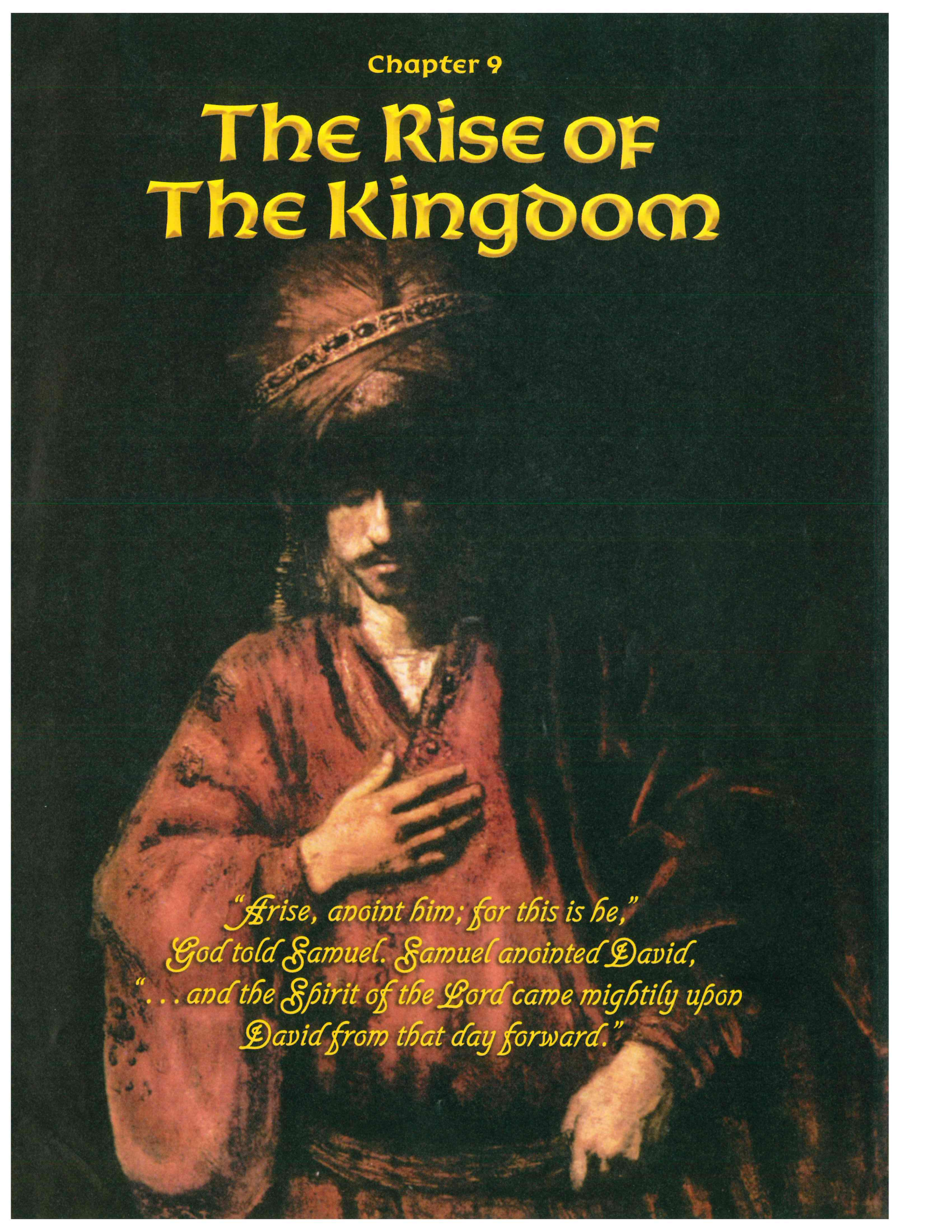


Chapter 9

The Rise of The Kingdom



*"Arise, anoint him; for this is he,"
God told Samuel. Samuel anointed David,
"... and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon
David from that day forward."*

Chapter 9

The Rise of The Kingdom



Read

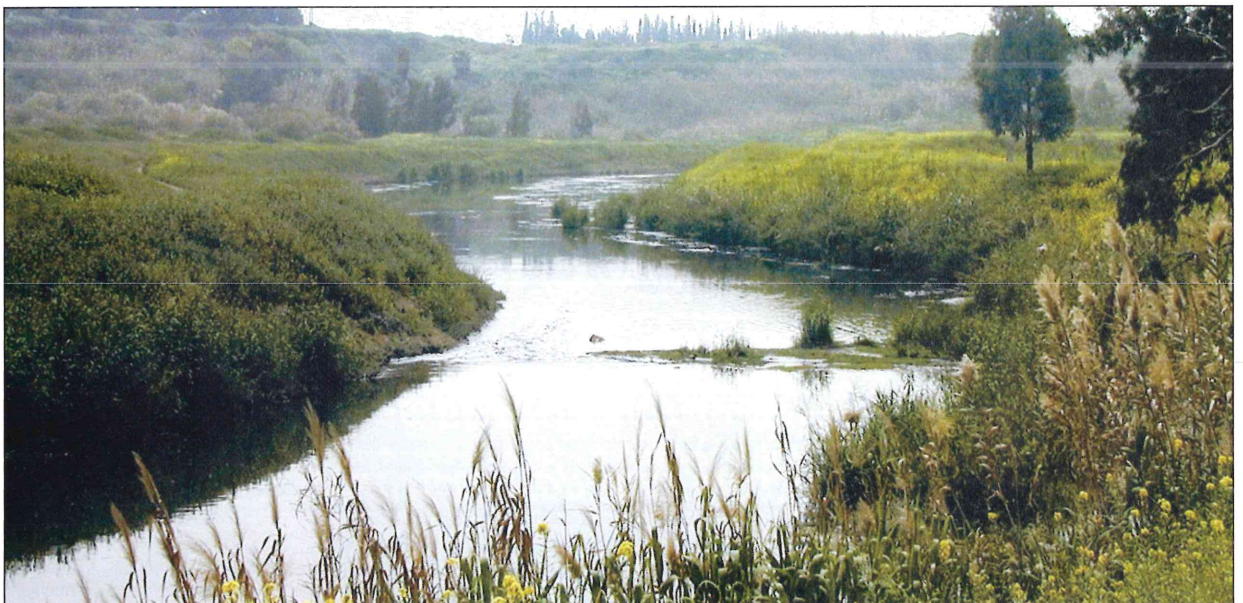
Joshua 3: 9 - 17
5: 2 - 9; 6: 1 - 21
24: 14 - 25

