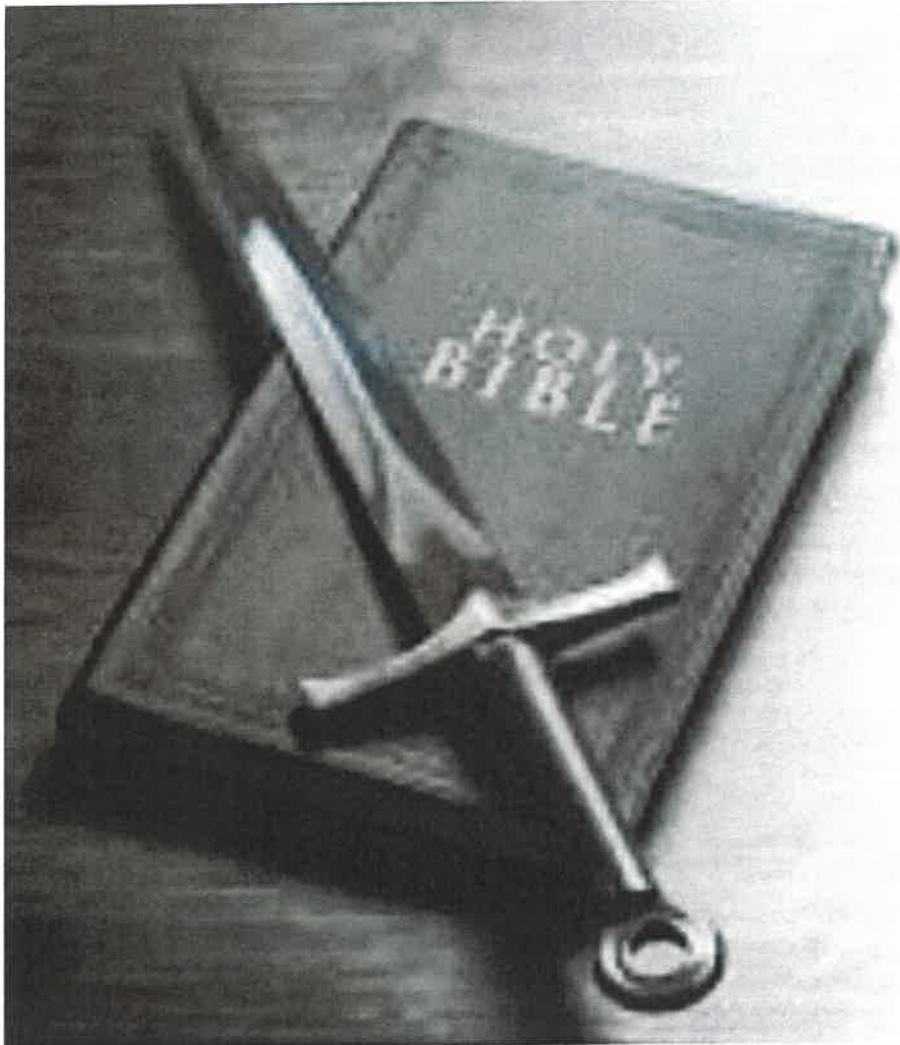


A Look at the Book

A Year Long Study of the Bible

The Sword of the Spirit

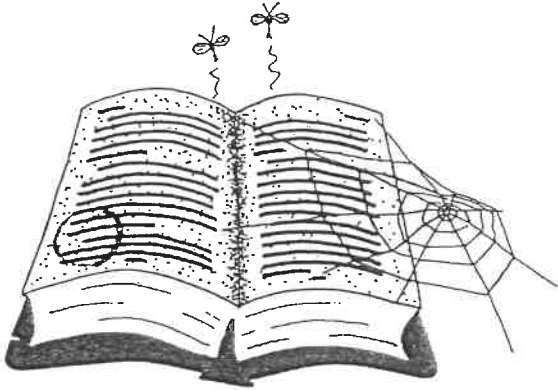


Member Manual



BOOK
Look at the

What is the Condition of Your Bible?



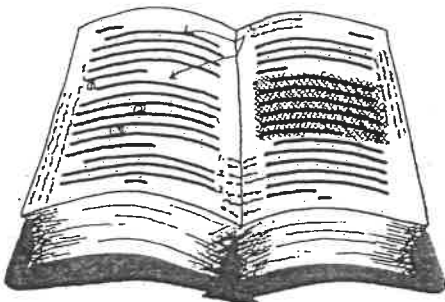
Biblicum Ignoris

Does your Bible sit on a shelf and collect cobwebs? Do you use it more as a paperweight or a coaster than as a source of spiritual nourishment? Does the T.V. Guide get more use in a week than your Bible does in a year?



Biblicum Banged-Upus

Is the cover of your Bible worn and torn while the pages inside look brand new? The outside of your Bible gives the impression of much use, but the inside looks and smells like it's never been opened. You carry the Bible around a lot, and most of your friends know you believe what it says. Unfortunately, you are not really sure what it says since you have rarely taken the time to read or study it.



Biblicum Heap-Studicus

Perhaps, on the other hand, your Bible looks well-used and comfortably lived in. There are notes in the margins and underlining in the text. The pages have that "handled" look. There are study notes tucked in every nook and corner - written on napkins, and the backs of attendance cards, and the inside covers of your Bible. *Good!* That's how a Bible ought to look.

A Book Worth Studying

As one survey indicates, only 12 percent of Bible believers spend any time in the Word on a daily basis; 34 percent read the Bible only once a week, while 42 percent of such people read God's book only once in a great while.

There are many voices that would speak to us about life today. Voices are being raised calling us to new thinking about the meaning of life and how we should live. Such voices tell us it is time to lay aside obsolete notions about life, to be rid of restricting moralities, to listen less to God and more to ourselves.

They are disillusioned voices . . . disappointed voices . . . which tell us we expect too much of life and of ourselves. On the one hand, they boast of man's self-sufficiency and technological advances. On the other, they deplore that man remains stuck in a vacuum of hatred and envy, delinquency and crime, guilt and irresponsibility, abundance and poverty, war and intrigue. Self-styled experts have bombarded us with the "answers to life's problems"—only to fail completely in answering the questions that really matter most: Who are we? Where have we come from? Why are we here? Where are we going?

Amidst all this clamor, one voice stands out which speaks against the grain — the Bible. Among the babble of uncertainty, the Bible sounds a clear and credible note above life and how it should be lived.

The Bible has all the action of a good western, all the suspense of a murder-mystery, and all the practical advice of a self-help best seller. It is a saga written over a 1600 year period - an epic with a cast of thousands, set in the most exotic regions of the world. The Bible has been on the Best Seller List since the list was first published.

And yet, the Bible is so much more!

It tells the greatest story ever told: a tale of good and evil, love and hate, crosses and crowns. This book deals with the most crucial issues facing the human race. Though it knows the depths to which man can fall, the Bible focuses primarily on the heights to which he can soar. And the author . . . ? None other than the God of the Universe.

A Program of Reading and Study for the Year

Beginning with the first Sunday of our quarter, this congregation will embark on a study of the entire Bible in one year. The purpose of this study will be to give each of us a broad understanding of the Bible's message. Personal reading, sermons, Bible classes - all will be geared toward this end.

1. Daily Bible Reading - At the end of this booklet is a schedule of Bible reading that will allow us to read through the entire Bible in the approximate order in which it was written. This schedule not only helps us to read the Bible consistently but to learn when events occurred and where various books and people fit into the big picture of the Bible.

2. Weekly Bible Study - As we read through the Bible during this year, we will be studying through the Bible on Sundays. The books we read each week in our personal study will be the focus of the sermons and adult classes on the Lord's Day. We don't have to tackle the Bible alone! Each Sunday, we can come together with other readers to study, learn and be encouraged.

Look at the Book is an invitation to embark on what could be the most exciting year of your Christian life. Taking time each day of the year to listen to God, and spending time each week to study his word, is one of the most rewarding and growthful things we could do this coming year.

Would you make a commitment to **Look at the Book** with us over the coming year? There is reading to be done, notes to be taken, questions to be asked, and answers to be sought. But the goal is worthy of the effort - a better understanding of God's word. So dust off your Bible, and bring it with you to worship - we are about to take a good, hard **Look at the Book**.

Daily Bible Reading

One of the major objectives of this year will be to encourage personal Bible study. Most of us want to be better students of God's book, but lack either the discipline or the tools to make a meaningful study on a daily basis.

Look at the Book is designed to give each of us the encouragement and structure we all need to succeed in the resolution to read through the whole Bible in a year. We hope to do this through several means:

A Daily Bible Reading Schedule

In this booklet, you will find a schedule of reading for each day of the year. By following this schedule, you will be able to read the entire Bible during the year. Each day's reading is relatively short (averaging 6 - 8 chapters), and should take the normal reader no more than 30 minutes each day. If you are too busy to spend this much time with the Bible each day, perhaps you are too busy!

Chronological Approach

Unlike some systems of Bible reading, this schedule does not follow the ordering of the books that has become standard in our Bibles. Rather, a **chronological** approach is used. Books are read in the approximate order in which they were written. This schedule not only allows us to read through the Bible, but helps us get a feel for when events occurred and how books fit into the historical setting of God's dealing with man. Most of us know, for instance, that Paul wrote a book called Galatians. Did you realize, however, that Galatians was probably the first New Testament book to be written, and gives us our earliest insight into the issues faced by the early church? A chronological reading of the Bible alerts us to these kinds of issues, and helps us make sense of the Bible as a whole.

Aids for Understanding

One of the greatest barriers to Bible reading is the feeling that the Bible is hard to understand and apply. We hope to overcome this barrier, in part, by providing you with material which will enrich your understanding of the books you read. As you read Genesis, for instance, we want to help you get the most out of this book by explaining its **background** and **theme**, providing a brief **outline** of the major points and events, showing how and where Genesis talks about **Christ**, and putting the book in a **historical** perspective.

Accountability

The final thing all of us need is a check to make sure we are being consistent with our reading. Like dieting or exercise, Bible reading is easy to start - sticking with it is the difficult part! Each week we will be keeping a count of "Daily Bible Readers" - those who have managed to keep up with the readings through the course of the week. A friendly competition between the Adult Bible classes, to determine which class had the highest percentage of Daily Bible Readers, will encourage us to be consistent with and committed to our reading. If you fail to do the reading for a particular week, you will be shot in the parking lot following Sunday morning services.

Would you make a commitment to read through your Bible with us during this year? There is only one word of caution we need to give about such a commitment. The Bible is "living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword." You can't read this book without it changing you. A year spent reading the Bible will result in a different "you." You will be a better person at the end of the year if you commit yourself this first Sunday to spending the year with the Word of God.

First Quarter Schedule of Reading and Study

3/3 **Week One** Inspiration & Authority
 Monday Ge 1-9:29
 Tuesday Ge 10-18
 Wednesday Ge 19-24
 Thursday Ge 25-32
 Friday Ge 33-40
 Saturday Ge 41-50
 Sunday **Genesis-Drama Begins 1-4**

3/10 **Week Two**
 Monday Ex 1-7
 Tuesday Ex 8-14
 Wednesday Ex 15-22
 Thursday Ex 23-29
 Friday Ex 30-35
 Saturday Ex 36-40
 Sunday **Exodus-God Comes Down 5-8**

3/17 **Week Three**
 Monday Lev 1:1-5:13
 Tuesday Lev 5:14-7:38
 Wednesday Lev 8-12
 Thursday Lev 13-17
 Friday Lev 18-22
 Saturday Lev 23-27
 Sunday **Leviticus-Making a Holy People 8-12**

3/24 - 3/30 SPRING BREAK NO READING

3/31 **Week Four**
 Monday Nu 1-6
 Tuesday Nu 7-12
 Wednesday Nu 13-18
 Thursday Nu 19-24
 Friday Nu 25-34
 Saturday Nu 31-36
 Sunday **Numbers-Obey or Pay 13-16**

4/7 **Week Five**
 Monday Job 1-7
 Tuesday Job 8-14
 Wednesday Job 15-21
 Thursday Job 22-28
 Friday Job 29-35
 Saturday Job 35-42
 Sunday **Job-Why me, Lord? 17-20**

4/14 **Week Six**
 Monday Jos 1-4
 Tuesday Jos 5-7
 Wednesday Jos 8-11
 Thursday Jos 12-16
 Friday Jos 17-19
 Saturday Jos 20-23
 Sunday **Joshua-Canaan or Bust! 21-24**

4/21 **Week Seven**
 Monday Jdg 1-4
 Tuesday Jdg 5-8
 Wednesday Jdg 9-12
 Thursday Jdg 13-16
 Friday Jdg 17-19
 Saturday Jdg 20-21
 Sunday **Judges-On Again, Off Again 25-28**

4/28 **Week Eight**
 Monday Ru 1 & Dt 1-5
 Tuesday Ru 2 & Dt 6-10
 Wednesday Ru 3 & Dt 11-17
 Thursday Ru 4 & Dt 18-24
 Friday Dt 25-31:29
 Saturday Dt 31:30-34:12
 Sunday **Ruth-Love Story 28-32**

5/5 **Week Nine**
 Monday 1Sa 1-6
 Tuesday 1Sa 7-13
 Wednesday 1Sa 14-20; Ps 59, 56
 Thursday 1Sa 21-27; Ps 34
 Friday 1Ch 12:8-18; Ps 52, 54, 63, 142
 Saturday 1Sa 28-31; 1Ch 10, 12:1-7, 19-22
 Sunday **1 Samuel-Take me to your Leader 33-36**

5/12 **Week Ten**
 Monday 2Sa 1-4
 Tuesday 2Sa 5-6:11; 1Ch 11:1-9, 12:23-40 & 13:1-14:17
 Wednesday 2Sa 22; Ps 18; 2Sa 6:12-23; Ps 96; 2Sa 7; Ps 105; 1Ch 17
 Thursday 2Sa 8-10; 1Ch 15-19; Ps 6; 2Sa 11-12; 1Ch 20:1-3
 Ps 51
 Friday 2Sa 13-19; Ps 3
 Saturday 2Sa 20-24; 1Ch 20:4-8, 11:10-47, 1Ch 21-29
 Sunday **2 Samuel-The Best of Times 37-40**

5/19 **Week Eleven**
 Monday Ps 5-7, 10, 11, 13
 Tuesday Ps 17, 23, 26, 28, 31, 35
 Wednesday Ps 41, 43, 46, 55, 61
 Thursday Ps 62, 64, 69-71, 77
 Friday Ps 83, 86, 88, 91, 95
 Saturday Ps 108, 109, 120, 121, 140, 143, 144
 Sunday **Seminar**

5/26 **Week Twelve**
 Monday Ps 1, 14, 15, 36, 37, 39, 40, 49, 50
 Tuesday Ps 73, 76, 82, 84, 90, 92, 112, 115
 Wednesday Ps 8, 9, 16, 19, 21, 24, 29, 33
 Thursday Ps 65-68, 75, 93, 94, 97-100
 Friday Ps 119
 Saturday Ps 122, 124, 150
 Sunday **Psalms-The Song Book 41-44**

Second Quarter Schedule of Reading and Study

6/2 •Week One

Monday 1Ki 1-4
 Tuesday 1Ki 5, 8; 2Ch 1-6
 Wednesday 1Ki 9, 12; 2Ch 7-11; Ps 72
 Thursday 1Ki 13, 16; 2Ch 11-17
 Friday 1Ki 17, 20
 Saturday 1 Ki 21-22; 2Ch 18-21
 Sunday **1 Kings-The Good, Bad & Ugly 45-48**

6/9 •Week Two

Monday Pr 1-6
 Tuesday Pr 7-13
 Wednesday Pr 14-20
 Thursday Pr 21-26
 Friday Pr 27-29
 Saturday Pr 30-31; Ps 127
 Sunday **Proverbs-Mini-Pearls 49-52**

6/16 •Week Three

Monday Ecc 1-2
 Tuesday Ecc 3-4
 Wednesday Ecc 5-6
 Thursday Ecc 7-8
 Friday Ecc 9-10; 2Ch 9:29-31
 Saturday Ecc 11-12; 2Ch 10-12
 Sunday **Ecclesiastes-Wine, Women & Song 53-56**

6/23 •Week Four

Monday 2Ki 1-5; 2Ch 19-21:3
 Tuesday 2Ki 5-9; 2Ch 21:4-22:9
 Wednesday 2Ki 10-14; 2Ch 22:10-23:21
 Thursday 2Ki 15-19
 Friday 2Ki 20-24
 Saturday 2Ki 25
 Sunday **2 Kings-Good, Bad & Ugly II 57-60**

6/30 •Week Five

Monday Ob; Joel 1-3; 2Ch 24
 Tuesday Jnh 1-4; 2Ch 25
 Wednesday Hos 1-7
 Thursday Hos 8-14
 Friday Am 1-9; 2Ch 26
 Saturday Mic 1-3
 Sunday **Pre-Exilic Minor Prophets -
 Apocalypse Now 61-64**

7/7 •Week Six

Monday Isa 1-6; 2Ch 27-28
 Tuesday Isa 7-12
 Wednesday Isa 13-22
 Thursday Isa 23-30
 Friday Isa 31-35; 2Ch 29-31
 Saturday Isa 36-39; 2Ch 32
 Sunday **Isaiah I-Dare to Discipline 65-68**

7/14 •Week Seven

Monday Isa 40-42; 2Ch 33
 Tuesday Isa 43-47
 Wednesday Isa 48-51
 Thursday Isa 52-57
 Friday Isa 58-62
 Saturday Isa 63-66
 Sunday **Isaiah II-Glimpses of Glory 69-72**

7/21 •Week Eight

Monday Jer 1-9
 Tuesday Jer 10-20
 Wednesday Jer 22; 2Ch 34, 36; Jer 26, 46-47, 25, 35
 Thursday Jer 36, 45, 48, 49, 37:1-2, 52:1-3, 24, 29, 27:28, 23
 Friday Jer 50, 51, 34, 21, 32, 30-31, 33
 Saturday Jer 37-39, 52, 40-44
 Sunday **Jeremiah-Going, Going, Gone! 73-76**

7/28 •Week Nine

Monday Eze 1-7
 Tuesday Eze 8-15
 Wednesday Eze 16-24
 Thursday Eze 25-33
 Friday Eze 34-40
 Saturday Eze 41-48; Ps 44, 74, 79-80
 Sunday **Ezekiel-Towering Inferno 77-80**

8/4 •Week Ten

Monday Da 1-2; La 1-3
 Tuesday Da 3-4; Ps 85, 102, 106, 123, 137
 Wednesday Da 5-6
 Thursday Da 7-8
 Friday Da 9-10; Ps 78, 107, 116, 118
 Saturday Da 11-12; Ps 125-126, 128-129, 132
 Sunday **Daniel-Dream Weaver 81-84**

8/11 •Week Eleven

Monday Na 1-3; 2Ch 35
 Tuesday Hab 1-3
 Wednesday Zep 1-3
 Thursday Hag 1-2
 Friday Zec 1-8
 Saturday Zec 9-14
 Sunday **Post-Exilic Minor Prophets -
 Recess is Over 85-88**

8/18 •Week Twelve

Monday SS 1-8
 Tuesday Est 1-2; Ps 147
 Wednesday Est 3-4; Ps 149
 Thursday Est 5-6
 Friday Est 7-8
 Saturday Est 9-10
 Sunday **Esther-Foiled Holocaust 89-92**

8/25 •Week Thirteen

Monday Ezr 1-4
 Tuesday Ezr 5-7
 Wednesday Ezr 8-10
 Thursday Ne 1-4
 Friday Ne 5-8
 Saturday Ne 9-13
 Sunday **Ezra - Nehemiah-Follow the Leader 93-96**

Third Quarter Schedule of Reading and Study

9/11

•Week One

Monday Malachi 1-4
 Tuesday
 Wednesday (I Maccabees)
 Thursday
 Friday
 Saturday
 Sunday **The Silent Years 97-100**

10/13

•Week Seven

Monday 1Th 1; Ac 16-19:22
 Tuesday 1Th 2
 Wednesday 1Th 3
 Thursday 1Th 4-5
 Friday 2Th 1-3
 Saturday 1 & 2Th
 Sunday **1 & 2 Thessalonians-Christian Primer 121-124**

9/18

•Week Two

Monday Ps 2, 4, 22, 110
 Tuesday Ps 12, 20, 25, 27
 Wednesday Ps 30, 42, 45, 47
 Thursday Ps 48, 51, 53, 57, 58
 Friday Ps 60, 101, 103-105
 Saturday 1Ch 1-9
 Sunday **Gospels-Greatest Story Told 101-104**

10/20

•Week Eight

Monday 1Co 1-3; Ac 19:23-20:1
 Tuesday 1Co 4-6
 Wednesday 1Co 7-9
 Thursday 1Co 10-11
 Friday 1Co 12-14
 Saturday 1Co 15-16
 Sunday **1 Corinthians-One in the Spirit 125-130**

9/15

•Week Three

Monday Lk 1-4
 Tuesday Lk 5-8
 Wednesday Lk 9-12
 Thursday Lk 13-16
 Friday Lk 17-20
 Saturday Lk 21-24
 Sunday **Luke-Jesus the Man 105-108**

10/27

•Week Nine

Monday 2Co 1-2
 Tuesday 2Co 3-4
 Wednesday 2Co 5-6
 Thursday 2Co 7-8
 Friday 2Co 9-10
 Saturday 2Co 11-13
 Sunday **2 Corinthians-Imitation of Christ 129-131**

9/22

•Week Four

Monday Ac 1-2
 Tuesday Ac 3-4
 Wednesday Ac 5-6
 Thursday Ac 7-8
 Friday Ac 9-11
 Saturday Ac 12-13
 Sunday **Acts I-Can't Keep a Good Man Down 109-112**

11/3

•Week Ten

Monday Ro 1-3
 Tuesday Ro 4-6
 Wednesday Ro 7-9
 Thursday Ro 10-12
 Friday Ro 13-15
 Saturday Ro 16; Ac 20:2-21:16
 Sunday **Romans-To Rome with Love 132-136**

