

The Classics

***An Adult Look At Our
Favorite Childhood Classics***



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AN ADULT LOOK AT OUR FAVORITE CHILDHOOD CLASSICS

Psalms 46:10 Be still, and know that I am
God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I
will be exalted in the earth.

Forward

Those who grew up in Sunday School can all recall the flannel graph stories of the Old Testament written to intrigue the minds of youngsters. As adults we often think of them as children's stories and then never look at them again as adults. However, they are packed with valuable adult life lessons and are worth another look from an adult perspective. As we wrote and taught these lessons nearly every week someone said "I didn't know that".

If you didn't hear these lessons as a child, I invite you to settle in and get ready to have your mind blown by the real life, true stories, that played out thousands of years ago but remain applicable to life today.

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CREATION

- Before we even begin talking about what or how everything was created, it is important to note that God, the creator, was not born or created. God always has been. That is a difficult concept for us to wrap our human heads around but nevertheless it is a fact.
- In that God has always existed, I've wondered what God did before He created our Heavens and the Earth. Did He create other earths? I think any answer to that question, before we get to ask Him, is speculation.
- Although what He did before is speculation, our means and method of creation is not speculation. God, from the beginning, tells us when and how it occurred.
- Man has many theories on how we became, all man's theories leave more unanswered questions. Gods' description of how the earth became leaves NO questions. However, it requires an answer to one question. Do you believe the Bible?

- On the point of do you believe the Bible's description of creation or not, I make two points.
 1. Salvation requires you believe scripture, to base our eternal security on something partially correct is scary at best.
 2. If you believe the Bible's version of creation is simply the writings of a religious zealot (Moses), you must also believe that Moses was able to perfectly describe creation, in a way that would perfectly coincide with it being able to operate as we know that it does, and Moses had to have written it in 1400BC without the aid of what we know through today's science.
- It is crucial that we look at the scripture, verse by verse, so we can understand the condition of the earth when each piece of our world was either created or formed, and how God did it.
- 1. **Day One – Created Heaven, Earth, & Light**
Genesis 1:1-5 1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. 2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. 3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. 4 And

God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. 5And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

- A. **In the beginning** - The beginning refers to the beginning of our world's existence, not the beginning of time, as God has always existed.
- B. **In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth**, is not a descriptive statement of what God is going to do in the next few verses, He is telling us what He just did. He will continue to create and form but He created the heavens and the earth **in the beginning** at verse one.
- C. Scripture is also very clear that God created and more specifically spoke the heaven and the earth into existence. **Psalms 33:6** "By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth."
- D. **In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.** – The first thing that happened was God created the heaven,

being space (area) and the earth being the substance that would form earth as we know it.

- E. **And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.** – This is a descriptive statement about the state of the earth “in the beginning” immediately after “God created” it.
- F. These descriptive terms, coupled with verse 2b’s mention of **“water”**, and His description of how He separated water on the second day of creation, lead me to believe that the substance of the earth at this time was a mixture of everything God created, that He knew He would need, to form the earth as we know it today. This coupled with the fact that more than 71% of the earth’s surface is water makes sense.
- G. The second part of the passage makes it clear that not only did the Holy Spirit exist at this time, but that the matter that made up earth in its present form was nothing until God’s spirit moved upon it. **“And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”**

- H. While the substance that would be earth was still in the form previously described God spoke into existence light.
 - I. In that the sun, moon, and stars wouldn't be created until day four, God simply wanted light and spoke it into existence. Light with seemingly no source other than He wanted light.
 - J. So essentially God turned on light, He liked it, and decided that He would separate a period for light and a period for dark. **3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. 4 And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.**
 - K. God named light day and darkness night, He used the period of light and dark that he created to define a day, and that was the first day. **5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.**
- 2. Day Two – Created Firmament, Divided Waters**
Genesis 1:6-8 6 And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. 7 And God

made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. 8 And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

- A. The firmament that God spoke into existence is the earth's atmosphere. 21% oxygen, 78% nitrogen, 0.9% argon, and .01% other gases. **"God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters".**
- B. At the point prior to the creation of the firmament the earth was in a liquid state, without form, void of anything living. It existed as a soup of sorts, of everything God required to form the earth.
- C. Firmament originates from the Latin word *firmamentum*, which means "that which strengthens or supports".
- D. The firmament God created did just that. It was the atmosphere that encapsulated the liquid earth forming its spherical shape.

- E. Now that the liquid earth had been shaped by the firmament, God dewatered some of the earth soup. **“And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament”**. It wasn’t an equal parts division; however, God knew exactly how much He needed to dewater to create a rain cycle. About .001% of the earth’s water is in the atmosphere. Atmosphaera, Latin meaning atmos ‘vapor’ + sphaira ‘ball, globe’.
- F. So now we have a space (heaven 1:1), which contains a spherical atmosphere (firmament 1:7), that spherical atmosphere contains and gave form to the liquid earth (earth/waters 1:1), once the earth was within and shaped by the firmament God divided the some of the waters from the earth and placed it in the atmosphere.
- G. We know in Geneses 1:1 God called the space He created heaven and now He also called this firmament heaven. **8 And God called the firmament Heaven.**
- H. Don’t let His naming two spaces heaven confuse you. 2Corinthians 12:2 Paul speaks

of the “third Heaven” which is where God resides. The atmosphere (firmament) is referred to as the first heaven, space is referred to as the second heaven, and Gods residence is referred to as the third heaven.

- I. This completes the second day of creation.
8b**And the evening and the morning were the second day.**

3. Day Three - Formed Dry Land, Sea, Created Plant Life

Genesis 1:9-13 9And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. 10And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good. 11And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. 12And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good. 13And the evening and the morning were the third day.

- A. **“Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear”**. As it pertains to the water and the land, God had already created them, so this act was not creating but further forming that which He had already created.
- B. Based on what God tells us in scripture, to explain the second part, (**“let the dry land appear”**) as anything other than a consequence of the first (**“Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and”**) would be incorrect. The revealing of the solid ground by the removal of the waters from its surface, and not vice versa, is to reverse the ordinary processes of nature. Essentially, this is the day that God created the gravity that drew water from the state of simply being held in form by the firmament to being drawn to its sea, river and creek beds by said gravity.
- C. Modern science’s theory incorrectly suggests that the waters were broken up and set apart from land masses due to the upheaval of land as it heated and cooled due to subterranean heat. This conflicts with what scripture just told us and raises many

additional unexplained questions like where did the heat originate?

- D. 600 years after Moses told us how God created the earth, David gave us this confirming description of how God separated dry land and the waters.

Psalm 104:5-7 5Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever. 6Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains. 7At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away.

- E. We see here again that God spoke plant life into existence **"11And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so."**

- F. It is important that we note the sequence in which God created each part of the earth and its inhabitants. We see here that God did not create plant life prior to creating an atmosphere and dry land that would sustain their life. A sceptic might say that Moses simply looked at earth and reverse engineered it. However, to have done that

Moses must have had a greater understanding of the environment, botany, and many other sciences that had not been discovered in 1400BC.

G. Plant life wasn't created haphazardly, God meticulously created plant life to ensure they served their purpose and regenerated. This passage describes three different types of plants that encapsulate every form of plant life. **12And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good."**

H. **"Grass"** – Plants that do not produce seed but reproduce through their root system. Imagine herds grazing on plant life that relied on seed to regenerate. The herd would eat all that is above ground, including the seed, and have no regeneration. Animals don't plant seeds and harvest for next year.

"Herb Yielding Seed" – Plants with exposed seed able to be windblown or carried for reproduction.

“Tree Yielding Fruit” – Trees such as the Apple, Peach, and Pear that have a seed within the fruit.

H. God created each of these different types of plant applications because He knew the future and their benefit in different applications.

I. **13And the evening and the morning were the third day..**

4. Day Four - Created Sun, Moon, and Stars

Genesis 1:14-19 14And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: 15And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. 16And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. 17And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, 18And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good. 19And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

- A. Again, as to process, what would have occurred if God had created the moon and sun prior to the earth gravitational pull that holds the earth's waters in their banks the sun and moon gravitational pull would have dewatered the earth completely. The day on which each thing was created is crucial. We will continue to see this each day.
- B. Before day four there was no physical source of light, God simply wanted light and said let there be light. Now we find God placing permanent sources of light. **14And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night;**
- C. God described the purpose of the two lights in 14b. **14b.....to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years:**
- D. **“to divide the day from the night”** We understand this to be the physical division of day and night that we experience every day.
- E. **“and let them be for signs”** in addition to just light, both the sun and the moon give us signs, some we have come to understand

and some we don't yet completely understand. We know something about what a red sky either at morning or night means. We know if we see the sunlight blocked by clouds it's probably going to rain. We know the sun reflecting through moisture is a sign of Gods rainbow promise. The position of the Sun and moon allow us to tell the time of day.

F. **“and for seasons, and for days, and years”**

God also put in place a sequence of orbits and rotations to perfectly create our calendar. Man didn't create our time cycle, God started our seasonal, day, and year clock for us on the fourth day of creation. Note the term week isn't included in what He did on the fourth day because He hadn't set that standard for us until the seventh day of creation.

- G. Verse 16 tells us that not only did He speak into existence the two great lights but also the stars. **16And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also.** Science has changed their opinion on what is a star and what is a planet, however, scripture says everything,

but the sun and moon are stars and science may come around or not, but it is fact.

- H. God perfectly positioned the two lights and the stars, so to provide the perfect amount of light, during both day and night, to perform the tasks He wanted done, while not burning up or freezing His creation. Verse 17 gives us specifics to where God set the sun and moon and why. **17And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth. 18And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good.**
- I. There is a distinction between where God set the lights and where the light that they give light. The firmament of Heaven (the location) God set the lights, is like the firmament of earth, but the next layer. They were for the purpose of giving light to the earth. **“15And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so.”**
- J. **19And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.**

5. Day Five – Created Sea Life, Birds

Genesis 1:20-23 20And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. 21And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good. 22And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. 23And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

- A. Although there may be a reason that we are not yet privy to, we see no reason other than God wanted to that He created the birds of the air and the inhabitants of the water on the same day.
- B. **“And God said”** again confirming that God simply spoke everything of the sea and air into existence.
- C. There are three significant descriptive statements concerning the sea creatures that God created on day five. **20....Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving**

creature that hath life. The word **“Abundantly”** speaks to the number of each kind of creature that He created that day. The description of **“Moving”** speaks to the fashion in which each kind of fish travels being a constant motion of schools of each kind. Finally, **“that hath life”** separates them from the living stationary plants that He created on day three.

- D. The other type of creature that God created on the fifth day is the fowl. **20....and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.** The descriptive portion of the verse for fowl is so wonderful. It shows us that God in His perfect way is cautious to be precise in His words. It also gives us a wonderful example of the importance of one singular word in scripture. The word **“may”** in **“may fly above the earth”** is purposeful, as without it, man could argue biblical contradiction concerning God’s creation, in that some fowl, such as, penguins, ostrich, and kiwi haven’t the ability to fly.
- E. **21And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after**

their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good. The word kind in this passage carries great importance and can explain so much as to what science believes to have occurred concerning extinction and evolution of animals. Kind is a descriptive term that allows us to classify different types of animals. It was used in two prominent places in scripture, at creation and again when Noah was loading the ark. Kind classifies all animals in large groups, the classifications are large and therefore more inclusive than scientific classifications. God uses the term on day five and on six when creating land animals.

- F. The significance of **“kind”** in evolution and extinction is important and explains much. For instance, the dog kind includes many different breeds of dogs, many have by “artificial selection” become prominent to their surroundings, meaning the most prominent features of the specific dogs in an area thrived based on many things like resistance to the sun, temperatures, thicker coats. Humans have purposely interfered with this natural process to create breeds more to their liking, but at no time in history

has something from the dog kind ever become a cat. Furthermore, concerning extinction, types of kinds have gone away while the kind continues to exist, for example the woolly mammoth is gone but the elephant continues. The alligator exists but the T-Rex is gone. **“Kinds”** and their scriptural meaning explains all of sciences evolutionary and extinction questions.

- G. **22And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.**

To bless is to wish well. In the case of God blessing fowl and fish, it signifies to make them to prosper and be abundant. The nature of the blessing pronounced upon the animal creation had reference to their propagation and increase. Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.

- H. **23And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.**

6. Day Six – Created Animals, Man

Genesis 1:24-31 24And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth

after his kind: and it was so. 25And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good. 26And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. 28And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. 29And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. 30And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so. 31And God saw every thing that he had

made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

- A. Once again, we see as we did previously with the fish and fowl, God simply spoke the animal kingdom into existence. Nothing evolved or morphed from anything else. God simply wanted animals and said **“Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind”** and it occurred.
- B. **“25And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good.”** Again, we see the application of kinds, meaning kinds of animals.
- C. As it pertains to the animal created on day six, any animal that walks crawls, or creeps on land was created on this day. Kinds, as it pertains to the animal kingdom, can be described as cattle, dog, cat, snake, or any other animal kind that moves about the earth. From those snakes that were created that day, came the different variations of snake based on what each snake was able to environmentally adapt to, which formed what we now call species of snake. This

same cycle occurred after Noah's flood when he only to two of each kind, male and female, on the ark with him.

D. **26And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness:.....** There are three very important points I would like to make from this statement.

- 1) **"Let us"** – On the first day God revealed to us that the Holy Spirit existed when He said, **"And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters"**. Again, with the phrase **"let us"** it seems clear that God is not only speaking to but working with the trinity at this time.
- 2) **"make man"** – God made man on the sixth day. If you believe the Bible, you must also succumb to the fact that God made us. We did not evolve from anything else. How does one believe the Bible enough to secure their eternity but call into question any other portion of scripture.
- 3) **"in our image, after our likeness"** - These words were expressive of separate

ideas: **“image”**, of the bodily description and **“likeness”**, of the soul, or the intellectual and moral nature. This is different than any other creation thus far, as everything else was created **“after his kind”** with man God chose to create us in His **“image”** and **“Likeness”**. One may say, but man isn’t of God’s intellectual or moral nature, and we are not, however, at the point of creation man was without sin. Not that man was as God when created, but man looked like and had the moral compass of God.

- 4) That moral compass may be the best evidence that there is a God but for that moral compass what determines right from wrong for us. Our moral compass is itself evidence of God and that He created us in His likeness. Acts of sin are in opposition to Gods moral compass.

E. **26.....and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.** The last half of verse 26 continues the thought God had concerning creating man in His **“image”** and **“Likeness”**

as we see He also gives man dominion as God has dominion.

- F. **27So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. 28And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth,.....** If we believe the Bible, this portion of scripture crushes Satan's narrative of the day. God created man, male and female only, and He did that for the purpose of multiplying. Based on scripture, any other discussion on the matter is simply man's attempt to justify sin by saying that they were created in some other way than that which scripture describes our creation. The LGBTQ movement is nothing more than Satan's attempt to legitimize man's sin nature to contradict God.
- G. **28b.....and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. 29And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for**

meat. 30And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so. Verse 28b through 30 dispels another tactic and narrative of Satan that infers in some way that we are subject to the earth and its animal and fish inhabitants instead of man having dominion as described in scripture. That's not to say that we are not responsible for its wellbeing, as one who has dominion, but we are not responsible to it as our mother or father earth, as Satan influences.

- H. **31And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.** On completion of His work, the God of everything looked at everything that He created, which was everything, and said **"it was very good"**. It is worth noting again, this was God's view of everything prior to sin entering the world. We know that is not His summation of the world post sin. Post sin, He still sees His perfect creation, only tainted by the effects of sin.

7. Day Seven – Sanctified the Day and Rested

Genesis 2:1-3 1Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. 2And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. 3And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

A. 2:1Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. This statement is unequivocal Biblical evidence against any other drastic land or water formations being created by moving ice, a heated core, or any other event until the flood. Granted wind, rain, flood, and heat may minimally form geography differently, all the earth that has been created was completed on the sixth day, and the same goes for the heavens. As for the host of the heavens and the earth they to **“were finished”** on the sixth day. Granted “artificial selection” will still play a part in the traits of man in different regions but all the man, animal, fish, and fowl that have ever been created were created within the first six days.

- B. **2And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.** This passage is not telling us that God needed or took a break on the seventh day, nor does this passage tell us that we should rest on the seventh day. The Hebrew term for **“rested”** in this passage is more akin to ceased or finished. So, when the passage says **“he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made”** it simply means that He had stopped. Much like when you hear an attorney in court say the defense or prosecution rests.
- C. **3And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.** Sanctified means to set apart or make holy. In Genesis 3:3 God sanctified and made holy that particular seventh day. Although it gives us example it is not direction that we do that on the seventh day or our week. Gods direction to us pertaining to days is for the Sabbath day. Which is different than the individual seventh day that God sanctified

- D. We get our direction for which day of the week we celebrate the Sabbath by example and direction of The Disciples and Paul.

Acts 20:7 7And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.

1 Corinthians 16:1-2 1Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. 2Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

- E. The fact that scripture records Jesus rose on the first day (Matthew 28:1, Mark 16:1-2, Luke 24:1, John 20:1) and we are to give to God our firsts may be the motivation for our first day sabbath.
- D. The fourth commandment describes how God directed us to act on the Sabbath Day regardless of what day it is. He directs us to **remember the sabbath day and keep it Holy**. Part of this remembrance is where we

actually get our direction to rest on the sabbath, not from the Genesis 3 passage.

Exodus 20:8-11 8 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: 10But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: 11For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

- E. We like to twist Exodus 20:8-11 into whatever we want it to be. Family day, catch up day, hobby day, sports day, community day, travel day. However, scripture directs us to **“keep it holy”** it seems a minimum of meeting that requirement that we attend church whenever it meets.
- F. We saw in Acts 20:7 that Paul preached to the disciples until midnight even though he had to depart the next morning. **“.....Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the**

morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.”

- G.** The reason we have so many problems on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday is that we don't attend, listen, or apply to our lives what God gives us on Sunday.

ADAM AND EVE

We know that God created everything in the first six days, however, often scripture operates on the principle of **repeat and enlarge**. The first part of our study today is one of **repeat and enlarge**, as Genesis 2:4-25 gives us some insight as to how God created man and a specific garden that God created when He created plant life.

1. God Expounds upon how He created everything.

A. The general status of the world at creation of man.

Genesis 2:4-6 4These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens,⁵And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground.⁶But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.

B. God enlarges upon how He created man.

Genesis 2:7 7And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

- 1) This passage tells us how God created man back on Day 6 in chapter 1.

C. God enlarges upon a specific garden that He created when he created plant life.

Genesis 2:8-14 8And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.9And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.10And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.11The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold;12And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone.13And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of

Ethiopia.¹⁴And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates.

- 1) This passage gives information about the Garden of Eden, its location, and what God put in the garden when He created plant life back in chapter 1.

D. God enlarges upon the direction He gave man when He created man.

Genesis 2:15-17 ¹⁵And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.¹⁶And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:¹⁷But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

- 1) Don't eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

E. God makes an initial statement about creating woman and enlarges upon how He created animals.

Genesis 2:18-20 18And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.19And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.20And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.

- 1) God created animals from the earth just like man but not in God's image and likeness. God allowed Adam to name everything that He gave Adam dominion over.

