
a *Grace Notes* course

History I

by Warren Doud

Lesson 2

Old Testament History (Part 2 of 4)

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Lesson 2 Quiz 6

Instructions for Completing the Lesson

Begin each study session with prayer. It is the Holy Spirit who makes spiritual things discernable to Christians, so it is essential to be in fellowship with the Lord during Bible study.

Instructions

1. Read the lesson notes carefully.
 2. Look up and study each passage of the Bible that is mentioned.
 3. Complete the answers to the Questions and send your response to *Grace Notes*.
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History I - Lesson 2

The Seeds of National Destruction, Gen.11

The people of Babel, in defiance of God, thought they could construct a better society, a more secure, more compatible, more idealistic community. Their volitional defiance of God began at the grass roots level, "They said to one another..."; then they united in an effort to organize their society under agreed-upon principles. They had a complete disregard for God; there was no communication between God and man. They refused divine viewpoint and the commandment to go throughout the world and multiply.

During the Age of the Jews there were many examples of national discipline. Hosea 4:1-7 gives an example of the nation rejecting Bible teaching and building for chastisement. They were engaged in false business practices (4:2); there was no application of grace, "no truth...nor mercy" (4:1); they were in a miserable state "languish" (4:3); there was false prosperity "they are increased" (4:7); they followed their religious leaders to destruction.

The whole book of Isaiah, notably chapter 28, was directed at the nation which had rejected the authority of God.

National destruction came on every nation that rejected the Word of God, not just the nation of Israel. Canaan was destroyed by the Jews under Joshua. There was divine discipline on Egypt for refusing to let the Jews leave. Assyria was destroyed (2 Kings 19:35; 2 Chron. 32:21). Babylon, in turn, faded quickly as a nation (Daniel 5).

And discipline is related to cities as well as to nations, as the following examples indicate:

Sodom and Gomorrah, Gen. 18:20

Jericho, Joshua 6

Jerusalem, Luke 21:24; Jer. 5:1

Damascus, Isaiah 17:1

Nineveh, Nahum 3:5-8

Babylon, Isaiah 13:19-21

Tyre, Ezekiel 26,27; Isaiah 23:1

Rome, Rev. 17:11; 18:1ff

Chorazin and Bethsaida, Matt. 11:21

Sidon, Ezekiel 28:20,22

The Centuries Preceding Daniel

In Bible study it is easy to compress centuries into days, so that one sometimes thinks of events with a great deal of foreshortening of vision. It is important to remember that in ancient history there are many hundreds of years involved. The events from the time of Abraham to Daniel's lifetime covered about 1,400 years. While it is difficult to know the exact dates involved, we know that the events in the Bible concerning Abraham and his direct family involved about 700 years. During that time Isaac, Jacob and Esau, and Jacob's twelve sons were born, Joseph was sold into Egypt, Jacob's family moved into Egypt, and the Hebrews experienced about 250 years of captivity in Egypt before escaping through the Red Sea in about 1290 B.C.

In about 1250 B.C., the Jews moved into Canaan under Joshua's leadership; and the period from about 1200 B.C. to 1020 B.C. was known in Bible history as the Period of the Judges. During this period the Trojan War was fought (c. 1194 to 1184 B.C.), and Tiglath-Pileser I ruled Assyria. Egypt was fairly quiet during this period, but there was continuous invasion and counter-invasion among the Greek city-states. In 1020 B.C. Israel became a kingdom under Saul.

The years 1000 B.C. to 961 B.C. mark the reign of David. During this period, the Greeks colonized Asia Minor, the Assyrian Empire increased in size and strength and began to subdue the Hittites, the Phoenicians continued to consolidate their commercial strength. The Persians existed only in their tribes at this time and had not yet become a cohesive national entity.

From 961 to 925 B.C., Solomon built the Temple, and upon Solomon's death the kingdom was divided into the Northern (Israel) and Southern (Judah) kingdoms.

After 900 B.C. the Assyrians began to extend their borders through conquest. They won the battle of

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Kharkar, and the Hittite city of Aleppo fell to Assyria during the reigns of Jehoshaphat in Judah and Ahab and Jezebel in Israel.

In 814 B.C., Carthage was founded. In 805 B.C., the city of Damascus fell to Assyria. In 800 B.C., the Etruscans invaded Italy. In 776 B.C. the first Olympic games were held in Greece. Uzziah was king in Judah, Isaiah was the prophet, and Jeroboam reigned in Israel. In about 753 B.C. the city of Rome was founded. In quick succession, the last Hittite states, then Syria (Damascus), and Israel fell under Assyrian rule (721 B.C.). In 701 B.C. Sennacherib, King of Assyria, invaded Judah but was repelled under King Hezekiah.

From Solomon to Daniel

The Disobedience of Solomon (1 Kings 11)

The decline of Israel as a sovereign nation under God can be traced to Solomon's spiritual decline. He had married many foreign women, even though the Lord had warned against such practice. These wives and concubines turned his attention to such pagan gods as Ashtoreth, one of the best known of fertility goddesses, known to the Greeks as Astarte, and worshipped in Babylonia under the name of Ishtar. Solomon finally came to the place where he built a high place of worship for the pagan Moabite god Chemosh on the "hill that is before Jerusalem" (Isa. 11:7), which was probably the Mount of Olives.