9/29

•Week Five

Monday Ac 14-15
 Tuesday Ac 16-17
 Wednesday Ac 18-19
 Thursday Ac 20-22
 Friday Ac 23-24
 Saturday Ac 25-26
 Sunday **Acts II-How the West was Won 115-116**

11/10

•Week Eleven

Monday Jas 1-2
 Tuesday Jas 3-5
 Wednesday Jas 1-2
 Thursday Jas 3-5
 Friday Jas 1-2
 Saturday Jas 3-5
 Sunday **James-Practice What You Preach 137-140**

10/6

•Week Six

Monday Gal 1-3; Ac 14-15
 Tuesday Gal 4-6
 Wednesday Gal 1-3
 Thursday Gal 4-6
 Friday Gal 1-3
 Saturday Gal 4-6
 Sunday **Galatians-Born Free 117-120**

11/17

•Week Twelve

Monday Mk 1-2
 Tuesday Mk 3-4
 Wednesday Mk 5-7
 Thursday Mk 8-10
 Friday Mk 11-13
 Saturday Mk 14-16
 Sunday **Mark-Jesus the Servant 141-144**

Fourth Quarter Schedule of Reading and Study

11/24 •Week One

Monday Eph 1-3
 Tuesday Eph 4-6
 Wednesday Eph 1-3
 Thursday Eph 4-6
 Friday Eph 1-3
 Saturday Eph 4-6
 Sunday **Ephesians-Give Peace 145-148**

11/19 •Week Eight

Monday Mt 1-4
 Tuesday Mt 4-7
 Wednesday Mt 8-14
 Thursday Mt 15-18
 Friday Mt 19-23
 Saturday Mt 24-28
 Sunday **Matthew-Jesus the King 169-172**

12/1 •Week Two

Monday Col 1-2
 Tuesday Col 3-4
 Wednesday Col 1-2
 Thursday Col 3-4
 Friday Col 1-2
 Saturday Col 3-4
 Sunday **Colossians-To Know Him 149-152**

•Week Nine

Monday
 Tuesday
 Wednesday Open
 Thursday
 Friday
 Saturday
 Sunday Open

12/8 •Week Three

Monday Ps 111, 113, 114
 Tuesday Ps 117, 130, 131
 Wednesday Ps 133-135
 Thursday Ps 138-141
 Friday Ps 146-148
 Saturday Ps 149-150
 Sunday **Seminar**

1/26 •Week Ten

Monday Heb 1-2
 Tuesday Heb 3-4
 Wednesday Heb 5-6
 Thursday Heb 7-8
 Friday Heb 9-10
 Saturday Heb 11-13
 Sunday **Hebrews-New & Improved 173-176**

12/15 •Week Four

Monday Php 1-2
 Tuesday Php 3-4
 Wednesday Phm
 Thursday Php 1-2
 Friday Php 3-4
 Saturday Phm
 Sunday **Philippians-United We Stand 153-156**

2/2 •Week Eleven

Monday Jn 1-3
 Tuesday Jn 4-6
 Wednesday Jn 7-9
 Thursday Jn 10-12
 Friday Jn 13-17
 Saturday Jn 18-21
 Sunday **John-Jesus the God-Man 177-180**

2/20 - 12/28 Holiday VACATION

12/29 •Week Five

Monday 1Ti 1-2
 Tuesday 1Ti 3-4
 Wednesday 1Ti 5-6
 Thursday 2Ti 1-2
 Friday 2Ti 3-4
 Saturday 1Ti & 2Ti
 Sunday **1 & 2 Timothy-Never Say Die 157-160**

2/9 •Week Twelve

Monday 1Jn 1
 Tuesday 1Jn 2
 Wednesday 1Jn 3
 Thursday 1Jn 4
 Friday 1Jn 5; 2Jn
 Saturday 3Jn
 Sunday **1, 2 & 3 John-Confident Christians 181-184**

1/5 •Week Six

Monday Tit 1
 Tuesday Tit 2
 Wednesday Tit 3
 Thursday Tit 1-3
 Friday Tit 1-3
 Saturday Tit 1-3
 Sunday **Titus-Sharp Focus 161-164**

2/16 •Week Thirteen

Monday Rev 1-3
 Tuesday Rev 4-7
 Wednesday Rev 8-10
 Thursday Rev 11-14
 Friday Rev 15-18
 Saturday Rev 19-22
 Sunday **Revelation-When Worlds Collide 185-188**

1/12 •Week Seven

Monday 1Pe 1-5
 Tuesday 2Pe 1-3; Jude
 Wednesday 1Pe 1-5
 Thursday 2Pe 1-3; Jude
 Friday 1Pe 1-5
 Saturday 2Pe 1-3; Jude
 Sunday **1 & 2 Peter & Jude
 When the Going Gets Tough - 165-168**

Background:

Title:

The term "Genesis" comes from the Hebrew "Bere'shith," first word in the Bible. It means "in the beginning." The term in the Greek Septuagint and the English translations means "origin" or "beginning."

Author:

Moses - the lawgiver and leader of Israel during the exodus from Egypt and wilderness experience. He is known as the author by Jews and Christians alike. The Old Testament contains both direct and indirect references to the Mosaic authorship of the entire Pentateuch (Ex 17:14; Lev 1:1-2; Nu 32:2; De 1:1; Jos 1:7; 1Ki 2:3; 2Ki 14:6; Ez 6:18; Neh 13:1; Da 9:11-13; Mal 4:4). In the line, the New Testament also contains numerous references to Moses as the author (Mt 8:4; Mk 12:26; Lk 16:29; Jn 7:19; Ac 26:22; Ro 10:19; 1Co 9:9; 2Co 3:15).

Moses was called by God to be a leader for His people (Ex 3). Reluctantly he complies. It would be difficult to find another man as well qualified as Moses. He had received his formal education in Egypt (7:22), and possessed the practical skills to correctly integrate and understand all the available records, manuscripts and oral transmissions into the four inspired volumes called the Pentateuch. Genesis is the first.

Date:

Various times are given, but the most logical time seems to be when Moses was with God on Mt. Sinai (Ex 24:12).

Time Span:

From creation to the death of Joseph and the settlement of God's chosen people in Egypt. The beginning of Genesis cannot be dated with certainty, but the final events of the book probably occurred around 1700 B.C. half of the entire period of Old Testament history.

Summary:

History is the account of the acts of God. In a real sense history is viewed as God's story. Genesis is the beginning of the acts of God in human events and is in many respects the foundation book of the entire Bible. It starts with the beginning of all things and assumes the existence of an eternal, all powerful, holy God. Man is created and placed in a protected garden. He is driven out because of disobedience and establishes cities. Politically and religiously, man is under the dominion of Jehovah. It is not until after the flood that "nations" are formed, and not until the Exodus that the nation of Israel is created.

During the period from Abraham to Joseph, the rest of the world develops slowly. Signs of civilization are sparse. In the nearby Balkans, the Bronze Age has just begun. In the area of Western France, the dead were being buried in vast stone tombs, the last of the Stone Age. In Britain, the Temple of the Sun at Stonehenge was being built, and Germany was beginning to learn farming.

After the creation of the world, the sin of Adam and Eve, and the great flood, God calls a particular man, Abraham, from Ur of Chaldees, a city on the Euphrates River. By this man's seed, all the families of the earth will be blessed. The Bible is the account of God's covenant promise to mankind through Abraham and its ultimate fulfillment in Christ and the church (Gal 3).

GENESIS

The Drama Begins

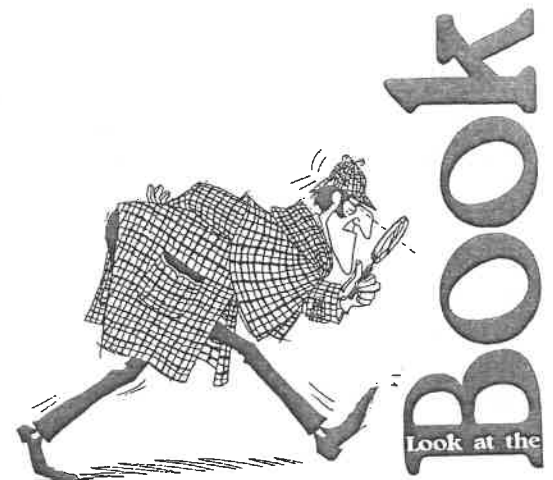
Key Text:

Ge 3:15

I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.

Theme:

- I. Genesis is the Book of Beginning:
 - A. The creation of the universe and all living things.
 - B. Beginning of sin and death.
 - C. Beginning of the plan of redemption.
 - D. The distribution of peoples, languages and nations.
 - E. The Hebrews become the chosen nation.
- II. Genesis tells of God's promise to Abraham. Three elements: (12:1-9)
 - A. A nation would arise *from* his seed.
 - B. A land will be given *to* his seed.
 - C. A blessing will be given *through* his seed.
- III. Genesis describes God's providential care for His people, and gives assurance that His word will be fulfilled.



Sermon Outline

The Seed

Outline:

Introduction:

Family feuds make great stories. Some of the best (and worst) dramas have been built around one family at odds with another. Shakespeare dealt with this theme in **Romeo and Juliet** -- the Montagues and the Capulets were sworn enemies. Friday night television deals with this theme -- what would "**Dallas**" be without the rivalry between the Ewings and the Barnes families? We're all familiar with the Hatfields and McCoys.

Two families are waging a battle in which only one side can be victorious; the losing side is doomed to extinction.

The book of **Genesis** is a drama built around two feuding families. Originally, they shared a common Father and sprang from a common root. In creating Adam and Eve, God seemed intent on raising a family through them that would honor and worship Him. The ideal was God and man in fellowship, living as one big, happy family.

A split occurred, however, and two family lines were established. On the one hand, there is the family of God -- those who have been chosen by God and who live according to His commands. On the other hand, there is the family of man or "Satan's family" -- those who have rejected God and who refuse to be governed by His commands.

These two families are sworn enemies in the book of **Genesis** and throughout the remainder of the Bible. God is working to protect his family and to rescue others from the Devil's grasp. Satan, father of his own clan, works to keep his family intact and to destroy God's children.

There is enmity and hostility between these families. They are waging a battle in which only one side can be victorious; the losing side is doomed to extinction.

I. Emphasis on Family in Genesis

A. God Begins a Family

1. It can almost be said that God created the earth because He wanted to start a family.
2. Adam and Eve were His "children" through whom He hoped to raise an entire nation of godly people.

B. "Be Fruitful and Multiply"

1. Some 17 times in the book of **Genesis**, being fertile is commanded or promised -- much of the story of **Genesis** revolves around this theme.
2. Examples of those who received this command/promise.

C. Emphasis on Genealogy

1. 193 verses are devoted to genealogical information -- 13% of all the verses in **Genesis**.
2. The 12 sons of Jacob are listed four separate times in this book.

II. The Feud Begins

A. Good Seed and Bad Seed

1. In the garden, there is one big, happy family (Ge 1 & 2).
2. With the Fall, however, a new family is born (Ge 3).
3. The foreshadowing (Ge 3:15)

B. Early Developments in the Family Feud

1. Cain, Abel, and Seth
2. Sons of God and daughters of men (Ge 6:1-3).
3. Shem, Ham, and Japheth

Transition: At this point, God seems to change his strategy. He can't destroy the world every time Satan pollutes his family line. He can't start all over again every time Satan wins a round in the Family Feud. So God begins to protect his family line. He concedes most of mankind to Satan and chooses one man to continue his family line and ensure that, eventually, God would win over the Devil.

III. God Protects His Family

A. Abraham and Sarah - the Great Promise

B. Isaac and Rebekah - Genesis 25:21-23

C. Jacob and Rachel and Leah

1. **Genesis** focuses on Joseph
2. The real story is about Judah (Ge 38)
3. Read Matthew 1:3

Conclusion:

1. We are now God's family - the church.
2. The family feud still rages.
3. God is still protecting his family.

Christ in Genesis

This book of beginnings also anticipates the coming of Christ. Though veiled to those who do not believe, several verses speak clearly to the faithful and show the plan of God to bring His Son to the world.

Prophecies:

The "seed" of woman (Ge 3:15): This is the first prophecy of the redeemer. Sin has produced separation and condemnation for all men (Ro 5:14ff). The only remedy is the "seed" which will come. He will crush Satan's head (bring an end to Satan and his work), but He will be bruised (crucifixion and resurrection). Starting from this passage, the prophecies and promises of the Christ continue until their fulfilment in Jesus. (cf Heb 2:9-15; Gal 4:4-5).

The "seed" of Abraham (Ge 12:1-4; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14): The undeniable meaning of these promises made to the Patriarchs is that through their posterity salvation should be extended to all the nations of world. The fulfilment can be seen in Christ (Jn 8:36; Gal 3:16-19; Ro 4:13-25).

The "Lion" of Judah (Ge 49:10): "Shiloh" means *pacifier*, or *peacemaker*; used in a concrete sense, he who is *peaceful*, *secure*. Three things are predicted in this verse. First, the tribe of Judah will remain until the Redeemer should appear. Second, the Prince of Peace (Eph 2:14) would come from Judah. Third, His rule will extend over the nations (Rev 5:5).

Types:

Adam (Ge 1:-3): Ro 5:14; 1Co 15:45

Melchizedek (Ge 14:18ff): Ps 110:4; Heb 6:20-7:28

Isaac (Ge 21:12): Heb 11:18-19

Jacob's Ladder (Ge 28:10-17): Jn 1:51

Why Did God Speak To Men Through Prophecy?

1. If their views had been limited to the present, the covenant people would have been in danger of becoming selfish.
2. The promise of the Messiah was a means of retaining the allegiance of the people to the Lord during times of calamity.
3. The promise of the Messiah was a means of promoting genuine piety and true devotion to God. Only the righteous would receive the blessings.
4. Prophecy prepared the way for Christ, so that, when He did come, He might be identified by a comparison of the prediction with the fulfilment.

Major Lessons

1. Election

Abel, Noah, Abraham, Jacob and Joseph are all called by God and chosen for their place in the history of God's people. Sometimes, as in the case of Jacob, the choice flies in the face of traditional ways of doing things.

2. Salvation

As soon as man committed sin, God made it plain that He was concerned to rescue man. Ge 3:15, 4:4, and 22:8 may all refer to the work Christ was to do.

3. Work

Even before the fall, man had a task to do in the world (1:28). Man was made to work. After the fall, it became less enjoyable (3:17-19).

4. Rest

The idea of one day in seven being a rest day comes from these earliest chapters of the Bible (2:2, 3). This notion precedes the command given to Moses.

5. Satan

An evil influence is introduced into the world. Satan, active and lying and scheming, is shown at work in God's creation.

6. Death

Death is threatened (3:3), overcome (5:24), and often encountered (e.g. 49:1-50:3). It is one of the chief fears of man. There are two deaths encountered: physical and spiritual.

7. Marriage

Marriage is instituted by God as an honorable and holy state (2:18-25). It forms the thread from which the entire fabric of human society is woven.

8. Worship

From the very beginning, man has had the privilege and responsibility to worship God (4:1-7).

9. Soul

It is during the creation of man that God breathes into his body both life and the eternal soul. The eternal spirit or soul distinguishes man from animal life (2:7).

10. Providence

God's activity in the events of history is an ever present reality as demonstrated in the life of Joseph (37:1-36; 39-50).

Outline

- I. The History of the Primitive World (1-11)**
- A. The Creation (1-2)
 - 1. Creation in general (1)
 - 2. Creation of man in particular (2)
 - B. The Fall (3-6)
 - 1. Fall of man; expulsion from paradise (3)
 - 2. History of Adam and descendants (4-5)
 - 3. Increase of wickedness and the flood (6)
 - C. The Flood (7-8)
 - D. The New World (9-11)
 - 1. Intoxication of Noah (9)
 - 2. Distribution of peoples (10)
 - 3. Dispersion of mankind (11)
- II. The History of the Patriarchs (12:1-50:26)**
- A. Abraham's Life: Covenant Promise (12:1-23:20)
 - 1. Covenant faith begins (12:1-14:24)
 - a. God's promise to Abraham (12:1-4)
 - b. wanderings of Abraham (12:5-13:1)
 - c. dispute and division of the land (13:2-18)
 - d. kings of the east capture Lot (14:1-24)
 - 2. Covenant faith tested (15:1-21:21)
 - a. an heir promised (15:1-20)
 - b. Ishmael not the heir (16:1-15)
 - c. circumcision a sign of the covenant (17:1-27)
 - d. son promised to Abram and Sarah (18:1-15)
 - e. Sodom and Gomorrah (18:16-19:38)
 - f. Abraham visits Abimelech (20:1-19)
 - g. Isaac born and Ishmael driven out (21:1-21)
 - 3. Covenant faith perfected (22:1-23:20)
 - a. offering of Isaac (22:1-19)
 - b. death of Sarah (23:1-20)
 - B. Life of Isaac: Covenant Passed On (24:1-26:33)
 - 1. Marriage to Rebekah (24:1-67)
 - 2. Isaac and his sons (25:19-26)
 - 3. Sale of the birthright by Esau (25:27-34)
 - 4. Covenant Given to Isaac (26:1-5)
 - 5. Deception of Abimelech (26:6-33)
 - C. Life of Jacob - Covenant Pursued (27:1-36)
 - 1. Secures physical blessing by deceit (27:1-45)
 - 2. The flight to Haran (27:46-29:14)
 - 3. Life in Haran (29:31-30:43)
 - 4. Laban Pursues Jacob (31:1-55)
 - 5. Peace with Esau and life in Canaan (32:1-36:43)
 - D. Joseph's Life: Covenant Practiced (37:1-50:25)
 - 1. His training by trials (37:1-40:23)
 - a. Joseph the dreamer (37:1-11)
 - b. sold into Egypt (37:12-40:23)
 - c. Judah and Tamar (38:1-30)
 - 2. His triumph by testing (41:1-50:25)
 - a. preparation for famine (41:1-57)
 - b. confrontation with his brothers (42:1-45:28)
 - 3. His death (50:22-26)

Small Group Study

Warm-up:

Share a time in your life when you spent a great deal of money for something of little value.

Look at the Book

Genesis 25:21-34

1. What significance has Jacob's name and his holding to Esau's heel with Jacob's personality in this story?
2. Do you think Jacob was being cold and hard when Esau asked for "a swallow of that red stuff" and he would not give it to him until Esau sold his birthright?
3. How desperate do you think Esau was when he asked for the food? Do you think he was really about to die, or that he just *thought* he was about to die?
4. Why was the birthright so important?
5. Why do you think Esau "despised" his birthright?

Looking Closer:

1. If you were Jacob, how would you react to Esau despising his birthright?
 - a. It's mine now!
 - b. I didn't think he would do it!
 - c. I knew he didn't want it.
 - d. He didn't deserve it anyway.
2. If you possessed a great spiritual blessing, what would it take for you to sell it?
 - a. Very little. They are not worth much.
 - b. Not much. They can be purchased again.
 - c. A great deal, but it has got to be the right price.
 - d. I would not sell it for any price!
3. What would cause you to despise your spiritual blessing?
 - a. The example of an unfaithful Christian.
 - b. My own faithless action.
 - c. Nothing.
 - d. Not valuing my "birthright" sufficiently.
4. What do you think about the moral implications in Jacob's deception? Was he right or wrong? Why?
5. Do you think we can be deceptive and please God? If there was one thing in the world that you really wanted, would you use deception to get it? What would it be? How do you think God would react?

Look Around:

Go around the group and share with them two of your greatest spiritual blessings.

Background:

Title:

The name **Exodus** is derived from the Greek Septuagint (LXX). The Hebrews knew the five books of the Pentateuch by their initial word or words. *Ve-elah shemoth* are the first two words in **Exodus**. But as this kind of nomenclature was unknown to the Greeks, the Alexandrian translators had to devise new titles, which should be intelligible to their reader. Thus the term, *Exodos*, a Greek word, was used to denote the contents of the book. It means "going out" or "departure" and has reference to the children of Israel going out from Egyptian bondage.

Author:

The credibility of Biblical writings is more easily established if they can be shown to have been written by eye-witnesses. That **Exodus** was written by such an eye-witness, is indicated by the vividness with which events are portrayed and the details which the writer includes (i.e. the effect of the hail upon the Egyptian's standing crops, 9:31-32; the exact number of the wells at Elim, and the number of palm trees that grew about them, 15:27; the fact that the first tables of stone were "written on the one side, and on the other," 32:15, etc.). It would not detract from the value of the work as an historical record if it would be shown to have been written by Aaron or Hur, by Joshua or Caleb; but the interest is increased if it can justly be regarded as the work of Moses.

It would seem that there is a unanimous agreement from the writers of the Old and New Testaments that Moses was the author of "The Book of the Law" (Jos 8:31; 2Ki 14:6; 2Ch 25:4; Ezr 6:18; Ne 13:1; Mal 4:4; Jn 7:19, 1:17, 45; Ac 4:22; by Paul repeatedly). Therefore, we would be wise to conclude that the **Exodus** was written by Moses.

Date: (See Genesis)

Time Span:

Exodus extends from the death of Joseph to the setting up of the Tabernacle near Mt. Sinai.

Summary:

Exodus begins where Genesis closes. The opening verses provide a link with Genesis by repeating the names of Jacob's sons and restating Joseph's death. A new king arises in Egypt who does not recognize Joseph or the Hebrews. Probably because of fear, the Hebrews are enslaved and the male children are systematically destroyed. Moses is rescued and raised by Pharaoh's daughter. When a premature attempt to deliver his people fails, he runs to the wilderness. After 40 years he returns, only this time with God as his power. The plagues follow, then the exodus under the blood of the passover lamb. After some incidents in the wilderness, the people reach Sinai where God manifests Himself and gives the Law which will be the standard until the Christ comes. From chapter 25 to the end of the book, the Tabernacle and furnishings are given in detail. As Genesis is the record of the Covenant made with the Patriarchs, so **Exodus** is the record of the renewal and perpetuation of that Covenant with the nation.