F. God enlarges upon verse 18 as to how He created woman.

Genesis 2:21-25 21And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;22And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.23And Adam said, This is now

bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.²⁴Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.²⁵And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

- 1) It is my belief, as God doesn't give us any other indication, that Adam and Eve were the only two people that He created, all others are the offspring of Adam and Eve.
- 2) This brings to question how they populated the earth without it being incestual. Our determination of right and wrong is instilled in us by our creator when He created us "after His likeness". His command in the beginning was to multiply. His command concerning what we would call incest didn't occur until Leviticus 18. It is at that point when it became improper because our creator said it was improper, prior to that it wasn't.
- 3) Although responsible for, these passages do not tell us that Adam necessarily has

dominion over Eve at this point but more so that she is a helpmeet to Adam.

- 4) What is also interesting is that Adam knew Gods plan in that he exhibited the concept of mother, father, and marriage before there was a mother father or marriage. **“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”**

2. Satan’s first interaction with God’s creation.

Genesis 3:1-5 1Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?2And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:3But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.4And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:5For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

- A. Scripture doesn't tell us how long Adam and Eve lived in the garden sinless before the serpent.
- B. It is not by happenstance that Satan chose to tempt Eve, as 1 Peter 3:7 tells us that spiritually speaking women are the weaker vessel.
- C. Interestingly we see that Satan began his temptation as he continues to do today, not by force but subtlety calling into question what he wants you to do. **"Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?"**
- D. In that scripture doesn't specifically tell us that Eve was present when God gave Adam the directive, we must assume that Adam had at least told Eve what God said about the tree of knowledge, as at Satan's first approach Eve seems to know she shouldn't eat of the tree. However, she adds that if she even touches it, she will die.
- E. I've often thought that the **"neither shall ye touch it"** directive may have come from Adam to his wife, as we often do in an attempt to keep one that we are responsible

for from even getting close to something that they shouldn't do. The problem we have is that when they do touch it and don't die it lessens the believability of everything that we've told them and emboldens them to go further. The effort is good, however knowing and teaching those we are responsible for precise scripture is best as we see in this case.

- F. On Eve responding to Satan, he immediately questions her understanding of what God told them and why. He then presented an ulterior motive that God had for not wanting them to eat the fruit.
- G. This is the same thing Satan does to us. We will be walking through the garden with every intention of serving the Lord and all the sudden there is Satan presenting an opportunity to sin. Like Eve our first mistake is not running as fast as we can in the other direction but choosing to have a conversation with Satan about why we shouldn't, giving the most subtle creature God created the opportunity to talk us in to doing it. RUN from it.

3. Eve Considers her sin.

Genesis 3:6-7 6And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.7And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

- A. When we don't immediately run from Satan, giving him the opportunity to talk us into sin, our flesh will begin to consider the sin as we see Eve did. **"And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise"**. In this passage we actually see what we do every time we allow Satan to reason with us about something God told us not to do.
- B. The result of us not running, listening to, and reasoning with sin, is we more often than not at this point in the process will fall to it as we see that Eve has done. **"she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat,"**.

- C. As we will see later Adam is responsible for his own sin, however our not running from Satan, as did Eve, affects those around us and ultimately every generation after us. **“and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat”**

4. Having to face God after sin.

Genesis 3:8-13 8And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.9And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?10And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.11And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?12And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.13And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

- A. Adam and Eve tried to hide from the all-knowing all seeing God, how rediculas. But

we do the same as soon as the Holy Spirit convicts us about our sin we often run from everything Godly in our lives in an attempt to hide the sin in our life.

- B. Adam attempted to blame God and Eve. **“The woman whom thou gavest to be with me”**. We do the same by attempting to blame circumstance or other people. Eve attempts to blame Satan. We are responsible for our sin and no one else. We should expect Satan to beguile us.

5. Serpent’s consequences for bringing Sin into the world.

Genesis 3:14-15 14And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:15And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

- A. Have you ever given thought to, of all the animals in the world, just naturally the snake is the most hated and feared of all. **“thou art**

cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field;”

6. Eve’s Consequences for bringing Sin into the world.

Genesis 3:16 16Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

- A. Ladies, the discomfort and pain you have monthly, while carrying a child, and delivering a child began here. **“Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children;”**
- B. The natural desire to the husband’s leadership and rule is a biblical principle and was set in motion by God as part of woman’s punishment for her part in bringing sin into the world.
- C. Woman’s desire to circumvent her husband’s rule and quite frankly the entire woman equality movement is nothing more than a tactic of Satan to push against Gods

directive. **“and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.”**

7. Adam’s consequences for bringing Sin into the world.

Genesis 3:17-19 17And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;18Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;19In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

- A. **“17And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree,”** This statement from God dispels any notion that Adam didn’t know or that he was in some way tricked into eating the fruit. He, just like we often do, against what is in the best interest of our families, because we want to please them, gave in to what she wanted. The fault lies with Adam!

- B. We are responsible for, and rule over our wives, we are not to allow our wives to rule us by means of giving in to their every desire. It is our responsibility to our wives not to give them everything they want, but to give them what is best for them according to scripture. We are not doing them or our children any favors by saying yes to the fruit of the tree when we shouldn't. That said, we are responsible for allowing ourselves to be led by the spirit so that when she presents the fruit we know to say no, and we do it.
- C. More often than not, because we want to please our families, or because it is just easier, or because the world has told us we are equal in regard to leading the family men have failed to lead and failed our families.
- D. God informs Adam that he would now work for everything he and his family has. **“cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;¹⁸Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;¹⁹In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground;”**

- E. God confirms the punishment that He originally declared by telling Adam he would not live forever in the perfect world; he would now die and return to dust. **“for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return”**

8. The result of Sin entering the world.

Genesis 3:20-24 20And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.21Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.22And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:23Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.24So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

- A. God clothed and removed Adam and Eve from the garden so they wouldn't be able to partake of the tree of life and live forever.

- B. And here we are today still living and rebelling against the punishment God proclaimed that day by trying to live longer, still allowing our poor wives to take the lead when we should, and rebelling against family order.

DANIEL LIONS DEN

- How important is prayer? Today's lesson will give us an example of the importance of prayer in Daniel's life.
- Daniel was in captivity; his status was one of a slave. Although a slave, Daniel's excellent spirit, because of his prayer life, allowed him to rise to a leadership position over the entire kingdom.
- We know that the enemy couldn't allow one of God's followers in leadership to go unchallenged.

1. Daniel was known for his excellent spirit.

Daniel 6:1-3 1It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom an hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom; 2And over these three presidents; of whom Daniel was first: that the princes might give accounts unto them, and the king should have no damage. 3Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm.

- A. Usually, as is today, leadership positions are given according to lineage, nepotism, or being an expert in a particular field. However, on occasion we have all known someone who has neither, but because of their demeanor, we often call it wisdom, they excel. This was Daniel.
- B. Where does that attribute of wisdom stem from? Sometimes, it stems from how they were raised, sometimes it stems from life experience, sometimes it's simply the person's demeanor. In Daniel's case we will see that his excellent spirit stems from his prayer life and the direction he gets from God through it.
- C. As usually happens in a world where Satan has influence, Satan will not allow any influence of God go unchallenged, as we will see.

2. Satan challenges God's influence in the kingdom.

Daniel 6:4-9 4Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him. 5Then said these men, We shall

not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God. 6Then these presidents and princes assembled together to the king, and said thus unto him, King Darius, live for ever. 7All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions. 8Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not. 9Wherefore king Darius signed the writing and the decree.

- A. These men were leaders of the nation, so we can assume that they wanted the nation to be successful. Although they may have recognized Daniels contribution to the nation's success, they allowed the influence of Satan on their life to outweigh their desire for a successful nation. Less Satan's influence they would have recognized

Daniels potential contributions and allowed them to be utilized for their common goal.

- B. We can know it was Satan's influence because 1) there are only two controlling influences and 2) the only way they could find to attack Daniel was "concerning the law of his God".
- C. We do that often in our lives don't we? We know that following Gods direction and living for Him alone is best for our life, however because of Satan's influence in the world contradictory to our own good, we allow ourselves to be influenced by the enemy.
- D. In this case, Satan used his weapon of jealousy to motivate the princes and presidents to attack God's influence. Today his greatest weapon is blatant self-pleasure. Meaning Satan escalates our desire for self-pleasure by giving us activities that are more pleasurable than serving God.
- E. Satan keeps us trapped in the self-pleasure weapon by giving us more desirable things to do at the times when God provides training concerning Satan's weapon. There is a reason that the hardest thing for us to do during the week is come to church, read our

Bibles, and pray. Satan knows that is how God trains us and Satan will always give us something more pleasurable to do during those times even if its just doing nothing. He will also provide us with every ridiculous excuse we need to justify it to ourselves.

3. Daniel was faithful through Satan's challenge.

Daniel 6:10 10Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

- A. Daniel knew that the order had been signed and that it contradicted God's command. However, he did not go to facebook and make a meme he simply continued trusting and following God as he had always done. If he had he would have made an enemy of the king, princes, presidents, and those that followed the order.
- B. This isn't to say that we are not to be part of the political process, although it doesn't seem Daniel was given that option in this case. But just because we are part of the process doesn't mean we cease listening to the Holy Spirit when we do or disagree.

C. Daniel, Satan, the king, and the princes and presidents knew that Daniel's wisdom, guidance, and excellent spirit came from the Lord through his prayers. That's why they wanted to stop it and Daniel knew that he couldn't. It was his superpower, and it's a superpower afforded to us if we use it.

4. Daniel broke the law and the king is displeased with himself.

Daniel 6:11-15 11Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God. 12Then they came near, and spake before the king concerning the king's decree; Hast thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask a petition of any God or man within thirty days, save of thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said, The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not. 13Then answered they and said before the king, That Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day. 14Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him: and he laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver

him. 15Then these men assembled unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, That no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed.

- A. Daniels crime, although faithful to God, was a crime according to the law. But that's ok. Often things like that must happen for God to work His plan.
- B. The king is displeased with himself because according to their law he cannot change a law once he puts it into effect. He also realizes that he has been fooled by the existing princes and presidents.
- C. At this point I'm sure he recognizes that he failed to consult Daniel and his excellent spirit.

5. The King was worried but God protected Daniel.

Daniel 6:16-23 16Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee. 17And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet

of his lords; that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel. 18Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting: neither were instruments of musick brought before him: and his sleep went from him. 19Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions. 20And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions? 21Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever. 22My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt. 23Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God.

- A. Although the King acknowledges the significance of Daniels God, he hasn't the faith of Daniel in His ability to save Daniel. Isn't that the same position of the princes

and president that created the law putting Daniel in the lion's den. They recognized the significance of Daniel's God as they chose to attack the source of his wisdom but failed to recognize His power to protect Daniel if Daniel stayed true to God's law.

- B. Isn't that the position of most people, including those of us who refer to ourselves as Christians. We recognize God but fail to have the faith to follow Him because we don't have faith in His power. Therefore, are those people Christians or simply acknowledgers of God.
- C. Nevertheless, God does protect Daniel and as a result obtains His due glory defeating the enemy's attempt to challenge God. It happened because Daniel chose God over the fear of man.

6. God silences the opposition.

Daniel 6:24 And the king commanded, and they brought those men which had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions, them, their children, and their wives; and the lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces or ever they came at the bottom of the den.

- A. Throughout the Old Testament, as here, we see episodes of God taking out those who are in opposition to Him, the one true God. Their deaths and their lives are meaningless in comparison to God's will and plan being carried out.
- B. Quite frankly Christians lives and deaths are meaningless other than carrying out Gods will and plan. Exemplified by the likes of Stephen, John the Baptist, and all the disciples.
- C. Human life means a lot more to us than it means to the God who created it. We wrongly view life as the ultimate thing, God justly views human life as a thing created to glorify Himself and the living or dying of it is for that purpose.
- D. In the situation of these prices, presidents, and their families, their lives were taken for the purpose of eliminating those in opposition to God, protecting those who faithfully serve the one true God, and as a deterrent to any who thought to oppose Him again.
- E. Would I want to live in a kingdom where God yields that kind of control, YES. Does any human wield the authority to proclaim and

carry out law that authorizes that type of authority, NO. Has God given that authority to humans previously, YES, as exemplified by David, Saul, Sampson, and many others.

7. God's plan was achieved.

Daniel 6:25-28 25Then king Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. 26I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and stedfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end. 27He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions. 28So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

- A. Men died, women died, children died, Daniel was cast in a lion's den, the king lost a night's sleep. GOD's will and plan was carried out.
- B. Those who proved useful to God, who stood for God, and those who were able to continue Gods service lived.

- C. The next proclamation that came from that king was. **26I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel**

Closing:

- **Be of excellent spirit by making supplications to God, you will be recognized for it.**
- **When Satan challenges God due to your excellent Spirit, don't allow him to be successful.**
- **I caution you concerning Satan's greatest weapon of the day, self-pleasure.**

DAVID & BATHSHEBA

- Last week we looked at David and Goliath maybe the high point in David's life, this week we are going to review arguably the lowest point in David's life.
 - This lesson will attempt to break down sin, by explaining the process Satan uses to capture us in it, in hopes of creating a deterrent to it, and learning how to recover from it, if we get hit by it.
 - During this period David was faithful to God and God was faithful to David. At this point in his life David was at the top of his game, so to speak. He had been chosen and trained by God to be the leader of Israel. He learned to consult the Lord before making decisions in his life. He had conquered the kingdoms around him and was revered by all people as a godly king. This caused Satan to put a very big target on David's back because he knew if he could take David down many would go down with him and so could all of Israel. So, attack Satan did.
1. **David wasn't in the fight, so he was vulnerable.**
2 Samuel 11:1-4 1 And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they

destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem. 2 And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon.

- A. I think it is important to this story that David wasn't on the battlefield, in the fight with his men. When in service for God the enemy has less opportunity to attack because we are busy with God's work.
- B. However, the more you do for God the bigger target you are for Satan because he knows if he can take you out you will take others with you.
- C. It is important to note that to this point David had not sinned. Satan certainly presented the temptation to sin, but David had yet to act on Satan's temptation.
- D. Satan will often try to make us think all is lost and that we have failed because of the temptation. However, temptation is natural, Jesus Himself was tempted. It's what we do with that temptation that matters. If we walk away from the temptation we exhibit

God's power over it, if we act improperly on the temptation, we exhibit Satan's power over us and there are always consequences for that.

2. David Acted on Satan's temptation.

2 Samuel 11:3-7 3 And David sent and enquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?

- A. When David enquired about the woman, he still had not physically sinned, however we do not know what was occurring in his mind. I suspect the act of enquiring was not for the purpose of correcting the woman's actions but was for the purpose of gauging his ability to have her.
- B. This is a crucial point in the sin process because it indicates our direction for the enemy, and the enemy will act accordingly. If Satan sees that we have a weak spot he is going to capitalize on that weak spot. When David inquired about Bathsheba Satan saw an opening.
- C. David's sin is always the point of this story, however, purposeful, or not, this passage should also be a stern warning for both men

and women, as the enemy will use our seemingly innocent but overt actions to launch attacks on others. Also, as we will see Bathsheba also paid the consequences of this situation, maybe because of her actions.

3. David acts improperly on Satan's temptation.

2 Samuel 11:4-14 4 And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; for she was purified from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house.

- A. It is at this point David sins. He hadn't sinned when he saw her, we don't see if he sinned when he enquired about her, but he definitely sinned at this juncture.
- B. We see that David provided an opportunity for the enemy, because he wasn't in the fight with his men. We see that the enemy did what we should expect him to do by presenting a temptation to sin. We see that David showed his weakness for that specific temptation when he didn't immediately run from it, but he enquired about it. We see that David acted improperly on the temptation when he had her brought to him.
- C. This is exactly the process that the enemy uses every time he tempts us to sin against

God. Think back on situations in your life where you sinned. It occurred the exact same way and it always does. There is always a point where we should have run but we enquired about it.

4. David's sin is revealed.

2 Samuel 11:5-13 5 And the woman conceived, and sent and told David, and said, I am with child.

- A. Firstly, although Satan will cause us to act like a two-year-old and think that we can hide our sin, it is ridiculous to think that God doesn't see our sin, however initially that is often the lie that the enemy will give us. Because at this point, we are looking for anything to cover our sin we will latch on to all kinds of ridiculous things to hide or attempt to justify our sin.
- B. Our sin will always be revealed. Think about it, if the enemy can take down others and discredit God because of our sin, he definitely wants it revealed. He initially tells you nobody will know, knowing full well that he must expose it to have the maximum effect of it.

5. David attempts to cover his sin.

2 Samuel 11:6-13 6 And David sent to Joab, saying, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David. 7 And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded of him how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered. 8 And David said to Uriah, Go down to thy house, and wash thy feet. And Uriah departed out of the king's house, and there followed him a mess of meat from the king. 9 But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house. 10 And when they had told David, saying, Uriah went not down unto his house, David said unto Uriah, Camest thou not from thy journey? why then didst thou not go down unto thine house? 11 And Uriah said unto David, The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in tents; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields; shall I then go into mine house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? as thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing. 12 And David said to Uriah, Tarry here to day also, and to morrow I will let thee depart. So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day, and the morrow. 13 And when David had called him, he did eat and drink before him; and he made him drunk: and at even he went out to

lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but went not down to his house.

- A. First, I want to point out that “mess” as a unit of measure is biblical. Vs8....” a mess of meat from the king”.
- B. In an attempt to cover David’s sin, he calls Uriah from the battle front so Uriah might lay with his wife and therefore the child would be attributed to Uriah. We see here that David’s sin and it’s attempted cover up has already begun to affect others as he is diminishing the war effort of the entire nation in an attempt to cover his personal sin.
- C. What guilt David’s sin must have caused him, to find that Uriah’s dedication to David and Israel wouldn’t allow him the comfort of going home when his country was at war. All the while David didn’t lead them into battle but rather stayed home and took the pleasure of Uriah’s wife.
- D. The spiritual effects of sin will always take you deeper than the highs of its physical pleasure.

6. David's greatest sin.

2 Samuel 11:14-17 14 And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah. 15 And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die. 16 And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city, that he assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men were. 17 And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell some of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also.

- A. When we sin, it gives the enemy a foothold in our lives, and because of that foothold he will take us to places that we would otherwise never go. I'm sure David would have never dreamed that he could kill his faithful servant and warrior brother to cover his own sin. However, because he first gave the enemy a foothold in his life it was easier for him to go that direction instead of back to where he was before the initial sin.
- B. I'm sure in retrospect we can all look at episodes in our lives and say how did I ever let that happen. The answer is always retrievable, if we are honest with ourselves, by looking back a little further at the initial

sin that gave the enemy a foothold in our life.

- C. David's first attempt to cover his sin didn't work because Uriah was dedicated and in the fight. If David had been in the fight, there wouldn't have been the initial opportunity. So, to eliminate the self-imposed threat David kills Uriah.
- D. So now not only has David's sin personally affected Bathsheba but also, the one he enquired to, the messengers who brought Bathsheba, unknowingly Uriah, and now Joab his general.

7. God sent Nathan to redirect David's course.

2 Samuel 12: 1-9 1 And the LORD sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor. 2 The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds: 3 But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. 4 And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his

own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him. 5 And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die: 6 And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity. 7 And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul; 8 And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things. 9 Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.

