and Asher

Chp. 8- Genealogy of Saul the Benjamite. One thing I thought was interesting was the last verse: "The sons of Ulam were brave warriors who could handle the bow. They had many sons and grandsons— 150 in all."

I'm wondering who in the church today has the most sons & grandsons

Chp. 9- "All Israel was listed in the genealogies recorded in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah. They were taken captive to Babylon because of their unfaithfulness" (v1)

Records the people in Jerusalem and genealogy of Saul

### **Comment:**

Butch O'Neal:  
Thank you, Nick!

### **Comment:**

Kevin Crittenden:  
You could take a census of the church and get the answer to your question!

### **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:  
Thanks, Nick! That would be an interesting answer to your question. I'm glad the Chronicler offered commentary between lists. I've overlooked all the responsibilities of the Levites until reading these passages.

### **Comment:**

Joanne Caffie:  
I like the name of that 'famous' mountain'. LOL

### **Comment:**

Kevin Crittenden:  
Mount Nick. Good name!

## **August 22: 1 Chronicles 10-14 (Nick Hermon)**

HISTORY: 1 Chronicles 10-14

This week's reading is another account of things that happened in 1 & 2 Samuel. It does not include a few things from the book of Samuel, and sometimes it adds new information to the narrative.

We start off this week's study with the story of Saul's death. It is written nearly word-for-word as the account told in 1 Samuel 31. Slight additions I found from 1 Chron. 10 that I didn't see in 1 Samuel 31 is that they put Saul's head in the temple of Dagon, the valiant men who recovered their bodies buried their bones under the great tree of Jabesh, and the reasoning for Saul's death.

Chp. 11- We have David becoming king (2 Samuel 1), him conquering Jerusalem (2 Samuel 5), the list of David's mighty warriors (2 Samuel 23), and a couple fascinating stories of these mighty warriors

Chp 12- Lists the ambidextrous warriors of David while he was banished and the numbers from each tribe who served for David to make him king... 340,000+ warriors

Chp. 13- Is the story of the ark being moved and Uzzah reaching out and touching it (2 Samuel 6)

Chp. 14- David's house and family grows and he has a breakthrough (v11) with the Philistines (2 Samuel 5)

### **Comment:**

Butch O'Neal:  
Thank you, Nick!

## **August 29: 1 Chronicles 15-19 (Nick Hermon)**

HISTORY: 1 Chronicles 15-19

We start off with the ark being brought to Jerusalem- a story also told in 2 Samuel 6.

The 16th chapter is unique in reference to it in the book of Samuel. Here, David appoints Asaph and his associates to give praise to the Lord. Part of this praise is also found in Psalm 96 as well as well as chapter 16.

Chapter 17 passages I like:

"This is what the Lord Almighty says:I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed you ruler over my people Israel. I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name like the names of the greatest men on earth." (17:7-8)

"I declare to you that the Lord will build a house for you: When your days are over and you go to be with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, one of your own sons, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for me, and I will establish his throne forever." (17:10-12)

And David's response:

"Who am I, Lord God, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far? " (17:16)

"There is no one like you, Lord, and there is no God but you" (17:20)

I also like how the NIV uses the word "awesome" in reference to the power of God in verse 21... it's not often you hear that word today in its correct context.

Chp. 18 records David's victories and officials (Tou, king of Hamath also found in 2 Samuel 8)

And chp. 19, David defeats the Ammonites (2 Samuel 10)

Comment:  
Butch O'Neal:  
Thank you, Nick!

Comment:  
Ginger Hermon:  
Good thoughts and take-aways, Nick! I broke out in song when I read, "Give thanks to the Lord; for He is good. His love endures forever!" May have to request this for song night Wednesday. 😊

## September 5: 1 Chronicles 20-24 (Nick Hermon)

HISTORY: 1 Chronicles 20-24

We start off this week's reading with the capture of Rabbah and an incredibly heavy crown. The king's crown consists of gold & precious jewels and weighs a talent (approx. 75lbs!) and is given to David. More wars with the Philistines occur and Lahmi, one of the brothers of Goliath, is brought down. It also references to the warrior with 24 phalanges (2 Samuel 21:20).

In chp, 21, David's evil imagination gets the best of him. He decides to take up a census of Israel (2 Samuel 24). It is interesting how the first verse is told in each of these passages.

2 Samuel 24 reads:

"Again the anger of the Lord burned against Israel, and he incited David against them, saying, "Go and take a census of Israel and Judah."

while 1 Chronicles 21 reads:

"Satan rose up against Israel and incited David to take a census of Israel."

My understanding from this is that God allowed Satan to tempt him. David sinned, revealing his pride, and God then dealt with David accordingly. We've seen multiple instances that God can use Satan in various ways, with the result being the refining, disciplining, and purification of disobedient believers.

As to why God was angry at David, in those times, a man only had the right to count or number what belonged to him. Israel did not belong to David; Israel belonged to God. In Exodus 30:12 God told Moses, "When you take a census of the Israelites to count them, each one must pay the LORD a ransom for his life at the time he is counted. Then no plague will come on them when you number them." It was up to God to command a census, and if David counted he should only do it at God's command, receiving a ransom to "atone" for the counting.

Because of this, God gave David a choice of three punishments for his sin (2 Samuel 24) and David begrudgingly chose the shortest option- three days of the plague.

But as is the way with David, he constantly repents of his sins and is with the Lord in prayer. He builds an altar and in the 22nd chapter does all he can to prepare for the temple without the permission to build it himself.

Kind of an interesting side note- the recorded census determined David had "one million one hundred thousand men who could hand a sword, including four hundred and seventy thousand in Judah" (v5)... plus if you include Levi and Benjamin in the numbering, it could outnumber the present number of active military in the United States (1.3mil).

Chp 23-24 lists descendants, the instructions for the Levites in the temple, and division of priests

### **Comment:**

Cherris Lehman:

Very interesting! Thanks Nick!

## Comment:

Charles Fry:

Two or three decades ago I heard an archaeologist who excavated in Ammon talk about knowing what David's crown looked like, meaning the crown he took from the Ammonite king of Rabbah.

"A king of Ammon, with plaited hair, curled beard, earrings and crown, may be depicted in this life-size ninth- to eighth-century B.C.E. limestone sculpture found east of the Jordan in the ancient Ammonite capital of Rabbah (modern Amman). According to the Book of Samuel, the Ammonites numbered among the monarchy's fiercest adversaries until David subdued them at the battle of Rabbah and seized the crown of their king (2 Samuel 12:26–31)"



## Replies:

Cherris Lehman:

I've been trying to find this crown since I read Nick's scriptures. So thanks Charles Fry

## Comment:

LuAnn Woody:

How old was the tabernacle at this point in time? I suppose it was like their shoes in the wilderness, suspended from deterioration. It was mentioned in this passage as a place David was too ashamed to visit .

## Replies:

Charles Fry:

From 1 Kings 6:1 we know the temple was begun 480 years after the Exodus, in Solomon's 4th year. (Other sources indicate Solomon began to reign in about 960 B.C., and David began to reign in about 1000 B.C.) Supposing the incident in 1 Chron 21 was fairly late in David's reign, the tabernacle must have been on the order of 470 years old. I don't think we need suppose it was divinely protected or kept from wearing out that whole time, remember what happened to Shiloh in Samuel's youth? The "built by Moses" ascription reminds us of the origin (as opposed to the temple soon to be built on the threshing floor acquired in this story), and shouldn't be seen as a comment on the endurance of the parts. Remember that Solomon's temple required upkeep and repair during the centuries of its use. Also, David's fear of the sword of the angel that was there at Jerusalem prompted him to offer sacrifices right there (more than the one sacrifice commanded by Gad) rather than travel to Gibeon where the altar and most of the tabernacle resided (but not the ark). This story is here in part to tell Israel how the transition from tabernacle to temple took place, with God's sanction.

## Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks, Nick! Excellent summary. After LuAnn's question and my own questions about some of this reading I want to search for a good timeline during David's life. If anyone has a good reference please let me know. Thx.

### Replies:

Charles Fry:

I thought maybe Steven Wright would comment on this chronology question, but maybe he hasn't seen it. 😊 Yet.

Steven Wright:

Just did. Charles!

Steven Wright:

Is the link showing up? I don't see it on my phone?