EXODUS

God Comes Down

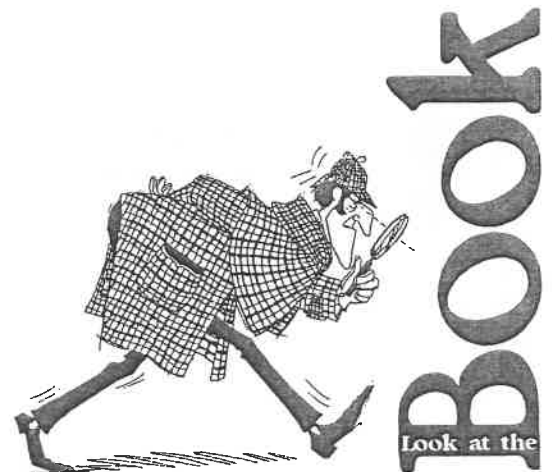
Key Text:

Ex 19:4-6

You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be a holy nation. These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.

Theme:

- I. Redemption of God's People (Ex 3:7-8)
- II. Passover (Ex 12)
- III. The Law at Mt. Sinai (Ex 20)
- IV. The Tabernacle and its Worship (Ex 25-40)



Sermon Outline

God Came Down

Introduction:

How do you go about reading a book? Authors write books to be read from the front to the back. First the preface, then Chapter One and so on until you reach the last page. Most of us are guilty, however, of occasionally turning to the end of a book first to see how the plot resolves. We are impatient readers. We don't let the story unfold in its own time. We want to know "who dunnit" right away.

Unfortunately, that is exactly how we read our Bibles. All of us are far more familiar with the New Testament than with the Old. We've already read about Christ. We've already learned how God deals with man's sin. We understand a great deal about the nature and personality of God.

In fact, so familiar are we with the "ending" of the Bible, it is difficult for us to comprehend that there was a time when God's people were in the dark about many of the things we take for granted. Think for a moment about the Israelites during the time of Moses. They didn't know many of the things we would consider basic to a relationship with God. They hadn't read about a "Messiah". They didn't know how to worship God. They didn't even know God's name!

Exodus is the "chapter" in the Bible that begins to educate people about God. Here God reveals some fundamental facts about Himself: His name, His attributes, His concern for those He has chosen and how He is to be worshiped. A basic theme of **Exodus** is God's desire to be known. God comes down in this book to reveal Himself to man. In many ways, the rest of the Bible is simply a continuation of what God begins to do in the book of **Exodus**.

Exodus . . .
the "chapter" in the Bible that begins to educate people about God.

Outline:

I. God Wants Man to Know Him

- A. You Will Know that I Am the Lord Your God
 - 1. In the book of **Exodus**, God acts 14 times so that people will know that He is the Lord. (6:7; 7:17; 8:10, 22; 9:14, 29; 10:2; 11:7; 14:4, 18; 16:6, 8, 12; 29:46.)
 - 2. He wants the people of Israel to know he is the Lord.
 - 3. He also wants the Egyptians to understand who he is.
- B. Visual Symbols of God
 - 1. The burning bush (3:1)
 - 2. The pillar of cloud and fire (13:21-22)
 - 3. At Mt. Sinai (19:16-19)
- C. The Tent of Meeting
 - 1. 12 out of 40 chapters deal with the Tabernacle.
 - 2. **Exodus** stresses the Tabernacle because it is here that God reveals Himself to His people
 - 3. **Read Ex 29:42-46**
- D. God Came Down
 - 1. On three occasions, God "comes down" in **Exodus**.
 - 2. Each occasion marks a significant point in the book, and reveals something significant about God.

II. God Reveals Himself

- A. The Burning Bush
 - 1. God comes down in the burning bush.
 - 2. **Read Ex 3:5-15**
 - 3. What we learn about God from this event: God is holy (5-6); God is compassionate (7-10).
- B. Mt. Sinai
 - 1. God comes down at Mt. Sinai.
 - 2. **Read Ex 19:14-25**
 - 3. What we learn about God from this event: God is holy (16-19); and God requires a holy people.
- C. Moses
 - 1. God comes down to Moses.
 - 2. **Read Ex 33:18-23; 34:5-8**
 - 3. What we learn about God from this event: God is holy; God longs to be known; the attributes of God (34:6-7).

Conclusion:

- 1. God is still the Invisible God in Exodus.
- 2. Only with the coming of Jesus does God become visible.

With the coming of Jesus, we have seen the very face of God. Jesus could claim that anyone who had seen him had seen the Father, that he and the Father were one. One of his followers would later rejoice that God "made his light to shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ" (2 Co 4:6).

Christ in Exodus

1. **Burning Bush "I AM that I AM"** (Ex 3:14; Jn 8:58). The One who spoke from the burning bush was Jehovah God. Jesus makes the claim in John that He IS God, the One who spoke from the bush.
2. **Passover Lamb** (Ex 12; 1Co 5:7-8; Jn 19:36). Christ is our Passover (as the Lamb was the Hebrew's) in the following particulars: (1) He was the Sacrifice because God passes over the guilt of the sinner when he believes. (2) He was qualified to be our Passover Lamb in that He was without blemish (1Pe 1:19).
3. **Manna** (Ex 16:4; Jn 6:48-51). The Manna in the Wilderness was given by God from Heaven to sustain the Hebrews while they were in the wilderness. In the Gospel of John the Lord represents Himself as "the bread of God" (6:33), "the bread of Life" (6:48), "the living bread" (6:51), "the True bread from Heaven" (6:32). We must "eat" Him (believe) so that life may be sustained. There is no spiritual life apart from Him.
4. **Spiritual Rock** (Ex 17:6; 1Co 10:4; Jn 4:13-14). The Rock that provided water during the wilderness years is a type or figure of Christ. He is the One to whom the believer should go to receive the life-giving waters. We should drink from Him. When He is "struck" (crucified), from Him shall flow rivers of Living Water (Jn 7:38-39).
5. **The Tabernacle** (Ex 25-40; Heb 8:5; Jn 1:14; Rev 21:3; 1Co 3:16; 6:19). The presence of God resided in the tabernacle. Christ is the tabernacle of God in the flesh. The way a sinner approaches God is through the Tabernacle: by the Gate, the Altar, the Laver, and through the Holy Place to the Presence of God in the Holy of Holies.
6. **The Veil of the Tabernacle** — separating the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place (Heb 10:20). We enter into the presence of God through the death of Christ on the cross. His flesh was "torn" for us. He is the Veil.
7. **The Great High Priest** (Ex 28:1-43; Heb 4:14 -8:2). Aaron is a type of Christ chiefly by *contrast*, whereas Melchizedec was a type by *likeness*.

Major Lessons

1. **Concerning God**
 - a. He rules over all nature (Ex 7-12).
 - b. He has a right to choose His own people.
 - c. He has the ability to defend and care for His people (Red Sea, manna, quail, water).
 - d. He has powers over all kings and governments (Pharaoh).
 - e. He is holy and righteous.
2. **Concerning Man**
 - a. Redemption is necessary (Israel in bondage).
 - b. Redeemed people must worship and obey God.
 - c. Redemption is secured by sacrifice (Passover).
3. **Concerning Redemption**
 - a. Wholly through the power of God.
 - b. By means of a deliverer (Moses).
 - c. Under cover of blood (Passover).
4. **Other Lessons**
 - a. **Exodus** is the story of God's leadership through Moses.
 - b. **Exodus** tells of a merciful, covenant-remembering God who bears the responsibility of grooming His people.
 - c. **Exodus** is the story of God's election of Israel whom He delivered to be His "special treasure" among all people.
 - d. **Exodus** clarifies through law God's love for downtrodden and oppressed persons in society.
 - e. **Exodus** declares God's righteousness and His desire for justice in human relations.
 - f. **Exodus** describes God's provision for His presence in His people's worship.
 - g. **Exodus** explains the character of Jehovah as a "God merciful and graceful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness."

The Religion of Egypt

Sir Flinders Petrie, famous Egyptian archaeologist, says that the Original religion of Egypt was Monotheistic. But before the dawn of the historic period, a religion had developed in which each tribe had its own god, represented by an animal.

- Ptah** (Apis) was god of Memphis, by a Bull.
- Amon**, god of Thebes, represented by a Ram.
- Hathor**, Egypt's foremost goddess, by a Cow.
- Mut**, the wife of Amon, by a Vulture.
- Ra**, sun god, by a Hawk.
- Set** (Satan), god of the east frontier, by a Crocodile.
- Osiris**, god of the dead, by a Goat. **Isis**, his wife, by a Cow.
- Heka**, a goddess, by a Frog.
- Nchebt**, goddess of the South, by a Serpent.
- There were many other gods. The **Nile** was also sacred.

Outline

I. Historical (1-18): Demonstration of God's Power

- A. Deliverance Needed (1)
- B. Deliverer Prepared (2-4)
 - 1. Moses' early years (2)
 - 2. Moses called (2-4)
- C. Deliverance Demanded (5-11)
 - 1. First approach and results (5)
 - 2. Promise and commission renewed (6-7)
 - 3. Infliction of nine plagues
- D. Deliverance Accomplished (12-15)
 - 1. The Passover (12)
 - 2. The Departure (13-14)
 - 3. The Song (15)
- E. Journey to Horeb (16-18)
 - 1. The Lord's provision (16)
 - 2. The Lord's protection (17)
 - 3. Counsel of Jethro (18)

II. Legislative (19-40): Description of God's Principles

- A. Emphasis on the Moral Law
 - 1. Preparation for receiving the covenant (19)
 - 2. The Commandments given
 - 3. The Social and Civil Commandments (21-23)
 - a. To show mercy and justice (21)
 - b. To explain property and rights (22)
 - c. To provide for the poor and God's servants (23)
 - d. Binding of the covenant between Jehovah and Israel (24)
- B. Emphasis on Tabernacle - God's Presence
 - 1. Jehovah's plan for the Tabernacle (25-31)
 - a. Design for giving (25:1-9)
 - b. Design for the inside furniture (25:10-40)
 - c. Design for the outside court and fixture (26-27)
 - d. Design for the priests' robes (28)
 - e. Design for consecration ordinances (29:1-37)
 - f. Design for daily sacrifice (29:38-46)
 - g. Design for Tabernacle (30-31:12)
 - h. Design for the Sabbath (31:13-18)
 - 2. Jehovah's punishment for idolatry (32-33)
 - a. Introduction of idolatry (32)
 - b. Intercession for idolatry (32)
 - c. Injunction against idolatry (32)
 - d. Intercession and mercy (33)
 - 3. Jehovah's renewal of the covenant (34)
 - 4. Jehovah's people abundantly supplied (35)
 - 5. Jehovah's pattern is carried out (35-39)
 - 6. Jehovah's presence descends gloriously (40)

Small Group Study

Warm-up:

Our culture has many memorials. What do you think is the most important? The least important? The most ridiculous?

Alternative: Prepare and eat a Passover meal. Go through the chapter and follow the instructions. You may want to "skip" the sprinkling of the blood on the doorpost; however, it wouldn't be a bad idea.

Look at the Book

Exodus 2:1-51

- 1. Why was a lamb chosen instead of a goat or bull?
- 2. What is the importance of the blood being placed on the lintel of the house? What does it signify for us today?
- 3. Why do you think that it was important to remove all leaven from the house? Does this have any meaning for us today? What?
- 4. If the feast was to be observed as a "permanent ordinance" (12:14), do you think we should still be observing this feast? Why not?
- 5. How did the Passover reveal God's love to Israel?

Looking Closer:

- 1. If you had been living as an Egyptian at this time, how would you have reacted to the statement that "all the first-born in the land of Egypt will be killed?"
 - a. outraged
 - b. awed
 - c. eager to participate in the Passover
 - d. cried out "kill the Hebrews first"
- 2. Why do you think "blood" was so important to God?
- 3. I would describe my attitude toward life right now as:
 - a. in bondage and hating it
 - b. in no hurry to leave bondage
 - c. ready to leave bondage
 - d. out of bondage
 - f. looking around for a deliverer
- 4. How important is it to you to know that Christ's blood has saved you? How could Christ's blood take on more significance in your life?

Looking Around:

Turn to the person on your right. Share with them why you want them to be with you when Christ has His great banquet feast in heaven.

Background:

Title:

The name of the book "Leviticus" is taken from the Septuagint (LXX), a Greek translation of the Hebrew, and means "pertaining to Levite" or priests.

Author: Moses

Date:

It was written immediately after the book of Exodus and probably after the building of the Tabernacle. Leviticus starts with, "Then the Lord called to Moses...."

Note concerning the Date and Authors:

In 1929, a discovery at Ras Shamra, the ancient archaeological site at Ugarit, has helped to show (contrary to the assertions of some theologians) that the Pentateuch could have been written by Moses around 1400 B.C. Terminology in use at Ugarit during the 15th century B.C. parallels that of Leviticus. Terms such as 'burnt offering,' 'whole burnt offering,' 'trespass offering' and 'peace offering' appear in Ugaritic literature. All the external evidence that has been found is in full accord with internal evidence for Mosaic authorship.

Time Span: About one month.

To Whom Written:

Specifically to the Levites, but also to the Israelites in general.

Summary:

The book of Leviticus is concerned mainly with the ministry of the priests ("the sons of Aaron") in the Tabernacle. After the covenant at Sinai, it was essential to ensure and maintain a relationship with God. This was achieved through the many sacrifices and worship ordinances. The soul brought into fellowship must have a means of maintaining that relationship. These detailed instructions are designed to show the holiness of God, and the holiness He requires of His people. The book of Leviticus reveals that our enjoyment of God's presence is based upon our trust in Him and our obedience to His Word. Obedience brings us into harmony with his holy nature, and brings peace. The word 'peace' is mentioned more times in Leviticus than in any other book of the Bible.

Given in the day of types and shadows, Leviticus teaches us the sinfulness of sin and that true holiness can be found only in the Messiah. In that respect, Leviticus is a schoolmaster who points us to Christ (see Gal 3:24-25).

How wonderful it is to know that we serve such a great God, that He would design and construct such wonderful sketches, types, and blueprints to give knowledge and hope to His people. It is equally wonderful to consider that we are not only called to be 'children of God,' but also, 'joint heirs with Christ' and priests! Truly, it is no small thing to be a Christian.

LEVITICUS

Making a Holy People

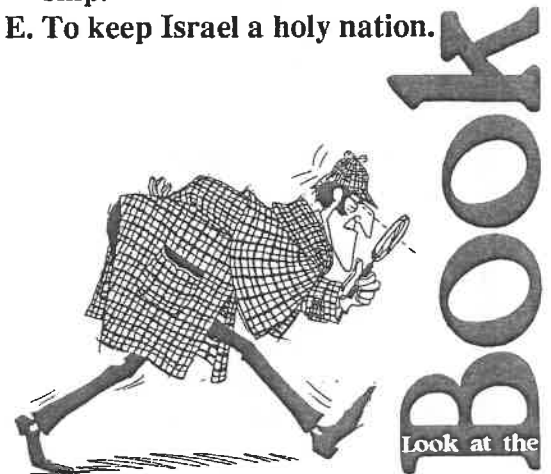
Key Text:

Lev 20:26

You are to be holy to me because I, the Lord, am holy and I have set you apart from the nations to be my own.

Theme:

- I. Two Divisions in the Book give its Theme:
 - A. The way to approach God (1-16).
Emphasis is mediation. All the divine instruction about sacrifice and priests culminate on the Day of Atonement.
 - B. The way of abiding with God (17-27).
Emphasis is consecration. When brought near, the blessings and benefits could be maintained.
- II. The Purpose or Scope of the Book
 - A. To show God is holy, man is sinful.
 - B. To show God can maintain His holiness, yet expose man's sinfulness.
 - C. To show how a sinful people can approach a holy God.
 - D. To give a manual of laws concerning the sacrifices and ordinances of worship.
 - E. To keep Israel a holy nation.



Christ in Leviticus

The sacrificial system of worship made it possible for God's people to draw near to Him. All the sacrifices represent different aspects of Christ, the Lamb of God, giving Himself as a sacrifice for sinners. The major sacrifices are listed below:

1. **Burnt Offering: 1:1-17; 6:8-13; 7:8.** The one who offers the sacrifice comes as a "worshiper" who had already been reconciled to God by first presenting the sin and the trespass sacrifices. The sacrifice was completely burned to ashes on the altar. It typified the death of Christ as being a complete and perfect act of obedience to the will of God (1Pe 1:19). It was designed to teach us that we, too, are to offer our best to God, and that we are to be completely consumed in obedience (cf Heb 9:26; 10:14; 1Jn 1:7; Ro 12:12).
2. **Meal Offering: 2:1-16; 6:14-23; 5:11-12; 23:9-22.** The "fine" flour or unleavened bread was offered with salt, oil and frankincense. Every meal offering pointed to Christ's daily consecration of all His works to the Father (Jn 17:19).
3. **Peace Offering: 3:1-17; 7:11-36; 19:5-8; 22:21-25.** The fat of a sheep, ox or goat was burned as "a sweet savor unto the Lord", then the remainder was eaten, always with a "meat" (meal) offering. This offering was shared in fellowship with God, the priest, and others. Christ is "our Peace" offering who stands as our representative before the Lord. He alone makes peace for us with God (Eph 2:14-15; 5:2). Promised (Jn 14:27). Purchased (Col 1:20). Preached (Eph 2:17).
4. **Sin Offering: 4:1-35; 5:1-13; 6:24-30.** This offering is required first in the "line of offerings" for it deals with sins against God. Burnt, peace, meal and drink offerings were of ancient usage, but the sin and trespass offerings were new in Israel. These sacrifices impressed upon the mind that it was sin that had removed man from fellowship with God. Christ is "the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world" (Jn 1:29, 36). He is the "sin-offering" (Heb 9:1-10:18; 2Co 5:21; 1Pe 1:18-20; 2:24; Matt 20:28).
5. **Trespass Offering: 5:14-19; 6:1-7; 7:1-7.** This offering was required of all Israelites. It made restitution and satisfaction for sins against another person or against God. Acts of sin were specifically listed which needed atonement. A lamb or a ram was sacrificed for these particular sins. In the New Testament, God's claim on ourselves and our services are never fully paid (by ourselves). Even if we did all that was commanded we are still "unprofitable servants." Jesus Christ is our trespass offering and our satisfaction. Only in the Cross will men be justified (Is 53:10; Ro 3:21-27; 2Co 5:14-21; 1Jo 2:2; 4:10; Col 2:13-14).

Major Lessons

1. **God is a holy God.** There is no sin, fault, or imperfection in His nature.
2. **Those who approach God must be holy.** The worshipper must be holy as God is holy. No access to Him can be obtained unless holiness or the covering of sin can be acquired. (11:44-45, 19:2, 20:7-8, 20:24-26.)
3. **God has not left man to devise his own plan of achieving fellowship with Him.** God alone gives man the way to holiness, and the means of dealing with sin. Throughout all of **Leviticus**, it is revealed how God in His grace accepts the death of a substitute as payment for the penalty of sin.
4. **The seriousness of sin is emphasized.** The blood sacrifice, the detailed instruction, and the special mediators (priests) all underscored the cost of sin in man's relationship with God and others. Sin cannot be overlooked.
5. **Blood is the means of atonement.** The life of the flesh is in the blood and it is the blood that makes us one with God. (17:11)
6. **Man must also be concerned with his fellowmen.** If one is in fellowship with God, he will love those whom God loves. (19:18, 24)
7. **The rights of others must be respected.** The people of God had a responsibility not only to their brethren, but to strangers. It was a general principle of mercy to all men.

Key Words of the Book

- A. Holiness (87 times)
- B. Sin & uncleanness (194 various forms)
- C. Blood — form of cleansing (89 times)
- D. "Offerings" and "sacrifice" (91 times)
- E. Direct messages from God (103 times)

Sermon Outline

The God of the Second Chance

Introduction:

Many of us have been through the agony of choosing up sides for a neighborhood baseball game. The biggest, fastest, and strongest are always the team captains. The rest of us must wait for a captain to call our names and invite us to join his team. What relief, what joy, when we are selected by one side or the other! Something about being chosen proves we are wanted and needed.

Sometimes, being chosen isn't all it's cracked up to be.

But it can also put the pressure on. The better the team, the better we are expected to play and the less room there is for mistakes. The more elite the club, the greater are the demands made on our characters and time. Sometimes, being chosen feels very good. But sometimes, being chosen isn't all it's cracked up to be.

I wonder if the Israelites were thinking along these lines when Moses stood before them and spoke the words we now have in the form of **Leviticus**. God had chosen them to be His own people in the events recorded in **Exodus**. He had brought them out of Egypt, gathered them around Mt. Sinai, and then came down to be among them. He selected them as His special nation and volunteered to be their God. What a privilege! What a joy!

But what pressure! Along with being chosen by God came the requirements for living with Him. With the Holy God came the necessity of being a holy people. For the God of Righteousness and Perfection, only perfect people would do. If **Exodus** is the "good news" ("You have been chosen by God"), **Leviticus** is the "bad news" ("Here is what is expected of you").

Outline:

I. God, the Perfectionist

A. The Emphasis on Holiness

1. "Holy" appears 87 times in **Leviticus** — more than any other book in the Bible.
2. God refers to Himself as "holy" 7 times. (22:31-32)
3. It follows that God's people must be holy.

B. The Emphasis on Perfection

1. Anything dedicated to God must be "without defect"
2. "Without defect" in the physical realm symbolized God's requirement that His people be "without defect" spiritually.

C. The Emphasis on Cleanliness

1. "Clean" or "Unclean" is used over 200 times in **Leviticus** (more than any other book in the Bible).
2. God's command to Israel, "You must distinguish..." (10:10)
3. **Leviticus** is a handbook on "clean living."

D. The Story of Nadah and Abihu (especially vs 3).

II. God, the Merciful

A. The Ideal and the "Allowance"

1. Holiness and Mercy
 - a. God requires people to be holy.
 - b. People need God to be merciful.
2. Cleanliness and Purification
 - a. God requires people to be clean.
 - b. People need God to cleanse.

