

## God's Story B.C. – Part 2

*Bibles* (Joshua); We're working our way through an overview of God's Story these days 30k fly-by in order to get the big picture, the box top . . .

So that we can put the pieces together and better understand God's grand plan Covered 6 time periods starting with Creation and ending with the Israelites at the end of their 40 years of Desert Wandering perched on the east side of the Jordan River (**map**)

Moses had just died, God gave Joshua his marching orders to go in and take the land, and so begins the historical period of . . .

### **Conquest & Judges – 1404-1050BC** (350 years)

There was only one problem – Jericho

So Joshua sends out some spies to check it out

They're helped by a prostitute named Rahab – part of the lineage of Christ himself

God parts the waters of the Jordan; Cross on dry ground; March around Jericho; Walls fall

So began the conquering and division of the land among the 12 tribes of Israel

That's the first purpose of God in this time period . . .

### **To establish his people in the land he promised**

The land he promised to Abraham way back in Gen 15, 700 years earlier

The land they'd been away from for some 470 years

The land God refers to in Josh 1:6 – read

The second purpose during this time was . . .

### **To purge the land of evil nations**

They wouldn't leave, and they wouldn't believe – so, unable to tolerate their wicked sin in his presence, God devoted them to destruction

As a result of Joshua's faithfulness in that, the land had peace Joshua died

At which time the remaining leaders from various tribes decided that was a bad plan, and let them hang around

So God says – fine, but they're going to be *thorns in your sides* (Jg 2:3)

In fact, he used the pagan nations to test their allegiance to him

### **To test the allegiance of the Israelites**

Read Jg 3:4 – problem was, they failed miserably; Read v5-6

Despite the fact that God raised up judges/leaders to deliver them and lead them . . .

*Everybody did what was right in his own eyes* (Jg 17:6)

They were on a roller coaster of sin, devastation, repentance, and deliverance

And they didn't get off for over 325 years

- In the middle of this mess is the account of Ruth (~1115 BC)

Through a series of events, she catches the eye of a godly man in Israel – Boaz

Boaz married her, and they had a son named Obed

Though you might think that Ruth is in Bible as kind of a “Chicken Soup for the Soul” . . .

God's purpose was to show that King David, Ruth's great-grandson, was part of God's grand plan that he promised to Judah, some 330 years earlier in **Gen 49:10** –

*The scepter [power] shall not depart from Judah [who he refers to as a lion in the previous verse], nor the ruler's staff [symbol of leadership] from between his feet, until tribute comes to him [worship]; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.*

God, through Jacob, was saying that someone from the line of Judah would rule and reign over the nations, receiving their worship

And because Boaz is the great, great, great . . . grandson of Judah, as shown by the genealogy at the end of the book of Ruth in 4:13-22, so is David

Therefore David is a part of that plan/promise of kingship made to Judah, intended to foreshadow its final fulfillment in Christ (which we're going to see in a few minutes)

That's the story/purpose of Ruth – to link David to Judah, foreshadow the reign of Christ

When take all of that into account (conquest, judges, Ruth), the lesson we can't afford to miss is that . . .

### **Our Lesson: Obedience brings blessing while sin brings suffering**

You could write that lesson over most of the historical periods in the OT

But this time period makes painfully clear that if you choose to sin, you choose to suffer

Book of Judges especially illustrates that – so much so that you wonder when they're ever going to learn

I don't think it's too much of a stretch to ask some of you the same question

When are you going to learn? When are you going to learn that obedience brings blessing while sin brings suffering?

When are going to stop deceiving yourself that your cycle of misery is worth the rush?

### **United Kingdom – 1050-931BC** (120 years; glory days of Israel)

This time period starts with Samuel, who closed out the time period of the judges, and starts the time of a United Kingdom, with the appointment of Saul as their first king

God told them that it wasn't a good idea – that they were essentially rejecting him . . .