Charles Fry:

Maybe... I see the link when I touch the notification of your previous comment, but not when I touch the notification of your most recent comment.

Steven Wright:

Hmm! Did it on the pc?

Charles Fry:

It's okay, the link is posted.

### Comment:

Steven Wright:

Just caught the thread. How about good old Mr Rudd. Charles Fry, LuAnn Woody, and, Ginger Hermon? Here ya go ! <http://www.bible.ca/archeology/bible-archeology-maps-timeline-chronology-2samuel-6-7-1chron-13-17-22-king-david-new-spiritual-order-temple-reorganizes-levitical-priesthood-997-964bc.htm>

### Comment:

Butch O'Neal:

Thanks, Nick!

## September 12: 1 Chronicles 25-29 (Nick Hermon)

HISTORY: 1 Chronicles 25-29

We finish 1 Chronicles today and the EIGHTH book of our history study!

The reading starts off with the listing of musicians. It gives a specific number: 288 trained and skilled in music to the Lord... I bet it would be quite a group to hear perform!

It also lists the amount of lots cast by each group.

Chp. 26-27 lists the gatekeepers, the lots they cast, and the Israelites and their divisions

One verse I found interesting-



"David did not take the number of the men twenty years old or less, because the LORD had promised to make Israel as numerous as the stars in the sky." (27:23)

Chp. 28-29 David goes into detail planning the layout of the temple and how it is to be handled.

David give some of the final words and much like the wise leaders before him, he encourages the people to serve God only and keep His commands.

He explains to the people that his dream is to build a house for God, but God has chosen his son Solomon to reign after him and to be the one to build the temple.

He gives a public prayer and Solomon is acknowledged as king. David dies and "As for the events of King David's reign, from beginning to end, they are written in the records of Samuel the seer, the records of Nathan the prophet and the records of Gad the seer, together with the details of his reign and power, and the circumstances that surrounded him and Israel and the kingdoms of all the other lands." (29:29-30)

### **Comment:**

Butch O'Neal:  
Thank you, Nick!

### **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:  
8 books! That puts it in perspective. I wonder where we are at for the whole year? I'll look into it and post. Thanks for your faithfulness to the study, Nick. A set of verses I appreciated were, "Be strong & courageous and do the work of the Lord. Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord God, my God, is with you. He will not fail or forsake you." Words of wisdom and faith for all of us to pass on to each generation.

### **Replies:**

Ginger Hermon:  
We are around 35 books read thus far. 8: history, 12: epistles, 3.5: law, 2/3: psalms, 1.33: poetry, 7: prophecy, 3.6: gospels. Only 16 weeks left. So grateful for the leaders in this study and all those who have participated. Your insight and knowledge has edified me beyond measure. You have helped my Christian walk immensely; changing my lifestyle to prioritize reading scripture. It's been an honor. Acts 17:11

Joanne Caffie:  
It has definitely been an honor!

# Seven Bible Studies 2017

## History

### September 19: 2 Chronicles 1-5 (Nick Hermon)

HISTORY: 2 Chronicles 1-5

Solomon asks for wisdom and offers a thousand burnt offerings (1 Kings 3) on the most important high place. We are told in this book (but not in 1 Kings) that the altar is made of bronze. He asks God for wisdom and God which grants him and more.

In chp 2, Solomon prepares to build the temple. "He conscripted 70,000 men as carriers and 80,000 as stonecutters in the hills and 3,600 as foremen over them. (v2)" An incredible amount of material and skilled laborers go into the making of this temple. I think it's the first time I've ever noticed the word "design" used. In the NIV version, it says of Hiram-Abi, "he is experienced in all kinds of engraving and can execute any design given to him."

I am curious as to if anyone has a theory as to why Solomon taking a census in chp 2 v17 seems alright but the one taken by David was evil. My theory is the intent behind it- Solomon's census was to know the number of foreigners so he can put them to work for God's house vs. David's for greedy warfare but I am open to hearing others thoughts about it.

Chp. 3-4 Solomon builds the temple (1 Kings 6) and it goes into deep detail of the furnishings and the temple's aesthetic appeal... even down to the weight of the gold nails — 1.25lbs — (chp3v9).

Finally, the ark is brought to the temple (1 Kings 8) on long rods with trumpeters, musicians, and singers joining in praise and song to the ark being placed in its beautiful [yet temporary] home.

#### Comment:

Joyfully Nellie:

I have always thought of it as the motive behind the census before... would like to hear if there are other thought as well.

#### Replies:

Ginger Hermon:

I agree it was behind the motive. 1 Chronicles 21:1 says that Satan inspired David to take the census. His action was motivated by pride in knowing the size his empire had acquired. God wanted the children of Israel numbered only so that they would know how much to give to the Lord. David just wanted to know, with Satan's influence, how big his army was; he was putting his trust in his military might rather than in the promises of God.

Here is an example for a census during the days of Moses:

And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel after their number, then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul unto the LORD, when thou numberest them; that there be no plague among them, when thou

numberest them. This they shall give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half a shekel after the shekel of the sanctuary: (a shekel is twenty gerahs:) an half shekel shall be the offering of the LORD. Every one that passeth among them that are numbered, from twenty years old and above, shall give an offering unto the LORD. The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when they give an offering unto the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls. [Exodus 30:11-15 KJV]

### **Comment:**

Butch O'Neal:

This census seems to have occurred before Solomon began to do things that displeased GOD, but I would also like to hear other's thoughts.

### **Replies:**

Butch O'Neal:

Thanks, Nick!

### **Comment:**

Marc Hermon:

"He is good! His love endures forever!"

### **Comment:**

Marc Hermon:

My favorite points of this reading:

- 1.) Temple built on Mount Moriah which Abraham had named "The Lord will provide"
- 2.) One of the pillars was named Boaz, perhaps after Solomon's twice great grandfather.
- 3.) The diameter of the basin was 10 cubits and the circumference 30 cubits.  $30/10$  gives us  $\pi$  to one sig fig which is 3.

### **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:

Love reading Kings & Chronicles! Good summary, Nick. One thing that caught my eye was the ark only had the tablets in it. I suppose the jar of manna and Aaron's staff were lost when the Philistines had possession of it.

### **Comment:**

Charles Fry:

Ginger, the rod and jar may indeed have been lost, but they had not been inside the ark. They were "before the Lord" (Ex 16:33, Num 17:4, 10, 20:8-11). My impression is that the rod of Aaron was the rod of Moses and was also called the rod (staff) of God (Ex 4:20, 7:17, 19, etc). That staff used by Aaron at Moses's direction would have been a shepherd's walking stick, surely too long to fit into the ark (external length 2 1/2 cubits, 40 inches). The idea of those objects being inside the ark comes from a misreading of Heb 9:3-5 which speaks of items connected with the most holy place.

Nick, I think you are right, the intent and scope of Solomon's census was practice in nature, utilitarian, which doesn't seem to have been David's motive.

Isn't it interesting how Gibeon, the home of the Canaanites who tricked Israel into a covenant became the home of the tabernacle after the destruction of Shiloh?

Good point, Marc, especially the connection from Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac to David's sacrifice in the same place after the prior census to the temple being built on that place where the Lord provided, and would provide.

## Replies:

Ginger Hermon:

Wow. I've been teaching that wrong for years to many children. 😞 I did teach it from Hebrews 9. NIV must be a very poor translation. Thx for the prod. What exactly does, "before the Lord" mean?

Charles Fry:

Ginger Hermon Think of the mercy seat as a throne with the cherubim on each side (this is a very Biblical picture). God would be enthroned between the cherubim, in the midst of his people, and "before the Lord" would be in front of the mercy seat, in front of the ark it rested on, in front of the tablets of the testimony that were in the ark, under the mercy seat. See Ex 30:6 for example.

I don't really blame the NIV, lots of people have drawn the same conclusion from Heb 9 reading the KJV or almost every English translation. But the NIV is too helpful in supplying "this ark contained" rather than "in which was" (NASB). Note that the writer in 9:2-5 puts things in relation to the two "tents", distinguishing the holy place from the most holy place, and associates the lamp, table and bread with the first, while associating the golden altar, the incense, the ark, the jar, the staff, the mercy seat and cherubim with the second. While the golden altar was located in front of the curtain, in the holy place, it was placed in relation to the inner room, to present incense before the throne and smoke on the day of atonement to obscure the throne. I think if we take the first "in which" in Heb 9:2 (NASB) and note that it is referencing the room, and the second "in which" in 9:4 and think of that also as referencing the (second) room, it works out. Most people though read it in every English version I know of just as you read it in the NIV.