Judges 2: 11 - 23

1 Samuel 8: 4 - 22
15: 13 - 23
16: 1 - 13

Israel was a nation set apart—a nation governed not by human laws, but by God himself through his prophets. But the attraction of worldly ways would prove too much. Seduced by the religions of the Canaanites, God's people would fall into idolatry and anarchy. At last they would give up on the idea of being a nation set apart. They would want to be governed like every other nation.

It was a direct rejection of God. Yet God would use that rejection to bring about the right conditions for another covenant with his people—a covenant that would partially restore the relationship that Adam's sin had destroyed. It would also pave the way for the New Covenant in Jesus Christ, through which all the people of the earth would be restored to their right relationship with God.



God told Joshua the time had come to cross the river Jordan into Canaan. For Christians, the crossing of the Jordan is another type of baptism.



View over Jericho and the Jordan Valley.

The Conquest Begins

At the age of 120, Moses passed away, leaving his faithful servant Joshua to take over the leadership of Israel. At last it was time to begin the conquest of Canaan.

In spite of Israel's faithlessness, God once again fought for Israel. But it would be a long and bloody struggle. Although the people of Israel would ultimately conquer Canaan, they would never completely drive out their Canaanite enemies. Those Canaanites would be thorns in their sides, constantly tempting God's people away from the true faith and toward the wicked idols of Canaan.

The book of Joshua describes the beginning of the conquest of Canaan. The first target was Jericho. Some archaeologists call Jericho the oldest city in the world. Settlement there goes back to the Stone Age. In the time of Joshua, Jericho was already thousands of years old.

It was also the strategic key to Palestine, a strong and important city right in the middle of the Promised Land. If Israel could take Jericho, it would be a crushing blow to the Canaanites.

When God told Joshua the time had come to cross the river Jordan into Canaan,¹ Joshua's sensible first step was to send two spies to look over the city. They stayed with a woman named Rahab, described as a "harlot" (which might mean only that she ran an inn). Rahab believed in the God of Israel, and she knew that Israel would conquer. When the king of Jericho found out about the spies, Rahab hid them. Then she made a deal with them: she and her family would be saved when Israel destroyed Jericho, as long as they stayed in their house. A scarlet cord tied in her window would be the sign to the Israelites that Rahab's house was to be left untouched.²

After a hair-raising escape through a window, the spies made it back to camp and told Joshua what they had found out: everyone in the land was already afraid of Israel. "Truly the LORD has given all the land into our hands."³

The time was right. "Sanctify yourselves," Joshua warned the people, "for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you."



Then he told the Levite priests to take up the Ark of the Covenant and walk to the Jordan. As soon as their feet touched the water, the river dried up. Once again, the people walked through the water on dry land. For Christians, the crossing of the Jordan is another type of baptism, in which we, the new Israel, pass through the water to the Promised Land.

Renewing the covenant with God, Joshua had all the men of Israel circumcised. (The generation that grew up in the wilderness had not been circumcised yet.) Then he began the siege of Jericho.

The Israelites did not attack the city in any conventional way. Following God's instructions, they simply marched silently all the way around the city once each day, while priests blew trumpets. For six days they repeated their silent march.

On the seventh day, the people marched around the city not once but seven times. Then the people gave a mighty shout, and the walls came tumbling down by themselves. The army of Israel marched right up over the rubble and destroyed the city.⁴

But they saved Rahab and her family, just as they had promised. Rahab is very important for Christian history: Rahab later married an Israelite, and St. Matthew tells us⁵ that she was one of the ancestors of David, and thus ultimately one of the human ancestors of Jesus Christ.



A stone tower in the ancient city of Jericho, ca. 7,000 B.C.
Jericho is the oldest continuously inhabited city in the world dating to 8,000 B.C.

Canaan At The Time Of The Conquest ca. 1406 B.C.



Jericho

Is the story of the conquest of Jericho historically accurate? Although some archaeologists disagree, many see signs of a catastrophic earthquake that toppled the walls of Jericho just about the time Joshua and the Israelites would have been besieging the city. A layer of charred remains tells of a great fire about the same time. (“And they burned the city with fire, and all within it,” says Jos 6: 24.)

According to some archaeologists, one small section of the city walls seems to have been left standing—a section that had small houses built into it. Now, in the book of Joshua, the house of Rahab “was built into the city wall, so that she dwelt in the wall” (Jos 2: 15). The Bible says that Rahab and all her family were spared when Jericho was destroyed. Could that one small section of wall that didn’t come down have been Rahab’s house?