But he went along with it and let them suffer the consequences – not a good place to be

Sure enough, Saul began to disobey

So God made plans to remove him by secretly anointing David to take his place

Shortly after which, David defeated Goliath and began to receive the praise/admiration of the people, causing Saul to hate him and try to kill him

As a result, David ran, even living with the Philistines for a time, until he finally became king when Saul was killed in battle

Under David's leadership, the nation flourished, expanded its borders, and enjoyed much security for 33 years until he died in 970BC – the glory days

Unfortunately, he also sinned greatly through his adultery with Bathsheba, and the prideful census he took to measure the expanse of his kingdom

But God blessed him in spite of it

As he did Solomon, his son, who took the throne at his death

And despite *his* sin, ruled with extraordinary wisdom for 40 long years . . .

Building a temple to the Lord, and greatly increasing Israel's wealth

Begs the question – Why the blessing in light of the sin?

The only answer is that David was a man after God's own heart

In **Acts 13:22** (God says) – *I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all my will.*

God found in David someone who wanted what he wanted, and blessed him for it

One of God's purposes in all of this . . .

**God's Purpose – To show that God blesses *most*, those who want what he wants**

Those who hunger and thirst after him

Those who burn with his passion, and strive for his holiness

It's hard to avoid such a conclusion with Scriptures like . . .

2 Sam 5:10 – *David became greater and greater, for the Lord, the God of hosts, was with him.*

2 Sam 8:14 – *The Lord gave victory to David wherever he went*

1 Kings 4:29 – *God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding beyond measure, and breadth of mind like the sand on the seashore*

All of this despite their sin

God's not looking for perfect people – he's looking for people who want what he wants

People after his own heart; People who will be *blessed* because of it

Second purpose was . . .

**God's Purpose – To establish an everlasting kingdom**

2 Sam 7:16 – [The prophet Nathan spoke to David, on God's behalf saying . . .] *Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.*

When you see words like *forever* in the Bible, with no conditions or qualifications, you know something is up

This is called the Davidic covenant – God's promise to David that someone from his lineage, his house, would rule and reign forever over his people

David reiterates it in 2 Sam 23:5 – [God] *has made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and secure.*

This covenant/promise is the reason that Mt and Luke go to such great lengths with their genealogies, to connect Christ with David

Because if he's not from the house/lineage of David, he's not the true Messiah

He's not the one to rule and reign over all

But in fact, they show that he *is* from the line of David with all the right connections . . .

And therefore he *is* the legitimate heir to the everlasting throne of the Davidic covenant, promised right here in 2 Sam 7

- If you think that's old news, think again  
Because in a vision of the future in the book of Rev, the apostle John is standing before the throne of God in heaven, weeping . . .  
Because he sees no one who has the authority to open the scrolls – i.e. to unfold the events of the end times that God has ordained

In **Rev 5:5** he writes – *One of the elders said to me, "Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah [Gen 49], the Root of David [2 Sam 7], has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals."*

Lest you think the OT is passé, the authority of Christ to unfold events at the *end* of time, is *still* based on his connection to God's promises at the *beginning* of time

Once you make the connections and fall to your knees in awe, the only thing left to do is trust and obey

**Our Lesson: Trust and obey, for there's no other way**

There's no other way to receive God's blessing

There's no other way to enjoy God's favor

There's no other way to accomplish God's purposes

In 1 Sam 15:22 Samuel is speaking – he's just been chastising Saul for his disobedience

Saul says – ya but we sacrificed a lot of animals

Samuel says – *to obey is better than sacrifice*

In other words – God doesn't care *what* you do if you don't do what he says

Practicing obedience is more important than practicing religion

Function is more important to God than formality

Take a cue from Samuel, Saul, David, and Solomon – trust God and obey him

For there's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust/obey

That's the United Kingdom that ends with the death of Solomon in 931, and starts the . . .

**Divided Kingdom – 931-722BC** (lasting some 200 years)

With Solomon's death, the nation split

10 northern tribes took the name of Israel, and 2 southern tribes based in Jerusalem, took the name of Judah

Pretty soon, dysfunction begat more dysfunction; And sin, more sin

Resulting in a dual line of kings who for the most part were the very antithesis of David and Solomon . . .