Ginger Hermon:

Charles Fry: thank you! I will definitely study this more!

## September 26: 2 Chronicles 6-10 (Nick Hermon)

HISTORY: 2 Chronicles 6-10

"But will God really dwell on earth with humans? The heavens, even the highest heavens, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built!" (6:18)

What powerful words of Solomon in his dedication of the temple to God.  
And sure enough, we know Solomon's question is answered.  
God did dwell on Earth (John 8:58) and continues to dwell (Ephesians 2:19-22)

So the promise of God made to David is fulfilled- David's son, Solomon, builds the temple. His prayer of dedication may sound familiar to some people- "Lord, God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven or on earth")

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K9Gi94AbkkA>  
“Covenant of Love-Training”

The rest of chp. 6 is instructions on the temple, how to handle bad situations, enemies, and non-believers. I think some of these instructions can correlate to our life’s focus and how we act around others even today.

Chp. 7: Give thanks to the Lord for “He is good; his love endures forever.”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CFWCH60nJ-A>

God Appears to Solomon and tells him, “This temple will become a heap of rubble” if Israel turns and forsakes His commands and decrees.

Chp. 8 lists Solomon’s other activities including: building up Tadmor in the desert, rebuilding Upper and Lower Beth Horon, and “whatever he desired to build in Jerusalem, in Lebanon and throughout all the territory he ruled.”

250 officials supervising, Pharaoh’s daughter couldn’t live in the palace, festivals were held

Chp 9: The Queen of Sheba visits Solomon and is impressed by his wisdom and splendor so she gifts him many fine items.

Some other fascinating physical things about his kingdom:

—>Solomon’s throne was covered in ivory and overlaid with pure gold, six steps, a footstool of gold attached to it, armrests with a lion standing beside each of them. Twelve lions stood on the six steps, one at either end of each step

—>All of King Solomon’s goblets were gold

—>Solomon had a fleet of trading ships that would return every three years carrying gold, silver, ivory, apes and baboons

—>Four thousand stalls for horses and chariots w/ twelve thousand horses

—>Silver became as common in Jerusalem as stone, and cedar as plentiful as sycamore-fig trees

“Nothing was made of silver, because silver was considered of little value in Solomon’s day.”

Then Solomon dies

Chp, 10 Israel rebels against Rehoboam because of nonsensical decision to follow the advice of his young peers instead of the wise elders.

### **Comment:**

Butch O’Neal:  
Thanks, Nick!

### **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:

I feel like the Queen of Sheba. Amazed! I'll forever sing these songs with a new understanding and level of love. Another great reading. Thanks, Nick!

### **Comment:**

Suzanne Ingle Harvey:  
Beautiful song! Thanks for sharing it and for your thoughts!

### **Comment:**

Marc Hermon:  
Sweet! I'm married to the Queen of Sheba! Honey, we need a new car.

## **October 3: 2 Chronicles 11-15 (Nick Hermon)**

HISTORY: 2 Chronicles 11-15

Rehoboam prepares an army of 180,000 soldiers but is told by God to not attack Jeroboam. Instead, he fortifies Judah and and priests and Levites side with him. He has 18 wives and 60 concubines but he loves Maakah, daughter of Absalom more than all of them combined. With all those women, he has a whopping 28 sons and 60 daughters... it is kind of fascinating looking up those who have the most children. This would put him on the list although it still doesn't compare to some people.... 😊

Shishak, king of Egypt, attacks Jerusalem because Rehobam and Israel fell away. Rehoboam humbled himself (12v6) and God shows mercy to him. His son Abijah succeeds him as king.

Chp 13-15 revolves around Asa and Abijah

Abijah takes an army of 400,000 to take on Jeroboam's army of 800,000. He gives a battle speech on how the Lord is on their side and they rally to win- inflicting 500,000 casualties on Israel.

Asa, Abijah's son, does what is right in the eyes of God. He tears down the high places, takes down the Cushites and other groups, and builds up an altar to God where they sacrifice 700 head of cattle. He establishes religious reform that is taken seriously with the oaths they proclaim. Chp 15 v17 states, "Asa's heart was fully committed to the Lord all his life"

### **Comment:**

Butch O'Neal:  
Thank you, Nick!

### **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:  
Thanks, Nick. Asa walked for many years with God. I love that he disposed Maacah as queen mother for building a repulsive Asherah pole (& Asa burned it). The Spirit of God gave good advice, "be strong and do not give up." Wish he kept the same courage & faith (defeating the Cushites) in year 36 & beyond.

## October 10: 2 Chronicles 16-20 (Nick Hermon)

HISTORY: 2 Chronicles 16-20

(16) While King Asa's heart was right with God, he still made the mistake of relying on the King of Aram. Because of this, a seer told him he will always be at war. Asa was so enraged he put the seer in jail and brutally oppressed some people. He was inflicted a disease on his feet but still was stubborn and turned to physicians instead of the Lord. Despite his mistakes late in life, people loved him and gave him the funeral worthy of a king.

(17) Jehoshaphat, Asa's son, becomes king of Judah. He followed after David and did not follow the practices of Israel. He removed the high places and Asherah poles from Judah and took the "Book of the Law of the Lord" to teach people in Judah.

(18) is a fun one- Jehosaphat acquires great wealth and honor and allied himself with Ahab by marriage. This seems like a dangerous thing to do, but he treads carefully. Ahab asks him to go to war alongside him but Jehosaphat tells Ahab to seek the counsel of the Lord. 400 prophets of Israel tell Jehosaphat to go to war but Jehosaphat requests a prophet of the Lord. Ahab is grumpy and tells him Micaiah son of Imlah never prophesies anything good about him. Micaiah tells Jehosaphat to go to war... but it seems like he may have done so in a sarcastic manner because Jehosaphat is able to tell that it is not a message from the Lord. Micaiah then tells him that Israel would be scattered and Ahab exclaims, "Didn't I tell you that he never prophesies anything good about me?!"

Ahab has Micaiah thrown in prison and orders him to only be given bread and water until he returns from war. Jehosaphat disguises as the king of Israel and cries out in fear as the chariot commanders go to attack him. They realize he isn't Ahab and God delivers Jehosaphat to safety. Ahab, on the other hand, isn't so lucky and is killed by an arrow shot at random. We don't have any word what happens to Micaiah after his prophecy from the Lord comes through.

(19) Jehosaphat is confronted by Jesu the seer for siding with the wicked, appoints judges and priests, and defeats Moab and Ammon

(20) An overwhelmingly large army of Moabites, Ammonites, and Meunites prepare to attack Judah. Jehosaphat cries to the Lord for help and proclaims a fast over Judah. They all come together in Jerusalem and are told by God they will win against them. They are so victorious that it takes three days to carry the plunder. On the fourth day, they worshipped God and the fear of God came upon the surrounding kingdoms.

### Comment:

Butch O'Neal:  
Thank you, Nick!

### Comment:

Charles Fry:  
There is power in praise. The story in chapter 20 is a favorite.

2 Chronicles 20:22 (NIV)

22 As they began to sing and praise, the Lord set ambushes against the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir who were invading Judah, and they were defeated.

### Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Good study! I like it when there is a good king, and Hey! Here is Tarshish again. I love this attribute of our Lord, "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him." Thanks, Nick. 😊

### Comment:

Marc Hermon:

18:33 "But someone drew his bow at random and hit the king of Israel between the sections of his armor" God uses his providence here through an un-named soldier so that we clearly see this was the hand of God. Interesting though in 1 Kings 5:1 we read later, "Now Naaman was commander of the army of the king of Aram. He was a great man in the sight of his master and highly regarded, because THROUGH HIM the Lord had given victory to Aram." Could be he was just the commander of the army but perhaps he was the random soldier that God used to take aim.

### Comment:

Suzanne Ingle Harvey:

Good comments. We always find little pieces of stories that we know we have read before, but didn't let all the words "sink in". I had forgotten about the disease of the foot.

### Comment:

Cherris Lehman:

Good stuff! The stories from the Bible are very intriguing! Thank you Nick!