The Route Of The Spies



Jericho (“moon city,” a city where the moon god was worshiped) is 17 miles northeast of Jerusalem and 5 miles west of the Jordan. The record conquest of Jericho makes it clear that God gave the city into the hands of the Israelites (Jos 6). The contents of Jericho were burned as a “first fruits” offering in which everything was devoted to the LORD.

Joshua's Covenant With Israel

As long as Joshua was their leader, the people of Israel were mostly faithful to God. They conquered city after city and tribe after tribe of the Canaanites. When he was 110 years old, and he knew that he was dying, Joshua called all the heads of the tribes together at Shechem—the very place where God had promised to give the land to Abraham,⁶ and where Joshua (Jos 24: 32) was buried.⁷ There all the tribes swore to serve God faithfully.

Joshua gave them a chance to back out. He suggested that serving God would be too hard for them. “You cannot serve the LORD; for he is a holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins. If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm, and consume you, after having done you good.”⁸

But the people insisted that they would serve God. “Nay, but we will serve the LORD,” they assured him.

Then Joshua said to the people, “You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the LORD, to serve him.” And they said, “We are witnesses.” He said, “Then put away the foreign gods which are among you, and incline your heart to the LORD, the God of Israel.” And the people said to Joshua, “The LORD our God we will serve, and his voice we will obey.” So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made statutes and ordinances for them at Shechem. (Jos 24: 22-25)

Then Joshua died. The book of Joshua tells us that all the heads of the tribes who had made that covenant with Joshua were faithful to it. Israel served the True God as long as they were alive.⁹

Once they died, however, Israel began to lapse again.



The ancient remains of the Baal-Berith Temple in Shechem, Samaria. A prominent Biblical city which occupied a strategic position in the pass between Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Ebal. In Rabbinical literature, the idol Baal-berith, which the Jews worshiped after the death of Gideon, was identical, according to the Rabbis, with Baal-zebub, “the ba'al of flies,” the god of Ekron (2 Kings 1: 2). He was worshiped in the shape of a fly; and so addicted were the Jews to his cult that they would carry an image of him in their pockets, producing it, and kissing it from time to time.

The Right Time To Attack

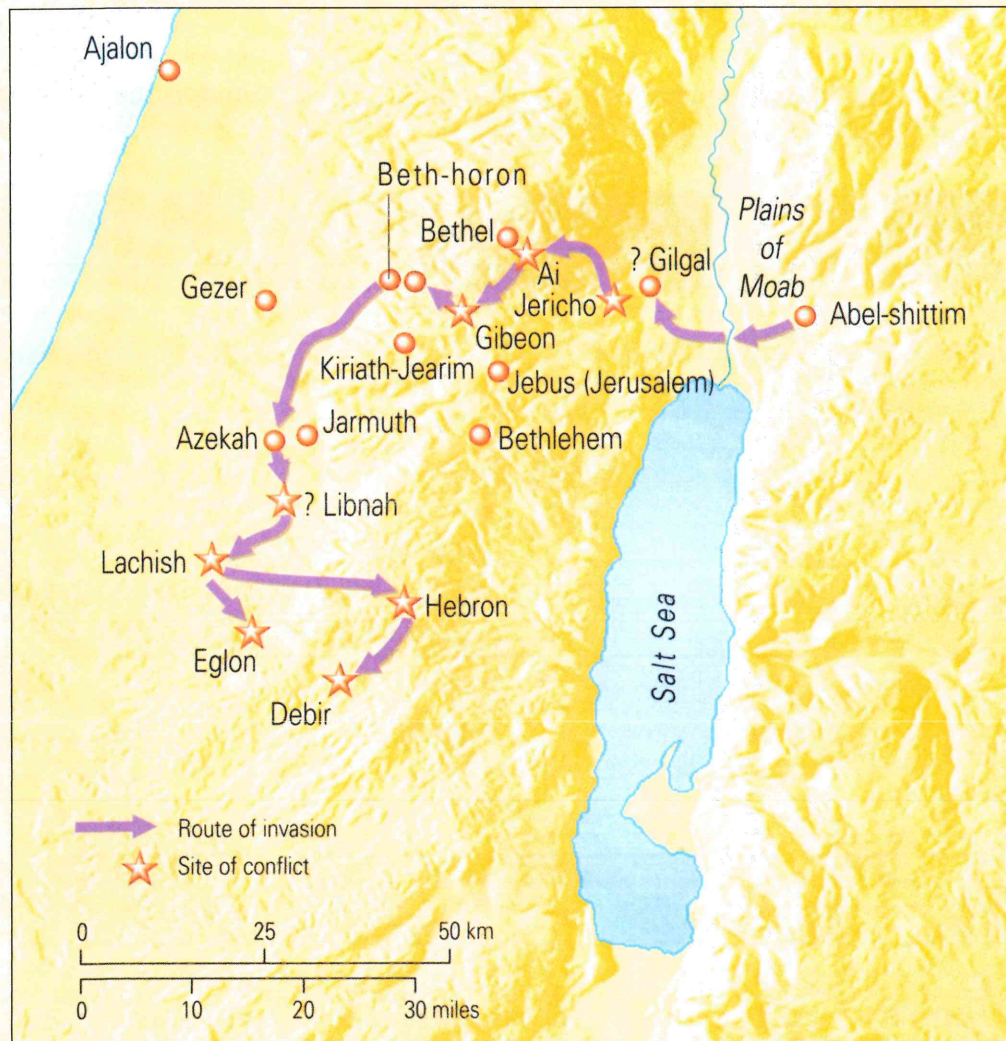
God promised to send “hornets” before Israel to help drive the Canaanites out of the Promised Land (see Ex 23: 28). He kept his promise—not by sending a literal plague of hornets, but by plaguing the Canaanites with civil wars and difficult times.