- A. Until now David thought it was over, he didn't have to answer to anyone who was alive because he was the king and Uriah the only one, he would have had to answer to was now dead.

- B. David may have thought he had covered his sin and gotten away with no repercussions for it, but he had to answer to God for it. Satan will often cause us to think that the problems that we incurred covering our sin is the punishment for our sin, and that we got away with the sin, but he does that to get us to continue in the downward spiral of sin and commit more sin.
- C. Satan does this so he can maintain the foothold that the original sin gave him and if we allow him to do this, he continues to get footholds in his effort to capture our lives. Unless we are confronted and turn to God Satan's climb will continue.
- D. God sends Nathan the prophet. God will also send a Nathan in our lives, it may be a scripture, it may be the pastor, it may be a family member, it should be someone setting around this table. The key is to recognize that God has sent a Nathan to help redirect you back to Him and release Satan's footholds.
- E. Satan is not new to this game, and he knows God will send you a Nathan. So, Satan will cause you to stay away from your Nathan, when your Nathan does appear Satan will give you reason to be angry at him. Know

this, the first step to recovery is recognizing as verse 1 says “the LORD sent Nathan unto David” and he sent your Nathan also.

- F. Because Satan has a foothold you may not like what your Nathan has to say but God sent him with the message.

8. Even forgiven sin causes scars.

2 Samuel 12:10-14 10 Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife. 11 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. 12 For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun. 13 And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. 14 Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die.

- A. **David's repentance for his sin:** 13 "And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD". Our repentance deters the enemy and begins the process of restoration with God.
- B. **God's forgiveness for his sin:** 13 "And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die". God wants to forgive the sins and reunite with His children.
- C. **The punishment for David's sin:** Although we repent and God forgives, there is punishment and scars from sin. Because of this sin:
- 1) David's son raped his stepsister.
 - 2) Another son killed his rapist brother.
 - 3) David's son attempted to take over his throne.
 - 4) Two of David's wives were taken into captivity.
 - 5) The child David conceived with Bathsheba died.

Closing:

- 1. It's not sin to have a weakness, that's simply our sin nature. It's not a sin to be tempted, that is simply Satan's weapon. These things are normal. Sin is when you allow your weakness to overcome God's protection.**
- 2. When confronted with the enemy's temptation flee from it.**
- 3. If you sin don't double down on it to cover it.**
- 4. Take advantage of your Nathans.**
- 5. Repent ASAP!!!!**

DAVID & GOLIATH

- The theme of this lesson is to build trust in Christ by acting on faith in Christ. To do that we must delete some of our training in self-reliance.
- To set the scene, The Army of the Philistines stood on one hill and the Israeli Army stood on another hill with a valley between them. They had been going down into the valley to fight morning and evening for forty days.

1. Goliath the warrior defies God before the entire Israeli army.

1Samuel 17:4-11 4And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. 5And he had an helmet of brass upon his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail; and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass. 6And he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass between his shoulders. 7And the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam; and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron: and one bearing a shield went before him. 8And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and

said unto them, Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. 9If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us. 10And the Philistine said, I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together. 11When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid.

- A. Goliath's height was about 9'6". His armor was 150lbs. His spear weighed 26lbs. His sword weighed 15lbs.
- B. In addition to all the weaponry and protection that Goliath carried he then had a shield bearer walking in front of him.
- C. Goliath walks into the middle of the battlefield and challenges them to send one man to fight him to end all the daily battles.
- D. You see Goliath made a critical error. He is under the assumption that they are servants

of King Saul. “am not I a Philistine, and **ye servants to Saul?**”

2. Jesse, David’s father sent David to the Army with food for his brothers. While there Goliath defies God’s Army again.

1Samuel 17:17-18 17And Jesse said unto David his son, Take now for thy brethren an ephah of this parched corn, and these ten loaves, and run to the camp to thy brethren; 18And carry these ten cheeses unto the captain of their thousand, and look how thy brethren fare, and take their pledge.

1Samuel 17:23-24 23And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, out of the armies of the Philistines, and spake according to the same words: and David heard them. 24And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him, and were sore afraid.

- A. We see that Goliath didn’t come out and make this challenge once. He did it before David arrived and now again after David’s arrival. The difference is that nobody stepped up the first time. Could it be that they didn’t step up the first time because

God didn't want it to be an Israeli warrior to defeat Goliath but a boy. So that God would obtain the glory for the defeat? Same thing He wants in our life.

- B. David wasn't supposed to be there, but God was being defied by Goliath, So God put a plan in place to exhibit His power.
- C. Now in the presence of David, Goliath steps up again and makes the same statement he made before, but David isn't having it.

3. David was astonished that Goliath said this and no one was stepping up to defend God. David's brother was angry that David was questioning them.

1 Samuel 17:26-29 26And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God? 27And the people answered him after this manner, saying, So shall it be done to the man that killeth him. 28And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men; and Eliab's anger was

kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle. 29And David said, What have I now done? Is there not a cause?

- A. Saul had promised whoever killed Goliath his daughter, freedom, and riches but no man stepped up.
- B. David corrects Goliath's mistake indicating that they are the **army of the living God** and not servants of Saul. But still nobody stepped up.
- C. David's brother was angry with him because he thought that he had just come down to watch the battle. I'm sure he was also probably a little embarrassed that his kid brother was there questioning him and his friends also.
- D. These men were trained much like we were. Measure your strength and act according to your strength. However, that way of

thinking doesn't consider God's direction and protection.

- E. How often do we in our lives today, when faced with a seemingly insurmountable obstacle in our life, revert to our training and not consider God's direction and protection?

4. David steps up to fight Goliath but King Saul tells David that he can't fight Goliath.

1Samuel 17:32-33 32 And David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine. 33 And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.

- A. It seems Saul had also forgotten that he was leading the army of the living God.
- B. God desires the glory in our service and for that reason often God will choose to use the most unlikely people to perform the greatest tasks for Him. He wants it to be seen that the tasks performed could only be done because God was in it.

C. Sometimes when God is trying to use an unlikely person His will to use that person is objected to by that person. Have you ever felt like you should be doing something for the Lord and not doing it because you felt like someone else is more qualified, experienced, or would be better at it? You're probably right, there is a more experienced and qualified person, that's why the Lord wanted to use you, so it would be evident that it was obviously the Lord who did whatever He is calling you to do, NOT YOU, so He can be glorified.

D. Because God choses to use the unlikely person, to prevent God's plan the enemy will present someone like Saul in the case to try and tell you how unqualified that you are.

5. David was confident that God would care for him if he only trusted God and served Him.

1Samuel 17:34-37 34 And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: 35 And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard,

and smote him, and slew him. 36 Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. 37 David said moreover, The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the LORD be with thee.

- A. David had no idea that he would end up fighting Goliath that day, but he trusted God and was willing to step up wherever and whenever God needed him. David saw an opportunity to defend and serve God and jumped at it. Where did David get that kind of trust? David's trust came from experience, he knew God took care of him with the lion and the bear, and he certainly wasn't afraid of some giant.
- B. Maybe the reason we don't have the trust to step out like David did is because we never had to face a lion or bear. I submit to you the only reason you haven't faced the lion or bear is because to this point God has fought them for you and you just haven't

acknowledged it. We can all look back at our lives and see situations where God stepped in and killed the lion for us. We will often attribute it to something we did; stealing Gods glory but it was God.

- C. David had every opportunity to stand down. David's family questioned his motives for being there. King Saul told him he couldn't do it. The entire army on both sides just knew David was about to die. David knew God would care for him if he served God, so when David saw an opportunity to serve God, he took the opportunity to serve God.

6. Saul wanted to arm David but he refused, trusting his proven weapons.

1Samuel 17:38-40 38 And Saul armed David with his armour, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail. 39 And David girded his sword upon his armour, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved it. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. And David put them off him. 40 And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had,

even in a scrip; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine.

- A. David trusted God to the extent that he didn't want anything in battle that wasn't proven. Saul gave David the best weapons and armor he had but David didn't want them because he hadn't proven them.
- B. When we step out in faith and allow God to prove His promise of protection it grows our trust in God, and you will soon rightly realize that you truly can do anything if it's God's will and you trust Him to care for you.
- C. You see God's promise in Philippians 4:13 is not that God strengthens you, it's the trust you have in God that strengthens you. **"13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."**

7. Goliath cursed God and David

1Samuel 17:41-44 41 And the Philistine came on and drew near unto David; and the man that bare the shield went before him. 42 And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained him: for he was but a youth, and

ruddy, and of a fair countenance. 43 And the Philistine said unto David, Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. 44 And the Philistine said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field.

A. Unbeknownst to Goliath, he is narrating God's plan to obtain God's due Glory. It will be completely impossible, after Goliath is dead for anyone to ever say that it was because David was a skilled fighter or that David had better weapons, or anything else other than David had God because Goliath had just narrated the fact that physically David was nothing compared to him physically.

8. Before David kills Goliath he lets everyone know who is actually going to be killing him and why he is about to die.

1Samuel 17:45-47 45 Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.

46 This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.
47 And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD'S, and he will give you into our hands.

- A. David is making it clear that although Goliath has the most modern weapons of the day it's no match when we **"come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts"**. We have that same promise today when serving God against the odds.
- B. David's confidence in The Lord that day is available to us today as we serve The Lord.
- C. I love that Goliath says to David that he is going to feed David's body to the fowls of the air and David replies by saying **"I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air"**.

D. David knew that he was nothing more than a weapon that God was going to use in killing Goliath, but God's goal wasn't just to kill Goliath. Goliath was just a means in God achieving His goal of obtaining His just glory.

9. David killed Goliath with his sling then cut his head off with Goliath's own sword.

1Samuel 17:48-51 48 And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. 49 And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth. 50 So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David. 51 Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled.

- A. Knowing what was about to happen David was excited that he was being used by God and ran toward Goliath. **“David hastened, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine”**
- B. God’s stone didn’t just hit him and knock Goliath out. This ruddy kid of about 15 slung the stone so hard that **“the stone sunk into his forehead”**.
- C. It goes to God supplying our needs when we need them that in verse 46 David told Goliath that he was take off his head, but David had no sword. We see that in God’s timing when needed God will provide what we need to complete His mission. As God provided Goliath’s sword to cut off Goliath’s own head.
- D. On the other hand, God expects us to know our enemy and prepare ourselves for the battles that he calls us to. David only used one of his five stones that he picked up but he was prepared in the exact same fashion as God prescribed for him to go in to battle for Goliath’ four giant brothers.

10. Israel defeated the Philistines

1Samuel 17:52-54 52 And the men of Israel and of Judah arose, and shouted, and pursued the Philistines, until thou come to the valley, and to the gates of Ekron. And the wounded of the Philistines fell down by the way to Shaaraim, even unto Gath, and unto Ekron. 53 And the children of Israel returned from chasing after the Philistines, and they spoiled their tents. 54 And David took the head of the Philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem; but he put his armour in his tent.

- A. Just as David said God would do, after fighting the Philistines for some time with no victory, that day they defeated them, and left their carcasses to be devoured by the beasts.

Closing:

- **David is not the hero of this story, God is glorified in this story, David knew it and that's why he did it.**
- **Each of us can glorify God like David by allowing God to take an unqualified but willing servant and do great things.**

- **Imagine the glory God will get the next time He puts it on your heart to do something that seems above you, in the face of naysayers and He uses you to do it simply because you trusted Him.**
- **Any successes you may have had in life are because God is killing your lions and bears, and He will continue to take care of you, when you step up, face Goliath, and give Him the glory.**
- **Just a little faith in God will create trust in God and when you have trust in God you have comfort because of God, and when you have God's comfort you finally have Peace.**

ESTHER

Romans 8: 28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

- Although our study is of the book of Esther, Romans 8:28 could be a theme of the book of Esther, as it provides us with a real life of example of how God is behind the scenes working a plan and all we must do is follow His direction to do our part in the plan and have complete success.
 - To the point, Esther is a book about God working His plan, for our life, behind the scenes.
 - It is important to note that not one time is God's name mentioned in the entire book of Esther. However, it is obvious that He is there and working His plan through Esther and her uncle Mordecai.
 - We find at this time, around 536 BC, most of the Jews are content to be living under Persian and Mede rule. Although, they are definitely considered a lower class of citizen.
1. **King Ahasuerus had a celebration to show off his power but the queen refused to participate.**

Esther 1:3-4 3In the third year of his reign, he made a feast unto all his princes and his servants; the power of Persia and Media, the nobles and princes of the provinces, being before him: 4When he shewed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honour of his excellent majesty many days, even an hundred and fourscore days.

Esther 1:11-12 11To bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal, to shew the people and the princes her beauty: for she was fair to look on. 12But the queen Vashti refused to come at the king's commandment by his chamberlains: therefore was the king very wroth, and his anger burned in him.

- A. No one knows it yet, but this was the first step in God's plan to protect the Jewish people. As we will see later, this Queen had to be removed in order for God to replace her with a queen that He was able to use.
- B. Have you ever looked back on a situation in your life and thought, oh now I see why God did that? Often, we don't see it at the time when God begins to work a plan but if we follow His lead we eventually always do.

2. The king eventually divorces the queen for fear that other wives would rebel their husbands.

Esther 1:19-21 19If it please the king, let there go a royal commandment from him, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes, that it be not altered, That Vashti come no more before king Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal estate unto another that is better than she. 20And when the king's decree which he shall make shall be published throughout all his empire, (for it is great,) all the wives shall give to their husbands honour, both to great and small. 21And the saying pleased the king and the princes; and the king did according to the word of Memucan:

3. The king will chose a new queen and Esther was taken against her will to be considered.

Esther 2:3-4 3And let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather together all the fair young virgins unto Shushan the palace, to the house of the women, unto the custody of Hege the king's chamberlain, keeper of the women; and let their things for purification be given them: 4And let the maiden which pleaseth the king be queen instead of Vashti. And the thing pleased the king; and he did so..

Esther 2:8 8So it came to pass, when the king's commandment and his decree was heard, and when many maidens were gathered together unto Shushan the palace, to the custody of Hegai, that Esther was brought also unto the king's house, to the custody of Hegai, keeper of the women.

- A. Esther had no choice in the matter of being taken for consideration to be queen. All virgins in the kingdom who were considered beautiful by the men the king sent out were required to go.
 - B. Often when the The Lord is using us, it is against our will, because our will doesn't naturally consider Gods plan, because we don't know God's plan. However, the best place for us when God is working a plan is squarely in His plan.
 - C. It is important for us to always be watching for what God may be doing and remain willing to follow His plan no matter how unwilling our flesh may be.
- 4. The king chose Esther to be queen but Esther didn't reveal her Nationality for fear of persecution.**

Esther 2:17 17And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the virgins; so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti.

Esther 2:20 20Esther had not yet shewed her kindred nor her people; as Mordecai had charged her: for Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him.

- A. Now we see God putting the people He planned to use in place.
- B. Esther still has no idea why she is there, but it will soon be revealed just how God plans to use her to protect a nation.

5. Mordecai, Esthers uncle foiled a plan to assassinate the king.

Esther 2:21-23 21In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king's gate, two of the king's chamberlains, Bigthan and Teresh, of those which kept the door, were wroth, and sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus. 22And the thing was known to Mordecai, who told it unto Esther the queen; and Esther certified the king thereof in Mordecai's name. 23And when inquisition

was made of the matter, it was found out; therefore they were both hanged on a tree: and it was written in the book of the chronicles before the king.

- A. In the same period that his niece was taken into captivity, Uncle Mordecai learns of a plan to assassinate the king. I'm sure that Mordecai didn't like what the king had done to his niece and for that reason may have thought himself about assassinating the king, but Mordecai was a Godly man and determined to warn the king's men of the assassination plot.
 - B. Have you ever been in a position to get some pay back for some perceived wrong only to later see that if you had God may not have been able to use you to complete His plan. That is the situation Mordecai found himself in and he opted to follow The Lord's guidance and warn the king.
- 6. After the assassination attempt the king promoted Haman to second in command. Haman was arrogant and required everyone to bow to him, but Mordecai refused to bow, so Haman plotted to kill all of the Jews.**
- Esther 3:1** 1After these things did king Ahasuerus promote Haman the son of

Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes that were with him.

Esther 3:5-6 5And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath. 6And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they had shewed him the people of Mordecai: wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even the people of Mordecai.

Esther 3:8-11 8And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them. 9If it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed: and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to the hands of those that have the charge of the business, to bring it into the king's treasuries. 10And the king took his ring from his hand, and gave it unto Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jews' enemy. 11And the king said unto Haman,

The silver is given to thee, the people also, to do with them as it seemeth good to thee.

- A. Haman was a descendant of the Amalekites. The Amalekites had always been enemies of the Jews. They were almost all killed by Saul. They hated the Jews for this and most especially they hated the Benjamite's, of which Mordecai was, because Saul was also a Benjamite.
- B. From the beginning God knew that Haman was going to be appointed, God knew that Haman was going to require His people to bow to him, God knew that as an Amalekite Haman would declare it a victory over God and God's people.
- C. Mordecai and Esther didn't know any of this but from the beginning but because they were willing to follow God's guidance, I think God's plan is starting to become clear to them.
- D. In our life we won't always know why God is doing something but be assured He does and at some point when it is revealed you will be so glad you went willingly against your will to see it through.

7. **Morticia tells ester about the order to kill all the Jews and asks her to speak with the king, however no one is allowed to speak to the king unless the king requests them to. Esther overcomes her fear and approaches the king anyway.**

Esther 4:8 8Also he gave him the copy of the writing of the decree that was given at Shushan to destroy them, to shew it unto Esther, and to declare it unto her, and to charge her that she should go in unto the king, to make supplication unto him, and to make request before him for her people.

Esther 4:11 11All the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces, do know, that whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king into the inner court, who is not called, there is one law of his to put him to death, except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live: but I have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days.

Esther 4:16 16Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and

so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.

- A. Have you ever been in a situation where the Lord is telling you to do something, and it is really scary or there is some big potential consequence of you do it?
- B. Usually what the Lord asks us to do doesn't include death as a consequence, but only because The Lord used those of us setting around this table as part of His plan in a situation that could have cost us our life to preserve his ability to spread the gospel.
- C. Unfortunately, after God using us to progress His plan, we don't follow through with the purpose of the plan which is spreading the gospel.
- D. No doubt this young woman was terrified of the potential consequences of following Gods plan but she called on her brothers and sisters to get prayed up and fast with her and she progressed God's mission.

8. The king sees Esther and grants her a request to have a banquet and invite Hamon.

Esther 5:2-4 2And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, that she

obtained favour in his sight: and the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre. 3Then said the king unto her, What wilt thou, queen Esther? and what is thy request? it shall be even given thee to the half of the kingdom. 4And Esther answered, If it seem good unto the king, let the king and Haman come this day unto the banquet that I have prepared for him.

- A. Esther intends to tell the king she is a jew and confront Haman in the presence of the king about his desire to kill her people. What a risky move but she is prayed and fasted up with the support of all her people and ready to step up for the will of God.

9. Even at the threat of death Mordecai still would not bow. So, Hamon builds gallows and plans to hang Mordecai.

Esther 5:9 9Then went Haman forth that day joyful and with a glad heart: but when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, that he stood not up, nor moved for him, he was full of indignation against Mordecai.