B. The Purpose of Sacrifice

That's why sacrifice is such a prominent theme in **Leviticus**. **God is a soft-touch**. He consistently finds ways to make the imperfect perfect again.

1. Function of Sacrifices
2. Day of Atonement

Transition: The purpose of all this was so that God could give his people a second chance. What man could not accomplish for himself, God did for him. God makes man what man cannot make himself.

Conclusion: God, the "Soft-touch"

A. The Case of the Poor Man (Lev 5:5, 7, 11)

1. Sin offering required for sin to be forgiven.
2. Notice how God bends over backwards to make forgiveness possible for all His people.

B. God Wants Nothing to Separate Us from Him

Outline

- I. The Approach to God (1-16)**
- A. The Sacrificial Ordinances (1-7)
1. Burnt offerings (1)
 2. Meal offerings (2)
 3. Peace offerings (3)
 4. Sin offerings (4-5:13)
 5. Trespass offering (5:14-6:7)
 6. Special instruction to the priests (6:8-7:38)
- B. The Priestly Ordinances (8-10)
1. Consecration of Aaron and his sons (8)
 2. Commencement of priestly duties (9)
 3. Correction of Aaron's sons (10)
- C. The Ordinances of Purity (11-15)
1. Concerning food (11)
 2. Concerning childbirth (12)
 3. Concerning leprosy (12-14)
 4. Concerning sex (15)
- D. Ordinances for the Day of Atonement (16)
1. Preparation of Aaron (16:1-10)
 2. Preparation of the priests (16:11-14)
 3. Preparation of the people (16:15-19)
 4. Preparation of the scape-goat (16:20-22)
 5. Offerings completed (16:23-28)
 6. Sacredness of the day (16:29-34)
- II. Continued Fellowship With God (17-25)**
- A. Holiness -- A Requirement for the People (17-20)
1. Purity in regard to food (17)
 2. Purity in regard to marriage (18)
 3. Purity in regard to conduct (19)
 4. Impurity punished (20)
- B. Holiness -- A Requirement for Priests (21-22)
- C. Holiness of the Feasts (23)
1. The Sabbath (23:1-3)
 2. The Passover & unleavened bread (23:4-14)
 3. The Feast of Weeks/Pentecost (23:15-22)
 4. The Feast of Trumpets (23:23-25)
 5. The Day of Atonement (23:26-32)
 6. The Feast of Tabernacles (23:33-44)
- D. Holiness of Ceremonial and Judicial Rites (24)
- E. Holiness of Sacred Years (25)
1. The Sabbatical Year (25:1-7)
 2. The Year of Jubilee (25:8-55)
- III. The Conclusion and Special Ordinances (26-27)**
- A. The Blessings and Cursings (26)
1. Necessity of a holy relationship (26:1-2)
 2. Blessings of obedience (26:3-13)
 3. Cursing for disobedience (26:14-39)
 4. God is faithful (26:40-46)
- B. The Special Ordinances (27)
1. Vows (27:2-25)
 2. Exclusions from vows (27:26-29)
 3. The tithe (27:30-33)

Small Group Study

Warm-up:

1. When you were a child, what annual event did you look forward to? Why was this event special?
2. If you could create a new annual event what would it be?
3. How do you react when you see blood?
 - a. turn pale
 - b. panic
 - c. throw up
 - d. faint
 - e. no reaction
 - f. hurt for the one bleeding
 - g. want to help
 - h. becoming thirsty

Look at the Book

Hebrews 10:1-18

1. Why couldn't the sacrifices of the bulls and goats take away sins?
2. What was the purpose of all the sacrifices under the law if they could not remove sins?
3. Why would Christ be the remedy for sins?
4. What is the difference between the old sacrificial system and the new sacrifices? (11-14)
5. Give an explanation of verse 14. In what sense are Christians already perfect, and at the same time being made holy (or perfect)?

Looking Closer

Hebrews 10:1-18

1. What actions of worship remind you of God's mercy and love? How are these actions important to you?
2. What do some people substitute for the sacrifice of Christ? Explain your answer.
 - a. a feeling of being saved
 - b. the ritual observance of New Testament statutes
 - c. works of merit
 - d. other men's philosophy
 - e. physical blessings
3. If I were to describe my life in relationship to Christ's sacrifice I would have to say that I . . .
 - a. am still relying on Old Testament sacrifice
 - b. am without a sacrifice
 - c. do not need a sacrifice
 - d. wish I had a sacrifice
 - e. am waiting for a sacrifice
 - f. am rejoicing over His sacrifice
 - g. am growing to appreciate His sacrifice more and more
4. What evidence have you seen that God is making you a holier person?

Looking Around:

Go around the group. Let everyone share how they could be helped to live a holier life.

Background:

Title:

The name "Numbers" (*Arithmoi*) is taken from the Greek title of the Septuagint (LXX). "Numbers" is derived from the two numberings of the children of Israel in chapters 1 and 26. In Jewish writings, however, it is usually referred to by the Hebrew word "Bemidbar," which means "in the wilderness," which is closer to the content of the book.

Author: Moses

Read John 3:15; Acts 7 and 13; 1 Corinthians 10:1-11; Hebrews 3 and 4; Jude 11; Numbers 1:1 and 33:2.

Date: (See Genesis)

Time Span:

Numbers 1:1 compares with Deuteronomy 1:13. Two years and two months after the Israelites depart Egypt to the 40th year and 11th month of their journey.

Summary:

Genesis tells of God's selection of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as the chosen seed line. Exodus describes the birth of Israel as a nation, and the establishment of a covenant with that nation. After deliverance and instruction, the Israelites are provided with a way to approach God.

God's people are now ready to advance into the promised land of Canaan, a short two week march from Mt. Sinai. However, because the people are rebellious and murmur against Moses, Aaron, and God, they spend the next 38 years wandering the wilderness. We know very little of those years. Interspersed with laws, Numbers records the leading events during the journey.

This nation possibly numbered three to four million people! The first census taken lists 603,550 males above 20 years old (excluding Levites)—the second census, 601,730 males above 20 years old were counted. The feeding and clothing of this great migrating mass remains as one of the greatest miracles in the Bible.

Of all the people who began the journey, only two—Joshua and Caleb—lived to cross Jordan and enter into Canaan. This was the consequence of unbelief and rebellion on the part of a stubborn people.

NUMBERS

Obey or Pay

Key Text: Nu 14:22-23

...not one of the men who saw my glory and the miraculous signs I performed in Egypt and in the desert but who disobeyed me and tested me ten times - not one of them will ever see the land I promised on oath to their forefathers. No one who has treated me with contempt will ever see it.

Theme:

- I. God loves and cares for His people.
- II. God punishes disobedience yet deals patiently with His people.
- III. God's promises are sufficient and final victory is always in Him.
- IV. Order is indispensable.
- V. Faith is a matter of trusting God.



Christ in Numbers

Star out of Jacob: 24:17-19 with Mt 2:2; Lk 1:33, 78; Rev 22:16. Balaam was an extraordinary man. He lived largely among the wild race of the Midianites, but he had gifts and powers which, so far as we know, were entirely unshared by those among whom he dwelt. He was endowed in a high degree with the gift of prophecy. Balaam was in some respects what Melchizedek had been in another age, an organ of truth outside the chosen people of God. His prediction of the star and scepter that were to arise out of Jacob is not fully satisfied by the conquests of David, Omri, or John Hyrcanus. It points to the spiritual empire of Jesus Christ.

Manna: 11:8 with Jn 6:31-34; 1Co 10:3. The manna in the wilderness was a miraculous supply of food during the time Israel wandered in the wilderness. It was a provision for the bodily, and not for the spiritual nature of the nation. However, it did represent the higher and better things of the Gospel. In both cases, there is a redeemed people, travelling through a wilderness to the inheritance promised to them and prepared for them, and receiving as they proceed the provision they require for the support of life. In the one case it is the physical descendant of Abraham redeemed from Egyptian bondage, in the other it is the spiritual seed, the church, redeemed from the bondage of sin. In one it was the physical wilderness of Arabia; in the other the spiritual wilderness of this world. In one manna; in the other, Christ.

Rock that gave water: 20:11 with 1Co 10:4. Christ is often represented in the Scripture as a Rock (1Pe 2:4-8). This image pictures strength, durability, or the protection it is capable of affording. The Israelites drew physical nourishment from the Rock. Today, Christ is the fountain-head of life and blessings. He ministers to His people an abundance of spiritual refreshment while they are on their way to the heavenly inheritance. He gives "a spring of water welling up to everlasting life" (Jn 4:14; cf. Jn 7:38-39).

No broken bones: 9:12; Ex 12:46; Ps 34:20 with Jn 19:36. One of the many passages fulfilled at the crucifixion of Jesus. These words were quoted by John to prove from the event of the cross that Jesus was the true paschal Lamb of God.

Serpent of bronze: 21:8-9 with Jn 3:14-15. As Moses required the sinner to look to the instrument of God's judgment, so sinners today are saved by looking to Christ's cross and accepting His substitutionary work for us. The cross was (and is) God's instrument in judging the sins of the world.

Continued from "Christ in Numbers"

Major Lessons

1. God will train and chasten His children when it is necessary for their development.
2. God wants His children to be faithful.
3. There is a terrible consequence for not trusting in God (13-14:38; 1Co 10:1-10; Heb 3-4).
4. It is a fearful thing to disobey a holy God (14:10-12, 15:32-36, 16:31-35).
5. Disobedience and lack of faith can keep God's children today from their Canaan (Heb 3-4).
6. God will provide all things necessary to sustain His children through periods of trial.
7. God's purpose and promise will be fulfilled. (33:50-34:29)

Estimated number of animals sacrificed in one year.

1,103	lambs at feasts and daily sacrifice
256,000	lambs at Passover only
115	bullocks
41	rams
33	kids or goats

Christ in Numbers Continued...

Cities of refuge: Chapter 35 with Heb 6:18-20. The six cities of refuge were given to Israel as a means of protecting anyone who, through ignorance or accident, killed a man. Here he might flee from the avenger of blood. These cities were placed in easy reach of everyone. So also, Jesus is in easy reach of everyone. It is in Him that we find refuge and salvation.

Sermon Outline

Your God is Too Small

Outline:

Introduction:

In 1961, J. B. Phillips wrote a small but excellent book entitled **Your God is too Small**. The idea behind this book is that we have many notions of God which are simply inadequate to describe our great Jehovah. Since our ideas about God are flawed, our behavior toward him is often equally flawed. If we see God as a benevolent grandfather, we tend to take his mercy for granted and overlook his judgment. If we think of God primarily as a stern and harsh disciplinarian, we are likely to emphasize his punishment and overlook his grace.

Perhaps the greatest problem Phillips addressed was man's tendency to make God into a bigger version of himself . . . we try to create God in our own image. We make him think like us and react like us and feel like us. Too often, *we* become the yardstick against which the character of God is measured. Our worship of this kind of "god" quickly degenerates into a worship of ourselves.

The God of Abraham cannot be stuffed into a practical-sized box that keeps him comfortably and conveniently at man's disposal.

God is bigger than that.

In reality, God is not that small. He is not a deluxe version of ourselves. He is different. He is distinct. The very word "holy" stresses God's separateness from anything else in his creation. The God of Abraham cannot be stuffed into a practical-sized box that keeps him comfortably and conveniently at man's disposal. God is bigger than that.

The Israelites had the same problem with God which many of us experience. They wanted to mold God into fitting their needs rather than molding themselves to fit their God. Perhaps the major purpose of the events in **Numbers** is to show the Israelites that their God must be treated with respect. **Numbers** is the story of God teaching his people to respect and reverence him. He is not a God of convenience but a God of power and authority. Those who forget this fact do so at their own grave risk.

I. The Israelites Underestimated God's Power (Nu 13 & 14)

A. Coming into Canaan

1. God's promises concerning Canaan.
2. The choosing and commissioning of the 12 spies.
3. The report of the spies to the people.

B. The Reaction of the People

1. These people had seen the power of God.
2. Yet they forgot God's power when confronted with the armies of Canaan. (Nu 14:1-4)

C. The Response of God

1. "How long . . . ?" (14:10-12)
2. God punishes those who underestimate his power and disobey his commands. (Nu 14:20-23)

II. The Israelites Usurped God's Leadership (Chapter 16)

A. The Rebellion of Korah (Nu 16:1-3)

1. 250 leading men rise up against Moses and Aaron. "You have gone too far." (16:3)
2. The reason for the rebellion: They felt they should have leadership roles equal to those of Moses and Aaron. They forgot that God chose these men and not themselves.

B. The Reaction of Moses (Nu 16:4-7)

1. God has chosen Moses and Aaron to lead. "You Levites have gone too far." (16:7b)
2. "It is against the Lord that you and all your followers have banded together." (16:11)

C. The Response of God

1. A literal "trial by fire."
2. "Treating the Lord with contempt." (vs 30b)
3. God punishes rebellion against his leadership.

III. Moses and Aaron Took God's Credit (Chapter 20)

A. The People Complain Once More (Nu 20:1-5)

1. The people do not trust God to provide water.
2. But God had another lesson to teach his people. He had already covered this ground!

B. Moses's Reaction (Nu 20:6-12)

1. He is fed up with complaining Israelites.
2. Impatience and fatigue result in sin.

C. God's Response

1. "You did not honor me . . ." (vs 12).
2. The punishment of Moses and Aaron.

Conclusion: How Big is Your God?

Outline

I. The Old Generation of Israel (1-25)

- A. The Preparation at Sinai (1-10)
 - 1. The first numbering (1)
 - 2. The camping arrangement of the people (2)
 - 3. The camping arrangement of the priests (3)
 - 4. The duties of the priests (4)
 - 5. The laws for the purity of the camp (5)
 - 6. The special Nazarite vow (6)
 - 7. The worship of the camp (7-9)
 - 8. The guidance and signals for marching (10:1-10)
- B. The Failures and Sin of Israel (10:11-25:18)
 - 1. From Sinai to Kadesh (10-14)
 - a. The tribes leave Sinai
 - b. Complaining of the people (11:1-9)
 - c. Complaining of Moses (11:10-15)
 - d. Response of God (11:16-25)
 - e. Complaining of Miriam & Aaron (12:1-8)
 - f. Response of God - leprosy (12:9-16)
 - g. Complaining of the spies and people (13:14-10)
 - h. Response of God (14:11-45)
 - 2. From Kadesh to Kadesh (15-20)
 - a. Laws for Canaan (15)
 - b. Korah's rebellion (16:1-7)
 - c. Response of God (16:8-40)
 - d. More complaining of the people (16:41-42)
 - e. Response of God - plague (16:43-50)
 - f. Role of the priests (18)
 - g. Ordinances for uncleanness (19:11-22)
 - h. Complaining of people against Moses and Aaron for water (20:1-5)
 - i. Response of God - water from the rock (20:6-13)
 - 3. From Kadesh to Moab (20-21)
 - a. Edom refuses passage (20:14-21)
 - b. Death of Aaron (20:22-29)
 - c. Complaining against God and Moses (21:1-5)
 - d. Response to God - fiery serpents (21:6-9)
 - 4. Journey in Moab (21:10-25:18)
 - a. Victory over Ammon (21:10-32)
 - b. Victory over Bashan (21:33-35)
 - c. Failure with the Moabites (22-25)

II. The New Generation of Israel (26-36)

- A. The numbering of the new generation (26:1-51)
- B. Division of the Land (26:52-27:11)
- C. Appointment of New Leaders (27:12-23)
- D. Regulations of Offerings and Vows (28:1-30:16)
- E. Conquest and Division of Israel (31-36)
 - 1. Victory over Midian (31)
 - 2. Division east of Jordan (32)
 - 3. Wilderness journey reviewed (33)
 - 4. Division west of Jordan (33:50-34:2)
 - 5. Special cities (35)
 - 6. Vows (36)

Small Group Study

Warm-up:

Describe the longest walking trip you have ever taken. How did you feel when it was over?

- a. wanted to keep walking
- b. where's the bed
- c. a feeling of accomplishment
- d. wish I had never started
- e. sore - every muscle hurt

Look at the Book

Hebrews 3:7-10

- 1. What is the significance of the exodus to the Israelites?
- 2. What point is the author making about unbelief?
- 3. How can one's heart be hardened? Explain your answer or give an illustration.
- 4. What do we need to do or how are we to act so that we are an encouragement to others not to be hardened?
- 5. What is the final outcome of faithfulness and obedience?

Looking Closer:

Hebrews 3:7-19

- 1. What does it mean to you when someone is rebellious to God?
- 2. What has been one of the most rebellious times in your life? Who encouraged you to return to God?
- 3. Do you know a hard-hearted person that you would like God to soften? What are they like? What part could you play in this process?

Looking Around:

Go around the group and let each one give a reason why they want to enter God's rest (Heaven).

Background:

Title:

Iyyob is the Hebrew title. The word means “persecuted one.” The Greek and Latin Bibles use the title IOB and refer to the principal character, Job. Job was not a “made up” character. He was a real historic person. (Ge 46:13; Eze 14:14, 20; Jas 5:11).

Author:

There is a diversity of opinions as to the author of this book: Moses, Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Elihu, or even Job. The Jewish Talmud attributes it to Moses. But there are no textual hints to his identity.

Date:

The Events of the Book

Job was probably contemporary with Abraham. There are hints in Job pointing to the general time frame of Abraham and his sons.

1. He seems to have lived before the giving of the law. There is no reference to anything in the Law.
2. He was the priest of his family and offered sacrifice for them just as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob did (1:15).
3. His wealth was measured by livestock, not gold (1:3, 42:12).
4. The social unit was the family clan as with the patriarchal system.
5. The concept of God was that of an earlier period (before the Law). He uses the name for God, Shaddai (the Almighty), 31 times.

The Date of the Writing

No conclusive data is available to pinpoint the time of writing. The theory of authorship determines the date

Summary:

The book of **Job** discusses a problem common to all men, the dilemma of suffering. Thus, **Job** has a universal appeal. He is presented as a righteous, wealthy man with many friends. Satan challenges God’s power to hold the loyalty of Job after God’s protection is removed. It is not Job on trial so much as God.

After everything is taken away from Job, he must encounter the “debaters” of his age. The thesis of the discussion is “Why is Job suffering?” Job’s four “friends” give their reasons.

1. Suffering is a consequence of sin. Therefore, Job must be sinning.
2. Suffering is proportionate to the amount of evil in one’s life. Therefore, Job must be sinning a lot!
3. You really have it better than you deserve, since you are a sinner!

All four are partially right in their arguments, but they do not see the total picture. God ends the debate by speaking to Job. He makes no reference to Job’s suffering, but demonstrates His power and control over the seemingly uncontrollable. *God is God, not Job.*

The outcome was repentance (40:8), restoration, and comfort for Job. He did not receive an answer to his question “Why?” But he received what he needed, a vision of the Almighty. Now he knows the “Who” and that is sufficient.

There is another player behind the scenes of this grand drama — it is Satan who seeks out the righteous to devour. The fact that Job was righteous brings trials, tribulations, and suffering. The righteous suffer because they are righteous. It is not God, but Satan who acts against them.

JOB

Why Me, Lord?

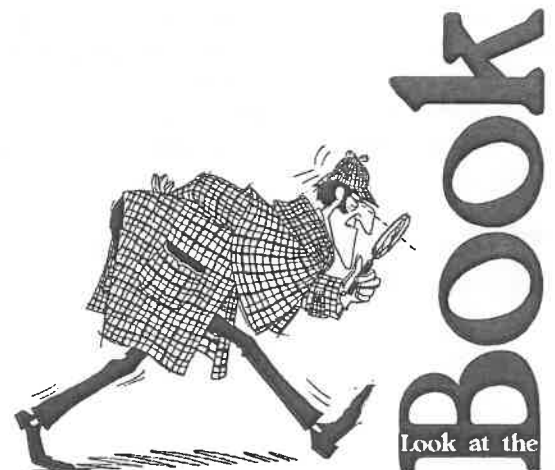
Key Text:

Job 13:15

Though he slay me, yet will I hope in him; I will surely defend my ways to his face.

Theme:

- I. Why do righteous and innocent people suffer?
- II. To reveal the players in the drama of life: God, Satan, and man.
- III. To justify the wisdom, goodness, and controlling power of God on the matter of human suffering.



Sermon Outline

Enter Satan, Laughing

Introduction:

Think of a young family man, a man with a pretty wife and beautiful children, a man with great promise and potential. He has a nagging pain in the back and, on going to the doctor, is informed that he has cancer. There are only weeks left of what should have been decades. Why do things like that happen?

Consider a woman, devoted to her marriage and family, who discovers her husband has been unfaithful and wants a divorce. All of the agony that seizes such a woman . . . all of the disruption it causes in the home. Why do things like this happen?

What about the father who loves his children, who trains them to be moral and good, who teaches them about God and his grace, only to have his children turn away from God and lead lives of rebellion and immorality. Why do good fathers sometimes have disobedient children?

Feel for a moment with the mother who has spent her life bearing and raising and loving her children, only to receive a phone call one evening telling her that all three of her teenagers have been killed in an auto accident. Why do such tragedies ever happen?

Why do bad things happen to good people?

If our faith in God cannot help us come to grips with such issues, it is not a faith for real life. Leave it to the ivory-towered intellectuals. Leave it to the Polly Anna's of our world who seem to waltz through life with never a care or a worry. For most of us, however, we need our faith to make sense of what seems senseless. We need God to answer the "whys" of our lives. Is He the cause of all this suffering? Are all bad things the consequence of our being such bad people? Does God punish us whether we are righteous or wicked? Why do bad things happen to people we know are good?

We need our faith to make sense of what seems senseless.

Outline:

I. Job: A Righteous Man who Suffered

- A. Job, the Righteous
 - 1. Read Job 1:1
 - 2. The entire book of Job is founded on the premise that Job is righteous before God.
- B. The Good Ol' Days
 - 1. Read Job 1:2-5
 - 2. Job enjoyed every blessing from God: children, herds and flocks, servants and great wealth.
- C. The Days of Evil
 - 1. The first round of suffering (1:13-22).
 - 2. The second round of suffering (2:7-10).
 - 3. In all his suffering, Job remains true to God (1:20-22; 2:10).