For a long time before the Israelites arrived, Canaan had been under the influence of Egypt. The Canaanite tribes had been more or less united, and they could count on strong Egyptian armies to defend them.

But by the time Israel was ready to begin the conquest of the Promised Land, Egypt had pulled back. With no great power to keep them in line, the Canaanite cities and tribes started fighting with one another. Instead of uniting against the Israelite invaders, the Canaanites kept up their petty civil wars.

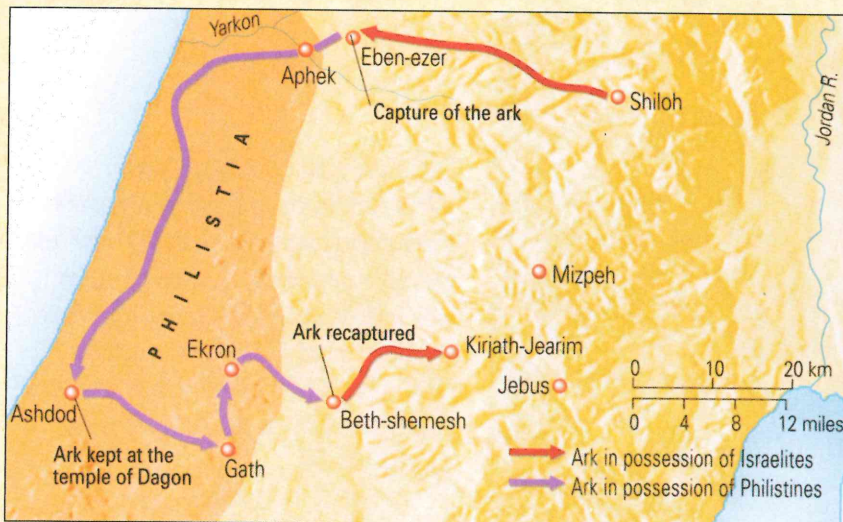
With no united opposition, the Israelites were able to take town after town. They still had to fight for every inch of territory, but the Canaanites’ difficulties made the conquest possible. Once again, God had kept his promise to his people.

The Invasion Of Canaan



Time-Line Of Early Israel And Her Neighbors

Date	Early Israel	Egypt	Mesopotamia	Asia Minor
3000 B.C.				
2500		Old Kingdom 29th-23rd centuries Pyramid Age 26th-25th centuries	Early Sumerians 2800-2360 Sargon of Akkad Dynasty ca. 2360-2180 Ur III	
2000	Abraham leaves Ur	Middle Kingdom 21st-18th centuries Syria-Palestine		
1750		Hyksos ca. 1720-1550 New Kingdom ca. 1570-1310 Amarna Letters ca. 1400-1350 Exodus of Hebrews ca. 1280 (?) Rameses II End of Egyptian Empire ca. 1100		Old Hittite Empire 1740-1460
1500	Ugaritic Texts 14th Century			New Hittite Empire 1460-1200
1250	Hebrew Conquest 1250-1200 Judges 1200-1020 Saul 1020-1000 David 1000-961 Solomon 961-922		Assyria strong under Tiglath-pileser I 1118-1078	
1000			Ashur-dan II 934-912	



The Capture Of The Ark By The Philistines And The Return Of The Ark To The Israelites

In a battle (ca. 1050 B.C.) to protect Shiloh from the threatening Philistines, the Israelites suffered a crushing defeat by the Philistines at Eben-ezer. The Philistines captured the Ark, which the Israelites had brought to the battlefield hoping it would make them victorious. The plagues and calamities that were wrought upon the Philistines by God forced them to return the Ark by ox-cart to Beth-shemesh.

The Judges

After the book of Joshua comes the book of Judges. In Judges we read how, over and over, Israel fell away from God into idolatry—and then into anarchy and even civil war. But at the darkest hours, God raised up “judges”—soldier-prophets who rescued the people of Israel from their enemies. But as soon as they were safe, they forgot about God again, and the cycle started all over. Why did Israel fall away so easily? The book of Judges gives a simple answer: Israel failed to drive out the Canaanites. It was much easier for the people of Israel just to settle down in the land they had already conquered and ignore the Canaanites who were too hard to conquer. The first chapter of Judges gives a long list of Canaanite tribes and cities that the Israelites left alone.

The Canaanites were city-dwellers, people who built temples of stone and lived in comfortable brick houses. They must have seemed very sophisticated to the nomadic Israelites, who were used to living in tents. Whenever the people of Israel settled close to the Canaanites, the Canaanite civilization always started to attract them. And, of course, the Canaanite religions went with that civilization. Soon the Canaanite cities would be full of Israelites admiring the magnificent temples and their impressive ceremonies.

Meanwhile, Israel was falling apart. The tribes were acting as separate units, not as a unified nation. Once they even fell into a sordid civil war, in which the tribe of Benjamin was nearly exterminated. Disunited and squabbling, the tribes of Israel were easy prey for stronger powers—like the newly arrived Philistines on the coast, who would be Israel’s most hated enemies for a very long time. (The name “Palestine” comes from the Philistines who settled there.) God brought them champions to redeem them from their enemies, but all too often the people of Israel would simply turn back to God for a little while and then lapse back into idolatry. Then, as punishment for their sins, God would allow them to fall into the hands of another conqueror.