Esther 5:14 14Then said Zeresh his wife and all his friends unto him, Let a gallows be made of fifty cubits high, and to morrow speak thou unto

the king that Mordecai may be hanged thereon: then go thou in merrily with the king unto the banquet. And the thing pleased Haman; and he caused the gallows to be made.

- A. We also see Mordecai exhibiting the same faith as Esther as he refuses to bow. I expect that Esther's example in being willing to go see the king at risk of death to some degree empowered Mordecai to do the same.
- B. Often the only thing preventing a younger in the Lord brother from stepping up for the Lord is our example.

10. The king can't sleep and decides to do some reading.

Esther 6:1-3 1On that night could not the king sleep, and he commanded to bring the book of records of the chronicles; and they were read before the king. 2And it was found written, that Mordecai had told of Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's chamberlains, the keepers of the door, who sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus. 3And the king said, What honour and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this? Then said the king's servants that ministered unto him, There is nothing done for him.

- A. What are the odds that the king can't sleep on this night and decides to read the logbook for the very night that Mordecai saved the king's life.
- B. How often do you think we have things happen in our lives that we overlook as coincidence that are really a step in God's plan for our life?

11. Hamon goes to the king to ask permission to hang Mordecai, but the king speaks first.

Esther 6:6-10 6So Haman came in. And the king said unto him, What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour? Now Haman thought in his heart, To whom would the king delight to do honour more than to myself? 7And Haman answered the king, For the man whom the king delighteth to honour, 8Let the royal apparel be brought which the king useth to wear, and the horse that the king rideth upon, and the crown royal which is set upon his head: 9And let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man withal whom the king delighteth to honour, and bring him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour.

10Then the king said to Haman, Make haste, and take the apparel and the horse, as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, that sitteth at the king's gate: let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken.

- A. So, Haman goes to the king to get permission to hang Mordecai. Haman thinks the king wants to honor him but it's Mordecai the king wants to honor. To further compound the situation Haman determines Mordecai's reward.
- B. Not only does the king give Mordecai the honor that Haman recommended for himself, in verse 10 the king told Haman to give it to him.
- C. It difficult to read this passage and not be reminded of **Romans 12:19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.**

12. Ester has her banquet with the king and Haman.

Esther 7:3-6 3Then Esther the queen answered and said, If I have found favour in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given

me at my petition, and my people at my request:
4For we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. But if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I had held my tongue, although the enemy could not countervail the king's damage. 5Then the king Ahasuerus answered and said unto Esther the queen, Who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so? 6And Esther said, The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman. Then Haman was afraid before the king and the queen.

- A. We already know that the king loved Esther very much and the thought that someone was plotting to kill her, and her people infuriated him.
- B. It is not until this point that Esther finally reveals to the king and to Haman that she is a Jew. We can be certain that if she had revealed it any sooner Haman would have incorporated that knowledge into his plan.
- C. Can you imagine Haman's fear when he realized Esther was a Jew and knowing how much the king loved her. God knew this moment was coming long before the original queen refused the king.

13. The king hangs Haman on the gallows Haman bult for Mordecai.

Esther 7:9-10 9And Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, said before the king, Behold also, the gallows fifty cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, who had spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman. Then the king said, Hang him thereon. 10So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified.

- A. It seems the rule that was put in place that the king must invite you to speak to him was no more as one of the chamberlains told the king about the gallows built for Mordecai.
- B. The king was extremely angry, to the point that only hanging Haman on the gallows that he built for Mordecai could ease his anger. "Then was the king's wrath pacified". What a statement!

14. The king grants the Jews power to hunt the hunters.

Esther 8:11 11Wherein the king granted the Jews which were in every city to gather themselves together, and to stand for their life, to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish, all the

power of the people and province that would assault them, both little ones and women, and to take the spoil of them for a prey,

- A. The king couldn't reverse the previous law because no law of the Medes and Persians could be changed, so the king created a law that allowed the Jews to hunt the hunters.

15. The Jews gathered and in each city in the kingdom and killed those that hunted them.

Esther 9:2-3 ²The Jews gathered themselves together in their cities throughout all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, to lay hand on such as sought their hurt: and no man could withstand them; for the fear of them fell upon all people. ³And all the rulers of the provinces, and the lieutenants, and the deputies, and officers of the king, helped the Jews; because the fear of Mordecai fell upon them.

- A. Not only did Mordecai lead the Jews in hunting the hunters but the other rulers helped Mordecai hunt them because they feared Mordecai's power with the king.
- B. Mordecai was given the place that Haman previously held.

16. The king gave Esther permission to hang Haman's ten sons.

Esther 9:13-14 13Then said Esther, If it please the king, let it be granted to the Jews which are in Shushan to do to morrow also according unto this day's decree, and let Haman's ten sons be hanged upon the gallows. 14And the king commanded it so to be done: and the decree was given at Shushan; and they hanged Haman's ten sons.

- A. As we have seen I don't think Esthers request was a request of vengeance but a request to protect her people from the next generation of Amalekites that would seek to do them harm.
- B. However, it does serve as a warning from God to those who might wish to do His people harm.

17. Mordecai declared a two-day annual Jewish holiday.

Esther 9:21-22 21To stablish this among them, that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same, yearly, 22As the days wherein the Jews rested from their enemies, and the month which was turned unto them from sorrow to joy, and from

mourning into a good day: that they should make them days of feasting and joy, and of sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor.

- A. The moral of the story is this if you mess with God's people, He will make your massacre a holiday.

Closing:

- **This lesson gives us an example of how God knows what's coming for you long before you do.**
- **If you stay close enough to hear His direction you will know what to do.**
- **If you do what He directs you to do He will see you through even life and death situations.**
- **If we don't stay close and follow His direction don't be surprised when your Haman destroys your people.**

JONAH AND THE WHALE

- Sometimes God through the Holy Spirit will want you to do something. In the day to day of our lives it is usually something like, go talk to this person or get involved in this ministry at church. Sometimes, as in Jonah's case, it can be much more life altering.
- When God tells us to do something we have a decision to make. Do what God wants us to do or deal with the consequences of not doing what God wants us to do.
- The decision determines if you are, or you are not "in God's will". Let me add life is always more comfortable, joyous, and peaceful when in God's will regardless of what the enemy might tell you or what God asks you to do.
- As we look at Jonah's situation, I would like you to consider what God might be wanting you to do and how you are responding to Him and what barriers the enemy is using to keep you from responding properly.
- Let me add this, it is impossible to be a Christian and God not to be calling you to do something. It doesn't work like that. If you are saved, He wants you to do something. It becomes a matter

of ensuring you are saved, determining what He wants you to do, and doing it.

1. The Lord gave Jonah a mission and Jonah ran from it.

Jonah 1:1-3 1Now the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, 2Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me. 3But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD.

- A. So, The Lord saw the wickedness of Nineveh and told Jonah, in the same way He tells us to do things, go to Nineveh and preach to them.
- B. Jonah at this juncture is in the same place we find ourselves when The Lord wants us to do something. Be in The Lord's will or not be in The Lord's will.
- C. As we said previously, because the enemy is obviously opposed to The Lord's will, he will give you every reason he can think of to keep you from doing what The Lord wants you to

do. It will interfere with what I want to do, it is dangerous, it isn't what's best for my family, I'm not qualified, ect, ect, ect.

- D. As we see, for whatever reason, Jonah fell for the enemy's tactics and decided to not be in The Lord's will but to attempt to run in a different direction from where The Lord wanted him.
- E. So, Jonah boarded a ship to run from God. We do the same thing when we decide to not follow God's will. We will find a reason to stay away from things that bring light to our decision. We either don't go as often or stop going to church. Sometimes the enemy will give us a conflict so we feel justified in finding another church where we might not have to face His conviction. He will attempt to keep us from people that love and support us. The enemy will be happy to give us excuses and places to run because if you are listening to his lies, he thinks he can keep you useless to God.

2. God corrected Jonah's course.

Jonah 1:4-8 4But the LORD sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken.
5Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every

man unto his god, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them. But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep. 6So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not. 7And they said every one to his fellow, Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah. 8Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us; What is thine occupation? and whence comest thou? what is thy country? and of what people art thou?

- A. Jonah doesn't get far before his actions start affecting not only himself but those around him also. In Jonah's case it was the sailors aboard the vessel he was on. In our cases it is usually our family that must weather our storms because we make the decision to not be in God's will.
- B. Jonah thought he had hidden the fact that he was out of God's will and running from God. However we see, God revealed Jonah as the one who was out of God's will through the godless sailors casting lots. Guess what,

casting lots is not required for those in God's will to identify those who are not.

- C. The grandest lie of the enemy, that we believe, is I'm doing a good job at hiding I'm out of God's will. From the outside it's often simple to see why your family is in the hull of a ship in the midst of a storm.
- D. The most difficult and dangerous part is helping you realize the reason for the storm while not giving the enemy ammunition that might cause you to run from help.

3. Jonah stops running from God.

Jonah 1:9-12 9And he said unto them, I am an Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land. 10Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them. 11Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us? for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous. 12And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you.

- A. Jonah knew all along that he was running from God's will. But it was at this point that he came to the realization that he couldn't run and that his running was affecting the people around him not to mention the people that God had called him to go preach to.
- B. At this point Jonah had no idea how or if he would ever get to Nineveh. He just knew that he had to stop running from God in order to stop the misery of those around him, so he tells them to cast him overboard.

4. Jonah is cast into the sea and the sailors turned from their gods to Jonah's God.

Jonah 1: 13-16 13Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not: for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them. 14Wherefore they cried unto the LORD, and said, We beseech thee, O LORD, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood: for thou, O LORD, hast done as it pleased thee. 15So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging. 16Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the LORD, and made vows.

- A. Some pretty important things occurred once Jonah got things right with God. The sailors have turned from their false gods to the one true God. We see they attempted to get Jonah to shore. We see a desire to properly follow God had been imbedded in their mind because of witnessing what happens when you don't follow God, as they asked God what to do about Jonah and not spilling innocent blood. They feared The Lord and offered sacrifices unto Him.
 - B. Nonetheless Jonah was destined to be the first submariner and they threw him overboard. As soon as they cast him overboard the storm stopped.
- 5. Jonah in the belly of a great fish. (whale Matthew 12:40)**

Jonah 1:17 - Jonah 2:10 17Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. 1Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly, 2And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice. 3For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and

thy waves passed over me. 4Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple. 5The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head. 6I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God. 7When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple. 8They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy. 9But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD. 10And the LORD spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.

- A. Now that Jonah has decided to get back on track, God provided transportation. Granted it wasn't as comfortable as the transportation would have been if Jonah had just followed God's will in the first place, as Jonah spends three days and nights in the belly of the whale.
- B. Now that Jonah is back on course with the Lord and the storms had stopped, Jonah had time to review his situation and came to

some conclusions that we can all benefit from.

- 1) Jonah didn't wait for things to get better to get direction from God. *"1Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly"*
- 2) Jonah realized it was his fault that he was in the belly of a whale. *"2.... I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I..."*
- 3) Jonah confessed he was out of The Lords will and turned back to God. *"4I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple."*
- 4) Jonah recognized that it was The Lord who saved him. *"6....yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God."*
- 5) Jonah acknowledges what caused him to decide not to follow God's will. *"8They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy."*
- 6) Jonah acknowledges that he owes everything to God. *"9But I will sacrifice*

*unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving;
I will pay that that I have vowed.
Salvation is of the LORD.”*

- C. The transport wasn't to get Jonah to Nineveh it was to bring him back to God. Once God was satisfied that Jonah had learned these lessons God allowed Jonah to disembark the vessel.

6. Jonah's preaching caused an entire city to trust god.

Jonah 3:1-4 1And the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying, 2Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee. 3So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey. 4And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.

- A. While laying on the beach amid a pile of whale vomit God gave Jonah the same mission, he had asked him to do in the beginning. Oh, how I imagine Jonah wished he had just taken the first-class ticket The

Lord would have probably provided him if he had just done what He wanted him to do.

- B. Jonah's attitude had definitely changed as he now ran to Nineveh in one third the time it normally takes to get there as scripture says *"Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey. 4And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey"*.
- C. We also see he wasted no time beginning to give The Lord's warning that in 40 days they would be destroyed.

7. Jonah finally carried out his mission.

Jonah 3:5-10 5So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them. 6For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. 7And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water: 8But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from

the violence that is in their hands. 9Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not? 10And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.

- A. Because Jonah completed his mission, an entire city came to God. Then God changed His mind and saved them.
- B. How many people would God save if we completed the mission that he has for us.

8. It's not for us to agree with God's will, but only to do it.

Jonah 4:1-11 1But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry. 2And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil. 3Therefore now, O LORD, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live. 4Then said the LORD, Doest thou well to be angry? 5So Jonah went out of the city, and sat on the east side of the city, and there made him

a booth, and sat under it in the shadow, till he might see what would become of the city. 6And the LORD God prepared a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd. 7But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered. 8And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live. 9And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death. 10Then said the LORD, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night: 11And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?

- A. Just because we are following God's doesn't mean the enemy will stop attacking. On the contrary you are in the fight now and he may attack more.
- B. Jonah was angry that God put him through all that he endured only to save Ninevah when he could have just saved them anyway.
- C. God's lesson in chapter four serves as a reminder to Jonah that it's not up to him to question God's motives, just to do them. 4Then said the LORD, Doest thou well to be angry?
- D. Have no doubt that after everything Jonah had been through his bad attitude in the end was an attempt by the enemy to turn him again.

Closing:

- 1. God has a will and mission for each of us.**
- 2. Being in God's will is a decision that we make.**
- 3. When we are not in God's will and carrying out His mission, we are the only ones that thinks it hidden. God knows, Satan knows it,**

and others who are following God's will know it.

- 4. Most all the storms in our lives are the result of not being in God's will.**
- 5. So, the answer to your storms is found in God's will.**

ELIJAH AT MOUNT CARMEL

- On this occasion we see that Ahab had become King of Israel. Ahab did more evil in the sight of the Lord than any other king before him. He served and worshiped the false god Baal. He went so far as to build a house and altar for Baal. 1 Kings 16:33 says **he “did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel than all the kings of Israel that were before him”**.
- Elijah who was a prophet of The Lord told King Ahab that there would not be rain or dew during **“these years”**. Assumably, he meant during the reign of Ahab but the period of time was open ended.
- The Lord cared for Elijah during this period but when things started drying up Ahab was on the hunt for Elijah. Ahab knew what Elijah said about the drought and he knew that the drought occurred, just like Elijah said, but it hadn't turned Ahab from Baal. It did cause him to want to kill Elijah.
- Here is where we begin the events of Elijah on Mt Carmel.

- 1. After three years of drought, knowing Ahab is looking to kill Elijah, God tells Elijah to shew thyself to Ahab and He will send rain.**

1 Kings 18:1-2 1And it came to pass after many days, that the word of the LORD came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth. 2And Elijah went to shew himself unto Ahab. And there was a sore famine in Samaria.

- A. First, I want to point out, while knowing that King Ahab wants Elijah dead the minute God says go find Ahab there is no hesitation or question.
- B. That confidence in God was built on Elijah doing what God told him to do previously and God taking care of him after he did.
- C. Do you know that is all it takes for us to have the same confidence in God?

- 2. At the same time King Ahab was devising a plan to find grass for the livestock.**

1 Kings 18:3 And Ahab called Obadiah, which was the governor of his house. (Now Obadiah feared the LORD greatly:

1 Kings 18:5-6 5 And Ahab said unto Obadiah, Go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and

unto all brooks: peradventure we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts. 6So they divided the land between them to pass throughout it: Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself.

- A. We can see that what Elijah told King Ahab about the drought had come to pass and they were struggling. They seem to have run out of all their resources to even feed the livestock.
- B. I would like to point out that when we make a choice to go away from God that He doesn't step in to save us. To learn our lesson, He makes us suffer for a while. He does this over and over in scripture when people stray, and we can look at our own lives and see He operates the same way.

3. Obadiah meets Elijah during his travels.

1 Kings 18:7-8 7And as Obadiah was in the way, behold, Elijah met him: and he knew him, and fell on his face, and said, Art thou that my lord Elijah? 8And he answered him, I am: go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here.

- A. Because of King Ahab being on the road, who knows how long it would have taken Elijah to find King Ahab, But God knew and placed Obadiah on Elijah's path.
- B. Obadiah was a godly man and governor over Ahab's house. Also because of King Ahab's plan, Obadiah may have been the only man in the world who knew where to find King Ahab at the time.
- C. Furthermore, if King Ahab and Elijah had met on the road first Ahab would have probably just killed Elijah, as it had been his desire.
- D. My point is this, No Fear, God was and is in complete control of every situation that He calls us to.

4. King Ahab and Elijah meet.

1 Kings 18: 16-20 16So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him: and Ahab went to meet Elijah. 17And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? 18And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim.

19Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table. 20So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel.

- A. Immediately when King Ahab sees Elijah he says, you are the one who is causing Israel all this trouble.
- B. It is interesting to me that King Ahab recognizes that it is Elijah who has caused all this trouble but still without acknowledging the power of the one true God.
- C. Elijah Says to King Ahab its not me who is causing this drought it is you because you turned from God and forsook His commandments.
- D. It is at this point we see King Ahab begin to consider that he may have messed up. If not, why would he have given Elijah the liberty to say these things to him?
- E. As scared as I'm sure he was, Elijah did not back down to the King when it was time to declare The Lord and the failure of the King

to follow the one true God. What do we do in those situations? Do we back down for fears sake or do we stand for God despite the possible consequences?

5. Elijah issues a challenge to the people.

1 Kings 18:21-24 21And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word. 22Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. 23Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: 24And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken.

- A. There are a few different groups on Mt Carmel that day, King Ahab and the Prophets of Bail, Obediah and the children of Israel,

and Elijah, all of which in either group are mostly Israelites.

- B. So, when Elijah says, **“How long halt ye between two opinions?”** Essentially, he is saying make up your mind are you servant of Baal, and if you are stop calling yourself Israelites. Its like today when people say they are Christians but worship tier false Gods, which is anything we put before God, including ourselves, family, jobs, hobbies, ect.
- C. After he said that, they were still silent, so for the sake of the children of Israel, in the presence of the King and the prophets of Baal, Elijah proposes a test of Gods to determine who the real God is. He did this to bring the Israelites back to God.
- D. I’m sure the prophets of Baal didn’t want to take the challenge because it may reveal their cash cow, however I believe the king was now teetering and wanted rain desperately.

6. The prophets of Baal take their turn at the challenge.

1 Kings 18:25-29 25And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for

yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under. 26And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made. 27And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked. 28And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them. 29And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded.

- A. Elijah allowed them to choose their bull first, they dressed it and began calling on Baal all morning, but no fire. When that didn't work, they started jumping on the alter, but no fire.
- B. About noon Elijah mocked them saying cry louder he must be busy, you need to wake him up. Elijah didn't reverence in any way

their false God. It would have been diversion from the power of the One true God for him to do so and the same applies to us today when we concede to a higher power of any thing else that diverts from the one True and only God. Elijah wasn't being belligerent; he was making it clear that there is only one God.