## October 17: 2 Chronicles 21-24 (Nick Hermon)

HISTORY: 2 Chronicles 21-24

DESPITE THE EVIL OF MAN, GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES

Jehoshaphat dies and his firstborn son, Jehoram, reigns as king of Judah. He does evil in the eyes of God by having his brothers and some officials put to the sword, marrying a daughter of Ahab, and following in the ways of Ahab.

But because of God's covenant with David that he would "maintain a lamp for him and his descendants forever," he does not destroy his lineage.

He does, however, strike everything he owns "with a heavy blow" and gives him with an incurable disease that makes his bowels fall out (causing him a painful death).

"His people made no funeral fire in his honor, as they had for his predecessors," (21:19) and "He passed away, to no one's regret" (21:20)

Only Ahaziah, Jehosaphat's youngest son, survives and is made king over Judah.



His mother, Athaliah encourages him to do evil and he does. But he only rules for a year because he is put to death by Jehu. Athaliah “proceeded to destroy the whole royal family” but “Jehosheba, the daughter of King Jehoram, took Joash son of Ahaziah and stole him away.” She kept him hidden away for six years while Athaliah ruled the land.

Chapter 23 is an exciting story of rebellion!

Jehoiada rallied the commanders of units of a hundred throughout Judah & Israel. Jehoiada brought them together at the temple and reminded them that it is the Lord’s promise that the king’s son, a descendant of David, is who is supposed to reign.

They devised a plan to establish Joash as king- 1/3 of priests and Levites were to watch the doors, 1/3 were to be at the royal palace & Fountain Gate, and 1/3 to be in the courtyards of the temple. The Levites were to be stationed around the king and put anyone to death that entered the temple.

They took the weapons of David from the temple in preparation and anointed and placed the crown on seven-year-old Joash yelling, “Long live the king!”

This grabbed the attention of Athaliah who “tore her robes and shouted, ‘Treason! Treason!’”

They seized her as she reached the entrance of the Horse Gate on the palace grounds and put her to death.

“Jehoiada then made a covenant that he, the people and the king[c] would be the Lord’s people” (23:16) and he tore down the temple of Baal, smashed the altars and idols, and killed Mattan the priest of Baal.

“All the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was calm, because Athaliah had been slain with the sword” (v21).

Chp. 24- So Joash was only seven years old when he was made the king, but he reigned 40 years. He did right in the eyes of God all the years of Jehoiada the priest. He had a chest placed in front of the temple where people were to bring their annual taxes to be placed into it. People did so gladly and they used the money to pay the workers to restore the temple.

But when Jehoiada died at the ripe old age of 130 and things turn downhill.

Joash stopped listening to the advice of the priests and instead listened to his officials. They began worshipping Asherah poles and idols. God sent prophets to turn them back to Him, but they would not listen. Zechariah, son of Jehoiada came to him proclaiming that he was in the wrong for forsaking the Lord and Joash had him stoned to death.

The army of Aram marched against Joash and he was injured in battle. Interestingly, his officials conspired against him for the murder of Zechariah and he was not buried in the tombs of the kings.

## **Comment:**

Butch O’Neal:  
Thank you, Nick!

## Comment:

Cherris Lehman:

The stories of the kings are so interesting!

## Comment:

Marc Hermon:

Perhaps 24:22 is a Messianic parallel? "King Joash did not remember the kindness Zechariah's father Jehoida had shown him but killed his son." A major difference would be Zechariah's response as he was dying was, "Lord hold them to account for this" whereas the more perfect Son said, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do."

## Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Great title, Nick! God always keeps His promises. What a roller coaster of emotions in these chapters. I couldn't help but think about the great cloud of witnesses/faith heroes we just read in Hebrews. Prophets were referenced as faith heroes and I couldn't help but think of this while reading Jehoiada's strength & Zechariah being put to death by stoning. Gives me chills to think we are surrounded by these "martyrs", Old Testament saints, who bore a noble testimony of God.

## October 24: 2 Chronicles 25-28 (Nick Hermon)

HISTORY 2 Chronicles 25-28

Chp 25- Follow God Wholeheartedly

Amaziah, the son of Joash, becomes king of Judah and has those who killed his father murdered but he kept within the law of Moses. He numbers those over 20-years-old who can handle a spear and he has 300,000 fit for battle. He hires 100,000 Israelites for 100,000 talents of silver but is told by a man of God to not use them since the Lord is not with Israel. He follows the instruction and sends the Israelite troops home to their dismay.

He is victorious but brings back the gods of the people of Seir. He is prideful of the win and arrogantly challenges the king of Israel to which he is disastrously defeated. King Jehoash captures Ahaziah and takes all the gold and silver of the temple.

Chp 26- Pride can cause leprosy 🤒

Uzziah, a 16-year-old, is made king in place of his father Amaziah. He built up a strong army, took on the Philistines, built towers and cisterns and vineyards, and reigns 52 years. His 2,600 family leaders were over 307,500 men trained for war. But much like his father, his pride led to his downfall.

He entered into the temple and Azariah with 80 other courageous priests confronted him. His forehead broke out in leprosy and everyone including himself ran out.

Chp 27- Learn from Dad's Mistakes

Jotham, son of Uzziah, becomes king at the age of 25. He only reigns 16 years and verse two sums it up- "He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, just as his father Uzziah had done, but unlike him, he did not enter the temple of the Lord"

Chp 28- Success can come to those in the wrong... so don't follow them!

Ahaz becomes king of Judah at the age of 20 and a bad king he is indeed. He made idols, sacrificed children, and engaged in detestable practices. The Arameans capture them and the prophet Oded confronts the soldiers about the plunder and prisoners they've taken.

King Ahaziah thinks that since the Arameans were so successful in taking them captive that they're gods are the true god(s). This leads to an even greater downfall of him and Israel and he is not buried in the tombs of the kings

### **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:

So many lessons from these kings. Thanks for the excellent summary and faithfulness to this study, Nick!

### **Comment:**

Butch O'Neal:

Thank you, Nick!

## **October 31: 2 Chronicles 29-32 (Nick Hermon)**

HISTORY: 2 Chronicles 29-32

Yes, there actually are some good kings...

### **(29) ACTIONS OF CHILDREN AREN'T ALWAYS REFLECTIVE OF THEIR PARENTS**

We left off last week with Hezekiah, son of the evil Ahaz, taking over as king of Judah.

Unlike his father, he does what is right in the eyes of the Lord. He opened the doors of the temple and repaired them, told the priests and Levites to remove the defilement in the sanctuary, and makes sacrifices to God.

### **(30) DO THE BEST YOU CAN UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES**

Even though they were not able to celebrate the Passover at the regular time because the priests had not been consecrated, they decided to celebrate it as soon as they were able to do so.

"There was great joy in Jerusalem, for since the days of Solomon son of David king of Israel there had been nothing like this in Jerusalem" -verse 26

### **(31) EVERYONE SHOULD GIVE GENEROUSLY**

They destroyed the Asherah poles, high places, and altars. Hezekiah assigns priests and Levites to divisions and orders citizens to give to them. They give so generously that they have an overabundance. Likewise, even king Hezekiah gives of his own possessions.

### **(32) GOD DEFENDS HIS PEOPLE**

When Sennacherib, king of Assyria, saw how successful Judah was, he laid siege to the fortified cities. He threatens Jerusalem and mocks them that the gods of other countries have never been able to defend them against their army. An overwhelming underdog, Hezekiah reassures his people, "Do not be afraid or discouraged because of the king of Assyria and the

vast army with him, for there is a greater power with us than with him. With him is only the arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God to help us and to fight our battles.”

King Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah cried out in prayer about this and “the Lord sent an angel, who annihilated all the fighting men and the commanders and officers in the camp of the Assyrian king.”

Like many before him, King Hezekiah became sick and died. He was buried on the hill in the tombs of David’s descendants and all the people of Jerusalem honored him.

### **Comment:**

Butch O’Neal:  
Thank you, brother Nick!

### **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:  
That was quite a letter in chapter 30! I really enjoy reading testimony of the good kings. Thanks, Nick.