Transition: The next 35 chapters record Job's struggle to make sense out of his suffering. Job puts God on trial and demands to know why a righteous man would be made to endure such torture and hardship.

II. Why Do People Suffer?

- A. The God of Pleasure and Pain
 - 1. "You reap what you sow" (Gal 6:7) God punishes the wicked and blesses the righteous.
 - 2. Examples of God working in this way: Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Nadab and Abihu, Korah, Uzzah.
 - 3. This is the picture of God painted by Job's friends.
- B. The Complicated God
 - 1. Often, the wicked prosper and the righteous suffer.
 - 2. Why does the God who blesses and punishes not take more care in choosing which people get what?
 - 3. This is the very dilemma faced by Job.

III. Enter Satan, Laughing

- A. Life is not a Duet -- it is a Trio
 - 1. Satan is a reality - he must be taken into account.
 - 2. It is Satan, not God, who causes the suffering of Job.
- B. Why Do Men Suffer?
 - 1. God causes some to suffer out of his hatred of evil.
 - 2. Satan causes others to suffer out of his hatred of good.
 - 3. Job suffers, not because of God, but because of Satan. Job suffers *because* of his righteousness, not in spite of it.

Conclusion:

- 1. God is God, and Job is not
- 2. Read Job 38:2-4, 12, 19-20, 34-36
- 3. The task of Man is to cease trying God and learn to trust him -- Read Job 40:1-8, 42:1-6.

Topics

Christ in Job

There is only one allusion to Christ, but it is not specific: Job 19:25-27.

1. The redeemer lives.
2. The redeemer comes to earth.
3. The resurrection of Job (Bodily).
4. The translation into God's presence.

Major Lessons

1. God is in control of the events of life, therefore, we must trust Him.
2. Satan is real and is seeking to destroy the righteous person.
3. Man must endure with faith the trials that come.
4. True faith is not a means of escaping trials, but a means of facing them.
5. Satan is the source of Job's suffering.

Wrong

Saved Believer

Lost Unbeliever

1. Disciplines	3. Reinforces
2. Judges	4. Rewards
God	Satan

Right

Saved Believer

Lost Unbeliever

5. Blesses	7. Persecutes
6. Saves	8. Punishes
God	Satan

Events Do Not Have To Be Concurrent

1. When the believer does what is wrong, God disciplines.
2. When the unbeliever does what is wrong, God judges.
3. When the believer does what is wrong, Satan reinforces.
4. When the unbeliever does what is wrong, Satan rewards.
5. When the believer does what is right, God blesses.
6. When the unbeliever does what is right, God saves.
7. When the believer does what is right, Satan persecutes.
8. When the unbeliever does what is right, Satan punishes.

Outline

- I. **The Challenge (1:1-2:10)**
 - A. The Character of Job (1:1-5)
 - B. The Council in Heaven (1:6-12)
 - 1. Satan's challenge of Jehovah (1:9-11)
 - 2. Jehovah's challenge of Satan (1:11-12)
 - C. The Controlled Assaults (1:13-22)
 - 1. His possessions (1:13-22)
 - 2. His person (2:7-10)

(The arrival of Job's friends 2:11-13)

- II. **The Complaint (3:1-26)**
- III. **The Circle of Speeches (4-37)**
 - A. The First Cycle
 - 1. Speech of Eliphaz and Job's reply (4-7)
 - 2. Speech of Bildad and Job's reply (8-10)
 - 3. Speech of Zophar and Job's reply (11-14)
 - B. The Second Cycle (15-21)
 - 1. Speech of Eliphaz and Job's reply (15-17)
 - 2. Speech of Bildad and Job's reply (18-19)
 - 3. Speech of Zophar and Job's reply (20-21)
 - C. The Third Cycle (22-31)
 - 1. Speech of Eliphaz and Job's reply (22-24)
 - 2. Speech of Bildad and Job's reply (25-31)
 - D. The Fourth Speaker, Elihu (32-37)
 - 1. Reasons for his intervention (32)
 - 2. First rebuttal (33)
 - 3. Second rebuttal (34)
 - 4. Third rebuttal (35)
 - 5. Conclusion (35-37)
 - a. God's use of affliction (36)
 - b. God's marvelous works (37)

- IV. **The Council of God (38-41)**
 - A. The First Challenge (38-40:5)
 - 1. Arguments from creation (38:1-38)
 - 2. Arguments from animals (38:39-40:5)
 - B. The Second Challenge (40:6-42:6)
 - 1. Argument from man (40:6-14)
 - 2. Argument from power (40:15-41:34)
 - a. over the behemoth (40:15-24)
 - b. over the leviathan (41)

- V. **The Corrections (42:1-9)**

- VI. **The Comfort by God (42:10-17)**

Small Group Study

Warm-up:

Describe a time when your entire family gathered together for a special occasion. Whom did you look forward to seeing? Whom did you dread seeing? Who is the clown of the family?

Look at the Book

Job 1 - 2

- 1. Describe Job's attitude toward his family (1:4-5).
 - a. loving
 - b. permissive
 - c. concerned
 - d. sad because of their attitude
 - e. other
- 2. Why do you think Satan had access into heaven? (1:6-7)
- 3. Describe what you think Satan looks like. Why? What kind of appearance do most people give to him?
- 4. Do you think the description of Job (1:8, 2:3) means that he was totally without sin? Explain.
- 5. How do you think God was protecting Job from Satan? Why would He protect him?
- 6. Who brought the great affliction on Job?
 - a. God
 - b. SatanWhy do you say that?

Looking Closer:

- 1. Was there ever a time in your life when you thought that God was protecting you from Satan? Why do you think that?
- 2. Did you ever blame God for the suffering you were experiencing? How did you feel afterward?
 - a. dumb
 - b. relieved
 - c. scared
 - d. angry
 - e. sad
 - f. haughty and proud
 - g. repentant
- 3. How do you think you would react if everything that happened to Job happened to you?
 - a. question my life
 - b. question God
 - c. trust God
 - d. doubt
 - e. think God was unfair
 - f. blame
 - g. examine my life
- 4. What would you do if you found that your suffering was a result of sin? That it was not a result of sin?

Looking Around:

Turn to the person on your right. Tell them what you would want them to say to you if you were suffering.

Background:

Title:

The term "*Joshua*" refers to the chief character of the book -- Joshua, the son of Nun, the successor of Moses. His original name was Hoshea, "salvation" (Nu 13:8); but Moses changed it to Yehoshua (Nu 13:16), "Jehovah is Salvation." This is the Hebrew equivalent of the name "Jesus" (Ac 7:45; Heb 4:5).

Author:

The scholars are divided over the authorship of this book, attributing it to various men: Joshua, Phinehas, Eleazar, Jeremiah, Samuel.

1. Jos 24:26 would imply that Joshua did some writing.
2. The writer implies that he crossed the river Jordan. If that be true, it would eliminate Jeremiah and Samuel (5:1).
3. Jewish tradition attributes the book to Joshua (the death of Joshua being added to the book by another writer at a later date).

Date:

Archaeological and internal evidence would seem to place the writing of the book contemporaneous with the events described in the book. Joshua probably took its present form at an early date.

Time Span:

From the death of Moses (Dt 34:5-9) to the death of Joshua and Eleazar — approximately 15 years (Jos 24:29). It took five years to conquer the land, judging from the age of Caleb (14:7 & 10).

To Whom Written: Israel (1:1-2)

Summary:

The history of the world is the history of great men and events. This is an accurate statement of the kind of history found in the book of *Joshua*. It begins with his divine call and commission, tells of his leadership in the conquest of the promised land, and ends with a record of his death. It covers a span of some 20 years of battles and heroic deeds. Quite an accomplishment for a man 100 years old.

Israel is prepared now to enter a land which they should have entered 40 years earlier. Disobedience kept them out then, obedience and faith bring them in now. Word has spread throughout Canaan concerning Israel's God, and fear paves the way for triumph. Jericho and Ai fall first. Then the kings of the south and north are routed and Israel possesses all the land that God had promised. Proportional distribution is made to each tribe, and God is glorified. Joshua closes his life by addressing the Israelites with a reminder of God's faithfulness and an admonition to serve Him. Jehovah has been their strength and deliverance and He will be their salvation. Joshua dies, but the tribute to his leadership is found in 24:31.

"And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who survived Joshua..."

JOSHUA

Canaan or Bust!

Key Text:

Jos 1:6-7

Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them, be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go.

Theme:

I. The Faithfulness of God to Keep His Promises - 21:45; 23:14-15.

II. The Holiness of God to Punish Sin.

A. The Inhabitants of Canaan. Ge 15:13-16 with Jos 5:13-21:24

B. The People of God, Israel. Jos 7:1-26.



Sermon Outline

The God of Judgment

Introduction:

Early in the second century, one of the most interesting heretics in all of church history came to prominence. Marcion was a wealthy ship owner from the region of the Black Sea. He gave up his business, however, and decided to spend the remainder of his life dabbling in theology. Although he was the son of an elder, his own father excommunicated him because of his eccentric teachings in the church there. Sometime around A.D. 140, he came to Rome seeking membership in the church in that place.

While in Rome, Marcion preached the gospel as he thought it really happened. The Old Testament, in his view, was the product of a sick and evil mind. "Look at all the lying, pillage, and killing," he said. "Look at the favoritism: Yahweh selects a race of idolatrous schemers to be his chosen people, and calls an adulterous murdering brigand 'a man after my own heart.' No," concluded Marcion, "the one who made the world and inspired the Old Testament could not be good. . . . The Old Testament god may be the powerful creator, but he is not the good heavenly father Jesus proclaimed."

Marcion preached that Christians must reject the Old Testament entirely. He believed Jesus opposed the work of the Old Testament god, claiming that Jesus really said (at Mt 4:17), "I have not come to fulfill the law but to destroy it." Marcion could not reconcile the God of gentleness and mercy that he saw in Jesus with the god of judgment and punishment he saw in the Old Testament.

Finally, he was excommunicated again. He became a travelling preacher, winning many converts to his thinking and establishing Marcionite churches throughout the East.

Have you ever had Marcion's problem with the Old Testament?

Outline:

I. The Dilemma of the Book of Joshua

- A. Passages in this book which cause problems.
 - 1. Jos 6:20-21 - the fate of Jericho
 - 2. Jos 8:24-28 - the fate of Ai
 - 3. Jos 10:40; 11:18-20 - the fate of Canaan
 - 4. This is a book about war and bloodshed. All of it is at the instigation of the God we worship.
- B. These passages highlight a major problem many have with the God of the Old Testament.
 - 1. Examples of this same problem from other books:
 - a. the Flood (Ge 6-8)
 - b. Sodom and Gomorrah (Ge 19)
 - 2. How can the God we know from the New Testament, the God we see in the face of Jesus, the loving and compassionate God of the cross, possibly be responsible for this kind of death and destruction?

II. The Message of the Book of Joshua

- A. The Earth is the Lord's
 - 1. He created it, maintains it, and determines its fate.
 - 2. Especially true with Canaan -- "the Lord's land" (Jos 22:19).
- B. He Blesses those who Obey Him -- faith and obedience led to the inheritance of Canaan.
 - 1. **Read Joshua 1:6-9**
 - a. "Success" in conquering the land was conditioned on the obedience of Joshua and those who followed.
 - b. If they would be obedient, God would bless their efforts.
- C. He Judges Those Who Disobey Him
 - 1. This was true of His chosen people: Ex. of Achan (Jos 7).
 - 2. This was equally true of other nations as well: God judged and punished Egypt (Ge 15:13-14).

III. The God of Judgment

- A. A "Full Measure" of Sin
 - 1. **Read Genesis 15:16:** The time would come for the descendants of Abraham to drive out the Canaanites and take possession of the land.
 - 2. The Sins of the Canaanites: A degraded and degrading religion -- Baal and Ashtoreth
- B. Joshua: An Introduction to the God Who Judges
 - 1. A book about God's holy war.
 - 2. A book about a God who judges.

Conclusion:

The God of the second Joshua (Jesus) is the God of the first Joshua also.

Christ in Joshua

Note: The significance of Rahab was not only an illustration of faith, but it is in her “seed” that the Christ will be born (Mt 1:5). For more information one should consult the material written for Ruth.

Some see a relational type between Joshua and Jesus. The meaning of the names is the same, “**Jehovah is Salvation.**”

Specific mention must be made to the third and fourth chapters of Hebrews. In that section of Scripture the author makes reference to the Israelites in the wilderness and that most of them failed to enter into the Promised Land because of unbelief. They had the “good news” preached to them, but, having heard, they did not trust God enough to believe. The trouble was not in the message but in the hearers. Though Israel was shut out of the land of Canaan, this in no way has affected God’s rest. God’s rest is still open and prepared for men.

Joshua was the commander under whose leadership the Israelites entered Canaan. Jesus is the Leader of His People. But the rest that Joshua gave to his followers was only physical and did not fully satisfy. Jesus, however, is able to lead us into an eternal rest.

1. He was prepared from the foundation of the world (4:3). Christ is the plan of redemption (Tit 1:2; Eph 1:4; 2Ti 1:9-10; 1Pe 1:20; Rev 13:8).
2. He is the Sabbath rest (4:9-10). Christ is our Sabbath rest. It is not a day but something that can be entered. The believer now has rest in Jesus (Mt 11:28). That rest continues on into heaven’s glory. (Rev 14:13).
3. He was preached (4:2). The gospel, the good news, is the message about Jesus (Mk 1:1-2; 1Co 15:1-4; Ac 8:12; Eph 1:13). It is a message of salvation, redemption, and peace with God.
4. He is entered by belief (4:3). When one believes the gospel about Christ and has obedient faith, he enters the realm of faith and rest (Ac 13:39; Jn 3:15-17, 18; Ro 10:4; Mk 16:15-16; Ro 5:1-2).
5. The believer becomes a partaker of Christ (3:14). When the believer enters into Christ, his rest, he becomes a partaker of His divine nature (2Pe 1:4).

Major Lessons

1. Strength and courage are necessary for victory over our enemies (Jos 1).
2. Faith is recognized and rewarded by God in the individual heart (Jos 2).
3. God is the real commander of our lives (Jos 5:13-15).
4. Obedience and faith bring down walls of resistance (Jos 6).
5. Secret sins mean sure defeat (Jos 7).
6. Sins cannot be hidden from God (Jos 7).
7. God is all powerful, and can do anything He wants (Jos 10).
8. God is faithful to do what He has promised (Jos 23:14-15).

Now I am about to go the way of all the earth. You know with all your heart and soul that not one of the good promises the Lord your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled...

Joshua 23:14

New Testament References to passages in Joshua

1:5 *with* Heb 13:5
 2:1-24 *with* Jas 2:25
 6:20-23 *with* Heb 11:30-31
 14:1-2 *with* Acts 13:19
 24:32 *with* Acts 7:16; Heb 11:22
 Book *with* Heb 4:8

Outline

Small Group Study

- I. **The Preparation for Canaan (1 - 5)**
 - A. The Charge to Joshua (1:1-9)
 - B. The Command of Joshua to the People (1:10-18)
 - C. The Commission of the Spies (2:1-24)
 - D. The Crossing of the Jordan (3:1-17)
 - E. The Construction of Two Memorials (4:1-24)
 - F. The Consecration of the People (5:1-15)
- II. **The Possession of Canaan (6 - 12)**
 - A. The Conquest of Jericho and Ai (6-8)
 1. The fall of Jericho (6:1-27)
 2. The fall of Ai (7-8:29)
 - a. the sin of Achan (7)
 - b. the sacking of Ai (8:1-29)
 3. The fulfilling of a command (8:30-35)
 - B. Conquest of the South (9-10)
 1. The tactics of Gibeon (9:1-27)
 2. The five kings against Gibeon defeated (10:1-27)
 3. The cities of the south conquered (10:28-43)
 - C. Conquest of the North (11-12)
- III. **The Division of Canaan (13 - 22)**
 - A. Land Area to be Allocated (13:1-14)
 - B. Allocations for Each Tribe on the East (13:15-33)
 1. Reuben (13:15-23)
 2. Gad (13:24-28)
 3. Manasseh (half tribe) (12:29-33)
 - C. Allocation for Each Tribe on the West (14:1 - 19:51)
 1. Special allocation to Caleb (6-15)
 2. Judah (15:1-63)
 3. Joseph (16:1-17:18)
 4. Indolence of seven tribes rebuked (18:1-10)
 5. Benjamin (18:11-28)
 6. Simeon (19:1-9)
 7. Zebulun (19:10-16)
 8. Issachar (19:17-23)
 9. Asher (19:24-31)
 10. Naphtali (19:32-39)
 11. Dan (19:40-48)
 12. Joshua (19:49-51)
 - D. Allocation for Cities of Refuge (20)
 - E. Allocation of Cities for Levites (21:1-42)
 - F. All the Promises of the Land Fulfilled (21:43-45)
 - G. The Altar of Unity (22:1-34)
- IV. **The Departure of Joshua 23 - 24**
 - A. Joshua's Farewell at Shiloh (23:1-16)
 - B. Joshua's Farewell at Shechem (24:1-28)
 - C. Joshua's Death (24:29-33)

Warm-up:

Describe the worst storm you have ever experienced. Were you fearful for your life? What did you do?

What do you think it would be like to experience an earthquake?

Look at the Book

Joshua 6

1. Why do you think the priests were involved in battle?
2. Why do the Israelites have to march around the wall and blow trumpets? Why didn't God just knock the walls down on the first day?
3. If you had been inside the city, what would you be thinking of the Israelites on the fifth or sixth day?
4. Why was it so important that the Israelites not take anything "under the ban"? What was the ban? How would you react to the ban if you were in Israel's army?
5. How do you feel about God utterly destroying everything in the city (vs 21)? Why was this necessary? Do you think God is justified in what He did? Why?
6. Why do you think Rahab was so important?

Looking Closer:

1. What is it in your life that stands in the way of your possessing what God has given to you?
 - a. attitude
 - b. lack of faith
 - c. disobedience
 - d. possessions
 - e. religion
 - f. procrastination
 - g. other people
2. How would you react to God's request that you must be willing to destroy, cast aside, or eliminate everything that hinders your relationship to Him?
 - a. no way
 - b. O.K.
 - c. I'm out of here
 - d. Sure, but later
 - e. It's going to die!
3. How do you react when someone tries to rebuild in your life a barrier to God that has been destroyed? What do you say to them?

Looking Around:

Go around to the left. Let each person in the group complete this sentence: "I can see God at work in this group by...."

Background:

Title:

The title, “**Judges**,” refers to the men and women whose deeds are recorded within this book. The Hebrew judges were primarily liberators, deliverers, champions, heroes, sheikhs; men of war, not peace; men of the sword, not men of the courts.

The Hebrew title is *Shophetim*, meaning “**Judges, Rulers, Deliverers or Saviors.**” The Greek word is *Kritai*, meaning “**Judges.**”

Author:

Again, scholarship is divided concerning the author. Various authors have been suggested: Phinehas, Hezekiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Ezra and Samuel. The majority of scholars attribute the book to Samuel, the last of the judges of Israel. The real author is Jehovah and the instrument He uses is of little importance.

Date:

It was written after the establishment of the monarchy (9:1, 21:25), but before the capture of Jerusalem (1:21) by David (2Sa 5:6-8). The Canaanites were still in Gezer (1:29), a city later given to Solomon’s wife (1Ki 9:16). Therefore, the most probable time of writing was sometime before the writing of 2 Samuel.

Time Span:

The record of **Judges** starts at the death of Joshua (1:1) and continues to the rise of Samuel. It is impossible to determine the exact years. Approximately 300 to 350 years are covered. Some judges may have ruled concurrently (e.g. Jephthah and Samson) or overlapped each other.

To Whom Written: The Israelites in general.

Summary:

2:11-23

When Joshua dies, he leaves no successor to the leadership of Israel. Therefore, there was no central government to hold the tribes together. Consequently, “*every man did what was right in his own eyes*” (17:6, 18:1, 19:1, 21:25). The promised land had not been fully conquered (1:21-36) and the Canaanites remained a serious threat to Israel’s power. Much of what took place during this period is not written down for us to read. However, the cycle of events depicts the entire period: a decline in morals, despotism by an oppressor, desperate cries for help, a deliverer comes to assist.

■ **Judges demonstrates in a bold way that faith and obedience cannot be neglected.**

This was an age of war, a period of rough, barbaric lawlessness that was demoralizing for Israel. But worst of all, it was an age of moral and spiritual decline. Israel allowed the influence of Baal to permeate its worship of Jehovah and the conscience of the people was corrupted. Thus, **Judges** stands in contrast with the book of Joshua. Joshua was a period of victory, **Judges** was a period of failure. It demonstrates in a bold way that faith and obedience cannot be neglected.

JUDGES

On Again, Off Again

Key Text:

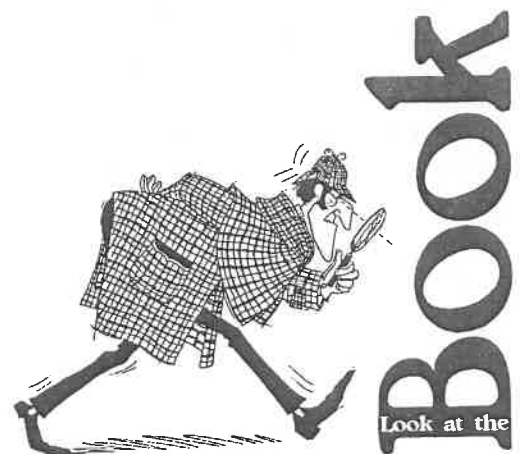
Jdg 2:10-13

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. Then the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord and served the Baals. They forsook the Lord, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of Egypt. They followed and worshiped various gods of the peoples around them. They provoked the Lord to anger because they forsook him and served Baal and the Ashtoreths.

