

Lessons from Rulers of Israel

Glimpses of Divine Character Building
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World History everywhere, from the beginning till now, could hardly exhibit four successive rulers so remarkable as these four, Samuel, Saul; David and Solomon, who followed each other in the rule of Israel.

SAMUEL, which means "God asked," was obtained from God by a wife who had been childless, and taunted for it. She prayed and God gave her Samuel. He was a sample of a prophet dedicated before birth, and reared and trained carefully in the house of the Lord from the age of three years. He grew up under divine tutorage.

His long life as judge and prophet of Israel was filled with miraculous exploits. It is not recorded that he ever made but one move that was not appointed by the Spirit. That was when he designated his two sons to be judges as his successors. They were not godly like him. Samuel was a remarkable example of what could be accomplished by the prayers of a mother. She brought a great prophet in to bless the world. 1 Samuel 8.

Saul was a king chosen for natural fine appearance and to please the people. He was powerfully anointed by Jehovah. He fought some great battles in the power of the Lord. But he afterwards broke down and proved a miserable failure. While Saul was attractive and brilliant in his beginnings, he lacked character and faithful obedience. He began in spiritual power, but ended in bad natural tendencies.

David was chosen by God for what God saw he was in heart, and because he knew David would please HIM. He stood years of discipline and rigorous training, till he was developed into a stalwart character of great beauty and usefulness. We shall see more of David in the future kingdom of the heavenly world.

SOLOMON—THE WISDOM KING.

Samuel was born of a prophetic mother. See her prophecy—1 Samuel 2:1-10.

Saul was of a noble stature and appearance.

David was anointed at fifteen years of age, and spent many years in training.

Solomon was born in the court of his father, King David.

Samuel, Saul and David fought against the enemies of Israel and subdued them, especially the Philistines. But Solomon came into the kingdom in peace, prosperity and plenty. He was richly supplied with materials to build the temple, and David gave him the blue prints thereof, which he had received by the Spirit. Solomon was endowed with the greatest gift of wisdom ever bestowed on mortal man. "And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding very much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the seashore."

He spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five. 1 Kings 4:30,32. His proverbs were the wisest, and his songs expressed the highest of spiritual relationship to God ever described.

Solomon began his reign under the most excellent and abundant conditions. As already said, he was reared in a palace amid plenty. His enemies were all subdued, scattered or destroyed. David had built a palace of cedar in Jerusalem, which he had captured and possessed

and made his capital. He also had gathered cedar, cut and prepared building stone, gold, silver, brass and materials to build a temple of divine worship. The blue prints of this temple he had received by revelation from the Spirit and gave them to Solomon. 1 Chron. 28:12,19.

And further, David had set in order, after a divine pattern, the Levites and the priests in their service, including three orders of prophetic musicians, also the army of his mighty men, and the twelve tribes. No king ever had a finer opportunity. He loved God and had His favor. God signally answered his prayers.

So Solomon, who was also called Jedediah, meaning, "Beloved of Jehovah," began a brilliant career under very remarkable and favorable circumstances. The Lord showed in His investiture which He bestowed upon Solomon, that He would give this man an opportunity to show what he would do and whether he would prove truly and permanently a great man under most favorable privileges. This for a while Solomon did. He showed himself truly great in a number of ways. But he finally went wrong by disobeying the command Jehovah had given to Israel not to marry the women of heathen nations about them. He took unto himself as many as he wished. They had to worship their heathen gods and so caused Solomon to build temples to their gods in Jerusalem. This greatly angered Jehovah.

A great man, son of a great king, receives great favors from God, inherits a great kingdom, already prepared with everything desirable at hand, makes a great start in his reign, but ends under a cloud of divine reproof.

LESSONS FROM THE KINGS OF ISRAEL.

No doubt the extended five stories of Israel's history, were intended in the mind of God, to make a grand illustration, or series of illustrations of moral acts and spiritual affairs, as they would be exhibited in such a description of the doings of a people. The Lord's dealings are especially shown in His direct and continuous hand upon their kings. If they went wrong, He let the heathen nations in on them, over-running, destroying cities and country and oppressing the people. If they walked with Him, keeping His commands and showing obedience, He blessed them with prosperity and wealth, and put fear of them on the heathen.

Among the lessons Jehovah constantly sought to teach Israel, there was one all important one. That was that they should know the difference between the witchery, chance, and luck of heathen gods, whose power lay in the chicanery of familiar spirits and those possessed by them: and faith and fellowship with the pure, clean, clear, miracle working power of Almighty Jehovah God.

For this purpose the history of Israel is one continuous stream of events of the most miraculous nature and abounding variety.

Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of Jehovah his God. When he was attacked he cried unto the Lord his God, and said, "Jehovah, it is nothing with thee to help, whether it be with many, or with them that have no power." And Azariah, a prophet, said, "The Lord is with you, while ye be with Him; and if ye seek Him, He will be found of you; but if ye forsake Him, He will forsake you." 2 Chron. 14:15.