*“And the Lord said to Gideon, ‘The people are still too many; take them down to the water and I will test them for you there;’...and the Lord said to Gideon, ‘Every one that laps the water with his tongue, as a dog laps, you shall set by himself; likewise every one that kneels down to drink.’”
(Jgs 7: 4–5)*

The Judges Of Israel: Deliverers Of Law-Freedom Fighters-Champions

JUDGE	Years of Service	Oppressor	Years of Oppression	Years of Peace	Biblical Reference	Province or Tribe
OTHNIEL		Cushan-Rishathaim Of Mesopotamia	8	40	Judges 3: 8-11	Judah
EHUD		Eglon, King of Moab	18	80	Judges 3:12-30	Benjamin
SHAMGAR		Philistines			Judges 3:31	Son of Anath (non-Israelite?)
DEBORAH with BARAK		Canaanites led by King Jabin and Sisera his general	20	40	Judges 4:1-5: 31	Deborah-Ephraim Barak-Naphtali
GIDEON		Midianites and Amalekites	7	40	Judges 6:1-8: 27	Manasseh
TOLA	23				Judges 10:1-2	Issachar
JAIR				22	Judges 10: 3-5	Gilead
JEPHTHAH	6	Ammonites and Philistines	18		Judges 10: 6-12: 7	Gilead
IBZAN	7				Judges 12: 8-10	Bethlehem
ELON	10				Judges 12:11-12	Zebulun
ABDON	8				Judges 12:13-15	Ephraim
SAMSON	20	Philistines	40		Judges 13-16	Dan
SAMUEL	Last of the Judges – First of the Prophets – The “bridge” between judges and kings				1 and 2 Samuel	Benjamin



Mount Tabor and the Jezreel Plain is the site of the defeat of the Canaanite army by Deborah and Barak.

Deborah was the only woman among the judges of Israel. Along with Barak, she defeated the Canaanites, King Jabin and his general, Sisera.

The “Song of Deborah” (Jgs 5) celebrates this victory. This victory allowed the Israelites to settle in the plain without fear of Canaanite attacks for 40 years.

Samuel The King-Maker



Finally Israel was in a state of anarchy. “Every man did what was right in his own eyes,” Judges 21: 25 tells us. Even the Levite priests of the True God had become mercenaries, making themselves rich on the sacrifices of the poor people of Israel.

The Israelites themselves knew that something radical had to be done to change the situation. Instead of turning humbly back to God, however, they decided they wanted a king. If they had a king to unite them, they thought, he might solve all their problems.

Samuel, the last of the Judges, had been the leader of Israel for a long time. He had won great victories over the Philistines, but in his old age he had made the mistake of setting his sons up to succeed him. It was a mistake because his sons were not like him: they were greedy men who “took bribes and perverted justice.”¹⁰

All the leaders of the Israelites confronted Samuel at his home. “Behold,” they said, “you are old and your sons do not walk in your ways; now appoint for us a king to govern us like all the nations.”¹¹

Samuel was personally insulted. Hadn't he been a good leader? So he prayed, and God answered his prayer.

And the LORD said to Samuel, “Hearken to the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them. According to all the deeds which they have done to me, from the day I brought them up out of Egypt even to this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are also doing to you. Now then, hearken to their voice; only, you shall solemnly warn them, and show them the ways of the king who shall reign over them.” (1 Sm 8: 7-9)

The people were not rejecting Samuel; they were rejecting the idea of being a nation set apart. They wanted to be like every other nation. It was exactly as Moses had prophesied, and the Book of the Law, Deuteronomy, had provided for this occasion.

So Samuel warned the people what they could expect from a king.

So Samuel told all the words of the LORD to the people who were asking a king from him. He said, “These will be the ways of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots and to be his horsemen, and to run before his chariots; and he will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and some to plow his ground and to reap his harvest, and to make his implements of war and the equipment of his chariots. He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive orchards and give them to his servants. He will take the tenth of your grain and of your vineyards and give it to his officers and to his servants. He will take your menservants and maidservants, and the best of your cattle and your asses, and put them to his work. He will take the tenth of your flocks, and you shall be his slaves. And in that day you will cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves; but the LORD will not answer you in that day.”

But the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel; and they said, "No! but we will have a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may govern us and go out before us and fight our battles." (1 Sm 8: 10-20)

Samuel told the people exactly what they could expect from a king: taxes, military service, and oppression. But the people insisted. Samuel obeyed their wishes and God's word. He agreed to find a king for them, no matter how much he hated the idea himself. But all his predictions would come true.

On a high hill overlooking Jerusalem from the north is a mosque covering one traditional site of Samuel's tomb. In Arabic it is called Nebi Samwil. A few miles east is Er Ram thought to be ancient Ramah, Samuel's birthplace and home. 1 Sm 25: 1 states that Samuel was buried at Ramah. Like many places in Bible lands, exact locations can remain controversial.



Saul, The Anointed One

God led Samuel to a man named Saul from the tiny tribe of Benjamin. Saul certainly looked like a king. He was the handsomest man anyone in Israel had seen, and he was taller by a head than anyone else. Still, he had no idea that he was about to be chosen to rule Israel. Saul had to see Samuel to ask about some lost livestock; imagine his surprise when he found that Samuel had an expensive dinner prepared for him.

Saul must have been even more surprised by what Samuel did next. “Then Samuel took a vial of oil and poured it on his head, and kissed him and said, ‘Has not the LORD anointed you to be prince over his people Israel?’”¹²

To “anoint” means to put oil on something as a sign of consecration. The oil was a visible sign that Saul had been chosen by God. Once he was anointed by God’s prophet, Saul became the *anointed one*—“messiah” in Hebrew, or “christ” in Greek. That is what “christ” means: the anointed one, someone chosen by God and anointed to be the leader and savior of God’s people.