Also, read chapter 21:25.

Theme:

- I. To show that the Lord will not tolerate sin. (This is true in respect to those who are His children as well as those who are not.)
- II. To show that when man repents of sins and obeys Jehovah, God will give him deliverance.
- III. To show that when man is left to his own device, chaos ensues.



Sermon Outline

Forget Me Not

Introduction:

For all the wonder and complexity of the human brain, in spite of man's intelligence and ability to learn, regardless of our capacity for abstract thought and mental gymnastics, many of us have trouble remembering the name of someone we met only moments before! Brag all you want to about your talent for learning . . . it's not what you learn but what you can remember that makes the difference in the end.

Over 50% of what we do hear and pay close attention to is forgotten within minutes.

Why are we so prone to forget? Psychologists tell us that forgetting occurs at an alarming rate. Much of what we "forget" we never even hear because we don't pay attention. Over 50% of what we do hear and pay close attention to is forgotten within minutes. The small piece of memory that remains is likely to be distorted in some way -- what we remember does not always correspond with what actually happened.

The news gets even worse. Sometimes our problem is not forgetfulness but the motivation to recall. The child who is caught jumping on the bed for the tenth time in the last hour may claim to have forgotten his mother's warning. In reality, he didn't forget . . . he just didn't want to remember!

The book of **Judges** is a textbook on human forgetfulness. One of the most interesting themes of this book is the forgetfulness of the Israelites. They "*forgot the Lord their God*" (3:7) and "*did not remember the Lord their God*" (8:34). Perhaps they didn't pay close attention. Perhaps they forgot His words and His ways. Perhaps they just weren't very motivated to remember. Whatever the case, they spent many miserable years proving that man's poor memory affects not only his ability to recall names or anniversaries but to remember his God as well.

Outline:

I. A Pattern is Established

A. Chapter 2: The Template for Judges

1. A Leader Dies (2:7-9).
 - a. So long as Joshua lived, the people served the Lord.
 - b. However, no leader lives forever.
2. Apostasy Occurs (2:10-13)
3. God Punishes (2:14-15)
4. God Saves (2:16)
 - a. New leaders
 - b. Deliverance from enemies
 - c. Period of peace

B. The Pattern Followed Throughout Judges

1. Othniel - 3:7-11
 - a. Joshua dies
 - b. Read 3:7 - Sin
 - c. Cushan - Rishathaim, king of Aram 8 years (Map)
 - d. Othniel - 40 years of peace
2. Ehud - 3:12-30
3. Deborah - 4:1-5:31
4. Gideon - 6:1-8:35
5. Jephthah - 10:6-12:7
6. Sampson - 13:1-16:31

II. Lessons for God's People of All Times

A. Apostasy is the Rule, Not the Exception.

1. We marvel at the sins of the Israelites.
2. Is the New Israel any different from the Old?
3. Apostasy is only a generation away.

B. God Disciplines Those He Loves.

1. We marvel at the patience of God.
 - a. God never gives up on His people.
 - b. When they obey, He blesses; when they rebel, He punishes. No matter what, He acts to draw them closer to Himself.
2. God disciplines his people to bring them back to himself.

C. God Uses Leaders to Restore His People

1. It is always when God raises up a leader that change takes place among his people.
2. God still raises up leaders for his church.

Conclusion:

1. How will we recognize God's leader?
 - a. He will be full of God's spirit.
 - b. He will demand obedience to God.
2. How should we follow such a leader?
 - a. Heart and soul - as they lead us back to God.
 - b. Lead, follow, or get out of the way!

Christ in Judges

There are no specific references to Christ in Judges. However, there does seem to be an allusion of the pre-incarnate Christ, the Word, in passages that relate to the Angel of Jehovah. We do not mean to suggest in any way that Christ is a created being or an angel in submission. **Christ, or the Word, is God.** But *one of the manifestations* of the Word in the Old Testament is in the Angel of Jehovah.

In this dark period of the Judges, the Angel of the Covenant appears to Joshua and states that He is the One who brought them from the land of Egypt and that He had established the covenant with them (2:1). For anyone familiar with the previous history of the Israelites, this person speaking could be none other than **Jehovah**. At His words “the people lifted up their voices and wept...and there they sacrificed to the **Lord**.”

About 150 years later, He appeared to Gideon to call him to his great work of delivering Israel. Gideon did not recognize that this was the **Lord**(6:13, 22). But the reader of Judges is not left to doubt (vss 11 and 14). Gideon brought a burnt offering and a meat offering, and the Angel of the Lord commanded him to lay them upon the rock and He touched the offering with His staff, the Angel did something only God could rightfully do — He accepted the offering. It was only then that Gideon recognized he was in the presence of the **Lord** and had seen Him face to face. Fear came into his heart for he knew this meant death. But the **Lord** assured him that he would not die (vss 22-24).

Thirty years after this event the **Lord** appeared again as the Angel of Jehovah to the wife of Manoah, then again to her and her husband together (13:2-23). Manoah did not recognize the “man” (vs 8) who spoke to them as the Lord (vs 16). When sacrifice was commanded and accepted, they both realized that this was **Jehovah** and experienced the same fear of death Gideon had earlier (vs 22-23). It was during this encounter that they ask the name of the “man.” The Angel said, “Why do you ask my name, seeing it is wonderful?” (vs 18). Literally, He said His name was “incomprehensible” or “wonderful.” Later this name is used by Isaiah (9:6) as a prophetic name for the Messiah. **Thus we are brought face to face with the Lord Jesus Christ in one of His pre-incarnate forms, the Angel of Jehovah.**

Major Lessons

1. We cannot retain sin and serve God.
2. Sin left in the heart becomes a snare.
3. Sin brings punishment.
4. The power that defeats the enemy is Jehovah — not the strength and wisdom of man.
5. Appearances of the Angel of Jehovah or the Angel of the Lord: He appeared to Hagar (Ge 16:7-14), to Abraham (Ge 18:1-33; 22:11-18), to Jacob (Ge 31:11-13), to Moses (Ex 3:2-5; cf. Jn 8:58), to Israel (Ex 14:19; cf. 23:20; 32:34), to Balaam (Nu 22:22-35), to Joshua (Jdg 2:1-5), to Gideon (Jdg 6:11-23), to Manoah (Jdg 13:2-25), to David (1Ch 21:15-17) and to Elijah (1Ki 19:5-7). In Genesis 18, one of the three “men” that appeared to Abraham is repeatedly represented as Jehovah (vss 13, 17, 20, 22-33).
6. God does not always look to men of high morality or perfect character and behavior to be deliverers. But God does call men out that they may act as His servants. As long as they yield to that calling, God speaks, acts, and glorifies His name through them. As soon as men begin to act and speak for themselves, to set themselves up as heroes and tyrants above their fellowmen, they rebel from God. God rules in the affairs of men. For man to govern without Him is folly.
7. The cycles of the book give clear evidence that people are the same in every age. When man strays away from God, he is on his way to disaster.
8. The seven cycles of the book are seen in the following four areas:

Apostasy	relapse into sin
Servitude	retribution for sin
Pleading	repentance from sin
Deliverance	rescue from sin

Outline

- I. Introduction (1:1-3:6)**
- A. From Joshua to Judges (1:1-2:5)
1. Summary of the period after Joshua's death (1:1-8)
 2. Summation of the activities of Judah (1:9-21)
 3. The failure of Ephraim and Manasseh (1:22-29)
 4. The failure of the other tribes (1:30-36)
 5. The angel of the Lord rebukes Israel (2:1-5)
- B. General Religious Characteristic of the Times (2:6-3:6)
1. A remembrance of Joshua's death (2:6-10)
 2. The apostasy of the people (2:11-15)
 3. The rise of the Judges (2:16-23)
 4. Nations left in the land (3:1-6)
- II. The Oppressions and the Judges (3-16)**
- A. Oppressed by Mesopotamia, Delivered by Othniel (3:7-11)
- B. Oppressed by Moabites, Delivered by Ehud (3:12-30)
- C. Oppressed by Philistines, Delivered by Shamgar (3:31)
- D. Oppressed by Canaanites, Delivered by Deborah and Barak (4:1 - 5:31)
1. The rise of Deborah and Barak (4:1-9)
 2. The battle against Sisera (4:10-17)
 3. The death of Sisera (4:18-24)
 4. The Psalm of Deborah and Barak (5:1-31)
- E. Oppressed by Midianites, Delivered by Gideon (6:1-8:32)
1. The oppression by Midianites (6:1-10)
 2. Call and commission of Gideon (6:11-26)
 3. Gideon's fleece (6:27-40)
 4. Selection of the 300 (7:1-8)
 5. Midianites and Amalekites destroyed (7:9-8:21)
 6. Lapse into idolatry (8:22-35)
- F. Abortive Attempt of Abimelech to be King (9:1-57)
1. Abimelech made king conspiracy (9:1-6)
 2. Jotham's fable (9:7-21)
 3. Gaal's plot against Abimelech (9:22-41)
 4. Shechemites destroyed (9:42-49)
 5. Death of Abimelech (9:50-57)
- G. Ammonite Oppression, Delivered by Tola and Jair (10:1-9)
- H. Ammonite Oppression, Delivered by Jephthah (10:10-12:7)
1. Oppressed (10:11-18)
 2. Call of Jephthah (11:1-11)
 3. Negotiations with Ammon (11:12-28)
 4. Vow (11:29-40)
 5. Conflict with Ephraim (12:1-7)
- I. No Oppression, Judged by Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon (12:8-15)
- J. Oppressed by Philistines, Delivered by Samson (13:1-16:31)
1. Birth of Samson (13:1-25)
 2. Marriage of Samson (14:1-20)
 3. Victory and defeat of Samson (15:1-20 to 16:1-22)
 4. Final victory of Samson (16:23-31)
- III. Defeat of Israel Through Idolatry 17**
- IV. Defeat of Israel Through Immorality 18**
- V. Defeat of Israel Through Civil War 19-21**

Small Group Study

Warm-up:

What is one of the funniest remarks you have heard from a child? What is the most complementary thing a teenager has said about you?

Look at the Book

Judges 11:29-40

1. Do you think that the vow Jephthah made was necessary? Why?
2. If you were Jephthah, how would you handle the situation?
 - a. Keep my vow
 - b. Ask God to exempt my daughter
 - c. I would exempt my daughter
 - d. Ask God if I could substitute something else
 - e. Wonder if I had done something wrong
 - f. Curse God for allowing her to come out
3. Why do you think her attitude is so accepting?
4. Do you think that Jephthah actually offered his daughter as a burnt offering? Do you think God would allow this?
5. What do you think verses 37 - 39 indicate about the sacrifice? Why was she weeping?

Looking Closer:

1. Have you ever made a vow to the Lord that you wish you had never made? (If so, will you share it with the group?)
2. Do you think that your commitment to Christ when you became a Christian constitutes a vow?
3. What is the difference between a vow to God, and striking a bargain with God? Can man ever bargain with God?

Looking Around:

Go around the group and have each person share what they want most to happen in their spiritual life.

Background:

Title:

The book takes its name from the chief character of the story, Ruth. In the Old Testament, the name "Ruth" is found only in this book. The Hebrew is RE'UTH, and means "companion" or "friendship."

Author:

Like the book of Judges, the authorship of the book is an unsolvable problem. Several people have been suggested, but the majority say Samuel wrote it. However, this is unlikely because David was well known at the time of writing (4:7, 22), and Samuel had died by the time David was anointed as king (1Sa 25:1).

Date:

It was written sometime before the writing of 2 Samuel and during the time of David. The writer looks back to a former time (1:1), after David's birth (4:22).

The events take place "in the days when the judges ruled" (1:1). The probable placement would be during the oppression by Moab. The setting is in the country of Moab (1:1-18), and then Bethlehem (1:22; 2:23; 3:2, 8, 14, 18; 4:13-16).

Time Span:

It is difficult to determine exactly, but, according to the text, about 11 years (1:4; 4:13-16).

To Whom Written:

The book was written to the Jews in particular, but it is especially significant to everyone because it reveals another non-Israelite in the lineage of the Messiah.

Summary:

In the book of Judges the reader is overwhelmed by battles, bloodshed, and strife. Into this dark arena shines the peace and faithfulness of those still serving Jehovah, and living simple, virtuous lives. The most striking point of this beautiful love story is the sense of God's loving concern in the everyday life of man.

Elimelech takes his Israelite family into the land of Moab to escape the famine. He dies leaving two sons and a wife, Naomi. His two sons marry Moabite women: Orpah and Ruth. The two sons die also, leaving the women to fend for themselves. Naomi decides to return to Palestine. On the way, Orpah decides to return to Moab, but Ruth stays with her mother-in-law. In Bethlehem, Ruth is forced to glean the fields in order to obtain food. By "chance," Ruth gleans from the field of Boaz, Elimelech's near kinsman. By Levirate law, Boaz was under obligation to marry and provide for Ruth. Boaz fulfills his obligation (but with enthusiasm!) and a son is born, Obed. The child Obed becomes the father of Jesse, the grandfather of David, and eventually a forefather of Christ (Mt 1:5-6; Lk 3:31-32).

RUTH

Love Story

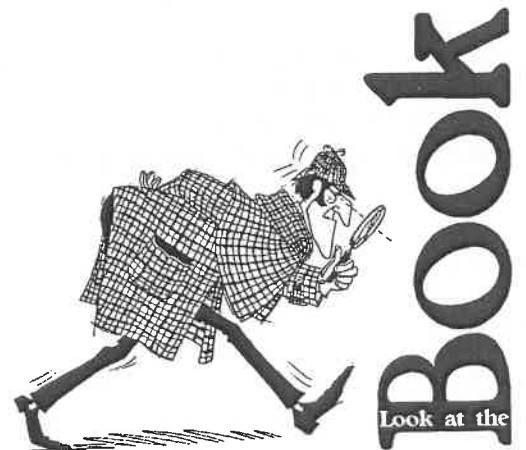
Key Text:

Ru 1:16

But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God."

Theme:

- I. To reveal the lineage of David, and form a bridge to the kings.
- II. To give us a greater appreciation of the lineage of Christ (Mt 1:5-6; Lk 3:31-32)
 - A. Ruth — Boaz
 - B. Obed (4:1-17)
 - C. Jesse
 - D. David
 - E. Christ
- III. To show God's providential care over his plan to bring a savior into the world.
- IV. To indicate that the Gentiles have an important place in God's heart and plans.



Sermon Outline

A Question of Integrity

Introduction:

The picture we get from the book of **Judges** is that Israel is in deep trouble. There is a general breakdown of moral standards and religious practice throughout the land. Most of the people had left Jehovah and were worshiping other gods instead. At least eight references are made to the Israelites forsaking God in favor of the local Canaanite gods. Even the Levites were engaging in a form of idolatry (Jdg 17:5). The Israelites were fighting among themselves over territory and booty and power. There are stories in **Judges** of deception and murder, rape and immorality, human sacrifice and human slaughter. The constant refrain running through **Judges** is, *"Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord . . ."*

It is in this setting that the story of **Ruth** unfolds. *"In the days when the judges ruled"* (Ru 1:1), we find a family moving from Bethlehem to Moab in search of food. The story that follows offers a touching and heartening story of one woman's piety and personal integrity.

Rightness before God is not determined by genealogy or nationality but by the quality of an individual's heart.

That woman is Ruth, a native of Moab and the daughter-in-law of Naomi. Ruth's devotion to Naomi and her sense of honor sets the book of **Ruth** apart from **Judges** -- in the middle of a pig-sty of immorality we find a pearl of virtue and dignity. The fact that Ruth was a foreigner serves only to highlight a theme which will recur throughout the Bible -- rightness before God is not determined by genealogy or nationality but by the quality of an individual's heart. Ruth has so pure a heart and shows herself to be of such integrity, God includes the story of this Moabitess in His Holy Scriptures and involves her in the family tree of both David and the Messiah to come.

Outline:

I. The Setting for Integrity

A. Setting the Stage - Read Ruth 1:1-5

1. There is a famine in Israel (Ru 1:1).
2. The family of Elimelech moves to Moab.
3. Tragedy strikes this family:
 - a. Elimelech dies, leaving Naomi a widow (1:3).
 - b. Naomi's two sons subsequently marry, but they too die within 10 years of their move to Moab (1:4-5).

B. The Plight of Widows in Ancient Times.

1. There was no such thing as Social Security.
 - a. Women survived through the labor of their husbands.
 - b. Widows counted on their sons for support in old age.
 - c. Naomi had neither husband nor son to take care of her.
2. Widows without sons were literally reduced to begging.

II. The Decision for Integrity - Read Ruth 1:6-13

- A. Naomi looks to the future.
- B. Orpah decides to return *"to her people and her gods."*
- C. Ruth commits her future to the care of her mother-in-law.

III. The Cost of Integrity

A. Hard Days in Bethlehem.

1. Naomi goes home, accompanied by her daughter-in-law.
Read Ruth 1:19-21
2. Ruth goes to work, supporting her mother-in-law.
3. This lasts for 2-3 months.

B. Right Choices are Not Always Easy to Live With.

1. Ruth could have been safe in her father's house.
2. Instead, she does manual labor in the fields of a stranger.
3. The reason: **Read Ruth 2:11-12.**

IV. The Reward of Integrity

A. Romance in the Grain Fields.

1. Boaz shows interest in Ruth.
2. Ruth shows interest in Boaz.
3. They marry and live happily ever after.

B. God Takes Care of Those Who Walk Honorably Before Him.

1. **Read Ruth 4:13-17**
2. Boaz gets a wife.
3. Ruth gets a husband.
4. Naomi "has a son" to sustain her in her old age (4:15).

Conclusion: Integrity is never out of style.

Christ in Ruth

The Kinsman - Redeemer (3:9)

The Hebrew word "*GOEL*" is used 13 times in Ruth. This word is variously translated as *kinsman*, *avenger*, *redeemer*. He was the one who, because of his near kinship, had the right to redeem, the responsibility to raise up seed to a deceased brother, and the solemn duty to slay the murderer of his kinsman.

1. He must be *related* by blood to those he redeems (Dt 25:5-10; Jn 1:14; Php 2:5-8; Heb 2:14-15). Christ became one of the human race as a qualified Kinsman. He was God in the flesh.
2. He must be *able* to pay the price of redemption (4:6; 1Pe 1:18-19). Christ was the only one able to pay the price of our redemption. There is salvation in no other.
3. He must be *willing* to redeem (3:11; Eph 5:25-27; Ac 20:28). Christ willingly left all the glory of heaven (2Co 8:9) in order to pay the price of our redemption (1Ti 2:6; Tit 2:14).
4. He must be a willing bridegroom and provider for those he redeems. (Lev 25:25-28; Mt 25:1ff; Jn 3:29; Rev 19:23). Christ is the bridegroom for the church, his bride, and abundantly provides all that is required and more (Eph 5:23-29; 1:3).

Ruth is found in the lineage of Christ (Mt 1:5). At the close of the book a genealogy of David is reviewed for the reader. In it we find the name of Ruth, a Moabite woman, a gentile. This lineage is repeated in the New Testament, connecting the seed of David and the seed of Jesus. It has been suggested that the inclusion of a Gentile indicates that the salvation found in Jesus Christ was not for the Jews only, but for the Gentiles also. Thus the blood of all races and nations flowed through the flesh of Jesus.

The charts of Jesus' ancestry include names of men and women who gave way to sin: Abraham, Jacob, David, Solomon, Manasseh, and Jeconiah - to mention a few whose sins flash before memory at the mention of the name. His family tree includes women such as Tamar the adulteress, Ruth the pagan Gentile, Rahab the harlot (Boaz was the son of Rahab), and Bathsheba, whom David took from her husband Uriah. With such a heritage, the sinlessness of Jesus is all the more marvelous.

Major Lessons

1. One can maintain personal faith in God even when all about there is trouble.
2. The Gentiles (Ruth) are not outside the scope of the redemptive plan.
3. Love should exist toward "in-laws."
4. The responsibilities of inherited obligation (Boaz to Ruth and Naomi) must be taken seriously.
5. God's plan and purpose in redeeming man will be accomplished (Ro 8:28-31).
6. Right choices can change one's relationship to family, and sometimes the course of history.

Moabites

Moab was the district east of the Dead Sea, extending from some distance north of the sea to its southern end. The eastern boundary was indefinite, bordering on the vast Arabian Desert.

The Moabites were of Semitic stock and were kin to the Hebrews, as is indicated by their descent from Lot, the nephew of Abraham (Ge 19:30-37), and by their language which is practically the same as Hebrew. The original inhabitants of Moab were the Emim (Dt 2:10). These were conquered by the Moabites.

The chief deity of Moab was Chemosh, frequently mentioned in the Old Testament. He was the national god of Moab, as Molech was of Ammon, and it is pretty certain that human sacrifices were offered to him (2Ki 3:27). But he was not the only god of Moab, as is indicated in Numbers 25. They had their Baalim like the nations around, as may be inferred from the place-names compounded with Baal, such as Bamoth-baal and Baal-peor.

Outline

- I. **Devotion of Love (1:1-18)**
 - A. A family in need (1:1-2)
 - B. A family in sorrow (1:3-5)
 - C. A family of love (1:6-18)
- II. **Demonstration of Love (1:18-23)**
 - A. Going to Bethlehem (1:18-22)
 - B. Gleaning for food (2:1-23)
 1. Generosity of Boaz (2:1-7)
 2. Comfort of Boaz (2:8-16)
 3. Discovery of kinship (2:17-23)
- III. **Duty of Love (3:1-18)**
 - A. Request for redemption (3:1-9)
 - B. Rights of the near kinsman (3:10-18)
- IV. **Declaration of Love (4:1-22)**
 - A. Boaz before the court (4:1-12)
 - B. Birth of a son (4:13-15)
 - C. Naomi honored (4:16)
 - D. Ruth in the lineage of David (4:17-22)

Bethlehem

Bethlehem is a town five miles south of Jerusalem. It was situated on a hill 2350 feet above sea level. The position is one of natural strength and the Philistines built a garrison there during the days of David (2Sa 23:14) and was fortified by Rehoboam (2Ch 11:6).