## **November 7: 2 Chronicles 33-36 (Nick Hermon)**

HISTORY: 2 Chronicles 33-36

Today, we finish the book of Chronicles and I find the dictionary’s definition very fitting:

chron·i·cle

noun

plural noun: chronicles

1. a factual written account of important or historical events in the order of their occurrence

So continuing on in Chronoicl(ogical) order... we start off in chapter 33 where Manasseh takes over as King of Judah as a 12-year-old. He reigns 55yrs and does not follow in his father Hezekiah’s ways, but instead in his grandfather’s ways by doing evil. He rebuilds the high places & altars to Baals, sacrifices children, and consults mediums and spiritists.

“But Manasseh led Judah and the people of Jerusalem astray, so that they did more evil than the nations the Lord had destroyed before the Israelites” (v9).

After a rough start, he gets hooked on the Assyrians and realizes he needs to get hooked on God instead.

He humbles himself and removes the foreign gods he built. But his son, Amon, who rules after him, follows in his footsteps but does not humble himself as Manasseh did.

34-35 THE POWER OF THE BOOK

Eight. Years. Old... when he became king. At 16, he decides to follow in the ways of God. At 20, he purges Judah and Jerusalem of high places, Asherah poles, and idols. At 26, he purifies the land and orders repairs for the temple.

They find the book of the law in the temple and Shaphan takes the book to the king and reads it to him. Josiah tears his clothes and orders that the word of the book is to be known throughout Judah. He establishes religious reform and, “removed all the detestable idols from all the territory belonging to the Israelites, and he had all who were present in Israel serve the Lord their God. As long as he lived, they did not fail to follow the Lord, the God of their ancestors” (v33).

They celebrate the Passover which “had not been observed like this in Israel since the days of the prophet Samuel.” There are some interesting points made here about how they follow the Book of Moses.

Unfortunately, he chooses to engage in a battle (in which he should have had no part in) with Necho king of Egypt. He disguises himself and is shot by archers from which he dies.

### 36- THE FALL OF JERUSALEM & DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE

We then have a series of bad kings: Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah as leaders under the Babylonian rule of king Nebuchadnezzar. As you may remember, God said the temple will last until his people fall away and this is where it happens.

“He carried to Babylon all the articles from the temple of God, both large and small, and the treasures of the Lord’s temple and the treasures of the king and his officials. 19 They set fire to God’s temple and broke down the wall of Jerusalem; they burned all the palaces and destroyed everything of value there” (v18-19).

### **Comment:**

Butch O’Neal:

Thank you, brother Nick!

# Seven Bible Studies 2017

## History

### November 14: Ezra 1-5 (Nick Hermon)

HISTORY: Ezra 1-5

We're diving into the first half of the book of Ezra today. Ezra & Nehemiah was originally written by one author as one letter but divided up later. We left off last week with the destruction of Jerusalem (and the temple) by the Babylonians in approximately 588 BC.

This book starts off about 50 years later (around 538 BC) and the Israelites who went into exile during the destruction of Jerusalem are now starting to return to their homeland which fulfills the prophecy told in Jeremiah 25.

In these two books, there are 3-4 main individuals: Zerubbabel & Joshua, Ezra, and Nehemiah.

Today's spotlight is on Zerubbabel & Joshua

Chp 1- God moved the heart of Cyrus, the king of Persia, to allow the exiles to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple. The family heads of Judah, Benjamin, and the priests and Levites returned. King Cyrus returned the temple articles Nebuchadnezzar stole. Lastly, it lists the few of the 5,400 articles of gold and of silver given to Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah, to be returned to Jerusalem.

Chp 2- Lists the exiles who returned (42,000+)

Chp 3 is the big one- We are introduced to Joshua son of Jozadak. Joshua leads the way in rebuilding the altar and after it is built, they celebrate the Festival of Tabernacles.

Zerubbabel (whose name means "planted in Babylon") leads the way with Joshua in the rebuilding of the temple. The Levites 20+ years old supervised the building of the house of the Lord.

When they laid the foundation, they celebrated and gave praise and thanksgiving to God:

"He is good; his love toward Israel endures forever." (very similar to David's praise in 1 Chronicles 16:34)

The end of the chapter is interesting:

"But many of the older priests and Levites and family heads, who had seen the former temple, wept aloud when they saw the foundation of this temple being laid, while many others shouted for joy. No one could distinguish the sound of the shouts of joy from the sound of weeping, because the people made so much noise. And the sound was heard far away." (3:12-13)

I am interested to hear why you all think about the older generation crying out. Is it tears of happiness or tears of sorrow that the new is not as good as the old?

Chp 4- What is a good story without a little bit of conflict?

The enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard the temple was being built and they offered to help. Zerubbabel shut them down and “they bribed officials to work against them and frustrate their plans.” A letter is sent to king Artaxerxes (which is included in this chapter!) and the letter of his response (also included in the chapter!) causes the building of the temple to a come to standstill

Chp 5- Haggai the prophet (check out the John Morris post on Friday) prophesied to the Jews in Judah and Jerusalem. This inspires Zerubbabel and Joshua to rally the people and rebuild the temple under the new ruler, King Darius. They work rapidly and the officials question who authorized them to allow them to do this. They say it was alright under King Cyrus so it should be ok. The officials aren’t sure what they are to do so they send a letter to King Darius (which is recorded in this chapter!).

Tune in next week for King Darius's response...

### **Comment:**

Jack Dyer:

Thanks Nick! One of greatest lessons for me comes from how the “things of God” were protected on their way home; how they were placed into the hands of the leading men who were accountable upon their arrival in Jerusalem.

### **Comment:**

Charles Fry:

No doubt some of the people would have wept with gladness to see the beginnings of restoration, but Haggai probably highlights the prevailing reaction among the older people who remembered the former glory.

Haggai 2:3 (NIV)

3 ‘Who of you is left who saw this house in its former glory? How does it look to you now? Does it not seem to you like nothing?’

### **Replies:**

Dianne Collier:

Really good scripture to qualify the feelings of the older people.

### **Comment:**

John Morris:

Zechariah also seems to address this same sentiment among the older: "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this temple; his hands shall also finish it. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. For who has despised the day of small things?" (Zech. 4:9-10a). "Small things." That's how they viewed the new temple. "Does it not seem to you like NOTHING?" (Hag. 2:3).

There's an important take away for the 21st century American church, btw. Yes, the numbers of the faithful are fewer than in time past. But how shall we respond to this? With despondency over how the church just isn't what she used to be (Eccl. 7:10)...or with joy that God is still working in the world, and a determination to be His instruments?

“Yet now be strong, Zerubbabel,’ says the LORD, ‘and be strong, Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; and be strong, all you people of the land,’ says the LORD, ‘and work; for I am with you,’ says the LORD of hosts. ‘According to the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, so my Spirit remains among you; do not fear!’” (Hag. 2:4-5)

## Replies:

Charles Fry:

Yes. "A Remnant on Earth." That was Sunday morning's message in Novato. Starting with Joseph, a youth, a slave, a prisoner...

Genesis 45:7 (NIV)

7 But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

John Morris:

Wish I could have heard it.

## Comment:

Butch O'Neal:

Thank you, Nick!

## Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Excellent notes, Nick. Thank you!

## Comment:

Dianne Collier:

Very good read Nick thank you.

## Comment:

Sue Reddy:

Bro. Nick, we're studying Ezra, in our Wednesday night class at Itasca, IL...Carol Kahn and I was trying to figure out who was also studying on Ezra on Facebook. Thank you, Nick for posting your studies. We appreciate it so much!

## November 21: Ezra 6-10 (Nick Hermon)

HISTORY: Ezra 6-10

Last week we left off with Zerubbabel and Joshua rallying the people to rebuild the temple under the new ruler, King Darius. Today we finish off the short book of Ezra

Officials are concerned and send a letter to King Darius asking if it's alright for the people to rebuild the temple. After searching the archives, King Darius realizes it was acceptable under King Cyrus and decrees that the expenses are to be paid out of the royal treasury and that whatever is needed is to be provided. Verses 11-12 go to show how serious he is about this proclamation of the temple being built.

They finish the temple and a celebration of dedication is held with hundreds of animal sacrifices. Then, "for seven days they celebrated with joy the Festival of Unleavened Bread



because the Lord had filled them with joy by changing the attitude of the king of Assyria” (6:22).

In chapters 7-8, we are introduced to this week’s main character and author of this book: Ezra

Ezra was a teacher well versed in the Law of Moses and King Artaxerxes appoints him to lead another wave of people back to Jerusalem. Ezra wants to rebuild the community and bring back social and spiritual renewal.