- C. At this point they started crying out louder and cutting themselves **“till the blood gushed out upon them”** they did this until the evening and still no fire.
- D. I want to ask a question, we know that Baal was nonexistent, he was simply a made-up false god name. So, then, what or who is it that caused the prophets of Baal to cut themselves to the point of gushing blood and why would that entity do that.

7. Elijah prepares for his turn.

1 Kings 18:30-35 30And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down. 31And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the LORD came, saying, Israel shall be

thy name: 32And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed. 33And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood. 34And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it the third time. 35And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water.

- A. Using twelve stones representing the twelve tribes, Elijah repairs the altar that the prophets of Baal tore down.
- B. He digs a trench around the altar, sets the wood up, and then so there is no question that is God, in a time of drought he pours 12 barrels of water over the wood to the point that it fills the trench that he dug.
- C. Elijah has complete confidence in God. All this type of confidence requires is allowing God to direct us, following that direction and watching Him care for us through it.

8. Elijah takes his turn.

1 Kings 18:36-38 36And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. 37Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. 38Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

- A. Elijah wasn't looking to be correct in the eyes of the king or the people. He was concerned that they might think he had anything to do with what was about to happen. We see this when he asks the Lord to **"let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word."**
- B. We see Elijah's motivation for the challenge when his prayer is **"37Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again."**

- C. Notice when it was Elijah's turn that there was no waiting immediately God acted on Elijah's prayer.
- D. With the correct motivation and trust in God not only did God burn the wet wood but the fire was so hot that it turned the rocks to dust.

9. The people turn to God.

1 Kings 18:39-40 39And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God. 40And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.

- A. Because Elijah trusted and followed God even when it seemed difficult God cared for him, and God's goal was achieved. The people turned back to God.
- B. To prevent it from occurring again God had another task. Kill the prophets of Baal and kill them he did.
- C. We can also point out that the people who were converted that day not only committed

to following God in word but also in deed, as they were the ones who gathered the prophets of Baal to kill them.

- D. It calls into question our salvation experience when we commit in word to follow God, but we don't follow through in deed.

10. It sounds like rain.

1 Kings 18:41-46 41And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain. 42So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees, 43And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times. 44And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not. 45And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel. 46And the hand of the

LORD was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

- A. At this point it has not rained but when Elijah tells King Ahab to eat, drink and get off the mountain before it rains, we see that he does. This goes to our ability to effect change if we would simply follow the Lord's direction in our life.
- B. You know why the world is in the shape that it is in, why you can't speak of the Lord at work, why there are limits on our ability to openly tell people about the Lord? Because we haven't done it, and the King Ahabs of the world hasn't experienced Gods stone consuming fire because we haven't risked it all in service to Him so that it may be exposed.
- C. Ahab rode home in the rain that day as a believer in the one true God because Elijah followed through on God's plan to present Himself.

Closing:

- **Admittedly pushing the envelope for God can be scary but I submit to you it is the safest place to live because it comes with Gods protection.**
- **I urge you to live close to God so you can hear His direction and when he speaks act upon it.**
- **When He speaks and you don't move remember the question Elijah asked, "How long halt ye between two opinions?" Are you a Christian or not????**

SAMSON & DELILAH

- The book of Judges gives us a history of the Israelites for about 300 years.
 - During this period the Israelites not only failed to conquer the entire land but were often enslaved by their neighboring heathen nations.
 - Judges 17:6 tells us why this continued to occur “In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.”
 - On the occasion of Samson, we find the Israelites enslaved by the heathen Philistines.
 - What do we know about Samson?
- 1. Samson’s birth is foretold, and Samson is born.**
Judges 13:5 For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.
- Judges 13:24-25** 24And the woman bare a son, and called his name Samson: and the child grew, and the LORD blessed him. 25And the Spirit of

the LORD began to move him at times in the camp of Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol.

- A. Who knows what a Nazarite is?
- B. Numbers chapter 6 describes a Nazarite as a person who vows a vow of separation to the Lord. A part of that vow, in addition to other things, they must not cut their hair.
- C. God intended to use Samson against the Philistines and therefore instructed his parents to raise him from the beginning as a Nazarite.
- D. In the Old Testament when the Lord wanted to use you for something the Spirit of the LORD would move on you for that occasion. The Spirit of the Lord lives in us New Testament saints. Because Samson was a Nazarite, we will see that the Spirit of the Lord will move on Samson often, as he did in verse 25.

2. Samson chose a Philistine wife.

Judges 14:1-4 1And Samson went down to Timnath, and saw a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines. 2And he came up, and told his father and his mother, and said, I

have seen a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines: now therefore get her for me to wife. 3Then his father and his mother said unto him, Is there never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines? And Samson said unto his father, Get her for me; for she pleaseth me well. 4But his father and his mother knew not that it was of the LORD, that he sought an occasion against the Philistines: for at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel.

- A. Samsons parents knew he was chosen of the Lord to be a Nazirite. They probably didn't think it acceptable of him to take a philistine wife. We see immediately that although they raised him as the Lord wanted them to "It was of the Lord" that he takes a Philistine wife.
- B. Often the Lord has a plan that we are not privy to. We may play a part in a portion of the plan, as Samsons parents did, we may not know all of Gods plan and must be open to His direction in the lives of others.

3. Samson kills a lion on the way to see his fiancée.

Judges 14:5-9 5Then went Samson down, and his father and his mother, to Timnath, and came to the vineyards of Timnath: and, behold, a young lion roared against him. 6And the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his hand: but he told not his father or his mother what he had done. 7And he went down, and talked with the woman; and she pleased Samson well. 8And after a time he returned to take her, and he turned aside to see the carcase of the lion: and, behold, there was a swarm of bees and honey in the carcase of the lion. 9And he took thereof in his hands, and went on eating, and came to his father and mother, and he gave them, and they did eat: but he told not them that he had taken the honey out of the carcase of the lion.

- A. Samson and his father and mother make a trip down to see this woman that Samson wanted to marry. At some point Samson and his parents split and Samson runs into a lion and he kills the lion.

- B. We will see later why scripture makes a point to tell us that Samson did not tell his mother or father about killing the lion or where he obtained the honey that they ate.
 - C. It is very important to note that it was not Samson's hair that gave him the ability to rent the lion as if it were a kid, it was that "the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him". The hair was a symbol of the Samson following the Lord, it was not the source of his strength but evidence of his faithfulness to God.
 - D. As we continue, we will see Samson's strength exhibited and every time his strength is exhibited, we see that the Lord came upon him.
- 4. Samson makes a challenge at his bachelor party.**

Judges 14:10-15 10So his father went down unto the woman: and Samson made there a feast; for so used the young men to do. 11And it came to pass, when they saw him, that they brought thirty companions to be with him. 12And Samson said unto them, I will now put forth a riddle unto you: if ye can certainly declare it me within the seven days of the feast,

and find it out, then I will give you thirty sheets and thirty change of garments: 13But if ye cannot declare it me, then shall ye give me thirty sheets and thirty change of garments. And they said unto him, Put forth thy riddle, that we may hear it. 14And he said unto them, Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness. And they could not in three days expound the riddle. 15And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they said unto Samson's wife, Entice thy husband, that he may declare unto us the riddle, lest we burn thee and thy father's house with fire: have ye called us to take that we have? is it not so?

- A. So, it seems that at Samson's bachelor party he bet the other guys that he could put forth a riddle and gave them seven days to guess what he was talking about. If they win, he will give them thirty sheets and thirty changes of clothes.
- B. Samson's riddle had to do with his killing the lion and then getting honey from its carcass. "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness".

- C. No one except Samson even knew he had killed the lion, including Samson's parents. Speculatively, Samson needed to win that challenge for a dowry or to begin his life with his to be wife.
- D. After seven days his friends still didn't know the riddle, so they threatened to burn the bride's parents' house if she caused them to lose the bet.

5. Samsons fiancé (wife) betrayed him.

Judges 14:16-18 16And Samson's wife wept before him, and said, Thou dost but hate me, and lovest me not: thou hast put forth a riddle unto the children of my people, and hast not told it me. And he said unto her, Behold, I have not told it my father nor my mother, and shall I tell it thee? 17And she wept before him the seven days, while their feast lasted: and it came to pass on the seventh day, that he told her, because she lay sore upon him: and she told the riddle to the children of her people. 18And the men of the city said unto him on the seventh day before the sun went down, What is sweeter than honey? and what is stronger than a lion? And he said unto them, If ye had not plowed with my heifer, ye had not found out my riddle.

- A. From the first day that Samson made the riddle his to be wife started asking him about it. Samson told her I haven't even told my parents; I'm not going to tell you.
- B. Finally on the seventh day she had worn him down and he told her. Immediately she told the others, and they answered his riddle.
- C. Samson with no doubt knew, because he had told nobody else, that it was his wife to be who had betrayed him as he said "If ye had not plowed with my heifer, ye had not found out my riddle".
- D. We see that Samson obviously had a weakness for women as he allowed her to entice him and therefor ruin his plan.
- E. As we move forward, we will see that this was a lesson that samson did not learn as he continues to allow women to woo and turn on him. God was teaching him what his weaknesses are and preparing him for future events to come in his life. The lesson seemed specifically that his weakness is women and furthermore, not to trust Philistine women.

6. The Spirit of the Lord came on Samson and he killed 30 men.

Judges 14: 19 And the Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he went down to Ashkelon, and slew thirty men of them, and took their spoil, and gave change of garments unto them which expounded the riddle. And his anger was kindled, and he went up to his father's house.

- A. Again, we see that “The spirit of the Lord came upon him” and gave him his strength to kill 30 Philistines.
- B. He was angry at the men who threatened his wife. He went down slew thirty of the men who threatened his wife. Took their garments to pay his debt to the remaining men who answered the riddle. Then he went home to his parents.

7. Samson’s to be father-in-law gave his wife away.

Judges 14:20 But Samson’s wife was given to his companion, whom he had used as his friend.

Judges 15:1-2 1But it came to pass within a while after, in the time of wheat harvest, that Samson visited his wife with a kid; and he said, I will go

in to my wife into the chamber. But her father would not suffer him to go in. 2And her father said, I verily thought that thou hadst utterly hated her; therefore I gave her to thy companion: is not her younger sister fairer than she? take her, I pray thee, instead of her.

- A. Speculatively, Samson went back home to gain in the harvest so he could come back to her father with a goat and obtain his bride. However, when he goes back to see his to be wife, he finds that she had been given to marry one of his groomsmen.
- B. Her father gave her away because he hadn't heard from Samson, and he figured that he hated her because she betrayed him.
- C. Her father must have really wanted that goat because he offered Samson his fairer younger daughter.

8. Samson burns the Philistines fields, the Philistines kill the fiancé and father-in-law, Samson kills the Philistines.

Judges 15:3-8 3And Samson said concerning them, Now shall I be more blameless than the Philistines, though I do them a displeasure. 4And

Samson went and caught three hundred foxes, and took firebrands, and turned tail to tail, and put a firebrand in the midst between two tails. 5And when he had set the brands on fire, he let them go into the standing corn of the Philistines, and burnt up both the shocks, and also the standing corn, with the vineyards and olives. 6Then the Philistines said, Who hath done this? And they answered, Samson, the son in law of the Timnite, because he had taken his wife, and given her to his companion. And the Philistines came up, and burnt her and her father with fire. 7And Samson said unto them, Though ye have done this, yet will I be avenged of you, and after that I will cease. 8And he smote them hip and thigh with a great slaughter: and he went down and dwelt in the top of the rock Etam.

- A. Samson is angry again and as we saw the last time he was angry; it doesn't end well for the Philistines. Samson says, "Now shall I be more blameless than the Philistines, though I do them a displeasure." Meaning I don't feel bad about what I'm about to do.
- B. Samson catches 300 foxes and ties a rope between their tails sets the rope on fire and

turns them lose in their corn, vineyards, and olive fields.

- C. When the Philistines find out that he did it because his to be wife was given away, they burn his to be wife and father-in-law.
- D. Samson tells them, hey you did this to get back at me so I'm going to beat y'all to get revenge, then it's going to be over. So, he "smote them hip and thigh with a great slaughter" and then left the area.

9. The Israelites turned Samson in to the Philistines.

Judges 15:9-13 9Then the Philistines went up, and pitched in Judah, and spread themselves in Lehi. 10And the men of Judah said, Why are ye come up against us? And they answered, To bind Samson are we come up, to do to him as he hath done to us. 11Then three thousand men of Judah went to the top of the rock Etam, and said to Samson, Knowest thou not that the Philistines are rulers over us? what is this that thou hast done unto us? And he said unto them, As they did unto me, so have I done unto them. 12And they said unto him, We are come down to bind thee, that we may deliver thee into the hand of

the Philistines. And Samson said unto them, Swear unto me, that ye will not fall upon me yourselves. 13And they spake unto him, saying, No; but we will bind thee fast, and deliver thee into their hand: but surely we will not kill thee. And they bound him with two new cords, and brought him up from the rock.

- A. So not happy with it ending there, as Samson had said, the Philistines moved to where Samson was. Once there the Israelites ask them why they were there, and the Philistines tell them they are there to do to Samson as he did to them.
- B. The Israelites go to Samson and ask, what do you think you are doing, don't you know these people rule over us. In Samson fashion he tells them I'm just doing to them as they did to me.
- C. Doesn't that sound like us, I've got to get them back because of what they did to me.
- D. So, willingly Samson allows the Israelites to bind him and turn him over to the Philistines.

10. Samson kills 1000 Philistines with the jawbone of an ass, then drinks from it, and is the judge of Israel for 20 yrs.

Judges 15:14-20 14And when he came unto Lehi, the Philistines shouted against him: and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and the cords that were upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire, and his bands loosed from off his hands. 15And he found a new jawbone of an ass, and put forth his hand, and took it, and slew a thousand men therewith. 16And Samson said, With the jawbone of an ass, heaps upon heaps, with the jaw of an ass have I slain a thousand men. 17And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking, that he cast away the jawbone out of his hand, and called that place Ramathlehi. 18And he was sore athirst, and called on the LORD, and said, Thou hast given this great deliverance into the hand of thy servant: and now shall I die for thirst, and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised? 19But God clave an hollow place that was in the jaw, and there came water thereout; and when he had drunk, his spirit came again, and he revived: wherefore he called the name thereof Enhakkore, which is in Lehi unto this day. 20And he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years.

- A. Now in the Philistines captivity, “the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him” and Samson broke the cords that bound him. Again, no mention of his hair giving him strength, but it was the Spirit of the Lord because he was faithful to the Lord, represented by his hair.
- B. Once lose Samson picks up a mule’s jaw bones and kills 1000 Philistines with it. Samson says heaps upon heaps of men.
- C. Once Samson throws the jawbone down, he is thirsty and the Lord causes water to form in the jawbone and samson drinks it.
- D. For the next twenty years, with the lessons about relationships and his weakness for women, Samson is a judge over Israel. It doesn’t seem or at least it isn’t mentioned that he has any other issues with women during his tenor as judge.
- E. However, like every weakness we must be cautious of it because its when we think its over that Satan will use it again, as we will see.

11. Samson goes to Gaza, the Philistines try to kill him, he rips the doors off their city.

Judges 16:1-3 1Then went Samson to Gaza, and saw there an harlot, and went in unto her. 2And it was told the Gazites, saying, Samson is come hither. And they compassed him in, and laid wait for him all night in the gate of the city, and were quiet all the night, saying, In the morning, when it is day, we shall kill him. 3And Samson lay till midnight, and arose at midnight, and took the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them, bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of an hill that is before Hebron.

- A. I think it is apparent that Samson still has a weakness for the ladies.
- B. They intended to take Samson when he left the next morning. Someone told Samson the plan, so he left at midnight before they were ready. As he departed, he took with him the gate which they hid behind.

12. Samson meets Delilah and the Philistines bribe her to find out the secret to Samson's strength.

Judges 16:4-5 4And it came to pass afterward, that he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek,

whose name was Delilah. 5And the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and said unto her, Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to afflict him: and we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred pieces of silver.

- A. Samson has fallen in love/**lust** with a woman again.
- B. This seems like what happened with Samson and his previous fiancé. He falls for the girl, the Philistines approach her to turn on Samson, he gave in, Samson paid the price. Do you think Samson will fall for it again?
- C. It's easy retrospectively look at Samson's situation and think how in the world could he continue to fall for this again. However, it is different when you are in the midst of a situation, and we allow the enemy to blind us. I think most of us have been there.

13. Samson lies to Delilah about his strength.

Judges 16:6-14 6And Delilah said to Samson, Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth, and wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict

thee. 7And Samson said unto her, If they bind me with seven green withs that were never dried, then shall I be weak, and be as another man. 8Then the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven green withs which had not been dried, and she bound him with them. 9Now there were men lying in wait, abiding with her in the chamber. And she said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he brake the withs, as a thread of tow is broken when it toucheth the fire. So his strength was not known. 10And Delilah said unto Samson, Behold, thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: now tell me, I pray thee, wherewith thou mightest be bound. 11And he said unto her, If they bind me fast with new ropes that never were occupied, then shall I be weak, and be as another man. 12Delilah therefore took new ropes, and bound him therewith, and said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And there were liars in wait abiding in the chamber. And he brake them from off his arms like a thread. 13And Delilah said unto Samson, Hitherto thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: tell me wherewith thou mightest be bound. And he said unto her, If thou weavest the seven locks of my head with the web. 14And she fastened it

with the pin, and said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awaked out of his sleep, and went away with the pin of the beam, and with the web.

- A. Delilah has decided to take the Philistine lords up on their offer. She has gone as far as to have men hidden in her chamber with them to take Samson once his strength is gone.
- B. Just like with his previous fiancé she begins to nag him with questions about where his strength comes from.
- C. Three different times she asks Samson how to take his strength and three times he wakes up to her screaming the Philistines are coming only to find that she had done what he said. She bound him with seven green withs that have not been dried (bow strings), she then ties him with new ropes, then she weaved seven locks of his hair.
- D. You would think he might start questioning Delilah's motives when he wakes the first time to find himself bound exactly as he told her. It is so easy for us to question him

however we find ourselves in the same positions.

- E. To Samson's credit he did leave after that third time, but he came back.

14. Samson finally tells Delilah the source of his strength and she sets him up.

Judges 16:15-18 15And she said unto him, How canst thou say, I love thee, when thine heart is not with me? thou hast mocked me these three times, and hast not told me wherein thy great strength lieth. 16And it came to pass, when she pressed him daily with her words, and urged him, so that his soul was vexed unto death; 17That he told her all his heart, and said unto her, There hath not come a razor upon mine head; for I have been a Nazarite unto God from my mother's womb: if I be shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man. 18And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, Come up this once, for he hath shewed me all his heart. Then the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and brought money in their hand.

- A. After all this you think Samson would have cut ties and gotten as far as he could from Delilah, but he didn't.
- B. As before with his fiancé. She lays it on him If you loved me, you would tell me, and he tells her.
- C. What does she do? Immediately she calls on the Phillistine lords and says bring me my money.

15. Samson is captured, blinded, and imprisoned.

Judges 16:19-22 19And she made him sleep upon her knees; and she called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head; and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him. 20And she said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the LORD was departed from him. 21But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house. 22Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven.