Later, when Asa faced difficulty he sent to the king of Syria. Then the prophet came to Asa and said, "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to shew Himself strong in the behalf of them

whose heart is perfect toward Him. Herein thou hast done foolishly." 2 Chron. 16:9.

In his last days Asa suffered exceeding great disease in his feet, but, "He sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians. And Asa slept with his fathers." Ye who do likewise, consider. 2 Chron. 16:12,13.

Jehoshaphat, son of Asa—"The Lord was with Jehoshaphat because he walked in the first ways of his father David, and sought not unto Baalim." "And his heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord." "And Jehoshaphat waxed great exceedingly." "Therefore the Lord established the kingdom in his hand." 2 Chron. 17.

Jehoshaphat did a very wise thing. In his third year he sent his princes, "And they had the book of the law with them, and they went about throughout all the cities of Judah and taught the people."

One great mighty miracle stands out in the life of Jehoshaphat. A great host of Amon, Moab and Mount Seir came against him. He prayed and cried to God. The Spirit in prophecy came upon Jahaziel, who among other things said, "The battle is not yours, but God's." "Ye shall not need to fight."

"Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, believe on the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe His prophets, so shall ye prosper." Amon and Moab destroyed Seir, and then each other. A very signal miracle. A great army went insane.

After the reign of a number of wicked kings and a long period of forsaking the Lord, Hezekiah comes on the scene. There are two particular events in the life of Hezekiah to be considered at this time. First, he starts a powerful move to return from their backslidings and

restore the worship of Jehovah. This goes on to a most remarkable passover, perhaps none like it in history, certainly none after Solomon's time.

After varied experiences with the Assyrians in which when he relies on God he has victory, and when leaning on man, has defeat, he finally comes to receive the prophetic word through Isaiah, "Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die and not live." "Hezekiah wept sore," and prayed. God heard his cry, sent Isaiah back to say that the Lord added fifteen years to his life. An outstanding and mighty miracle.

In concluding this Part Two, we are moved again to emphasize God's offer of His miracle working interposition for His people. Over and over, by His miracles, He proclaims Himself the help of His people, of the needy and the oppressed, the down trodden and the weak. To seek for other help is to offend Him whose name is JEALOUS. (Ex. 34:14.) That unbelief which did not recognize His supernatural working power, that had brought Israel to the door of Canaan, shut them out of the land. So we see they could not enter in because of unbelief. "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you, an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." Hebrews 3:4.

Time would fail us to recount all the miracles of those ancient worthies and their practical lessons. But, "Seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses let us lay aside every weight and the sin (of unbelief) which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith." Hebrews 11:32; 12:1,2.

Convention Report

The Fall Convention was preceded by several weeks revival, conducted by Mrs. Elizabeth Crum and Mrs. Myrtle Derflinger, in which numbers were saved and several received the Pentecostal Baptism. One notable instance of the latter is recorded elsewhere in this issue of the Herald. Revival spirit seemed to be in the very atmosphere.

The presence of the Lord was graciously manifested in the opening of the first service of the Convention. The Spirit came down in showers of blessing upon the assembled guests and home assembly. Waves of praise and worship passed over the congregation; and the atmosphere became charged with heavenly electricity as the people continued to praise the Lord in unity.

The prophetic messages were unusually deep and powerful and depicted a deeper depth of the Spirit than was heretofore attained.

In the first morning service a young pastor said that the Lord had impressed upon his heart the following stanza: "Open my eyes, that I may see Glimpses of truth thou hast

for me; Place in my hands the wonderful key That shall unclasp, and set me free. Silently now I wait for thee, Ready, my God, Thy will to see; Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!" then said he felt that was the key to the convention. The Spirit confirmed this testimony by prophetic utterance through a sister which effected a move of the Spirit in prayer.

There was very little formal singing at this Convention. People were hungry for God, and as they gathered in the tabernacle would begin to pray. The meeting would glide along from one spiritual line to another: sometimes testimony, nearly always some preaching, very frequently prophecy, praising and worshipping in the Spirit.

The Young People's meeting, under the leadership of the Young People's Superintendent, was unusually good. At one time there was a move of the Spirit in the dance accompanied by trap drums, wind instruments, string instruments, piano accordion, and tambourines; both old and young participated. Near the close of the

demonstration a young lady, who was under the power of the Spirit, said prophetically; "You in your place, I in my place, we in our place, all in Jesus and Jesus in the Father, I in you, you in me, we in Jesus; Jesus in us, and we shall be one. Isn't that beautiful harmony? I love Him."

Sunday was a time of spiritual refreshing throughout the entire day, the Spirit falling in gracious showers and in various ways. A report was received that a young man enroute home to a distant village, received a most glorious Baptism in the car and praised and sang in tongues. The outstanding phenomenon was the singing in tongues: "The Old Rugged Cross." The key thought of nearly all the sermons was "The Cross" in its various phases.

The last sermon of the convention was preached by a minister under a deep anointing of the Spirit. His subject was, "Restoration of the Roman Empire," and was delivered under such direct inspiration of the Spirit that there was a tremendous visible witness throughout the whole congregation: a very appropriate ending to a glorious three days' meeting.

—Mrs. J. C. Dillenbeck.

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