Until this time, only priests had been anointed. But after Saul had been anointed, he began to prophesy. The Spirit of God had come upon him. The people might have rejected God from being king over them, but God was showing them that he would still rule them through their king. Saul would be king not because the people had chosen him, but because God himself had chosen him.

Saul’s First Big Mistake

At first, things went very well under the new king. He defeated the Ammonites gloriously, and the people began to congratulate themselves on having made the right choice.

But power quickly went to Saul’s head. “If both you and the king who reigns over you will follow the LORD your God, it will be well,” Samuel warned the people; “but if you will not hearken to the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then the hand of the LORD will be against you and your king.”¹³

Saul wanted to lead, not follow. He was king now, wasn’t he? It was time for him to start showing a little authority.

His new attitude showed itself when a new war began with the Philistines. At first things went well, but then the Philistines put together a huge army at Michmash—“troops like the sand on the seashore in multitude,”¹⁴ the sacred author tells us.

The people of Israel didn’t know what to do. Most of them seem to have been certain that the Philistines would win. Many hid out in caves or tombs; many more crossed the Jordan as refugees into neighboring countries. Even the small number—about 600 soldiers—who stayed with Saul were “trembling.”¹⁵

In such desperate straits, the right thing to do was to ask for God’s help, and that was what Saul did. Samuel told Saul to wait at Gilgal for seven days, and then Samuel would come and offer sacrifices.

But Samuel was a little bit late. When he didn’t show up right on time, even the few remaining loyal soldiers started to wander away. Saul decided to take things into his own hands. He had the sacrifices brought to him and offered them himself.

Just as he finished, Samuel showed up. “What have you done?” Samuel demanded.

Saul tried to explain. “When I saw that the people were scattering from me, and that you did not come within the days appointed, and that the Philistines had mustered at Michmash, I said, ‘Now the Philistines will come down upon me at Gilgal, and I have not entreated the favor of the LORD’; so I forced myself, and offered the burnt offering.”

The Kingdom of Saul, ca. 1050 B.C.



The answer made some sense: after all, it was a time of crisis. But Saul's answer showed where his heart really was. He offered sacrifices not out of love for God, but rather because he wanted God to do something for him, and thought a sacrifice would be God's price. Saul had crossed an important line—the same line Aaron's sons had crossed when they “offered unholy fire before the LORD” (see Lv 10). He had decided to worship God his way, not God's way. It was the Golden Calf again.

“You have done foolishly,” Samuel told Saul; “you have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which he commanded you; for now the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. But now your kingdom shall not continue; the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart; and the LORD has appointed him to be prince over his people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you.”

Then Samuel turned around and walked away.

Now, Saul was still king. God had not deposed him. But his son would not be king after him: that was his punishment so far. He would not found a dynasty. Instead, some unrelated person would succeed him.

Saul's Second Big Mistake

Saul's next big mistake came when God, through Samuel the prophet, told Israel to destroy Amalek completely. The Amalekites were some of Israel's most dangerous enemies; they had often made horrible and bloody raids on peaceful Israelite towns. God told Saul to destroy everything not only because the Amalekites were evil, but also so that the lure of loot and booty would not become an excuse for making war on Israel's neighbors.

But Saul and his soldiers kept “the best of the sheep and of the oxen and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them; all that was despised and worthless they utterly destroyed.”¹⁶ They kept what was valuable and destroyed what was worthless.

God told Samuel what Saul had done, and Samuel, furious, went off to see for himself.

And Samuel came to Saul, and Saul said to him, “Blessed be you to the LORD; I have performed the commandment of the LORD.” And Samuel said, “What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?” Saul said, “They have brought them from the Amalekites; for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice to the LORD your God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.”
(1 Sm 15:13-15)

Saul can hardly have missed the bitter sarcasm in Samuel's question about the animal noises. He knew he had been caught red-handed, and Samuel did not accept his feeble excuse. “Why did you swoop on the spoil, and do what was evil in the sight of the LORD?”¹⁷ Samuel demanded. Once again Saul tried the excuse that the animals were saved for sacrifices, but Samuel did not believe it. Even if that were true, Saul was missing the point.

**And Samuel said,
“Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices,
as in obeying the voice of the LORD?
Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice,
and to hearken than the fat of rams.”** (1 Sm 15:22)

Saul had been trying to buy God's favor with sacrifices, not with obedience. In doing so, Saul had shown that he was the wrong sort of man to be king, and Samuel pronounced his final sentence:

**Because you have rejected the word of the LORD,
He has rejected you from being king.** (1 Sm 15:23)

Chapter 9: The Rise of The Kingdom

Now at last Saul seemed to grasp that he had done wrong. “I have sinned,” he admitted; “for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice.” (Notice that Saul is still trying to lay at least part of the blame on his soldiers, not on himself.) “Now therefore, I pray, pardon my sin, and return with me, that I may worship the LORD.”¹⁸

When Samuel refused and turned to go, Saul grabbed the hem of Samuel’s mantle—a traditional gesture of pleading. But Samuel must have been walking away briskly. The mantle tore, leaving Saul kneeling, with a shred of fabric dangling from his hand.

Samuel saw the accident as a powerful symbol. “The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you this day,” Samuel declared, “and has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you.”¹⁹

There was Saul’s final sentence. For his first offense he had lost his dynasty; now he lost the kingdom itself. In the very next chapter of the book, we read how God sent Samuel to Bethlehem to anoint another king to replace Saul—a young man from the neighboring tribe of Judah who seemed like a very unlikely choice for a king.

The cliffs of Michmash. In 1020 B.C., the Philistines invaded Israel and camped in force at Michmash, threatening King Saul’s capital at Gibeah. Jonathan and his armour-bearer surprised the Philistine garrison by climbing across from Geba at a steep place down the valley, and in the panic that followed, Saul defeated the Philistines chasing them back to their own borders.