- A. At this point to show him how much she cared for him she said honey put your head on my lap and take a nap.
- B. It was seemingly soon after he left previously with the seven locks as verse 19 tells us, she had a man come in while he was asleep on her lap to cut off the seven locks.
- C. Verse 20 tells us just how fooled Samson was by Delilah. He was in a deep sleep to the point that he needed to **“shake myself”** to wake up before he went out to meet the Philistines. The word **“wist”** means that he didn’t notice that the Lord had left him.
- D. When we are in the middle of an attack by Satan one of the ways he fools us is to make us believe that we are still in the will of the Lord, although those closest to us may see it, just as we do here, and even tell us we are not walking with the Lord we think we are fine and run out to face the Philistines not even realizing the Lord isn’t with us, in the will of the Lord.
- E. Because the Lord is no longer with him, he is bound by the Philistines, they poke his eyes out, take him to Gaza and put him in prison.

- F. Verse 22 tells us that while in prison his hair begins to grow again to renew his covenant with God. You must also believe that his period, blinded, weak and imprisoned, gave Samson opportunity to spiritually renew his covenant with the Lord.

16. The Philistines praise their false god for the capture and make fun of Samson.

Judges 16:23-25 23Then the lords of the Philistines gathered them together for to offer a great sacrifice unto Dagon their god, and to rejoice: for they said, Our god hath delivered Samson our enemy into our hand. 24And when the people saw him, they praised their god: for they said, Our god hath delivered into our hands our enemy, and the destroyer of our country, which slew many of us. 25And it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he may make us sport. And they called for Samson out of the prison house; and he made them sport: and they set him between the pillars.

- A. As Samson lay in prison the Philistines praised their Idol gods for delivering Samson to them. Elevating their Idol god over Samson's God. The Muslim religion

wouldn't come for another 1600 years so at this time they were worshiping one of their idols.

- B. As part of the celebration, they brought Samson down and tied him between the two pillars that supported the building to make fun of him. (sport)

17. Samson demolishes the building, kills himself, and 3000 Philistines.

Judges 16:26-31 26And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them. 27Now the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Philistines were there; and there were upon the roof about three thousand men and women, that beheld while Samson made sport. 28And Samson called unto the LORD, and said, O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes. 29And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left. 30And Samson said, Let me die with

the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life. 31Then his brethren and all the house of his father came down, and took him, and brought him up, and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the buryingplace of Manoah his father. And he judged Israel twenty years.

- A. Samson asked a little boy to put his hands against the two pillars that he was tied to.
- B. We don't know how many people the building held but scripture says that it was full. We also know that it included ALL the Philistine lords. Additionally, there were about 3000 people on the roof of the building.
- C. I don't mean to question Samsons motives, but I find it interesting that when Samson called upon the Lord to give him strength that his mind wasn't on avenging or proving who the one true God was, but that he was seeking revenge for them putting his eyes out.

- D. We know that in addition to his woman problem we also know he also had a revenge problem but, in this passage, God knew it and used it.
- E. Probably fulfilling the plan that God had for Samson since before his birth. God gave him strength and scripture says that on that day he killed more Philistines than he had killed in the entirety of his life.

18. Some points on Samson's life.

- A. We know that God is not surprised by anything, and that He knows what is going to happen in each of our lives, and the decisions that we are going to make that cause things to happen in our lives.
- B. We know that from before the beginning of Samson's life God had an **occasion** planned against the Philistines that would be carried out by Samson.
Judges 14: 4 But his father and his mother knew not that it was of the LORD, that he sought an occasion against the Philistines: for at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel.

- C. Hebrews 11:32-33 tells us that through faith Samson subdued a kingdom. With the knowledge of those two things 1. God had an occasion planned against the philistines from before Samsons birth and 2. Through faith Samson subdued a kingdom.
- D. Concluding those two things to be true, we must conclude that God from before Samson was even born God knew the decisions that Samson was going to make and although not every decision was going to please God those decisions were going to lead Samson to where God was going to use him.
- E. So, I say this to you nothing that has happened or will happen in your life is going to surprise God. Don't limit yourself by your past, follow the Holy Spirits direction, and let God use you despite the decision you have made. God had a plan for you before you were born, despite the decision He knew you were going to make.

SODOM & GOMORRAH

- Who of you, has heard someone reference Sodom and Gomorrah?
- Nearly always when someone references Sodom and Gomorrah it's in comparison to some evil place.
- As a children's story you may not have gotten into just how horrible Sodom and Gomorrah was. Let's just say the term Sodomite stems from those who occupied Sodom.
- Lot was the nephew of Abram who became Abraham and was greatly influenced by Abram.
- So how does Lot, a man under Godly influence, who seemingly desires to be Godly himself end up in such horrible place and circumstance?
- Like Lot, often I hear veterans say they were raised well and maybe even saved, only to enter the world/military and go a different direction.
- That happens because we have an enemy, he lays traps to divert our lives from God, and we fall for his traps. So, let's look at the traps laid in Lot's life as an example of what to look for.

1. Abram and Lot left Egypt and took everything they had with him.

Genesis 13:1 And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south.

A. Lot, a grown man at this time, had Godly influence in his life, so much so that he was following Abram from the comfort of Egypt to a different land.

B. Once in that new land Lot separated from Abram.

2. Why did Lot separate from the Godly influence of Abram?

Genesis 13:5-7 5And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents. 6And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together. 7And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land.

- A. It wasn't Lot and Abram that had a dispute. A dispute arose between the people that they were responsible for.
- B. We will see that Lot's family was less comfortable in the new land than they had been in Egypt. I'm also sure that although the dispute was between people in their families, Lot and Abram were hearing about it every day and getting pressure to do something about it.
- C. As men who are responsible for the needs and desires of our families, we must weigh out the family members short term desires and the long-term circumstances of what our families are pressuring us to do, and then make the proper long-term decision regardless of the blow back from the family.
- D. We will see that even when we are under Godly influence and The Lord has been blessing us, the enemy will search for weak points to separate us from God. We must be on the watch for these attacks. In Lot's situation his weak spot was the influence of his family.

3. God gave Lot another option.

Genesis 13:8-9 8And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and

thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren. 9Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.

- A. Abram proposed they stay together, and one take the right and one the left.
- B. This would have kept Lot and his family under Abram's Godly influence and out of the enemy's trap.

4. Why didn't Lot choose Abram's proposal?

Genesis 13:10-13 10And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar. 11Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other. 12Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom. 13But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.

- A. Once Lot determined that he was going to give in and separate from Godly influence to satisfy the immediate discomfort, the enemy presented opportunity if he would just advance a little further away. “Lot journeyed”
 - B. Once the enemy has traction it is easier for him to advance. In Lot’s situation he lured him further away by presenting him with many of the comforts that they had left back in Egypt, if they would just move a little further away. “like the land of Egypt”
 - C. The job is sometimes lonely, not easy, and no doubt you will not always make the family happy, however, in the long term you and the family will appreciate it. The job is long-term leading not short term happy.
 - D. It is important to note that from this point forward God blessed Abram with more land, family, animals, and promised that he would be the father of the Jewish nation. Lot and his family would have been part of that if they had stayed.
- 5. Lot loses everything but doubles down on his decision to separate from Abram.**
Genesis 14:9-12 9 With Chedorlaomer the king of Elam, and with Tidal king of nations, and

Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar; four kings with five. 10And the vale of Siddim was full of slimepits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and fell there; and they that remained fled to the mountain. 11And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way. 12And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.

Genesis 14:14-16 16And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan. 15And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus. 16And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people.

Genesis 14:21 And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself.

- A. Other kings conquer Sodom and Gomorrah. They take Lot and his family captive and all his belongings.

- B. Abram travels and saves Lot, his family, and his belongings. It is interesting that before scripture referred to Abram and Lot's relationship as nephew but here as his brother, referring to his spiritual relationship and indicating the reason Abram saved him being because of the spiritual relationship. A good example to what we should do in this situation when we find a brother, even a fallen brother, in trouble.
 - C. However, we see in verse 21 that Lot and his family returned to Sodom.
- 6. Lot now knows the mistake he made by bringing his family to such a wicked place.**
- Genesis 19:1-3** 1 And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground; 2 And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night. 3 And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat.

- A. I must believe that Lot was setting at the gate to warn and protect unsuspecting travelers.
 - B. Lot was earnest in his request to have these two men stay at his house because he knew how wicked the city that he brought his family to had become and what would happen to these men if they spent the night in the streets.
- 7. Lot is far from God, all because of his original decision of immediate comfort over long term leadership.**

Genesis 19:4-11 4 But before they lay down, the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter: 5And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them. 6And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him, 7And said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly. 8Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as is good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they

under the shadow of my roof. 9And they said, Stand back. And they said again, This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them. And they pressed sore upon the man, even Lot, and came near to break the door. 10But the men put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door. 11And they smote the men that were at the door of the house with blindness, both small and great: so that they wearied themselves to find the door.

- A. Lot is so far removed from a relationship with God, that amid a crisis, he thinks to offer his two virgin daughters to be raped before he thinks to turn to God for assistance.
- B. On a side note, it is particularly interesting to me, in verse 9, that the original Sodomites had the same response as the sodomites of today when faced with their sin. They essentially said don't judge me. "he will needs be a judge"

8. Lot loses his older daughters, all because of his original decision of immediate comfort over long term leadership.

Genesis 19:14-16 14And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law. 15 And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city. 16And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the LORD being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city.

- A. To save his older daughters Lot goes to their husbands and pleads with them to leave the city, but his son-in-laws are offended and won't leave. This is a consequence of Lot's initial decision of bringing his family to a wicked place where they would marry into families of that place.
- 9. Lot loses his wife and his possessions, all because of his original decision of immediate comfort over long term leadership.**

Genesis 19:17 And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.

Genesis 19:24-26 24 Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven; 25And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground. 26But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.

A. Although she had seen the wickedness of Sodom, seen the angels blind the Sodomites at their door, lost two daughters, been saved by angels, and heard the angels tell them not to look back, the draw of the life she had left behind caused Lot's wife to look back and she turned to a pillar of salt.

10. Lot's two remaining virgin daughters and unborn grandchildren are affected, all because of his original decision of immediate comfort over long term leadership.

Genesis 19:31-32 31And the firstborn said unto the younger, Our father is old, and there is not a man in the earth to come in unto us after the

manner of all the earth: Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.

Genesis 19:36 Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father.

- A. The actions of Lot's two remaining daughters are horrid, however Lot and not them are responsible. They were raised in such a wicked society that it seemed reasonable to them to do this. They didn't make their decision to lay with their father lightly, we see that they reasoned about it. The problem is that because of where they were raised their reasoning was flawed.
- B. Think of the wicked society that we are raising our children in and how different their reasoning is because of societal norms now than what they were just as far back as when we were children. Can you see how the enemy works and how important it is for us to keep our head on a swivel and lead long term not short term?
- C. Lot's decision continued to affect his grandchildren and every generation to follow.

Closing:

- **As you set here, the enemy wants you to believe this is a far-fetched story that is so far removed from your family and our times that it is irrelevant to you. However, it is an actual event that occurred, God gave it to us for a reason, and in retrospect we all know families that we have seen affected by one poor decision of immediate comfort over long-term leadership.**
- **We see from this example how the enemy will provide us with ways to eliminate immediate problems but create long term problems.**
- **We see the result of family leaders submitting to the immediate comfort of the family and not considering the long-term consequences.**
- **Husbands, we must consider the comfort of the family but be willing to take the heat and do the right thing for our family's long-term safety. If we don't, we are not the leader we are forcing members of our family to be a failed leader. That said we must consider our wives as God gave them to us as a help meet.**
- **Wife's we must submit to your leader's direction and be willing to endure something you may not like for the long term good. It is**

**easier for the rest of the family, child, or adult,
to follow the leader when they see the second
in command doing it.**

THE TWELVE SPIES

- God had been promising the Israelites a promised land for generations at this point in scripture we find them at the border of the land that God intended to give them.

1. The Israelites had come to the border of the land that God had been promising them.

Deuteronomy 1:21 Behold, the LORD thy God hath set the land before thee: go up and possess it, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath said unto thee; fear not, neither be discouraged.

A. This is a statement from Moses, in retrospect describing to the then Israelites what God told them to do forty years earlier.

B. We see that God gave them specific instruction to **“go up and possess it, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath said unto thee; fear not, neither be discouraged”**.

2. The Israelites send spies to recon the area that the Lord told them to “go up and possess”.

Numbers 13:1-3 1And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel: of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, every one a ruler among

them. 3And Moses by the commandment of the LORD sent them from the wilderness of Paran: all those men were heads of the children of Israel.

- A. God gave the Israelites freewill to follow their plan although He had given them specific instruction on what and when to do it.
- B. What does the Israelites sending spies into the land tell us about their trust in God?
- C. We see that the men that Moses sent were not grunts, he sent “heads of the children of Israel”. This is significant because if he had sent grunts their report back would not have been representative of the spiritual climate of the people as a nation.
- D. God gives us free will to follow his direction based on our spiritual relationship. We will see that the entire nation suffered as the result of these leaders and the same applies as we lead those we are responsible for.

3. Moses sent them to recon the strength of the enemy and the goodness of their land.

Numbers 13:17-20 17And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said unto them, Get you up this way southward, and go up into

the mountain: 18And see the land, what it is; and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they be strong or weak, few or many; 19And what the land is that they dwell in, whether it be good or bad; and what cities they be that they dwell in, whether in tents, or in strong holds; 20And what the land is, whether it be fat or lean, whether there be wood therein, or not. And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land. Now the time was the time of the firstripe grapes.

- A. What is the problem with what Moses asked them to do?
- B. The strength of the enemy. God didn't tell them to worry about the strength of the enemy. It doesn't matter the strength of the enemy if God tells us to go conquer them.
- C. The goodness of the land. God told them this is the land that I promised your fathers they would possess. The Israelites wanted to see it first to ensure that it was going to meet their standards.
- D. Direction of attack. God told them in Deuteronomy to "go up and possess it" from a militaristically inferior position. Moses told

them to circle around and approach from high ground. When God gives us a direction of attack it is the strongest position.

- E. The ultimate reason for the recon was to determine if Moses and the people were going to follow Gods direction or not.
- F. We can look at the Israelites and shake our heads in disgust. However, this is exactly what we do when we consider the consequences of an action God tells us to do before we do it.

4. The spies give a reconnaissance report of the land that God gave them and the people that God told them to conquer.

Numbers 13:25 And they returned from searching of the land after **forty days**.

Numbers 13:27 And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely **it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it.**

Numbers 13:28-29 28Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there. 29The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and

the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan.

- A. The land that God promised was wonderful. They presented fruit from the land that took two men to carry.
- B. The enemy is great. There were many nations living in strategic areas of the land. One of the groups were giants and the lineage of Goliath.
- C. Their fortifications are strong as it tells us their cities were walled.
- D. It is important to note that none of the spies conflicted on the report of the land, the enemy, or the fortifications.

5. The divided course of action.

Numbers 13:30-33 30And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it. 31But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. 32And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to

search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. 33And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.

- A. Although none of the spies saw a difference in the physical aspects of the report there seems to be a drastic difference in the plan of action.
- B. Caleb, who was one of the spies, using the same language that God used as to when and from what direction to attack, said **“let us go up at once and Possess it”**.
- C. However, some men that went up with him said, we can’t do it because they are stronger.
- D. What do you suppose is the significant difference in the recommended course of action? I submit to you by the evidence Caleb’s language, Caleb was focused on nothing other than what God told him to do, while the others allowed the potential consequences of following God to deter them from God’s orders.

6. The nation of Israel response to the recon report.

Numbers 14:1-4 1And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night. 2And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness! 3And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt? 4And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.

- A. The Israelites, like we often do, when faced with a course of action from leader's vs directions from God, chose to follow the leader for fear of the consequences of trusting God. Although, God has promised to care for us with the milk, honey, and giant fruit if we just trust Him and do what He asks us.

7. Moses and Aron fall on their faces and Caleb and Joshua try to correct Israel.

Numbers 14:5-9 5Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the

congregation of the children of Israel. 6And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes: 7And they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. 8If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. 9Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the LORD is with us: fear them not.

- A. Deuteronomy 1:23 tells us the Israelites plan to send spies pleased Moses, surly at this point Moses was regretting that.
- B. Caleb and Joshua beg them not to rebel against the Lord. Everyone they are speaking to has seen the Red Sea part, seen the plagues of Egypt, and every other way the Lord has cared for them and to do this as Caleb said would be pure rebellion against the Lord.
- C. Considering that The Lord has given us eternal salvation, can you see our fear of the consequences of serving Him as rebellion?

8. The Lord is extremely angry!

Numbers 14:10-12 10But all the congregation bade stone them with stones. And the glory of the LORD appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel. 11And the LORD said unto Moses, How long will this people provoke me? and how long will it be ere they believe me, for all the signs which I have shewed among them? 12I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them, and will make of thee a greater nation and mightier than they.

- A. The Lord was ready to kill the entire nation and replace them with a stronger nation to carry out His plan.
- B. The same goes for us, God says follow my directions and you get the fruits of being my child but if we don't carry out His plan the plan will continue with someone else, and we won't reap the benefits of following Him. However, His plan will continue.

9. Moses begged for a Pardon and God Pardoned with punishment.

Numbers 14:19-20 19Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now.

20And the LORD said, I have pardoned according to thy word:

Numbers 14:29-34 29Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me, 30Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I swore to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun. 31But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised. 32But as for you, your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness. 33And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness. 34After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise.

- A. The little ones that the Israelites said God would make prey if they followed His direction, God cared for them and allowed them in. However, they also paid for their parents sin, as they wandered in the

wilderness for forty years before they could go in.

- B. You ever wonder why God sent them to wander in the wilderness for forty years specifically, A year for each day the spies were in the country spying against God's direction.
- C. Everyone over the age of 20 would die as they wandered in the wilderness, before Israel would be able to enter the promised land. The oldest to enter would have been 60 years old. Except for Caleb and Joshua.

10. They still didn't learn.

Numbers 14:40-45 40And they rose up early in the morning, and gat them up into the top of the mountain, saying, Lo, we be here, and will go up unto the place which the LORD hath promised: for we have sinned. 41And Moses said, Wherefore now do ye transgress the commandment of the LORD? but it shall not prosper. 42Go not up, for the LORD is not among you; that ye be not smitten before your enemies. 43For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and ye shall fall by the sword: because ye are turned away from

the LORD, therefore the LORD will not be with you. 44But they presumed to go up unto the hill top: nevertheless the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and Moses, departed not out of the camp. 45Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill, and smote them, and discomfited them, even unto Hormah.

- A. Knowing their 40 years of punishment was to come, they attempted to backdoor the Lord and they paid the price.
- B. This only seals the fact that they still hadn't come to the point where they trusted that when the Lord said something He meant it.