Chapters 7-8 tells of the decree of the treasury to be given to Ezra in the reestablishment of Jerusalem as well as the list of the family heads returning with Ezra.

Chapters 9-10 is a sad story that can be a bit confusing/disturbing...

Ezra hears that the people of Israel, including the priests and Levites, are intermarrying with the neighboring people.

This appalls Ezra who tears his tunic and pulls hair from his head and beard. He earnestly prays to God asking for forgiveness of the sins of the people of Israel.

It is suggested to him by Shekariah son of Jehiel, to send away the women and children and Ezra decides to do so.

They tell all of Judah and Jerusalem to gather together and if they do not do so within three days all of their possessions will be taken from them.

Everyone gathers on the square and as it is raining, Ezra exclaims that many are guilty of intermarriage.

The people agree and Ezra selects family heads to investigate the cases.

“They all gave their hands in pledge to put away their wives, and for their guilt they each presented a ram from the flock as a guilt offering” (10:19)

V20-43 lists the descendants who were guilty and, “All these had married foreign women, and some of them had children by these wives” (10:44)

These last two chapters can be confusing because while it is abundantly clear that God does not want his people to marry non-believers (Deuteronomy 7:3 / 23:1-4), it doesn’t say anywhere that God decreed a national divorce.

The prophet Malachi encouraged the people of Israel to remain pure, but he also says in Malachi 2:13-16 that God is opposed to divorce.

Next week- Nehemiah

## **Comment:**

Butch O’Neal:  
Thank you, Nick!

## Comment:

Kevin Crittenden:

Thank you, Nick! I wonder if some of these marriage ceremonies to foreign women were conducted by pagan priests or priestesses. I get the impression that, while godly marriages are covenantal by nature, none of these marriages were and therefore putting their wives away wasn't really considered a divorce as such.

## Comment:

Steven Wright:

Although I perhaps would not have even come to be, except that some of my French ancestors came to North America and practiced the "Marriage du pays " and, the "placage" this does not mean that the arrangements were always right in God's sight. Especially regarding the latter type, which was when a French merchant took a wife, ( sometimes several) of the native/local women, while having also a wife back at home in France. Kevin Crittenden is on to something here. These were never any type of marriage that the LORD would condone! These were simply about sexual and idolatrous things. The men were "doing violence " as Micah puts it, against the wives of their youth, in much the same way as Jewish men were doing at the time of Christ, for whatever reason they could trump up, they could slap divorce papers in the hands of their wife, and kick her out of their home. Or, as I am sure was also happening, just, abandon their wives and go shack up with these other women. Either way, the Hebrew Women would have virtually no recourse against such action by their husbands. The fact that some of the priests and other leaders were doing it, made it that much easier for anyone else to do it!

## Comment:

Charles Fry:

In Ezra 8 I really appreciate the conundrum Ezra faced in v.21-22. We told the king how mighty our God is, how could we then ask for guards ;to protect us and the treasure we carried? So prayer, fasting, and planning. "and the hand of our God was over us, and He delivered us from the hand of the enemy and the ambushes along the way." (8:31). It's good to pray for safe journeys and to thank God for the outcome when we travel safely.

I also appreciate the careful accountability of weighing, assigning responsibility, tracking, counting everything at the beginning and end, the same principle of accountability Paul endorsed for the churches' funds in 2 Cor 7-9, multiple approved brethren, chosen by the churches, trustworthy, that the good work be accomplished and no doubt of the faithfulness.

I find the resolution of the mixed marriages situation challenging, not as a fact, but primarily because of reasoning to apply this event as a principle or precedent for the church. What Ezra and his fellow leaders did was a difficult judgment call (10:2-5). It was undertaken with prayer and fasting, much soul searching and consideration of the Law and history, and was a harsh and difficult decision. They did what they believed was necessary. There is no God given mandate for divorce in this passage, or any other scripture I know of. Some "marriages" of course can't be marriages, that is true, as when Herod took his brother's wife, a union specifically forbidden as incestuous in the law (Lev 20:21), but various men did marry outside the nationalistic bounds of the Law, including David in his polygamy, Solomon of course in his unwise multitude of foreign wives (not positive examples!), but also Salmon who married Rahab, and Boaz who married Ruth. In the story of Ruth her Moabite origin is very much on display, not only in 1:4, but repeatedly in the story, including 3 times in chapter 4. She was "Ruth the Moabite." It's emphasized. David's forbear was a Moabite woman. We reason that Ruth professed faith in God, and she did claim both God and Israel in her pledge of devotion to Naomi, but the Law didn't say "no Moabites unless they proselytize", it said no Moabites in the assembly (Deut 23:3-4). I would hope that in the consideration of the cases in Ezra's day

(10:14-17) they did look at circumstances analogous to those of Ruth (or of Rahab) and didn't make a blanket ruling for the 113 or so individuals listed as having made these unions(10:18-44). As described, it was a terrible time with terrible choices.

### **Replies:**

Steven Wright:  
Amen Charles!

Marc Hermon:

This passage has made me uncomfortable also but I think that may be the point for our present times. When someone in the kingdom marries someone not in the kingdom it can cause problems for not only that person but also their possible future children as well as their spiritual leaders. It sets a dangerous precedent for watching eyes. Unnecessary uncomfortableness.

# Seven Bible Studies 2017

## History

### November 28: Nehemiah 1-4 (Nick Hermon)

HISTORY: Nehemiah 1-4  
Controversy Over Building A Wall (part 1)

Nehemiah is an Israelite official serving in the Persian government when he hears about the ruined state of Israel's walls. He asks King Artaxerxes for permission to go to Jerusalem to repair them and the king gave him an armed escort.

When he gets there, he starts building the wall but people of Jerusalem show opposition.

Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab laughed and despised Nehemiah saying, "What is this thing that you are doing?"

Chapter 3 lists those who helped him and chapter 4 says that Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem became furious as the wall was being built.

They even conspire to attack to cause confusion.

Nehemiah arms his wall builders with weapons and posts guards to keep watch.

To be continued...

#### Comments:

Butch O'Neal:  
Thank you, Nick! A massive undertaking indeed!

#### Comments:

Ginger Hermon:  
What incredible bravery! Working with 1 hand and weapon in the other from 1st light of dawn till the stars. Earnest efforts - constant preparedness. Never tiring in the work of the Lord. Wonderful examples to us even now. Thanks, Nick. Love this book.

#### Comments:

Charles Fry:  
I am especially amused by the incredulity and ridicule of the opposition:

Nehemiah 4:3  
3 Tobiah the Ammonite, who was at his side, said, "What they are building—even a fox climbing up on it would break down their wall of stones!"

Somehow, portions of that rubble wall have survived 25 centuries. 😊 A testimony to using what God supplies to build what God wants.

<http://magazine.biola.edu/article/08-spring/nehemiahs-wall-discovered/>  
"Nehemiah's Wall Discovered"

## Comments:

LuAnn Woody:

This book has so many dramatic elements to it- danger, comedy, undertaking an 'impossible' task. I was particularly moved by Nehemiah's prayer. Timeless entreaties.

## December 5: Nehemiah 5-9 (Nick Hermon)

HISTORY: Nehemiah 5-9  
Controversy Over Building A Wall (part 2)

Chp 5 is very Interest-ing. Nehemiah calls out the officials and nobles for charging their own people more than they should. He exclaims, "As far as possible, we have bought back our fellow Jews who were sold to the Gentiles. Now you are selling your own people, only for them to be sold back to us!"

They are speechless and promise to give back to the people.

Later, Nehemiah becomes governor. He writes about how he devoted himself to the work of the wall and doesn't demand food like the governors before him.

Speaking of the wall, chp 6-7 is more controversy over it. Tobiah especially shows opposition and threatens Nehemiah. The wall is completed, Nehemiah put his brother Hannah in command of the citadel, and it lists exiles who return.

TorahFest: The Seven Day Marathon

Chp 8-9 The people come together in the square before the Water Gate as Ezra reads the Book of the Law of Moses from daybreak until noon every day for seven straight days. "From the days of Joshua son of Nun until that day, the Israelites had not celebrated it like this. And their joy was very great" (8:17)

On the 24th day of the month, the Israelites confess their sins, fast, and wear sackcloth. The Levites give intriguing speeches on the major historical points of their people and towards the end of the chapter, makes a binding agreement of the people sealed by the priests.