The Man After God's Own Heart

When God told Samuel to go to the house of Jesse and anoint one of Jesse's sons, Samuel might have expected to find another regal-looking prince like Saul. There were many stately young men among Jesse's large family. But one by one Jesse's sons appeared before Samuel, and no matter how kingly they might have looked, not one of them was God's choice. "Do not look on his appearance or the height of his stature," God told Samuel as Samuel admired Jesse's eldest son, "because I have rejected him; for the LORD sees not as man sees; man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart."²⁰

In fact, the choice turned out to be Jesse's youngest son David. Jesse had not even called David in to meet Samuel. David was a shepherd, and he was out tending the sheep—which was all Jesse thought he was good for. But God saw David's heart "Arise, anoint him; for this is he," God told Samuel. Samuel anointed David, and "the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward."²¹

Then, in the very next verse, we find that "the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul." There could be only one Messiah, one Anointed One. Although Saul still possessed the kingdom, his special status as the Lord's Anointed was gone. Instead, an evil spirit came to torment him.

Now comes an ironic twist in the story. Saul's ministers decided that music would be good for him. And where would they find a good musician? "Behold," one of them began, "I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite..."

David—the young shepherd whom Samuel had just anointed to replace Saul—was also the best musician in the kingdom. Completely unaware that David was God's choice to replace him, Saul took David into his court. Whenever the evil spirit came on Saul, David would play his lyre, and Saul felt better. Christian readers will be reminded of how, in the Gospels, evil spirits fled the presence of Jesus Christ, the heir of David's kingdom (see, for example, Luke 4:41, where the demons "knew that he was the Christ"—that is, the Anointed One).

"And David came to Saul, and entered his service. And Saul loved him greatly, and he became his armour-bearer... And whenever the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, David took the lyre and played it with his hand; so Saul was refreshed,... and the evil spirit departed from him." (1 Sm 16: 21-23)



SUPPLEMENTARY READING

**Augustine, *City of God*, Book XVII
From Chapter 6**

In this way, too, the kingdom of Saul himself, who certainly was reprobated and rejected, was the shadow of a kingdom yet to come which should remain to eternity. For, indeed, the oil with which he was anointed, and from that chrism he is called Christ, is to be taken in a mystical sense, and is to be understood as a great mystery; which David himself venerated so much in him, that he trembled with smitten heart when, being hid in a dark cave, which Saul also entered when pressed by the necessity of nature, he had come secretly behind him and cut off a small piece of his robe, that he might be able to prove how he had spared him when he could have killed him, and might thus remove from his mind the suspicion through which he had vehemently persecuted the holy David, thinking him his enemy. Therefore he was much afraid lest he should be accused of violating so great a mystery in Saul, because he had thus meddled even his clothes. For thus it is written: "And David's heart smote him because he had taken away the skirt of his cloak." But to the men with him, who advised him to destroy Saul thus delivered up into his hands, he saith, "The LORD forbid that I should do this thing to my

lord, the LORD's Christ, to lay my hand upon him, because he is the LORD's Christ." Therefore he showed so great reverence to this shadow of what was to come, not for its own sake, but for the sake of what it prefigured. Whence also that which Samuel says to Saul, "Since thou hast not kept my commandment which the LORD commanded thee, whereas now the LORD would have prepared thy kingdom over Israel for ever, yet now thy kingdom shall not continue for thee; and the LORD will seek Him a man after His own heart, and the LORD will command him to be prince over His people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee," is not to be taken as if God had settled that Saul himself should reign for ever, and afterwards, on his sinning, would not keep this promise; nor was He ignorant that he would sin, but He had established his kingdom that it might be a figure of the eternal kingdom. Therefore he added, "Yet now thy kingdom shall not continue *for thee*." Therefore what it signified has stood and shall stand; but it shall not stand for this man, because he himself was not to reign for ever, nor his offspring; so that at least that word "for ever" might seem to be fulfilled through his posterity one to another.



*"He (David) said to his men,
'The Lord forbid that I should do
this thing to my lord, the Lord's
anointed, to put forth my hand
against him, seeing he is the Lord's
anointed.' So David persuaded his
men with these words, and did not
permit them to attack Saul."
(1 Sm 24: 6-7)*

VOCABULARY

CHRIST

Greek for “messiah.” See Messiah.

DAVID

The second king of Israel, a “man after God’s own heart.” God made a new covenant with all the nations through David.

JERICO

An ancient and strategically vital city in Canaan, the first major city to be captured by the Israelites.

JORDAN

The river that formed the eastern border of Canaan. Many, including Jesus, were baptized here by St. John the Baptist

JUDGES

Temporary leaders appointed by God to lead the people of Israel when enemies oppressed them.

MANTLE

An outer garment that was also the symbol of the wearer’s office.

MESSIAH

Hebrew for “Anointed One,” a title of the kings of Israel.

PALESTINE

Another name for the land of Canaan. Named for the Philistines who settled there.

PHILISTINES

A powerful nation that invaded Canaan from the sea and became the most hated enemies of Israel.

RAHAB

A Canaanite woman of Jericho who helped the Israelite spies escape. She later married an Israelite and became one of the human ancestors of Jesus Christ.

SAMUEL

A Levite priest, the last of the Judges, and the man chosen by God to anoint a king for Israel.