Closing:

- 1) Does this bring any clarity for you concerning the war in Israel today?**
- 2) The importance of following God regardless of the fear of consequences.**
- 3) What applications for our lives can you see in this historical event?**

- 4) People are standing at the border of the Promised Land; God tells us there is only one way to get into the promised land.**
- 5) People complain about the way God directs them into the promised Land and look for other ways.**
- 6) God condemns everyone that wouldn't do it His way and allows in those in to the Promised Land that did it His way.**

NOAH AND THE ARK

- For many, Noah is a preschool and children story. But there is much for Christians of all ages to learn and apply from Noah's life.
- To many the account of Noah and the Ark is considered a story and not actual history. But the Bible doesn't treat Noah as a fable, but rather actual history.
- Noah is first introduced in genealogy Genesis 5:28-32. From the very first mention, Noah is presented as a real man who lived in a real time in actual history. Noah is included in Jesus's genealogy in Luke 3:36. Jesus referred to Noah in Luke 17:26 & Matthew 24:37-39. Peter mentions Noah twice in 1 Peter 3:19-22 & 2 Peter 2:5-10. If we doubt the actual history of Noah, we must doubt Luke, Peter and Jesus!
- If we separate the scripture and just look at the flood historically there is a tremendous amount of archaeological evidence that proves actual this event occurred.
- As we review this event, and hopefully learn something, I want us to pay special attention to the lessons that we can learn from the man Noah.

- I would like to pose a question, answer it with scripture and then make a couple about the topic.

1. Why did God destroy the earth with the flood?

Genesis 6:5-7 5 And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. 7And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.

- A. How does Noah's time compare to the world today?
- B. That word repented means He regretted creating man because of what man had become, so He intended to destroy it.
- C. If we compare the state of man precursors of the flood, we must be close to the fire.

2. Why did God choose Noah to be saved from destruction?

Genesis 6:8-9 8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. 9These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.

A. Because Noah walked with God in his life, God knew that Noah would do as the Lord commanded him to do concerning the flood. Scripture confirms this at every stage of the event of Noah and the ark, as it says “Noah did as God commanded numerous times. Genesis 6:22, 7:5, 7:9, 9:1

B. When we walk with God, He trusts us to serve him in greater capacities.

3. Why did Noah build the Ark the way he did?

Genesis 6:14-16 14 Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. 15And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. 16A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set

in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it.

- A. Noah built the Ark exactly as he did because that is exactly how God directed him to build it to ensure God's plan would be enacted and Noah and his family would be safe.
- B. When we follow God's plan exactly, we also enjoy the safety and blessings of God's plan. When we don't, we and our families suffer in turmoil because we allowed ourselves to be swayed by the enemy to believe that we know better and didn't follow God's plan.

4. Why did Noah's family join him building and on the Ark?

Genesis 6:18 But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee.

Genesis 7:1 And the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.

- A. God doesn't say that He found grace in the eyes of Noah's wife and sons, or that they were just, or perfect in God's eyes, or that they walked with God.

- B. They were allowed on the arch and saved because Noah was the leader of his family, and his family was submissive to his leadership. That is the only reason they were included.
 - C. They were submissive not because they placed great trust in Noah's leadership but because they knew that Noah followed God and his leadership for his family was directed by God.
 - D. As heads of our family, if you want to lead and have your families submissively follow, we must dedicate ourselves to following God and then REQUIRE your family to follow you.
 - E. As wives you must follow your husband's direction and set an example for your children to follow your husband's direction. This is truly why picking the right husband and wife is important.
5. **How many and what KINDS of animals did Noah bring on to the Ark?**
Genesis 6:20 Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive.

Genesis 7:2-3 2 Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female: and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female. 3Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female; to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth.

- A. KINDS: The word “kinds” is extremely important to understanding how Noah got one of every animal on the Ark. Kind refers to just that “kinds” of animal. For instance, Noah did not bring a wolf, coyote, fox, hyena, and jackal. He brought a male and female dog and all other canines from that day have been bred from them. The same applies to every other kind of animal like hippos, pigs, and camels who are all in the artiodactyl family.
- B. SIZE: It would be reasonable to believe that Noah brought adolescents of each animal and not two fully grown animals to represent the KIND of animal.
- C. 2 of every UNCLEAN animal KIND and 7 of every CLEAN animal KIND: God did this so there would be animals for sacrifice.

6. How old was Noah when the flood occurred?

Genesis 7:6 And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth.

- A. Noah was 600 years old when this began.
- B. How often do we come up with reasons why we cant do something? Im to old, Im not experienced enough, I don't have the finances, my family and obligations wont allow it.
- C. Noah set it all aside and simply followed Gods direction and here we are almost 6000 years later still talking about him because God chose to use him and he chose to follow him.

7. What did the flood look like?

- A. It rained 40 days and nights.
Genesis 7:4 For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth.
- B. It wasn't just rain that covered the earth.

Genesis 7:11 In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.

- C. The water was on the earth 150 days after the rains and fountains.

Genesis 7:24 And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days.

- D. There 270 feet of water above the highest point of earth.

Genesis 7:19-20 20And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered. 20Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered.

8. Did anyone or anything survive the flood?

Genesis 7:21-23 21And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: 22All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died. 23And every living

substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark.

- A. Some have different opinions concerning this, however, there is absolutely no way you can read this passage and believe anything other than absolutely nothing survived that wasn't on that Ark. If you believe the bible.

9. How did Noah know it was over?

Genesis: 8:6-12 6And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made: 7And he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth. 8Also he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground; 9But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth: then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark. 10And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark; 11And the

dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf pluckt off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth. 12And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him any more.

- A. When the rain stopped knew didn't continue to hide in the ship, he opened the window and started to look and prepare for Gods next direction.
- B. If Noah hadn't started to investigate and listen for Gods next direction ha may have never left the Ark. I'm sure he was scared and didn't want to open the window, but he trusted god enough not to let it overcome his fear.
- C. Noah didn't get comfortable he began to prepare for God's next move in his life.

10. When did Noah leave the Ark?

Genesis 8:13-17 13And it came to pass in the six hundredth and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth: and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry. 14And in the second

month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dried. 15And God spake unto Noah, saying, 16Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee. 17Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee, of all flesh, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth.

- A. First, we notice that although Noah saw that there was dry ground and they had landed on it, he would not leave until God told him that it was ok to leave the Ark.
- B. You must imagine how scared they must have been, they had just gone through something that the world had never seen.
- C. How often do we find ourselves in a scary situation and thing we must act and not wait on Gods direction.
- D. God shut them up in the Ark for their protection, Noah knew not to leave that protection on his own.

11. Will the flood ever happen again?.

Genesis 9:12-15 12And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: 13I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. 14And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: 15And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.

- A. According to scripture the rainbow is a lasting promise from God that He will never destroy the earth again.
- B. It is interesting that the enemy chose the rainbow and not some other symbol to corrupt into a symbol for something that God tells us is an abomination.
- C. Although, as we will see, God promised to never destroy the world with a flood again, He says he will destroy the world with fire.
1Peter 3:10

12. Because Noah walked with God and followed God's direction how did God Care for Noah?

- A. God made a promise to take care of Noah and his family.**

Genesis 6:18 But with thee will I **establish my covenant**; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee

- B. God took care of Noah and his family by shutting them in the Ark and keeping them safe.**

Genesis 7:16 And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: and **the LORD shut him in.**

- C. God blessed Noah's life because he did what God asked of him. He blessed his family because they followed Noah.**

Genesis 9:1 And **God blessed Noah and his sons**, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.

- D. During the crisis God did not forget Noah and his family and everything under his care, just as God does for us if we walk with Him and do as He tells us.**

Genesis 8:1-2 1 And **God remembered Noah**, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters asswaged; 2The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained; 3And the waters returned from off the earth continually: and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated.

This is not a story about a superhero Christian this is a story about God and what He can and will do for an average man who walks with Him.

JOSEPH AND THE COAT OF MANY COLORS

- Have you ever thought, why does God allow bad things to happen to good people?
- We need to first start from the position of there are no good people. It's reasonable to say that some people's actions are better than others but people themselves are not good.
- Bad situations in our life generally stem from three places:
 - 1) Correction for something we brought on ourselves.
 - 2) God training us for a future situation.
 - 3) God using you to affect His plan.
- When we find ourselves in a bad situation:
 - 1) The first question becomes, how do I react to this bad situation and what do I do to correct it. Consulting God in prayer and scripture on the topic is your first move.
 - 2) The second question is, did I do something to cause it? This requires honest self-examination, otherwise the enemy will give you several other people or circumstances to blame.

3) The third question, if it's not self-inflicted, God what is it you want me to learn or how is it that you want to use me?

- When God allows us to endure bad things for the purpose of fulfilling His plan It may seem that God is unconcerned about us, however, He promises to care for us if we just follow His plan. Also, it gives us good perspective as to our importance in God's plan. We think we are of the utmost importance when in fact when we measure God and His plan in comparison to our temporary discomfort our discomfort is miniscule.
- As we move through this story of Joseph, remember in Genesis 35:10-11 God changed Jacob's name to Israel and told him that a company of nations would come from his loins. In the beginning of Joseph's story God had this plan, Joseph didn't know it but the "bad things" in Joseph's life were God's process of fulfilling His plan for Jacob.
- Joseph gives us a great example of a Christian dealing with multiple bad situations stemming from each of the examples given above and how Joseph reacted.

- 1. Jacob loved Joseph more than his other children.**

Genesis 37:3-4 3Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours. 4And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him.

- 2. Joseph dreamed he would rule over his family and told his brothers and father about the dream.**

Genesis 37:10-11 10And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth? 11And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying.

- 3. Josephs brothers took his coat, threw him in a pit, and sold him into slavery.**

Genesis 37:28 Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.

4. The brothers told their father that Joseph had been killed by an animal.

Genesis 37 31-33 31And they took Joseph's coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood; 32And they sent the coat of many colours, and they brought it to their father; and said, This have we found: know now whether it be thy son's coat or no. 33And he knew it, and said, It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces.

- A. At this point in the story, we know that Jacob loved Joseph more than his other children, Jacob made Joseph a coat of many colors and because Jacob loved Joseph more it caused Joseph's brothers to dislike him.
- B. We know that Joseph told his family about his dream that he would rule over them some day.
- C. Because his brothers didn't like Joseph, they plotted to kill him and threw him in a pit. However, they then decided to sell him into slavery.

- D. To cover their tracks they kill a goat, put its blood on Joseph's coat and return it to their father as evidence of Joseph's death. Jacob believes completely that Joseph is dead ensuring there would be no search for him.
 - E. At this point I think Joseph's situation qualifies as one we might classify as "why does bad things happen to good people."
 - F. Joseph could have told his new masters what had happened and that his father would have paid them to return him, but we don't see that recorded in the scripture. We must assume that although a horrible situation, Joseph must have believed the situation he was in was all part of God's plan for him.
- 5. In Egypt the Midianites sold Joseph to Potiphar, who was a captain in King Paraoh's guard.**
Genesis 37:36 And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, and captain of the guard.
- 6. Amid this horrible situation The Lord was with Joseph and although in slavery he prospered.**
Genesis 39:2-4 2And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. 3And his master saw that the LORD was with him, and

that the LORD made all that he did to prosper in his hand. 4And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand.

A. This statement in scripture, that we see a couple of times in this story is confirmation for us from God that although Joseph was in a bad place, because Joseph was following God's plan "The Lord was with Joseph" in slavery, and He will be with us as we do the same.

B. Joseph was in charge and could have escaped But it wasn't Gods plan for him.

7. Potiphar's wife caused Joseph to be imprisoned due to a self-inflicted mistake.

Genesis 39:7 And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me.

Genesis 39:10-12 10And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her. 11And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and there was none of the men of the house

there within. 12And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out.

Genesis 39:16-20 16And she laid up his garment by her, until his lord came home. 17And she spake unto him according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me: 18And it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out. 19And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that his wrath was kindled. 20And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison.

- A. Joseph was climbing the ladder and may have been able to complete God's plan from this position, but he made a self-inflicted mistake that caused a bad thing to happen to him for correction.
- B. What was Joseph's self-inflicted mistake? Knowing the threat of Potiphar's wife, he allowed himself to be in a compromising

position that could have messed up everything.

- C. Along the way of living God's plan, we must expect the enemy to continue to lay traps for us in his attempt to stop God's plan. We must keep our watch and operate accordingly.

8. Although it was a self-inflicted mistake The Lord was with Joseph in prison.

Genesis 39:21-23 21But the LORD was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison. 22And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. 23The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the LORD was with him, and that which he did, the LORD made it to prosper.

- A. We see "the Lord was with Joseph" in prison because Joseph was following God's plan.
- B. Joseph was in charge and could have probably escaped, but it wasn't God's plan for him.

9. The king's butler forgot Joseph and Joseph remained in prison for 2 more years.

Genesis 40:2-3 2And Pharaoh was wroth against two of his officers, against the chief of the butlers, and against the chief of the bakers.³And he put them in ward in the house of the captain of the guard, into the prison, the place where Joseph was bound.

Genesis 40:8-9 8And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, Do not interpretations belong to God? tell me them, I pray you. 9And the chief butler told his dream to Joseph,

Genesis 40:13-14 13Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head, and restore thee unto thy place: and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler. 14But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and shew kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house:

Genesis 40:23 Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him.

- A. Another bad thing that happened to a good person. The butler promised to reward Joseph for the dream interpretation but

forgot him once his dream came true and was with the king.

10. Two years later King Pharaoh had a dream, the butler remembered Joseph, Joseph interpreted the dream, and Pharaoh made Joseph second in command of all of Egypt.

Genesis 41:14-16 14Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon: and he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh. 15And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee, that thou canst understand a dream to interpret it. 16And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.

Genesis 41:25 And Joseph said unto Pharaoh, The dream of Pharaoh is one: God hath shewed Pharaoh what he is about to do.

Genesis 41:39-40 39And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art: 40Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou.

11. Famine comes, Joseph dream comes to fruition.

Genesis 41:55 And when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do.

Genesis 42:1-2 1Now when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons, Why do ye look one upon another? 2And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may live, and not die.

12. God ultimate plan is revealed.

Genesis 45:4-5 4And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. 5Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.

Genesis 46:2-3 2And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I. 3And he said, I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation:

- A. We see in this passage that God had a plan to care for His people through a great famine.
- B. The plan began with Jacob loving Joseph more than his brothers.
- C. The plan was motivated by Joseph's brothers hating him for it.
- D. The plan was set in motion by Joseph's brothers selling him into slavery.
- E. The enemy attempted to stop the plan using Potiphar's wife.
- F. God corrected the course of the plan by imprisoning a butler for three days.
- G. God completed the plan by giving Pharaoh a dream.
- H. This all occurred because Joseph knew his life was but a vapor in God's plan, He trusted that whatever was happening to him, all though seemingly bad, was part of God's plan, and that God promises to care for us if we follow his plan.

Closing:

- **Remember Joseph's dream, I'm sure everyone thought it unimaginable when Joseph told them about it. I mean, how could it happen, why would it happen? In retrospect we see very clearly that it was God's plan and because Joseph followed God's plan, God's plan worked perfectly to save His people. All because Joseph was a willing participant in the "Bad things happening to good people".**
- **Joseph was just a playing his part in God's plan, not because he necessarily knew the plan, but because he knew the best outcome for him was to follow God's guidance therefore carrying out God's plan.**
- **So here are the choices concerning seemingly bad situations:**
 - 1) **If correction, be happy that you have a God who loves you enough to correct you.**
 - 2) **If training, or if part of God's bigger plan, be excited to be a part of it and to see how God is going to use you.**
 - 3) **Or continue to whine, pout, and complain so you can remain miserable.**

THE FIREY FURNACE

- In the book of Daniel and today's lesson took place in a period when the Israelites were in Babylonian captivity, under King Nebuchadnezzar. The period is between 606-534 BC.
- The Israelites lost Jerusalem for the last time and became captive as the result of straying from God's directives.

1. Nebuchadnezzar issues an order to promote unity in Babylon.

Daniel 3:1-6 1 Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. 2Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. 3Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and

all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. 4Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, 5That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up: 6And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

- A. When I read the third chapter of Daniel it reminds me so much of the U.S. today, in that, Nebuchadnezzar didn't dictate that they couldn't continue to worship their God but for the purposes of unification of the country they must do things that go against directives of the one true God.
- B. We see this today as we are told that we can worship and follow God, but we must acknowledge ungodly things or we

find ourselves in violation of the law and or accepted society.

2. **Most everyone followed the king's directive although it violated God's commandments.**

Daniel 3:7 Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of musick, **all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshipped the golden image** that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

- A. Everyone including the Israelites in Babylon fell at the sound of the music and worshipped the image.
- B. Like today, although most people categorize themselves as Christians, given a directive to conform they certainly do for fear of punishment or being viewed negatively by society.
- C. The threat of losing tax exempt status and being viewed as social extremist has even caused conformity in most churches to the point that they are not churches in the Biblical view.

3. The Chaldeans told the king that certain Jews didn't follow his directive.

Daniel 3:8-12 8Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans came near, and accused the Jews. 9They spake and said to the king Nebuchadnezzar, O king, live for ever. 10Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, shall fall down and worship the golden image: 11And whoso falleth not down and worshipping, that he should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. 12There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; **these men**, O king, have not regarded thee: they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

- A. Satan will always ensure that there is someone to bring to light the fact that you are following God when you violate the directives of man. That is how he keeps people bowing to the image out of fear, when they should be standing for God. We shouldn't expect less.

B. On a side note, I think that it is purposeful by the enemy, that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego are often referred to as children when scripture specifically refers to them as men. They were men and the enemy attempts to diminish them through our calling them Hebrew children or boys.

4. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego double down on their faith in God's care for them.

Daniel 3:13-18 13Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these **men** before the king. 14Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up? 15Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; well: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of

my hands? 16Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, **we are not careful to answer thee in this matter**. 17If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. 18**But if not**, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

- A. At the threat of being thrown into a furnace these men doubled down on their convictions and said in response to the king, **“we are not careful to answer thee in this matter”**. This is today’s equivalent of telling the king, we don’t even have to think about this king, we are not bowing.
- B. They went on to tell the king why they didn’t need to think about it. They said that God can deliver them from the furnace **“But if not”**, meaning if He decides not to deliver us, we still will not bow.

- C. Why do you think they were able to say even if He doesn't deliver us, we still won't bow? Because they knew they were in God's will and if He decides that they should die that day in the furnace, that must have been what is best for their lives, they were all in.
- D. What's important to note is that they were respectful to the king as they made these comments, they didn't elevate themselves as better Christians because of their actions, they simply followed God's commands in a very difficult situation. As we follow God's directions in difficult situations today, we must also consider the enemies tactic to discredit God's work through our fleshly desire for recognition just as they did.

5. The furnaces belong to God.

Daniel 3:19-25 19Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: therefore he spake, and commanded that they should **heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated.** 20And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army

to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. 21Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. 22Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, **the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.** 23And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. 24Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. 25He answered and said, Lo, **I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.**

- A. The furnace was heated seven times hotter than normal. It was so hot the guards that threw them in died from the heat.

B. Nobody including Satan wanted them to be thrown in the furnace that day. The fear of the furnace, then and today, is nothing more than a tactic Satan uses to get us to do what he wants us to do. The furnaces belong to God and the enemy knows if you go into the furnace for God, God will be with you. The furnace belongs to God, the fear of the furnace belongs to Satan.

