

## Lesson 3: The Historical Books

### Preparation

- I listened to and read the historical books for a total of 1 hour this week.
- I read 100% of the assigned reading.
- I did not complete watching all the assigned videos this week but will watch them later.

### Essay

The historical books are a collection of historical writings that follow the nation of Israel after the writings in the Pentateuch. The unifying theme in the historical writings is that they describe the consequences that the Israelites go through as they either obey or disobey the covenantal law that God gave them through Moses. As God promised, the Israelites suffered loss as they repeatedly disobeyed the commandments, but by God's grace and covenantal promise with Abraham, the Israelites were still preserved.

The book of Joshua begins right after Moses passed away and Joshua takes on a leadership role to lead the Israelites to the promised land in Canaan. Joshua leads Israel to successfully defeat the Canaanites and then divides up the promised land to be inherited for each of the twelve tribes of Israel. The book of Judges follows a lineage of "Judges" that led Israel after Joshua and describes how the nation of Israel becomes more and more corrupt as they disobey the commands in the Torah. The book of Ruth tells the story of Ruth, a widowed Moabite woman who follows her widowed Israelite mother-in-law Naomi to Israel and is then fortunately redeemed by Naomi's relative Boaz. Ruth is part of the genealogy of King David and Jesus Christ. The books of 1 & 2 Samuel start after Judges and tells the story of how Israel enters a new saga of having Kings as rulers, after the prophet Samuel crowns Saul as the first King by request from the Israelite people after they suffered a devastating loss to the Philistines. After the fall of Saul, 2 Samuel continues to describe David's rule as king over Israel and God's promise to David that God would raise one of David's offspring to establish a kingdom for God that will rule forever. The books of 1&2 Kings describe Israel splitting into two separate Kingdoms, Israel and Judah, and then describes the lineages of the Kings for both Kingdoms, leading all the way up to the point where the Babylonian empire invaded Jerusalem and carried off David's descendants to exile. The books of 1&2 Chronicles summarize and retells stories from the Old Testament, starting from Adam and ending with the return of Israel from Babylonian exile. The books of Ezra & Nehemiah pick up around 50 years of the Babylonian exile and tell the story of how some of the Israelites were released from exile and returned to rebuild Jerusalem. However, the ending of these books is anti-climactic because even after rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, the Israelites continued to disobey the Torah with hard hearts. The book of Esther begins around 100 years after the Babylonian exile, and describes the story of Esther, an Israelite from the tribe of Benjamin who became the Queen of Persia and through a series of unusual events, and through her position as Queen, was able to save the Israelites from genocide in Persia.

One story that particularly struck me from this week's reading was the punishment of Achan in Joshua 7. Achan took spoils from Shinar which God forbade, and as a result, him and his entire

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family were stoned to death. The severity of the entire situation disturbs me. How could Achan disobey such a clear command from God? Why is this sin punished apparently more than when King David had an affair with Bathsheba and had Uriah killed?

Also, his entire family was stoned death because of his offense. Maybe his family were also accomplices in his crime, otherwise how would this be consistent with Deuteronomy 24:16 "Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor children for their fathers; each is to die for his own sin."?

I have many more questions. I am challenged to read the historical books more. I pray that God increases my understanding, honestly, I feel overwhelmed.