Will they uphold this covenant?  
Tune in next week!

## Comments:

Butch O'Neal:  
Thanks, Nick!

## December 12: Nehemiah 10-13 (Nick Hermon)

HISTORY: Nehemiah 10-13

Today, we finish the book of Nehemiah. As an overview, chapters 1-7 dealt with the controversy over Nehemiah building a wall, chps 8-12 is on the spiritual renewal of the people and chapter 13 is another anti-climatic-negative finish to the book.

This seems to be a theme throughout Ezra & Nehemiah. Think back to some of the sections within the two books- Zerubbabel refuses help building the temple, Ezra confronts the people in Israel as it rains, and Nehemiah argues over building a wall until it's completed.

Today's reading:

10- lists those who sealed the binding agreement to God. This agreement is basically a promise to follow through with the Laws of Moses

11- lists the leaders of Jerusalem and the tribes they're from

12- lists the priests/Levites and holds a dedication of the Wall of Jerusalem. Can't help but to mention that two choirs sang. One sang at the Sheep Gate and the other sang near the "Dung Gate" (v31)... guess we know which group stinks!



13- is the anticlimactic finish... they do not uphold their promise. The temple is neglected, the Sabbath is dishonored, and goods are traded along the walls he built.

He tries to plead his case to God and basically says, "At Least I Tried."

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Nick's 2cents-

Overall, I am not a huge fan of Nehemiah. It seems like the whole book is him trying to plead his case to God what a good person he is. He goes marching into Jerusalem to rebuild a wall which he was not directly instructed by God to do. In fact, the prophet Zechariah says in chapter 2 that Jerusalem should be a city without walls open for all to worship God but Nehemiah wants Jerusalem to be a closed city of God's people... so there seems to be two conflicting ideologies about what Jerusalem is supposed to look like.

Albeit, Nehemiah's ambition to get things done is admirable. He builds the wall and, for a period of time, gets people focused on what is important... but they don't stick to their agreement. They even start doing sinful things along the very walls Nehemiah built.

Nehemiah is often regarded as an inspirational leader. But in the final chapter, he calls curses down, beats people, and pulls out their hair when they sin (13:25). Does that sound like divine leadership?

Instead of focusing on the hearts of the people, he gets frustrated and quite literally tries to beat the idea of God into them.

The book(s) of Ezra & Nehemiah start with the hope of the temple and the kingdom of God being established but it ends with disappointment. Even though Israel is back in the land, their spiritual state is unchanged. While Ezra and Nehemiah try their best, their political and social reforms don't guide the people to fully follow God. These books end on downers, but they address an important issue... you can lead people in the way they should go, but not all will follow. It is a matter of the heart.

## Comments:

Jack Dyer:

Yes, Nehemiah was human. He made mistakes, but he was a tool used by God in the completion of His plan. In that, he gives us many lessons by which we can glorify God. I guess, that makes me a fan of Nehemiah (as he followed God).

## Comments:

Charles Fry:

I do understand the negative reaction to Nehemiah and his personal record of efforts and longings. In context though, he was trying to save his people and please God, and played a vital role in preserving Israel until the time was right for the Lord to come. I don't live in such a time or circumstance as he did, nor have the same sort of religious and secular authority and responsibility as he carried. (But I sometimes feel similar frustration with foolishness.)

Remember that Moses (Numbers 11:10-15 for example) also had really bad times as leader of Israel, and sometimes called for harsh judgment and strict enforcement of the covenant (Ex 32, Num 25). Likewise with Jeremiah, or Elijah (who called down fire more than once) or David, or any of those great leaders we know much about. Nehemiah's reminiscences are echoed in Psalms of petition and imprecation.

Regarding Jerusalem, I don't think there was a conflict between Zechariah's earlier vision and Nehemiah's labors. Daniel had foretold the rebuilding of Jerusalem (Daniel 9:25) and it seems very likely that prophecy pointed to Nehemiah's work. Zechariah's vision of the greater Jerusalem however comes into being as Paul spelled out in Ephesians 2:14ff when Jesus has taken down the dividing wall of hostility by fulfilling the law and making from all nations, Jew or Gentile, one people built together as one temple in worship of God. The wall of fire Zechariah heard about is seen again in Revelation 20:7-10, a vision of the final conflict when the Lord comes again.

Not so obvious in our English Bibles, but in the oldest existing complete Hebrew Bible (Old Testament, the Leningrad or St Petersburg Codex) the Old Testament ends with Nehemiah. The order is Law, Prophets, Writings (Wrings being Psalms, etc, see Luke 24:45). Thus, the last statement of the Old Testament was "Remember me, O my God, for good." (Nehemiah 13:31). The same word (good) we have in the beginning, at the close of every day of creation in Genesis 1, "God saw that it was good." A desire expressed by Nehemiah to return to the innocence and perfection before sin, before the curse (anticipated in Neh 13:2).

## Comments:

Butch O'Neal:

Thank you, Nick!

## Comments:

Marc Hermon:

I agree with Charles, that Zechariah is referring to the future church.

In the first two chapters of Nehemiah there is a lot of praying on Nehemiah's part. It seems that God answers his prayers and makes the king disposed to send Nehemiah to Jerusalem. It also seems that God chose Nehemiah to be the man for this task.

As far as Nehemiah's discipline goes, "No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been

trained by it." (Hebrews 12:11). It is a lesson for the church today. We cannot neglect discipline in the church and say we have love. "because the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son." (Heb 12:6)

I seem to remember some spankings you received growing up that you didn't like too much either. That was just my way of showing you my love for you! You made me pull my own hair out, though. :)



# Seven Bible Studies 2017

## History

### December 19: Esther 1-5 (Nick Hermon)

HISTORY: Esther 1-5

Today our study focuses on the first half of the book of Esther. I know this is one of the favorites for a few people so I look forward to hearing your thoughts on this book in the comments! :)

The book is set about 100yrs after the Babylonian exile in the city of Susa, the Persian capital.

#### Chapter 1- Queen Vashti Banished

Xerxes, the ruler of Persia, held a 7-day banquet in his garden where he displayed his tremendous wealth (just read verses 5-8... wow!). In high spirits from wine on the seventh day, he orders Queen Vashti to come before him so he can show off her beauty to his attendees.

She refuses and with the advice of his wise men, decides to cast her from the palace and orders that "every man should be ruler over his own household."

#### Chapter 2- A New Queen & A Conspiracy Debunked

When Xerxes fury had subsided, one of his attendants proposed that beautiful young virgins should come to the palace and let the one that pleases him become the next queen.

To no surprise, Xerxes likes this idea.

Esther was a beautiful young woman adopted by Mordecai who fit these qualifications. She was taken to the palace and placed under the care of Hegai. She won his favor and he provided her with beauty treatments and special food along with attendants.

She would check in with Mordecai along the gates every day and eventually gained the favor of Xerxes enough for him to choose her to become the new queen.

But she had not revealed her nationality... a Jew! (whoa... mind blown)

One day while Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate, he heard two of the king's officers angry and plotting to assassinate King Xerxes. He warns Queen Esther, who in turn reports to the king, giving credit to Mordecai.

#### Chapter 3- A Massacre in the Making

King Xerxes honored Haman, the Agagite and the royal officials at the king's gate kneel and honored him... but Mordecai would not.

This frustrates Haman to the point that he not only wants to kill Mordecai but all Jewish people.

He convinces King Xerxes that these people have strange customs which do not align with the king's laws and he plans to utterly destroy them.

Xerxes grants him permission to pursue the Jews and him and Haman roll die to determine the date. A copy of the text of the edict was passed out to all nationalities that on the 13th day of the 12th month that all Jews, young and old, women and children, are to be annihilated on a single day.

This news is devastating to many people.

#### Chapter 4- A Plea to Queen Esther

Mordecai and many others laid in sackcloth and ashes when they hear the order of the annihilation of their people. He goes weeping and wailing up to the king's gate and the distress catches Esther's attention. Through her attendants, she asks what is wrong and is presented a copy of the text for the annihilation of her people.

She responds that it is the law that if anyone goes to the king in the inner court without being summoned, they are to be put to death... even her. But Mordecai reasons with her that she may not be safe either and that those of her nationality depend on her.