6. King Nebuchadnezzar became a believer.

Daniel 3: 26-27 26Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, came forth of the midst of the fire. 27And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies **the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them.**

- A. Because at all costs these men were dedicated to serving God, when they came out of God's furnace they didn't even smell like smoke.
- B. Because they were willing to go into God's furnace the king became a believer, God was glorified, and as we will see, a nation was changed.

7. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego changed a nation.

Daniel 3:28-30 28Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God. 29Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort. 30Then the king

promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the province of Babylon.

- A. The king acknowledged the one true God. The king acknowledged that God sent an angel to protect them in the furnace. The king acknowledged that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abendego were God's servants, that they trusted God, and because of that trust they yielded their bodies.
- B. The king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.
- C. The king changed the law of the nation and places harsh penalties on anyone who even speaks against God. Can you imagine that happening in America today? All it requires is Christians who are willing to get in the furnace.

Closing:

- **Humbly stand for God.**
- **Don't allow the enemy to threaten you with God's furnaces.**

THE PASSOVER

- Who has heard of the Jewish holiday called the Passover?
- At the point of the Passover, Moses had been working to release the Israelites from bondage.
- God at this point has cast nine plagues but Pharaoh has failed to release the Israelites from bondage. Water to blood, frogs cover the land, lice, flies, diseased livestock, boils, hail & fire, locust, darkness,
- All Pharaoh must do to stop the plagues is release the Israelites. Why do you think he wouldn't do it?
- The tenth and final plague, and the associated Passover, is the subject of our lesson today.

1. As with the previous plagues God directs Moses and Aron to give notice to Pharaoh about the next plague.

Exodus 11:4-6 4And Moses said, Thus saith the LORD, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt: 5And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the

firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts.⁶And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more.

- A. Why do you think it was important for Moses to tell Paroah what was coming? So that when it occurred, there would be no mistake that God is the one who did it.
- B. Why did God want them to know He was the one who did it? Because they worshipped many false gods in Egypt and God wanted there to be no doubt that He is the all powerful and only God.

2. Like the previous plagues Pharoah denied their release.

Exodus 11:10 And Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh: and the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go out of his land.

- A. Why do you think it was that the Lord Hardened Pharoah's heart against releasing the Israelites from Egypt? So God would be glorified and to show that God controlled the entire universe. If Paroah had agreed

immediately to their release God wouldn't have been able to expose His greatness.

B. This really puts in place our significance in the great scheme of Gods plan.

3. God sets the Jewish Calander, gives direction for the first Passover, and gives us a picture of our salvation to come.

Exodus 12:1-13 1And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, 2This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you. 3Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: 4And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb. 5Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: 6And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. 7And they shall take of

the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. 8And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. 9Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof. 10And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire. 11And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD'S passover. 12For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. 13And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.

- A. The directions for the Jewish Passover Holiday continue through verse 20 of this chapter. They are interesting and I encourage you to read them.

B. What correlations can we make between the first Passover directions and our salvation plan?

- 1) Vs1 God used Moses and Aron as his only method to deliver the salvation message to the masses. / God uses his people today as His only method to deliver the salvation message to the masses.
- 2) Vs2 God set the timeline for salvation. / God has set the timeline for our salvation. Only God knows the timeline for His return.
- 3) Vs3 God commanded Moses and Aron to deliver the message of salvation. / God commands us to deliver the message of salvation. It's not the church's responsibility but ours individually to deliver the salvation message.
- 4) Vs4 God required the proper individual sacrifice for each "soul". / God requires individual sacrifice for each of our souls. Membership in a godly family or church isn't enough.

- 5) Vs5 God required a perfect lamb, of certain criteria, for the Passover. / God requires the perfect lamb as sacrifice for our salvation. Some have said there are many ways to Heaven but as we see as example in the Passover there are specific requirements for our sacrifice and only the lamb Jesus meets the criteria.
- 6) Vs 6 We see that “the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel” shall kill the Passover sacrifice. / It was the Israelites that killed Jesus, our lamb sacrifice.
- 7) Vs 7 We see that the sacrifice alone didn’t meet the standard for salvation, the blood had to be applied to the door. / Concerning our salvation, the sacrifice has been made, however the blood must be applied to our soul to meet the standard.
- 8) Vs 8-11 God gave specific instruction on how to appreciate the sacrifice after the blood had been applied for salvation. / God gives us similar direction on how we are to appreciate the sacrifice for our life. Most importantly He directed them and us to appreciate it and consume it completely.

9) Vs 12-13 God “passed Judgement” on everyone who wasn’t covered in the sacrificial blood. / God tells us He will again pass judgement on everyone who is not covered in the sacrificial blood of Jesus. Only God knows when, but just like Moses and Aron told them that day, I urge you to believe what I tell you. The Lord is coming to pass judgement and if your sacrifice hasn’t been applied God will “pass judgement” and you will be found eternally wanting.

C. As we review this it becomes completely evident that God’s directions for the Jewish Passover are just as much a picture of our salvation today.

4. Moses and Aron told the Israelites what to do and they did it.

Genesis 12:28 And the children of Israel went away, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they.

A. Imagine if Moses and Aron had acted with the same urgency as we do in carrying out our directive to warn others about the coming judgement.

5. The Lord smote Egypt.

Exodus 12:29-30 29And it came to pass, that at midnight the LORD smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle. 30And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead.

A. The Lord did just as he had promised and smote them just as He will do us if we don't have the blood applied to our lives.

6. Pharaoh called on them to leave in the same night.

Exodus 12:31-33 31And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the LORD, as ye have said. 32Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone; and bless me also. 33And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste; for they said, We be all dead men.

- A. Pharoah had enough and in the middle of the same night called on the Israelites to pack up and leave.

7. The Egyptians begged the Israelites to leave Egypt.

Exodus 12:35-36 35And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: 36And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them such things as they required. And they spoiled the Egyptians.

- A. The Egyptians were so eager to have the Israelites depart that they were willing to sack themselves to get rid of them, knowing they would never see their belongings again.
- B. When I read this passage, it reminded me of when President Trump said, "I'm going to build the wall and Mexico is going to pay for it".

Closing:

- **God's goal was threefold: to free His people, give us a very good illustration of salvation, show every person that He alone is the one true God.**
- **He did those three things, and they still apply to us today.**

THE RED SEA

1. The Lord Spoke to Moses.

Exodus 14:1-4 1And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2Speak unto the children of Israel, that they turn and encamp before Pihahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baalzephon: before it shall ye encamp by the sea. 3For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in. 4And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he shall follow after them; and I will be honoured upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host; that the Egyptians may know that I am the LORD. And they did so.

- A. Pihahiroth, Migdol, and Baalzephon are not physical locations that will allow us to pinpoint with certainty where the Israelites encampment or the exact crossing point was located, so we don't know.
- B. What we can take from the from the location God told them to camp is in the phrase in verse 2 *"between Migdol and the sea"*. Although we don't know where it was located, an Egyptian **Migdol** was a watch tower and God told them to camp in a

strategically horrible situation between the watch tower and the sea.

- C. We see why God told them to camp in the strategically horrible location in verse 3 *"For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in."*
- D. One might say, so shortly after enduring the plagues and begging the Israelites to leave Egypt, why would Pharaoh decide to chase the Israelites down? We find the answer to that in verse 4 *"And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he shall follow after them; and I will be honoured upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host; that the Egyptians may know that I am the LORD."*
- E. God wanted the Egyptians to know exactly where the Israelites were encamped so the Egyptians could follow them.

2. God did exactly what He said He would do concerning hardening Pharaoh's heart.

Exodus 14:5 5And it was told the king of Egypt that the people fled: and the heart of Pharaoh and of his servants was turned against the

people, and they said, Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us?

- A. After the plagues Pharaoh freed the Israelites but may have expected them to still be there to serve them, however, when he was told they were fleeing the country it all became real to him that they were gone.
- B. You could imagine what an effect this would have had on the country socially and economically for your entire workforce to literally be gone overnight.
- C. Because they encamped between the Migdol and the sea, the watch was able to know exactly where they were, and to tell Pharaoh. Therefore, God's plan was working.

3. Pharaoh pursued the Israelites, however the Israelites were confident.

Exodus 14: 6-9 6And he made ready his chariot, and took his people with him: 7And he took six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt, and captains over every one of them. 8And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued after the children

of Israel: and the children of Israel went out with an high hand. 9But the Egyptians pursued after them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army, and overtook them encamping by the sea, beside Pihahiroth, before Baalzephon.

- A. Pharaoh was going after the Israelites in full force. Every chariot in Egypt, and every captain of every chariot, was with him as they were in pursuit of Israelites, who were on foot.
- B. Verse 8 tells us that the attitude of the Israelites at this point is described as “*the children of Israel went out with an high hand*” which means that they were confident and arrogant to the fact that their God had just delivered them from Egypt.

4. Pharaoh catches up and the Israelites lose confidence in God.

Exodus 14:10-14 10And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto the LORD. 11And they said unto Moses, Because there were no graves in

Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? 12Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness. 13And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. 14The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.

- A. The Israelites were doing great, they look up and see a coming conflict, and immediately they lose all hope and forget all about the God who had given them the only freedom and victory they had ever known in their lives.
- B. We do that don't we, God saves us, we get freedom Hell and sin, are living peacefully through God and at the first glimpse of a problem we freak out instead of depending on God to carry us through it. I might add that most of the problems are caused by us.

- C. In verse 13 and 14, Moses gives them advice that we would do well to read every day of our lives, regardless of the conflict we are facing. He essentially tells them to simmer down and wait on The Lord, He will take care of you and your conflict, just don't run to or from the conflict.

5. God gave Moses direction for Israel.

Exodus 14:15-18 15And the LORD said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward: 16But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea. 17And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them: and I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen. 18And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gotten me honour upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.

- A. I think it is important to note the way that God directs things. Never does He speak to individuals in the group. Every single time

God gives the direction to His man and tells him to pass it along to his people. The same applies today as it relates to pastor and church.

- B. God says in verse 15"..... *Wherefore criest thou unto me?...*", as to say what are y'all crying about, we are on the verge of a great victory just do as I tell you. That is the same message God has for us during every crisis of our life.
- C. God had already hardened the hearts of the Egyptians to get them to pursue the Israelites. However, God was expecting that not to be enough hardening after they see the Red Sea split. So, he says again, y'all pass through on dry ground and I will harden their hearts so they will follow you.
- D. Its like God was luring them in. On their own accord they would not have done this.
- E. Why is it that this Red Sea event even occurred? It seems Pharaoh and the Egyptians were content to let them go, at this point they were free, they could have just left Egypt, went around the Red Sea, and never been heard from in Egypt again.

F. The answer is God wanted to make a statement and obtain His just honor of being the one true God. Sometimes the same things may happen in our lives. God may cause a difficult situation to rise in our lives for the sole purpose of Him being honored and glorified. We get to decide if we are going to be a part of his glory or part of the Egyptian Army.

6. Because they were still and trusted God, He protected them.

Exodus 14:19-22 19And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: 20And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night. 21And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. 22And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground:

and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.

- A. Psalm 46:10 Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.
- B. Israel on foot and Egypt in chariots they were gaining ground. God repositioned the pillar of fire and cloud between them so to hinder Egypt's chariots by the cloud and light the way for Israel. So, it went Israel, the pillar, then Egypt, this order is important.
- C. Too often when we see a struggle coming and we jump the gun and start doing things that only make it more difficult because we move outside what God's plan for the situation is. Because they continued to do what God told them to do, in the face of the looming struggle, God was able to work His plan and protect His children.
- D. Because they continued to do what God told them to do, in the face of the looming struggle, God was able to work His plan and make a way out for them.

7. The Egyptians attempted to retreat but it was too late.

Exodus 14:23-25 23And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. 24And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the LORD looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, 25And took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the LORD fighteth for them against the Egyptians.

- A. So, the Egyptians have seen the pillar of cloud block them, they have seen the sea part and they continued to pursue Israel into the dry seabed.
- B. What is important about the phrase in verse 24 “the LORD looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud”? Because we see from that position The Lord had placed Himself between the trouble and His children, and that’s precisely what He does for us when we are where He tells us to be.

- C. At this point Israel is on dry land, Egypt is in the midst of the sea but still pursuing, when God causes all the wheels to fall off of all the chariots. It's at this point Egypt concludes that God is fighting for Israel and decides to retreat, but it's too late.

8. The Lord solved Israels Egypt problem.

Exodus 14:26-29 26And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen. 27And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. 28And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them. 29But the children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.

- A. Every Egyptian, every horse, every chariot, the entire Egyptian army to include Pharaoh was covered in the sea and died.
- B. It's interesting that God chose to remind us of the contrast in verse 29 by telling us again, reiterating *"But the children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left."*. It's like He is reminding us of what happens when you just be still during our struggles and let Him lead.

9. Israel witnessed "the salvation of the Lord".

Exodus 14:30-31 30Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. 31And Israel saw that great work which the LORD did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and his servant Moses.

- A. All God's initial objectives were met, and Israel was able to be a part of it because they waited and followed God.
- B. Imagine what would have happened if they had initially saw Egypt pursuing them and ran in

a different before for being still and waiting on God. It would have been a different outcome for everyone. Including us because we may not have had this example.

Closing:

- **Whatever problem rises, “13....Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD”**
- **And we just saw how the Lord protects and guides us when we do.**
- **The problem you are facing may simply be for the purpose of God obtaining His honor, be a part of it. He will certainly place Himself between you and the trouble and care for you through it.**

THE WALLS OF JERHICO

- Recall what occurred in last weeks lesson as the Israelites did not follow God's direction concerning taking the Promised land.
 - They were sentenced to wander in the wilderness for forty years.
 - Only those who were twenty and below at the time of disobeying God would eventually be allowed into the Promised land, after their forty years of wandering, except for Caleb and Joshua.
 - So, to set the stage at least forty years has expired, and we find the Israelites who were twenty and younger when they were sent to the wilderness, plus Joshua, and Caleb have crossed the Jordon River into the promised Land.
 - They are now looking at Jericho, the first city they must conquer and waiting for direction from the Lord on what to do. This is a stark difference from the first time the Israelites planned to enter the Promised Land.
- 1. The people of Jericho closed the city.**
Joshua 6:1 Now Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in.

- A. Jericho can see the Israelites and know they are outside their city walls. Nobody is allowed in or out. Jericho is at defcon 1.
- B. Seemingly this was Standard Operating Procedure for Jericho when a threat approached the city.

2. God tells Joshua that He has given him Jericho.
Joshua 6:2 And the LORD said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour.

- A. This statement from God to Joshua isn't a victory statement meaning Jericho is already yours. It is a tactical statement meaning the king and all his army are locked in the city and can't come out and defend the city.
- B. One must assume from God's statement "I have given into thine hand Jericho" that it was not a common occurrence to have no defenses outside the city walls.
- C. However, this is a perfect illustration of how God will prepare our path when He directs us to do something.

3. God issues a clear battle plan.

Joshua 6:3-5 3 And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. 4 And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. 5 And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him.

- A. God basically tells them to have a parade. Imagine the sight. You've got seven priests each blowing a horn leading the precession, then the Ark of the Covenant, then the men of war, and all the other Israelites watching.
- B. God tells them to circle the city in this fashion once a day for six days in a row. Then on the seventh day God wants them to circle the city of Jericho seven complete times.
- C. Now, tactically this plan makes no sense at all. God wants Israel to expose the strengths and weaknesses of their army to the enemy every day for six days in a row. Not only does

this expose their strengths and weaknesses it gives Jericho six days to plan and strategize for the coming attack.

- D. I have no doubt upon hearing God's plan that Joshua's flesh began to raise questions that Joshua's faith had to overcome. I also have no doubt that Joshua's mind went to the first time God ordered the Israelites to enter The Promised Land and their failures.

4. The battle plan is conveyed to the people.

Joshua 6:6-10 6And Joshua the son of Nun called the priests, and said unto them, Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD. 7And he said unto the people, Pass on, and compass the city, and let him that is armed pass on before the ark of the LORD. 8And it came to pass, when Joshua had spoken unto the people, that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns passed on before the LORD, and blew with the trumpets: and the ark of the covenant of the LORD followed them. 9And the armed men went before the priests that blew with the trumpets, and the rereward came after the ark, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets. 10And Joshua had

commanded the people, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout; then shall ye shout.

- A. We see a picture of the plan God has in place today for directing His people. God conveys His directions for dissemination to His people through His man (pastor).
- B. We see that Joshua is very specific in passing gods direction to Israel, ensuring that he details every step just like God gave the steps to him. He told them don't even make a noise with your voice until I tell you to.
- C. Do you realize as we lead our families God has placed the same responsibility on us, as he placed on Joshua that day, and as the pastor as he leads the church.
- D. Joshua could have given in to their comfort or desires and said try to be quiet, or try to march in this fashion but he knew what God's directive was and that it was best for those he was responsible for to follow that directive, and because he cared for the well being of those he lead he had to be imperative about his directions to them and hold them accountable.

5. The battle plan is precisely followed.

Joshua 6:11-15 11So the ark of the LORD compassed the city, going about it once: and they came into the camp, and lodged in the camp. 12And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the LORD. 13And seven priests bearing seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD went on continually, and blew with the trumpets: and the armed men went before them; but the rereward came after the ark of the LORD, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets. 14And the second day they compassed the city once, and returned into the camp: so they did six days. 15And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times.

- A. Because of proper leadership, they trusted and followed God's direction exactly. None of these people ever spoke to God, only Joshua.
- B. Can you imagine the citizens of Jericho, for six days they had seen the same thing occur. It was early in the morning, I can imagine that after six days of this some of them might

have even said, “hey wake me up if something changes”.

- C. Then on the seventh day the Israelites finish the first lap and begin a second. I can hear the Jericho guards, “something isn’t right here.”

6. The Battle Cry.

Joshua 6:16-19 16And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the LORD hath given you the city. 17And the city shall be accursed, even it, and all that are therein, to the LORD: only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent. 18And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it. 19But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are consecrated unto the LORD: they shall come into the treasury of the LORD.

- A. Give me your best battle cry: **OOO-RAH, HOOAH, HOO-YA**

- B. Can you hear Joshua's battle cry "Shout; for the LORD hath given you the city",

7. God's Victory!

Joshua 6:20-21 20So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city. 21And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword.

- A. The horns blow, the people shout, they had followed God's direction completely.
- B. Because they followed God's direction, not only did the walls fall it says "**the wall fell down flat**, so that the people went into the city, every man straight before him. God flattened the obstacles before His people so they could claim His victory. Just as He will flatten the obstacles in the path of what He tells us to do.
- C. The act of not being tactical goes to the fact that it's not man's way but Gods way. God

isn't required to play by our rules. God is victorious although His plan may not make sense to us.

- D. We get to enjoy His victory with Him if we follow His plan despite it making sense to us or not.

Closing

- **The difference is clear between what occurred the first time versus the second time the Israelites attempted to take the promised land. The first time they did not blindly trust God and failed. The second time against odds they blindly trusted God and were victorious.**
- **This is exactly the promise God makes to us today. Trust and follow Him and He will care for you, don't and we will wander in the wilderness, dragging those we are responsible for with us, and He will use someone who will trust and follow Him to complete His mission.**
- **Listen for God's plan, overcome our flesh's doubts, lead your family through God's plan, and partake in God's victory.**