It was during this time, ~860 BC that God began to raise up a string of prophets, starting with Elijah

Among other things, Elijah is well-known for confronting and defeating the prophets of

Baal on Mt Carmel, by calling down fire from heaven and consuming the altar

He was followed by Elisha, who also did several miracles

But most importantly, both were faithful to *declare the word of the Lord* despite opposition/resistance/unbelief so prevalent around them

While they preached and ministered primarily to Israel in the north

Obadiah and Joel did the same to Judah in the south

Followed by Jonah ~775BC, who didn't want to minister to anybody, let alone Nineveh

On their heels were more prophets, like Amos and Hosea in the north

Micah and Isaiah in the south

These prophets had one main message – repent

God's not happy with you and he's going to punish you unless you repent

To understand how bad it was, turn to 2 Kings 17:11b-17

It was so bad, that some of the prophets didn't even want to *speak* to the people – they knew they wouldn't listen

God's like, fine, them that too – tell them they're living in sin, they need to repent, their hearts are so hard that they *won't* repent, so all they can expect is disaster – social, religious, political, and spiritual disaster

Not a good way to win a popularity contest

But even in the midst of the bad news, God in his mercy, also gave them some good news  
He told them he would preserve and protect a remnant who were faithful to him  
That they wouldn't be spared the suffering, but they *would* be preserved as a people

That's one of the purposes of God during this terrible time –

**God's Purpose – To punish *and* preserve his people** (WT)

To punish those in sin, and preserve those who were faithful in the midst of it

It was also during this time that God **exposed their need for a Savior**

A deliverer, a messiah – one anointed by God to rule like David and lead like Moses  
One who would fulfill all the longings of their heart, and reign over all the earth  
That need was exposed by the message of judgment, certainly  
But it was made all the more acute with prophecies of a Savior who was yet to come

Prophecies like Is 9:6-7 where it says that this deliverer would be called – Wonderful

Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace  
Or Is 11 – the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and  
understanding, counsel and might

Or Is 53, where this Savior would bear the iniquities and sin of many, and make  
intercession for the transgressors

God exposed their need for a Savior, not only with words of warning, repentance, and  
judgment – but with words of hope  
And because of that, they kept hope alive – and so should we

**Our Lesson: Keep hope alive** (WT)

No matter how bad it gets in your life, or the lives of those around you – keep hope alive  
No matter how bad it gets in our culture/society – keep hope alive

We of all people have reason to do that, because these promises are already being fulfilled  
in us . . .

Promises of forgiveness, life, purpose, very presence of God in the person of the HS  
With more to come – like heaven and Christ's return

There's a song called Days of Elijah that speaks to this – we're going to sing it  
That we're in the midst of great days and terrible days – just like the days of old  
And just like the prophets of old, we need to be declaring the word of the Lord – God's  
Story of redemption and salvation to all who will believe

Because one day our Savior will come again – riding on the clouds, shining like the sun  
He will usher in the year of jubilee – an eternity of no more crying, no more pain, no  
more tears, no more shame  
It's something to put our hope in, and keep it alive  
Let's stand and sing it out

## **Communion**

The death of Christ is the focus of God's story, and communion is intended to help us  
remember it

It's meant to remind us of the death of Christ as payment for our sins

Thanking God for the living hope we have because of it

If you've committed your life to Jesus Christ, having realized you're a sinner and  
trusted him to save you, you have much to remember and thank him for

Taking communion, just like getting baptized, doesn't save you – shows you already are

By eating and drinking, you're saying that you believe that . . .

Jesus died for you, in your place

He's Lord of your life

You're incredibly thankful to him because of it

If that describes you – join us

If not – if you haven't surrendered your life to Christ, to live for him . . . let the bread  
and the cup pass

Because the Bible says that anyone who eats and drinks without considering their  
worthiness to participate . . .

Will be guilty of showing disrespect/irreverence toward God

You risk bringing judgment on yourself

So no matter who you are, examine your heart this morning and clean house. . .

Asking God, just like David did in **Ps 51** – To wash you thoroughly from your iniquity,  
and cleanse you from your sin; and to create in you a clean heart, and renew a right  
spirit within you

Having done so – eat the bread, drink the cup with thanksgiving overflowing in your heart

After we pray . . .

Distribute both the elements – hang on to them; take together

Cup — 1 Cor 11:25

*This cup is the new covenant in my blood . . .*

This cup and what it contains is symbolic of the promise of salvation that Christ's  
blood bought/guaranteed

*Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me*

## Close

*The Lord bless you and keep you;*

*The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you*

*The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace*

Have a great Thanksgiving