Salma, the son of Caleb, is described as the "father of Bethlehem" (1Ch 2:51). It was the place of Rachel's burial (Ge 35:19; 48:7), and the Levites, of the events of Judges 17 and 19, were Bethlehemites.

Ruth settled in Bethlehem with her second husband Boaz, and it is noticeable that from her home she could view the mountains of Moab, her native land. David himself was from this city (1Sa 16:4, 17:15)

Bethlehem figures in prophecy as the natural birth place of the Messiah (Mic 5:2 cf Mt 2:1, 5; Lk 2:4, 15).

Small Group Study

Warm-up:

Share with the group how you feel about "good-byes." How would you describe yourself when it comes to saying "good-bye?"

- a. "cry baby"
- b. "sniffer"
- c. "stoic"
- d. "hard nosed"
- e. "frozen smile"
- f. "blasé"
- g. "happy"

Look at the Book

Ruth 1:14-18

1. Why were Naomi and the two Moabite women returning to the land of Judah?
2. Do you think it was necessary for Naomi to provide husbands for the two daughters-in-law? Why do you think that?
3. What can we learn about the personality of Orpah and Ruth from verses 14-15?
4. After reading verses 15-17, how do you think the statement of Ruth can be taken?
 - a. She is dependant on Naomi.
 - b. She is afraid to "go it" on her own.
 - c. She feels love and concern for Naomi.
 - d. She has experienced a "conversion" to Naomi's God.
 - e. She sees a way to get food for herself.

Looking Closer:

1. If you were an in-law in a similar situation as Orpah and Ruth, would you...
 - a. not feel obligated to help?
 - b. feel obligated to help, but reluctant to do so?
 - c. feel released from the family because of the death of your spouse?
 - d. be glad to help in any way possible?
2. Do you think people today are as concerned as Ruth was for Naomi? Why? Do you think this is a good or bad trend? Why?
3. If you were in Naomi's shoes (see vs 15), would you encourage your in-law to go back to their own god? Why do you think this is so bad? Good?

Looking Around:

Go around the group and let each one share one good thing they will do for their in-laws.

Background:

Title:

The book derives its name from the last judge of Israel, "Samuel." His name means "asked of God," or "God heard" (1:20). Originally 1 & 2 Samuel were one book called 1 Kings. The two books of Kings were also one book called 2 Kings. The present division came with the translation of the Septuagint (LXX) in the second century before Christ.

Author: Read 1 Chronicles 29:29

Most scholars affirm that Samuel wrote the first 24 chapters, and that Nathan the prophet and Gad the seer were the writers of chapters 25 through 31.

Date:

The date of the compilation of the material:

1. It was compiled after the death of David (2Sa 5:5).
2. It was compiled after the reign of Rehoboam for already Judah is separated from Israel in this book (1Sa 27:6).

Time Span:

From the time of Eli to the death of Saul. A time span of about 80 to 90 years.

Summary:

Samuel was used by God to lead Israel when the momentous change was made from the judges to the monarchy. It was a time for delicate and wise leadership. Without this, great turmoil might have destroyed Israel. Three special characters stand out during this period: Samuel (1-8), Saul (8-15) and David (16-31).

The ministry of Samuel marks the beginning of the prophetic office. Others before Samuel spoke with prophetic insight and direction from Jehovah (Dt 18:18), but the prophetic order was founded by Samuel (3:20; 10:5; 19:18-24). It was during this period that the Hebrews demand a king like the nations around them. The real meaning of their demand is stated by God in 8:7. The people had rejected His rule over them. Under God's guidance, the ideal monarchy is set up. The king would observe the law and be guided by the prophets. Saul fails. He sets himself above God's law and rebels (15:9-23). Samuel, under God's direction, anoints David, a man "after God's own heart," to be king (16:1-13).

During this period the providential care and protection of Jehovah over His anointed is demonstrated. The Spirit of the Lord departs from Saul and rests upon David. Jealousy erupts. David is forced to be a wandering outlaw in the hills of Judah. Saul tried several times to destroy David, but his efforts are foiled and David is blessed.

In contrast, David spared the life of Saul, demonstrating his faithful obedience to God. With all his flaws, David never set himself above God's law, and never failed to respect God's prophets...the greatest aim of the book is to tell the history of David.

1 SAMUEL

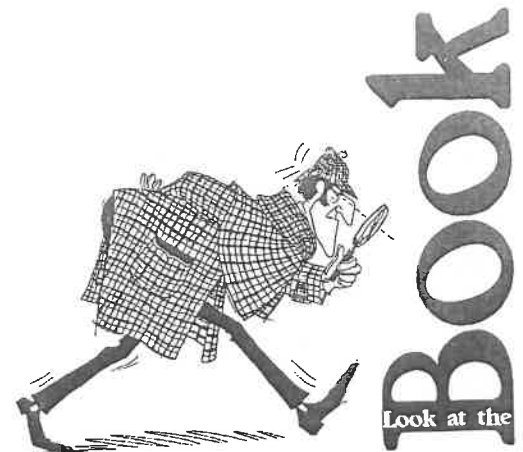
Take Me to Your Leader

Key Text: 1Sa 13:14

But now your kingdom will not endure; the Lord has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of his people, because you have not kept the Lord's command.

Theme:

- I. To show why Israel changed from a theocracy to a monarchy.
- II. To show the moral failure of the priesthood under Eli, the failure of the judges under Samuel, and the beginning failure of the monarch.
- III. To show the divine origin of David's kingship.



Sermon Outline

Long Live the King!

Introduction:

The greatest and most bloody revolutions in history have been fought over issues of leadership. France threw off the yoke of her extravagant monarchy in the revolution of 1789. Thirteen years earlier, the Americans had fought for the right of self-governance. England, Germany and Russia - each in her turn - struggled to determine what form of government would be best. Princes, presidents, prime ministers, and priests have formed governments and attempted to lead nations. It appears that human beings are vitally interested in how they will be lead.

The same is true of the church. Throughout the years, Christendom has struggled with the issue of leadership. During the early centuries, dissatisfaction with local elderships led to the elevation of regional bishops. This eventually led to the establishment of a papacy. In the 16th Century, the Protestant Reformation rejected the leadership of the Pope, and began to move back towards a more Biblical pattern. Today, churches are led by every conceivable form of government: elders, preachers/pastors, congregational democracy, prophets, denominational hierarchies, ad nauseam.

The Israelites struggled over this same issue as well. Many of the conflicts recorded in the Old Testament arise over the matter of government and how the people respond to their leaders. Judges, prophets, priests and kings try their hands at managing the Israelites. From the time of Moses, through the judges, until the anointing of Saul, the children of Israel argue over the best means of providing leaders for themselves.

You would think that, at least when it comes to those who claim to be God's people, we might listen more closely to Him who is our ultimate leader and King. God has always had a plan for providing his people with leadership, a means of transmitting His will and wisdom through agents He has chosen. The book of **1 Samuel** tells of that plan and of our failure to follow it through much of our history.

Outline:

- I. **"Give Us a King"**
 - A. The People Take Matters Into Their Own Hands (1Sa 8)
 1. Samuel is growing old and feeble (vs 1).
 2. He has appointed his sons as judges after him (vss 1-3).
 3. The people ask for a King instead (vss 4-5).
 4. "They have rejected me as their King" (vs 7).
 - B. Saul is Chosen as King (1Sa 9-11)
 1. Saul is chosen by God and anointed by Samuel (9:1-10:8).
 2. Saul is crowned before the people of Israel (10:9-27).
 3. The people acknowledge Saul as King (11).
 - C. Samuel Makes Clear the Issues Involved (1Sa 12)
 1. God has always provided leaders for his people (12:6-11).
 2. By taking matters into their own hands, they have usurped God's authority and rejected him as King (12:12-13).
- II. **God is Responsible for Raising Up Leaders**
 - A. He Provided Leadership for the Wilderness Wanderings
 1. Moses - called by God from the burning bush (Ex 3).
 2. Joshua - commissioned by God (Nu 27:12).
 3. Judges - chosen by God as the need arose.
 4. All of God's leaders were selected, not by elections, succession or contests of strength, but by the will of God.
Raising up leaders was not the people's task, but God's.
 - B. God Continued to Provide Leadership During Samuel's Time
 1. Samuel - God literally raises a leader.
 2. Saul - God continued to choose leaders.
 3. David - Called from the flocks to the throne.
- III. **God Also Takes Responsibility for Rejecting Leaders**
 - A. Eli is a Leader Rejected by God
 1. He condones the wickedness of his sons (1Sa 2:12-30).
 2. God rejects Eli's leadership and promises to raise up a "faithful priest" (1Sa 2:35).
 - B. Saul is a Leader Rejected by God
 1. He disobeys God's explicit commands (1Sa 13:7b-13).
 2. God rejects Saul's leadership and promises to appoint a new leader (13:14).
- IV. **Lessons on Leadership for God's People Today**
 - A. God is Our Leader - All Others Exercise "Borrowed Authority" and must Follow Even as they Lead.
 - B. Leadership Depends on the Will of God.
 1. God must be allowed to raise up leaders among his people.
 2. God must also be allowed to reject leaders who no longer fulfill their function.
 - C. To Follow God's Leaders is to Follow God; to Rebel Against His Leaders is to Reject Him as our King.

Christ in 1 Samuel

The Lord of hosts (1:3 with Isa 6:1-3; Jn 7:41; and Isa 8:13-14 with 1Pe 2:5-8). (Used over 300 time in the Old Testament) It is a title used to express that all created agencies and forces are under the leadership and dominion of Jehovah (Isa 45:2). In Isaiah it is the "Lord of hosts" who is "holy," who shall become a sanctuary," but who Israel shall stumble over. Peter refers this verse to none other than Jesus.

The Lord will judge (2:10 with Mt 25:31-32; Lk 1:51-55). Functions of judgment are usually assigned to the Father. However, Christ is expressly called "the judge" (Ac 10:42; 2Ti 4:8). If we add the passages in which "judgment" describes His activity (Ac 17:31; 2Ti 4:1; 1P:e 4:5; 1Co 4:4; Ro 14:9) or in which reference is made to His "judgment seat" (2Co 5:10), we see how consistently this office is ascribed to Jesus. The Gospels clearly portray Jesus as judging (Mt 25:1-13, 31-46; Jn 5:27). Christ Jesus was the judge over Israel. He is our Judge today. He will be our Judge on the "last day."

The horn of His anointed (2:10 with Lk 1:69). This is the first time the word "Messiah" is used. *Christos* is the verbal adjective used in the LXX to translate the Hebrew *mashiah*. Messiah means "anointed one," which in different forms was used in the Old Testament of the appointment of kings, the patriarchs, the people, and, above all, the seed of David through whom God would deliver and rule His people.

Possible Types

1. Samuel, who functions as prophet, priest, and judge, shows certain similarities to Jesus. While no New Testament application is drawn from Samuel's life, a few points serve to heighten our impression of Samuel. The birth of both was forefold to their mothers (1:17; Lk 1:31). Both of them were found early in the House of the Lord (1:24ff; Lk 2:41ff). Both spoke the Word of God (3:10ff; Jn 12:49). Both were men of prayer (7:5; 12:23; Lk 6:12, et al.). Both trained others to follow in their steps (19:20; Mk 3:14). As few other men in either Testament, Samuel typified Christ's work as prophet (9:19; Ac 3:22-240, priest (10:8; Heb 8:1), and judge (7:15; Ac 17:31).
2. David as the Shepherd/King of Israel. (The exact type which David demonstrates will be addressed later.)

Major Lessons

1. There is a high cost when we reject God's leadership (8).
2. God will provide for the leadership of His people (9:15ff and 10:1).
3. The Spirit of God changes a willing heart (10:9 and 10:6).
4. God does not look upon the outward appearance, but upon the heart (16:7).
5. To obey God is better than all the sacrifice we care to offer (15:22-23). Disobedience is not condoned by partial obedience. Unless obedience regards the whole will of God, it is not true obedience.
6. No matter how great a person may be, he can be replaced. Consider Eli and Saul (13:14).
7. The Failure of Eli (2 - 6).
 - a. He failed to qualify as priest (Nu 25:11-13).
 - b. He failed to discipline his sons (3:13).
 - c. He failed to protect the ark (4-6).
8. No challenge is so great that it cannot be defeated when God is with you (17).
 - a. David was on God's side.
 - b. David fought in God's Strength.
 - c. David became the conqueror.
9. Jealousy is often caused by the good things (18:7-8).
 - a. The wicked are often jealous of a good man's popularity.
 - b. The wicked are often terrified by a good man's security.
 - c. The wicked are often defeated by a good man's valor.
10. Do not consult with mediums or witches to obtain information about the future (28).

Outline

- I. The Last Judge of Israel (1:1-7:17)**
- A. Samuel's Birth (1:1-2:11)
 - B. Samuel at Shiloh (2:12-3:21)
 - C. Samuel as Judge (4:1-7:17)
 - 1. The ark is taken (4:1-7:17)
 - 2. The fall of Eli's house (4:12-22)
 - 3. The ark among the nations (5:1-6:21)
 - 4. The victories under Samuel (7:1-17)
- II. The First King of Israel is Selected (8:1-31:13)**
- A. The Demand of the People for a King (8:1-22)
 - B. The Designation by God of Saul to be King (9:1-25)
 - C. Divine Confirmation of Saul as King (9:26-10:16)
 - D. Declaration and Anointing of Saul as King (10:17-27)
 - E. Confirmation by Israel of Saul (11:1-15)
 - F. Confirmation by Samuel of Saul (12:1-25)
- III. The Beginning of Saul's Reign (13:1-15:35)**
- A. The Successful War against the Philistines (13:1-5)
 - B. The Wrongly Offered Sacrifice of Saul (13:6-23)
 - C. Jonathan's Bold Attack on the Philistines (14:1-23)
 - D. Saul's Rash Curse and its Consequences (14:24-46)
 - E. Saul's Disobedience and Rejection by God (15:1-35)
- IV. The Decline of Saul and the Rise of David (16:1-31:13)**
- A. The Early Days of David (16:1-20:42)
 - 1. Anointing of David to be king (16:1-23)
 - 2. Defeat of Goliath (17:1-58)
 - 3. Introduction of David to Saul's court (18:1-16)
 - 4. Saul's artful attempts to slay David (18:17-20:42)
 - a. David and the Philistines (18:17-30)
 - b. David and the servants of Saul (19:1-7)
 - c. Michal helps David to escape (19:18-17)
 - d. David in Samuel's house (19:18-24)
 - e. Turning a feast into a trap (20:1-42)
 - B. The Outlaw Years of David (21:1-27:12)
 - 1. Provisions from the priest of Nob (21:1-9)
 - 2. Fear and feigning madness at Gath (21:10-15)
 - 3. Collects a cohort of men at Adullam (22:1-5)
 - 4. Priests of Nob are slain by Saul (22:6-20)
 - 5. David rescues the city of Keilah (23:1-13)
 - 6. David is encouraged by Jonathan (23:14-18)
 - 7. David is betrayed but escapes (23:19-28)
 - 8. David spares Saul's life at Engedi (23:29-24:22)
 - 9. Samuel dies (25:1a)
 - 10. David encounters Nabal and Abigail (25:1b-44)
 - 11. David spares Saul's life again (26:1-25)
 - 12. David flees to the Philistines (27:1-12)
 - C. Saul's Downfall in Israel (28:1-31:13)
 - 1. Saul and the witch of Endor (28:3-25)
 - 2. David leaves the Philistines (29:1-11)
 - 3. David defeats the Amalekites (30:1-31)
 - 4. The fall of the house of Saul (31:1-13)

Small Group Study

Warm-up:

If you had just been elected president of the United States, what three things would you tell the nation you would like to accomplish?

Look at the Book

1 Samuel 16

1. Why do you think Saul would want to kill Samuel, a priest and prophet of God?
2. Why do you think the elders of the city came out trembling to meet Samuel? Do you think that this should be the reaction of today's leaders to God's prophets?
3. How do you think the seven sons of Jesse felt when David, the "runt of the bunch" was anointed?
 - a. rejected
 - b. happy for David
 - c. angry at Samuel
 - d. ready to follow David as king
4. What does the writer mean by "the Spirit of the Lord came upon David"? Is this something different from what happens when one becomes a Christian? How?
5. What do you think is the significance of verse 19? Do you think "the evil spirit" was a demon? Why? Do you think "the evil spirit" was Saul's own mistress? Why?
6. Is there a difference between the Spirit "coming upon" someone and the "indwelling" of the Spirit? What is the difference?

Looking Closer:

1. How would you react if you had just been anointed king?
 - a. proud
 - b. humble
 - c. afraid
 - d. unworthy
 - e. powerful
 - f. "Why me?"
 - g. "Not me!"
 - h. incompetent
 - i. competent
2. How does one receive God's Holy Spirit today? Does that make a difference in your life? How?
3. Can you lose God's Holy Spirit? How would you react if God's Spirit did leave you?
4. How do you think you would know when the Holy Spirit comes into your life? Why?
 - a. by miraculous gifts
 - b. by sensations of peace
 - c. by tongue speaking
 - d. by revelation of the word
 - e. by personal feelings
 - f. by fruit borne in your life

Looking Around:

Go around the group and let everyone share one work they would like the Spirit to do in their lives.

Background:

Title:

2 Samuel is a result of the division made by the Septuagint and the Latin Vulgate. It was originally known as the second division of the book of 1 Kings. Our English Bibles have used the titles from the Old Hebrew Bible and retained the divisions of the Septuagint and Vulgate translations.

Author:

See **1 Samuel** notes. The author of **2 Samuel** may well have drawn his material from Samuel's own words and those of the prophets who followed him. He knew some of David's poems (2Sa 1:19-27, 22; 2:51; 23:1-7).

Date: See **1 Samuel** notes.

Time Span:

From the death of Saul to the time just prior to the death of David. Approximately 40 years.

Summary:

Saul, Jonathan, and Samuel are now dead and David mourns the death of Saul and Jonathan. David is anointed as king and establishes his capital at Hebron. Later it is moved to Jerusalem when he begins to reign over all Israel. The lives of Biblical heroes are "open books" and their defeats, failures, and sins are recorded along with their victories. David's life is no exception. In his early life as king, he triumphs over the puppet king Ish-Bosheth, he captures the hill of Zion from the Jebusites, he recovers the ark of God, and he receives a covenant from God that David's seed would rule on the throne of Israel forever. Still, no matter how great the leader, temptation is still a problem. David sins against God, Uriah, and himself when he commits adultery with Bathsheba. This leads to a series of "cover-up" moves by David which are "uncovered" by Nathan the prophet. David repents, but still suffers the consequence of his sin.

Absalom's rebellion is another sad chapter in David's life. As soon as this rebellion is put down, a civil war erupts. The ten northern tribes under a man named Sheba revolt against David and the two tribes of Benjamin and Judah. Joab defeats the rebels and David is victorious.

Prophets will extol David's leadership, and point to a time when David, a figure of the messiah, shall reign forever.

In later years, as more and more men prove themselves to be unfit to rule, the people of God will look back to David as their great ruler. Prophets will extol David's leadership, and point to a time when David, a figure of the messiah, shall reign forever.

2 SAMUEL

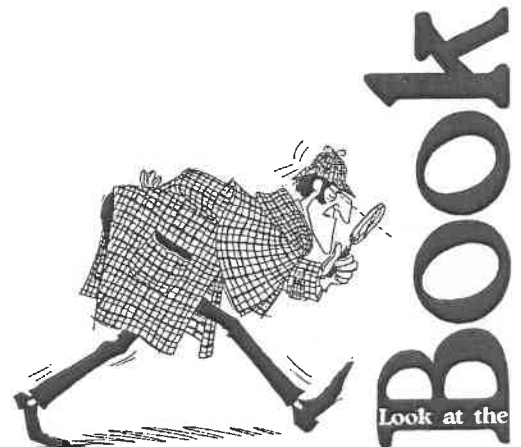
The Best of Times

Key Text: **2Sa 7:12-13**

When your days are over and you rest with our fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

Theme:

- I. **2 Samuel shows the establishment of David's rule over a consolidated Israel with Jerusalem as its capital.**
- II. **2 Samuel shows the success of David as king, and that he was a man after God's own heart.**



Sermon Outline

In Search of Excellence

Introduction:

- A. Brief Overview of Israel's Military History
 1. Joshua - Secured Canaan for the Israelites
 2. Judges - Protected what Joshua had conquered, but did not expand the borders of the kingdom of Israel
 3. Saul - More in the mold of the Judges than Joshua. Protection of borders rather than expansion
- B. A Look at David's Conquests in 2 Samuel
 1. Securing a capitol city - Jerusalem (2Sa 5:6-10)
 2. A listing of David's successes (2Sa 8)
 - a. Expanding western border
 - b. Expanding southern and eastern borders
 - c. Expanding northern border

There were many great men in Israel's past. Noah was a great man of action. Abraham was a great man of faith. Joshua was a great soldier. There were several good and noble judges. But when it came to "success" in expanding the kingdom of God, nobody can measure up to David.

- C. David Enjoyed Success in all his Efforts.
 1. The Bible describes him as "successful."
 - a. **Read 1Sa 18:5, 12-16, 30**
 - b. The meaning of Hebrew *sakal* - to be prudent or wise
 2. Whatever David did, he carried off with competence, wisdom and success.

As we study David today, keep in mind that this is more than an exercise in exegesis or a drill in historical biography. The parallels between the situation in the time of David and the church today are striking and challenging.

1. In both cases, the kingdom had been established long in the past.
2. In both cases, a much larger kingdom had been promised than was actually realized.
3. In both cases, the people of God live below their potential.
4. In both cases, the problem lay squarely in the lack of daring, visionary leadership.