She complies and orders a fast for three days and when that is done she will go to the king, "And if I perish, I perish."

#### Chapter 5- Esther's Request of the King

On the third day, she goes to Xerxes and stands in the inner court in front of the king's hall. He is pleased to see her and asks what her request is. She asks the king to come to a banquet together with Haman that she has prepared for them and she will let her request be known then.

Xerxes agrees and inquires of Haman to go with him to the banquet. Haman, happy and in high spirits, is ecstatic about being specially requested by the queen to attend a banquet. He sees Mordecai, who does not honor him and turns to rage, but restrained himself. He boasts that he is the only one who Queen Esther invited but says he still has no satisfaction as long as he sees that Jew Mordecai sitting at the king's gate. Haman's wife, Zeresh, suggests that in the morning to have Mordecai impaled on a pole and to go enjoy the banquet later.

Boom! Cliffhanger... what happens next?  
Tune in next week

#### **Comments:**

Butch O'Neal:  
Thank you, Nick!

#### **Comments:**

Charles Fry:  
Studies have been written and taught on Joseph, Daniel and Jesus, and rightly so. Perhaps there should be such a message on Joseph, Daniel, Esther and Jesus. There are numerous parallels, similar language in the Joseph/Esther stories, but at the same time Esther is almost the antithesis of Daniel, perhaps as a woman is the antithesis/complement of a man, the bride different than the husband, the church as both body and bride.

Feasting.... the king, the queen, the Jews...  
The writings.... Edicts, records, warnings, promises, salvation....  
The enduring conflict, Amalekites attacking the Jews and being defeated...

### Comments:

Marc Hermon:  
Hah! Cliff"hanger". Funny!

### Comments:

Marc Hermon:  
I couldn't help myself. I had to read on to find out what happened! You'll never believe the irony! I'll give you a hint.

Go to <http://www.hangman.no> and enter code hnzjcdcbhmac

### Comments:

Ginger Hermon:  
Love this captivating story of old! If we all have the mentality of Mordecai, "Who knows but that you have come to a royal position for such a time as this?" Powerful lessons in Esther about courage, obedience, divine timing, fasting, meditation and God's supreme love. Thanks for the great summary, Nick!

## December 26: Esther 6-10 (Nick Hermon)

As we finish our history study for the year, I just want to say that it has been an absolute pleasure reading through these books. I've learned a lot from these readings and hope to continue to grow as much in wisdom in 2018 as I have from this study in 2017.

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We started the history study in the book of Joshua and now conclude in the book of Esther.

Throughout this year, we have encountered many fascinating stories and lessons:

Joshua- The story of the conquest and distribution of the Promised Land.

"But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD" (24:15)

Judges- Israel enters a cycle of turning from God, falling captive to nations, calling out to God, and being rescued by leaders God sends their way

"But when they cried out to the LORD, He raised up for them a deliverer." (3:9)

Ruth- Two widows lose everything and find hope in God... leading to a very important lineage

"...Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God." (1:16)

1 & 2 Samuel- Israel demands a king and is disappointed until David, a man after God's own heart, becomes king

"The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." (1 Sam 16:7)

1 & 2 Kings- Solomon rules Israel, the nation splits and both kingdoms turn from God resulting in the people of Israel being conquered by Babylon

"Lord, God of Israel, there is no God like you..." (1 Kings 22:23)

1 & 2 Chronicles- Listing of the history from Adam to David to the Babylonians taking over

"...The Lord is with you when you are with him..." (2 Chr 15:2)

Ezra- Return of the Jews from Babylon and rebuilding of the temple

"Ezra had devoted himself to the study and observance of the Law of the LORD, and to teaching its decrees and laws" (7:10)

Nehemiah- Rebuilding of the wall around the city  
"...the joy of the Lord is your strength" (8:10)

Esther- Jewess who becomes queen of Persia to save the Jewish people from destruction

"Who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?" (4:14)

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Finally, today's study...

HISTORY: Esther 6-10

We left off last week with a cliffhanger:  
Haman vs Mordecai

Haman convinced the king to plan a date to annihilate the Jews because of his hatred for Mordecai. Esther asks the king and Haman to join her. Haman is excited to have special treatment, but wants the day to be REALLY good so he plans on having Mordecai executed by being thrown on a sharp pole the morning of the banquet.

6- Major Plot Twist

The night before the banquet, King Xerxes couldn't sleep so he had the record of his reign read to him. It was read how Mordecai exposed two officers conspiring to kill the king and Xerxes asked what recognition was given to Mordecai.

When the attendants told him "nothing," Haman happens to come to the king's door to ask the king to let him kill Mordecai. So Haman asks the king, "What should be done for the man the king delights to honor?" thinking that there's nobody to honor more than himself. He tells the king that he ought to have a royal robe placed on him as he rides a king's horse through the city streets as it is proclaimed, "This is what is done for the man the king delights to honor!"

The king agrees... but tells Haman to do so for Mordecai!

It would have been hilarious to see the look on Haman's face when Xerxes told him that!

So Haman robes Mordecai and leads him through the streets making the proclamation he suggested.

Absolutely humiliated, he returns home and hurries off to Esther's banquet.

#### 7- Death by Own Device

At the banquet, Esther tells the king that she is a Jew and asks him to spare her people. Xerxes asks who is responsible for destroying the Jews and she tells him, "This vile Haman!"

The king is furious and has Haman impaled on the pole he had set up for Mordecai.

#### 8-10 Mordecai & Jewish Nation Elevated

The king took the signet ring of Haman and presented it to Mordecai and Esther appointed him over Haman's estate. Esther begs that the Jews be saved as well. The king's edict grants the Jews in every city the right to defend themselves.

Interestingly, "many people of other nationalities became Jews because fear of the Jews had seized them."

When the day comes around, the Jews destroy the enemies and Haman's sons. The Jews held a celebration called Purim ((pur is the lot (dice) used to determine the date for the Jews destruction). It is a major moment in Jewish history and is said that, "These days should be remembered and observed in every generation by every family, and in every province and in every city. And these days of Purim should never fail to be celebrated by the Jews—nor should the memory of these days die out among their descendants" (9:28).

This is a fascinating and unique story in that it is the only book in the Bible where God is never mentioned by name.

So why?

My thoughts are that it either has to do with the circumstances the book was written (under the rule of the Persian empire) or that it has something to do with the moral issues happening here. There is a lot of drinking, sex, and murder... all violations of the Torah.

Despite the lack of acknowledgement, it is clear that God's work is at play behind the scenes.

It goes to show that God has not abandoned His promises, but protects His people.

May He protect you as well this upcoming year!

#### **Comment:**

Charles Fry:

Good reminders of the path behind, where we've been, and the story at hand. Thank you, Nick Hermon.

#### **Comment:**

Beverly Schoonover Wattenbarger:

Thank you, Nick, for all your time and effort this year. It has been interesting. Looking forward to next year. God bless you and your family

### **Comment:**

Kevin Crittenden:  
Thank you, Nick!

### **Comment:**

Butch O'Neal:  
Thank you, Nick!

### **Comment:**

Marc Hermon:  
Thanks for the excellent review. All year long I have been filling out chapter titles in my Bible. Here are my 10 chapter titles for Esther:

- 1.) Vashti Vanquished
- 2.) Esther Elected
- 3.) Haman's Holocaust
- 4.) Mordecai's Mourning
- 5.) Haman's Hubris
- 6.) Mordecai Magnified
- 7.) Haman Hanged
- 8.) Edicts Exchanged
- 9.) Purim Prescribed
- 10.) Mordecai's Mastery

### **Replies:**

John Morris:  
A lot of alliteration there.

### **Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:  
Love this book!!! Next to impossible to put it down and not read from beginning to end. You were blessed to teach some of the most exciting lessons from the Bible, Nick. Can't thank you enough for all the edifying posts. You had great summaries each week and now great reminders of each book. It brings great joy to reflect back on the year. I encourage you and all of us to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" during 2018. "To Him be glory both now and forever; Amen!" Thank you again. We are well pleased with you, son. ❤️

### **Comment:**

Theresa Jo Brady:  
Delighting in God's word this morning! Like Esther, who knows for what position and purpose we have been put in to be of help to God's people. Thank you Nick!

### **Comment:**

Yvonna Hartman:  
Thank you for your work. It has been very edifying.