SAUL

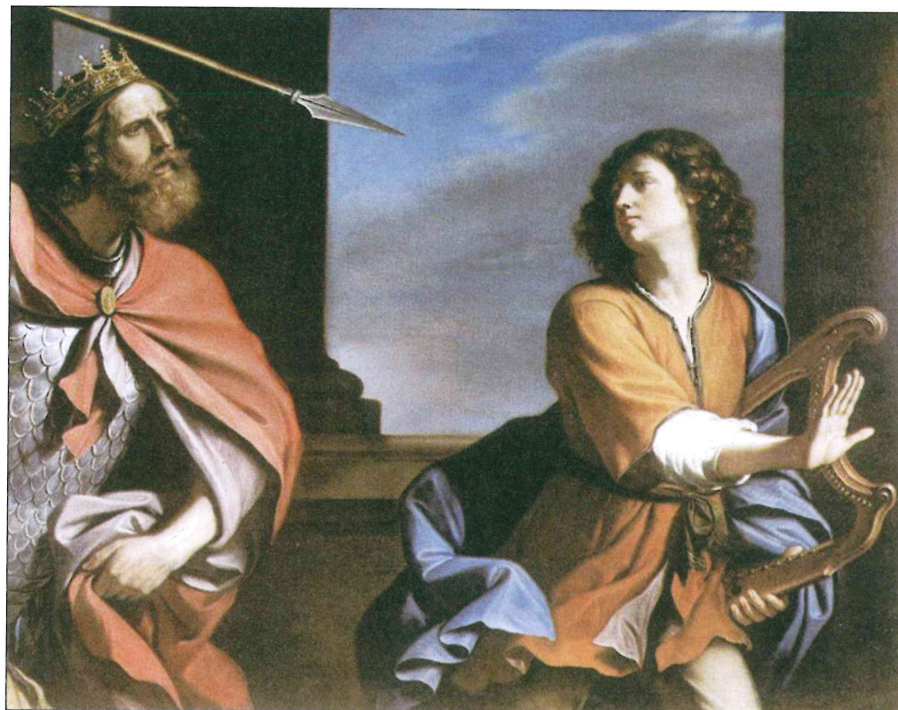
The first king of Israel, anointed by Samuel. Later rejected by God.



*“And David said, ‘The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.’ And Saul said to David, ‘Go, and the Lord be with you!’”
(1 Sm 17: 37)*

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What was the first target of the Israelites in Canaan?
2. Who succeeded Moses as leader of Israel?
3. With whom did Joshua's spies stay in Canaan?
4. What happened when the Levite priests reached the river Jordan with the Ark?
5. What important ceremony did the Israelites perform before beginning the conquest of Jericho?
6. How did the army of Israel defeat the city of Jericho?
7. Name two important descendants of Rahab.
8. Why did Israel need God to send them "judges"?
9. Why was the tribe of Benjamin nearly exterminated?
10. Why did the people of Israel want a king so badly?
11. What did God tell Samuel was the real reason they desired a king?
12. What did Samuel prophesy about the king who would rule over Israel?
13. What ceremony did Samuel perform to show that Saul had been chosen by God as king of Israel?
14. What does "anointed" mean?
15. What two mistakes did Saul make that cost him his dynasty and his kingdom?
16. Where did God send Samuel to find Saul's successor?
17. Who was chosen by God to succeed Saul as king of Israel?



"... an evil spirit from God rushed upon Saul, and he raved within his house, ... and Saul cast the spear, for he thought, 'I will pin David to the wall.' But David evaded him twice." (1 Sm 18: 10-11)

PRACTICAL EXERCISES

1. The Israelites went about conquering Jericho in a very interesting way. God used this event to show that the conquest of the Promised Land would be a gift from him, and not gained by the merits of Israel or its military prowess. All the people of Israel had to do was to follow God's orders and he led them to victory, even though it seemed the orders were not very oriented toward military strategy. What important lesson is God giving the people of Israel? What gift does God want to give everyone on earth in the same way he gave Israel the Promised Land? How might this affect the way we look at our daily lives and our obedience to God's Word?

2. The most important figures in Israelite history were descended from Rahab, a Canaanite woman of Jericho. What lesson about God's plan are we able to learn from that fact?

3. Saul acted foolishly when he made the sacrifice to God without waiting for

Samuel because he was acting with the wrong intention. He offered sacrifices not out of love for God, but rather because he wanted God to do something for him. Because of this, Saul was punished with the loss of his future dynasty. What important lesson does this teach us? What should we be ultimately concerned about in our relationship with God?

4. Of all Jesse's sons, the one picked as the next king of Israel was David. David was the youngest of the sons and a shepherd. Jesse hadn't even called David in to meet Samuel because he didn't think he was good for anything but watching the sheep. God, however, chose David as the next king and told Samuel to anoint him. Reread the section titled "The man after God's own heart." How did God's way of choosing the next Anointed One differ from human ways? What quality did David have that allowed God to make him a great leader?



Endnotes

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| 1. Jos 1: 2. | 8. Jos 24: 19-20. | 15. 1 Sm 13: 7. |
| 2. Jos 2: 18-20. | 9. Jos 24: 31. | 16. 1 Sm 15: 9. |
| 3. Jos 2: 24. | 10. 1 Sm 8: 3. | 17. 1 Sm 15: 19. |
| 4. Jos 6. | 11. 1 Sm 8: 5. | 18. 1 Sm 15: 24-25. |
| 5. Mt 1: 5. | 12. 1 Sm 10: 1. | 19. 1 Sm 15: 27-28. |
| 6. Gn 12: 6-7. | 13. 1 Sm 12: 14-15. | 20. 1 Sm 16: 7. |
| 7. Gn 50: 13. | 14. 1 Sm 13: 5. | 21. 1 Sm 16: 12-13. |