And he became more and more powerful, because the Lord God Almighty was with him. -- 2Sa 5:10

Outline:

- I. The Reasons for David's Success
 - A. God was responsible for the Successes of David
 1. **Read 2Sa 5:10**
 2. **Read 2Sa 7:8-9**
 3. Behind the successes of David stood a God who blessed David's efforts, protected David from harm, and ensured that success followed every action David took
 - B. David was a Man after God's Own Heart
 1. Direct passages relating to David's character
 2. Qualities which endeared David to God:
 - a. Integrity - For the most part, David lived by his beliefs.
 - b. Tender Conscience - David, Bathsheba, Nathan (2Sa 12)
 - c. Close Relationship with God

David loved to worship God, sing His praises, pray to Him, and spend time in His presence. He loved God. He loved God's word. He loved God's house. He loved God's laws.

Note: Although such characteristics are always necessary to do great things in God's kingdom, they are not always sufficient. There have been many people who have responded to God with integrity and conscientiousness and intimacy, but who have not done great things to advance the kingdom of God. Boaz was a good man, but he was no David. Samuel was a great man of God, but he was not the leader David was. Even Job, for all his righteousness, isn't known for his ability to accomplish great things. Something more is required of people before they can be used to "succeed" in expanding the borders of the kingdom.

II. David and the Capacity for Risk

- A. David was a Risk-taker by Nature
 1. Playing the mad-man at Gath (1Sa 21:10-15)
 2. Sneaking into Saul's camp (1Sa 26:6ff).
- B. David was also a Risk-taker by Faith
 1. David was willing to risk his life - 1Sa 17
 2. David was willing to risk his position - 1Sa 24 & 26
 - a. Saul tried a number of times to kill David
 - b. David refused to kill Saul even when he had opportunities
 - c. **Read 1Sa 26:9-11**
 3. David was willing to risk his dignity - 2Sa 6:12-13

Conclusion: Are there any "Davids" in the church today?

1. God's church needs men and women who are close to His heart - people of integrity, conscience and devotion.
2. God's church also needs some riskers - those who add to their good hearts the willingness to risk life or position or dignity so as to be obedient to God.

Topics

Christ in 2 Samuel

The Establishment of the Davidic Kingdom 2Sa 7:11-16

1. David desires to build God a "house," but is denied and told that God will build David a house (1-11).
2. The house of David will be built while David lies (dead) with the fathers (7:12; 1Ki 2:10). Therefore, David will be in the tomb when his house is built (Ac 2:29, 34).
3. It would be through the seed of David that the kingdom would be established (7:12; Am 9:11; Hos 3:5). **Christ, as the seed of David, established the kingdom** (Lk 1:31-33; Ac 2:29-31, 15:12-18, 13:22-23).
4. It would be an everlasting kingdom (7:13, 16; Da 2:44, 7:13-14; Ps 145:13; Isa 9:7; Mic 4:7). **Christ established this kingdom** (Mt 16:18-19; Lk 1:33; Heb 12:28; Col 1:13-14; Mk 9:1; Ac 28:20-23).
5. The seed of David will be the Son of God (7:14; Ps 89:26-27). **Christ Jesus is that seed** (Heb 1:5; Ro 1:3-4).
6. The loving kindness of God will not depart from this seed (vs 14, 15; Ps 89:30-37). **Christ saves** (Ro 5:8-9, 17-21; Eph 2:8-9; Tit 3:4-7).

Major Lessons

1. Strong spiritual leadership comes by individuals who have given themselves over to God (2Sa).
2. Weak spiritual leadership comes when individuals fail to yield themselves to God (2Sa).
3. God demands that His word be obeyed (2Sa 6).
4. The presence of God brings blessings to a spiritual house (2Sa 6:11).
5. Leaders who know God, act like God. They are kind and demonstrate love (2Sa 9).
6. No individual is beyond committing sin (2Sa 11).
7. "Nathans" are needed to point out the sins of others in order to bring about repentance (2Sa 12).
8. The righteous lament even the death of those who oppose them (2Sa 1, 3 19).
9. All victories, great and small, are of the Lord's doing, and not ours (2Sa 22).

These are the last words of David:

...The Spirit of the Lord spoke through me;
his word was on my tongue.
The God of Israel spoke,
the Rock of Israel said to me:
"When one rules over men in righteousness,
when he rules in the fear of God,
he is like the light of morning at sunrise on a cloudless morning,
like the brightness after rain that brings the grass from the earth."
Is not my house right with God?
Has he not made with me an everlasting covenant,
arranged and secured in every part?

-- 2 Samuel 23: 1-8

Outline

I. David's Lament Over Saul & Jonathan (1:1-27)

- A. News of Saul's Death (1:1-16)
- B. Odes for Saul and Jonathan (1:17-27)

II. David's Reign as King in Jerusalem (2:1-5:25)

- A. Rival Kings and Conflict with Abner (2:1-4:12)
 - 1. David proclaimed king of Hebron (2:1-7)
 - 2. Ish-Bosheth made king by Abner (2:8-11)
 - 3. Fight and pursuit of Abner (2:12-32)
 - 4. Sons born to David (3:1-5)
 - 5. Division of Ish-Bosheth and Abner (3:6-21)
 - 6. Abner is killed by Joab (3:22-39)
 - 7. Ish-Bosheth killed by Baanah and Recab (4:1-12)
- B. Ruler Grows in Strength (5:1-25)
- C. Ark of God is Returned to the City of David (6:1-23)
- D. The Temple is Planned by David (7:1-17)
- E. David's Prayer and Thanksgiving (7:18-29)
- F. Surrounding Nations Taken (8:1-18)
- G. Mephibosheth Treated with Kindness (9:1-13)
- H. Conflict with the Ammonites and Syrians (10:1-11:1)

III. David's Sin with Bathsheba; Nathan's Rebuke (11:2-12:25)

- A. The Act of Adultery (11:1-5)
- B. Attempts to Cover It Up (11:6-27)
- C. The Announcement by Nathan (12:1-25)
- D. The Death of the Child Conceived in Sin (12:15-23)
- E. The Birth of Solomon (12:24-25)

IV. David's conflict with Absalom (12:26-18:33)

- A. Rabbah is Taken (12:26-31)
- B. Amnon Rapes his Sister Tamar (13:1-22)
- C. Absalom Slays Amnon and Flees (12:23-39)
- D. Woman of Tekoa Pleads for Absalom (14:1-20)
- E. Joab Sent to Bring Absalom to Jerusalem (14:21-33)
- F. Absalom Steals the People and David Flees (15:1-37)
- G. Mephibosheth Cheated and David Cursed (16:1-14)
- H. Absalom's Counselors (16:15-17:14)
- I. The Conflict Progresses (17:15-29)
- J. David's Battle with Absalom (18:1-18)
- K. David Mourns for Absalom (18:19-33)
- L. David's Return and Sheba's Revolt (19:1-20:26)

V. The Last Days of David's Reign (21:1-24:25)

- A. Famine and Victory Over the Philistines (21:1-22)
- B. Song of Thanksgiving (22:1-51)
- C. Last Words of David (23:1-7)
- D. The Mighty Men of David (23:8-39)
- E. Numbering of the People (24:1-9)
- F. Punishment of David for the Census (24:10-17)
- G. Threshing Floor of Araunah (24:18-25)

Small Group Study

Warm-up:

Describe a time in your life when you thought you were doing the right thing, only to find out that you were doing what was wrong.

Look at the Book

2 Samuel 6:1-10

1. Why was it necessary for a cart to carry the ark of God?
 - a. It was heavy.
 - b. It was too sacred or holy to be carried in other ways.
 - c. It was *not* necessary. In fact, it was against God's will.
 - d. It was commanded by God.
2. If you had been in Uzzah's and Ahio's place, what would you have done when the cart started to tip over?
 - a. run, so as not to be crushed
 - b. yelled for the oxen to stop
 - c. done just as Uzzah did
 - d. screamed at Ahio to watch where he was going
3. How do you think Ahio reacted when Uzzah was struck down?
4. What do you think made this act of Uzzah an "irreverent act?"
5. What do you think of David's reaction to the Lord's anger against Uzzah?

Looking Closer:

1. Do you think Uzzah would say that God was unjust in his punishment? Why?
2. Are there things in your life that should have caused God to react in a similar manner as He did with Uzzah? Why do you think that?
3. Do you ever become angry with God because of His judgments on man? How do you overcome that feeling?
4. Does this action by God (against Uzzah) help you respect God's authority? How?

Looking Around:

Go around the group and share one way you have seen them obeying and respecting God.

Background:

Title:

Derived from the Greek translation, **PSALMOI**. The Hebrews called it "The Book of Praises" or simply "Praises." The word "Psalms" expresses the character of the whole collection of songs and poems.

Many of the psalms have their own title which were not part of the original text, but were appended to them sometime before the Septuagint version was translated (2nd Century B.C.). The major descriptive titles are included below:

- Maschil - a wise or instructive saying (13 psalms)
- Mikhtam - to cover, or atone (6 psalms)
- Mizmor - psalm played with an instrument (57 psalms)
- Shir - song (41 psalms)
- Tephillah - prayer (5 psalms)
- Tehillah/hallelu - praise (18 psalms)

Date:

It is impossible to date many of the psalms, but the majority were written between 1000 and 430 B.C., covering a period of 570 years. If Moses (1410 B.C.) is included as the author of Psalm 90, it would increase the time span to about 1000 years.

Author:

Scholars have assigned 129 of the Psalms to 12 different men. About 41 Psalms have not been assigned to an author.

Moses - 1	Sons of Korah - 10	Jeremiah - 1
David - 75	Heman - 1	Haggi - 1
Solomon - 2	Ethan - 1	Zachariah - 1
Assaph - 12	Hezekiah - 15	Ezra - 1

Summary:

The **Psalms** are the finest and greatest collection of poems and songs in the world. They command our close attention. As one reads through these songs, he cannot help but be impressed with their freshness and enduring quality. They take the spirit of the reader to the depths of despair and to the heights of exhilaration because of their spiritual intensity. No matter what the circumstance of the writer, he always magnifies, praises, and extols God. Each psalm reveals a personal relationship with Jehovah.

In these songs and poems, comfort is found, strength to endure is received, and wisdom to enlighten the mind can be obtained. There are dominant moods of hope, forgiveness and thanksgiving on every page. The **Psalms** are calculated to lead and encourage worship to God.

Although the **Psalms** touch the strings of the heart, they do not neglect the intellect -- important teachings are addressed and the Word of God, (the testimony, the law) is extolled as in no other book of the Bible. The **Psalms** have the honor of being quoted in the New Testament more than any portion of the Old Testament. It has been said that "the early church required their minister to know the Psalms by heart." (Dickson, pp. 951)

PSALMS

The Song Book

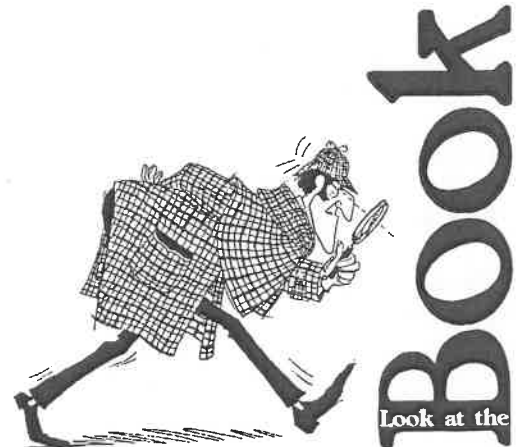
Key Text:

Ps 19:14

May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.

Theme:

- I. The Psalms express the human heart's joys, pains, pleadings, sorrows, and praises to God.
- II. The Psalms glorify the name of God and encourage worship to him.
- III. The Psalms are a means of providing Israel with songs of praise by which to worship God.
- IV. The Psalms enlighten the mind with teachings communicated by songs and poems.
- V. The Psalms give voice to the yearning in the heart for the Messiah to come and redeem Israel.



Sermon Outline

"Let us come before him with thanksgiving"

Call to Worship

1. Introduction to worship period. The use of Psalms to guide us in this worship experience.
2. Psalm 100
3. Psalm 95:1-7
4. Song: *All People that on Earth do Dwell* (#35) *
5. Song: *Let the Words of My Mouth* (#669)

Period of Praise

1. Psalm 103:1-5, 8-14 (Responsive Reading:
The congregation reads aloud the text in **bold print**)

**Praise the Lord, O my soul;
all my inmost being, praise his holy name.**

**Praise the Lord, O my soul,
and forget not all his benefits -**

*who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases,
who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with
love and compassion,
who satisfies your desires with good things so that your
youth is renewed like the eagle's. . . .*

**The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to
anger, abounding in love.**

*He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger
forever;*

**He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us
according to our iniquities.**

*For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his love for those who fear him;
as far as the east is from the west,*

so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

*As a father has compassion on his children,
so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him;*

*for he knows how we are formed,
he remembers that we are dust.*

2. Song: *Hallelujah, Praise Jehovah* (#148)
3. Psalm 8
4. Song: *O Lord, Our Lord* (#397)
5. Song: *O Praise the Lord* (#399)

Confession of Sin

1. Prayer: Psalms 63:1-4; 51:1-4a, 10-12, 15-17; 130.
2. Song: *Flee as a Bird* (#465)

Thanksgiving for Deliverance

1. Psalm 121
2. Song: *Unto the Hills* (#602)
3. Song: *The Lord's My Shepherd* (#530)

Psalms of the Messiah

1. Psalms 31:5a; 41:9; 91:11-12; 110:1; 118:22-23.
2. Psalm 22:1-11, 14-19.
3. The Lord's supper.

Word of Teaching

1. Song: *The Statutes of the Lord are Right* (Handout)
2. Psalm 19:7-11 (Responsive Reading:
The congregation reads aloud the text in **bold print**)

*The law of the Lord is perfect,
reviving the soul.*

*The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy,
making wise the simple.*

*The precepts of the Lord are right,
giving joy to the heart.*

*The commands of the Lord are radiant,
giving light to the eyes.*

*The fear of the Lord is pure,
enduring forever.*

*The ordinances of the Lord are sure
and altogether righteous.*

*They are more precious than gold,
than much pure gold.*

*they are sweeter than honey,
than honey from the comb.*

*By them is your servant warned;
in keeping them there is great reward.*

3. Psalm 119:9-16
4. Psalm 15

Concluding Praise

1. Song: *Praise the Lord* (#427)
2. ". . . a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise."

* Song numbers refer to Songs of the Church,
Alton H. Howard (ed.), West Monroe, LA:
Howard Publishers, 1977.

Topics

Christ in Psalms

1. Psalms which are explicitly messianic: 2, 8, 16, 22, 35, 45, 69, 78, 89, 91, 110, 118, 132.
2. Those Psalms describing the Messiah:
 - a. **He is Eternal** 102:25-27 (Heb 1:10-12)
 - b. **He is God** 45:6-7 (Heb 1:8)
 - c. **He is Creator** 19:1-6, 146:6 (Jn 1:1-4; Ac 4:24; Heb 1:1-4)
 - d. **He is Lord** 110:1 (Mt 22:44; Mk 12:36; Lk 20:42-43; Ac 2:34-35; Heb 1:113)
 - e. **He is King of Glory** 24:7-10 (1Co 2:8)
 - f. **He is King** 2:6, 48:1-3 and 8, 89:19-29 (Mt 5:35, 27:11; Rev 19:16; Col 1:15,18; 1Ti 6:15)
 - g. **He is the Son of God** 2:7, 89:27 (Ac 13:33; Heb 1:5, 5:5; Mt 22:45)
 - h. **He is Priest** 110:4 (Heb 5:6,10, 6:20, 7:17)
 - i. **He is Shepherd** 23:1 (Jn 10:11; 1Pe 2:25)
 - j. **He is the Chief Cornerstone** 118:22 (Mt 21:42; Mk 12:10-11; Ac 4:11; Eph 2:20; 1Pe 2:7)
 - k. **He is the Holy One** 16:10 (Ac 2:27; Lk 4:34)
 - l. **He is Man** 8:4-6, 22:22 (Heb 2:5-15)
3. Those Psalms referring to the Messiah's life with man:
 - a. **He came in the name of the Lord** 118:26 (Mt 21:9)
 - b. **He commanded nature** 107:23-32, 65:7, 89:9 (Mt 8:23-26; Lk 8:22-25)
 - c. **He was zealous** 69:9 (Jn 2:17)
 - d. **He came to do God's will** 40:6-8 (Heb 10:5-10)
 - e. **He taught in parables** 78:2 (Mt 13:35)
 - f. **He brought deliverance** 106:10 (Lk 1:71)
 - g. **He gave life to the world** 78:24-25 (Jn 6:31-36)
 - h. **He was hated without cause** 35:19, 69:4 (Jn 15:23-25)
4. Those Psalms referring to the Messiah's death:
 - a. **Betrayed** 41:9 (Lk 22:47; Jn 13:18)
 - b. **Accused by false witnesses** 35:11 (Mk 14:57)
 - c. **Forsaken by God** 22:1 (Mt 27:46)
 - d. **Scorned and mocked** 22:7-8 (Lk 23:35)
 - e. **Given vinegar and gall** 69:21 (Mt 27:34)
 - f. **Clothes gambled away** 22:18 (Mt 27:35-36)
 - g. **Committed His spirit to the Father** 31:5 (Lk 23:46)
 - h. **None of His bones were broken** 34:20 (Jn 19:33-37)
 - i. **Pierced** 22:16 (Jn 20:25,27)
5. Those Psalms referring to the Messiah's resurrection and ascension:
 - a. **Psalms as a body** (Lk 24:44-49)
 - b. **He was not abandoned to Hades** 16:8-11 (Ac 2:23-32, 13:33-36)
 - c. **He ascended on high** 68:18; 110:1 (Mt 26:64; Mk 16:19; Rev 8:34; Eph 1:20, 4:8; Col 3:1)
 - d. **Angels worship Him** 97:7 (Heb 1:6)
 - e. **His throne endures forever** 45:6 (Heb 1:8)
6. Those referring to the Messiah as Judge: 134:14 (Heb 10:30)

Two special problem areas will be noticed by most Christian readers of the psalms. One is the self-justification of the psalmists. The other is their tendency to call down and describe the most terrible vengeance on their enemies. What could be their motive for such words? They knew that no man was perfect by God's standards; and they were taught to behave in a loving manner to others and to their enemies (Lev 19:17-18; Ex 23:4-5). Nor did the Law license a retaliatory mind-set. There were boundaries. The following suggestions might be helpful.

Self-justification.

1. The psalmist is claiming comparative, not absolute righteousness (i.e. comparison with other people, not God's standards). A good man may sin and yet be a good man. But there is all the difference in the world between those who strive to do the right thing and those who set aside God's law.
2. The psalmist very often pictures himself as a lawyer presenting his case before God the Judge. However we may dislike the tone, from the point of view of the indignant plaintiff, he is unquestionably "in the right."

Cursing and Vengeance.

1. The first concern is holiness. The psalmists knew God as One who is pure and would not countenance evil. This is what motivates their call for vengeance on the wicked.
2. The psalmists recognize that right cannot triumph without the actual overthrow of evil and punishment of the wrong.
3. The psalmists never takes the law into his own hands; no Inquisition. Vengeance is always seen as God's function, and his alone.

Outline

Book One: 1-41
Book Two: 42-72
Book Three: 73-89
Book Four: 90-106
Book Five: 107-150

Classification of the Psalms:

1. Prayers 17, 86, 90, 102, 142
2. Thanksgiving 30, 31, 75, 105, 107, 118, 136, 138
3. Cries for mercy 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 106, 130, 143
4. Petition 3, 4, 7, 12, 13, 17, 25, 31, 35, 54, 88, 132
5. Adoration 89, 103, 104, 115, 117, 135, 145-150
6. Calls for judgment 7, 35, 55, 58, 59, 69, 70, 83, 109, 129, 137, 140
7. Missionary 67, 100, 117
8. Immortality 16, 17, 49, 73
9. Nature 8, 19, 29, 93, 104
10. Wisdom 37, 49, 73, 111
11. Royal 2, 20, 21, 24, 45, 60, 61, 63, 72, 101, 110
12. Voice of the Assembly 118, 122, 124, 129
13. Psalms used in the Hebrew ritual on the successive days of the week 24, 48, 82, 94, 81, 93, 92.
14. Historical 3, 7, 18, 30, 34, 51, 52, 54, 56, 57, 59, 60, 78, 105, 106, 114, 142
15. Hallelujah Psalms 105-107, 111-118, 135, 136, 146-150
16. Sung at Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles 113-118
17. Songs of the Ascent 120-134

Duplication in the Psalms:

Ps 14 and Ps 53
(differs only in the use of the name of God)

Ps 15 and Ps 24:1-6
(in thought and phraseology)

Ps 57:7-11 and Ps 108:1-5

Ps 60:5-12 and Ps 108:6-13

Small Group Study

Warm-up:

Did you ever try to write a poem or song? What made it difficult to compose? Share with the group a line of poetry you once memorized?

Look at the Book

Psalms 62:1-12

1. How many times is the word "alone" or "only" used in these passages? What word does it modify? What do you think the writer is trying to convey?
2. Who do you think is being addressed in verses 3-4?
3. Why do you think they are trying to pull this person down?
 - a. They desire his position.
 - b. They know he is weak and they want to take advantage of him.
 - c. They perceive him to be a pushover.
 - d. They do not like this individual.
 - e. They fear this person will dominate them.
 - f. They are testing God's protection of this person.
4. What do you think is happening in the last part of verse 4?
5. What is the writer trying to convey in verse 9?

Looking Closer:

1. Have you ever experienced a time in your life when someone was trying to "get you"?
2. During this period of conflict (above), how did you feel about God?
 - a. I totally trusted Him.
 - b. I did not consider God -- this was my problem.
 - c. I questioned why God would allow this to happen.
 - d. I forgot God.
 - e. I felt like He was a long way off.
 - f. I needed Him, but He was not around.
3. What does this psalm tell you about placing trust in other people, ourselves, or things?
4. In verse 12 we are told that God "will reward each person according to what he has done." According to the context of the psalm, what is it that a person "has done"?
5. How do you think you will be rewarded?

Looking Around:

Go around the group and let each person express his trust in God alone.