Because of these sins, the Lord said that he would take the kingdom from Solomon; but because of David, his father, He would not do this until the time of Solomon's son. During the reign of Solomon, a young man named Jeroboam came to prominence who was later to be king of the northern kingdom after the division. This was predicted by the prophet Ahijah, who tore Jeroboam's garment into twelve pieces, symbolizing the breaking up of Solomon's kingdom. Jeroboam fled to Egypt on rumors of Solomon's displeasure, and Solomon finished his reign of forty years and slept with his fathers.

The Division of the Kingdom (1 Kings 12; 2 Chron. 10)

Solomon's son Rehoboam prepared to ascend the throne after Solomon's death. The people of the ten northern tribes had asked Rehoboam to make their lives easier, and the older advisers of the kingdom advised Rehoboam to do so. However, he followed the bad advice of his young associates who told him to increase the taxation and burden on the ten tribes. The northern tribes rallied around Jeroboam and made him their king. Rehoboam prepared to go to battle against them, but the Lord said "This thing is from me." (1 Kings 12:24). The two portions of Solomon's kingdom remained divided until the Northern Kingdom was occupied by the Assyrians (721 B.C.) and the Southern Kingdom was subjugated by the Babylonians (586 B.C.)

Jeroboam's Idolatry; Shishak's Invasion (1 Kings 12,14)

Shortly after Jeroboam became king of Israel, he established calf worship by setting up calf altars at Dan and Bethel. He wanted to prevent the people from going down to the temple at Jerusalem where they might be influenced to join Rehoboam. The sacred bull was an object of worship in Egypt, and a bull's tomb was found at Memphis in the 19th Century. The sacred cow was the symbol of the goddess Hathor. It is likely that Jeroboam became acquainted with this religion when he went to Egypt during Solomon's reign. Israel underwent a very rapid decline under divine discipline, a decline which was never reversed during the next two centuries because there was no king who would lead the nation in repentance.

In the meantime, Sheshonk I of Egypt (spelled "Shishak" in the Bible) came to Palestine and took the Temple treasures from Jerusalem. An inscription regarding this military feat is found on the wall of the great temple of Karnak in Egypt. The inscription shows Shishak grasping a group of cowering Semites by the hair and hitting them with a club. On the bodies of the people in the carving are the names of many Palestinian towns,

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such as Taanach, Gibeon, Ajalon, Bethshan, and many others.

Idolatry was rampant in the Northern Kingdom after Jeroboam, under Omri, Ahab, and Jezebel. Elijah and Elishah were raised up to combat the progress of idolatry and Baal worship. The idolatry slowed down a little during the reigns of Jehu and Jeroboam II, but flourished again under later kings. The Northern Kingdom finally ended with a series of murders in the palace.

Hostilities between Israel and Judah

1 Kings 16; 2 Kings 17

Conflict between Israel and Judah continued throughout the reigns of Rehoboam, Abijah, and Asa (of Judah) and the dynasties of Jeroboam and Baasha in Israel. Neither side prevailed for long; and the constant warfare sapped the strength of both sides. The squabbles were mostly over the border lands of the tribe of Benjamin, which Israel claimed. Abijah raised an army and annexed to Judah the city of Bethel and the hills surrounding it, along with Ephron and Jeshanah (2 Chr. 13:19). In the days of Asa, however, Israel was stronger, and Baasha was able to recover the conquered territories. To safeguard the new border, Baasha fortified Ramah, on the main highway about five miles from Jerusalem.

The kingdom of Damascus became Israel's most serious threat. Their disputes concerned mostly the control of the Transjordan and the northern parts of Palestine. The kings of Damascus were called "Ben-Hadad", or "son of (the god) Hadad". Out of distress, Asa appealed to Ben-Hadad I for help in defeating Baasha. Baasha was forced to retreat from Judah. During Asa's long reign in Judah, order was restored to the kingdom, and the fruits of his victories were enjoyed by his son, Jehoshaphat.

The Rise of Omri -- 1 Kings 16:16f

For some time the town of Gibbethon, a city occupied by Levites and on the border with Philistia, was a sore spot. At the end of the reign of Elah the son of Baasha, news of the revolt of Zimri reached the Israelite troops encamped there.

They elected Omri as their commander, went to Tirzah, the capital of Israel, and besieged and conquered it. After a period of civil war, Omri was able to secure the kingdom for himself.

Omri stabilized the kingdom and strengthened it against Aram. He built the city of Samaria at a strategic location and moved his capital there. He renewed a treaty with Tyre by marrying his son Ahab to the Phoenician princess Jezebel. Relations with Judah were improved for a time through the marriage of Athaliah to Jehoram.

The Wars of Ahab Against Aram (1 Kings 20; 2 Chron. 18)

Ahab continued the policies of Omri, and there was some political and economic stability during his reign. The area of the city of Hazor, near the border with Aram, was doubled and the city surrounded by a fortified wall. In this period, Ben-Hadad, the king of Aram (Damascus) gained control of Aram and formed a cohesive political entity stretching from Israel to Hamath. Then began the struggle between Aram and Israel, and in the Bible are accounts of Ahab's three wars.

First, the Arameans laid siege to Samaria itself (c. 855 B.C.), but Ahab was able to beat them off.

During this period Ahab's army was part of an allied force which fought the Battle of Karkar against the Assyrians (see below).

The second battle with Aram took place in the Jarmuk valley, again resulting in the defeat of Ben-Hadad. In the third war (c. 850 B.C.), when Aram broke the treaty which resulted from the second war, Ahab and Jehoshaphat set out to fight at Ramoth Gilead. Ahab fell in battle, although he fought courageously and avoided an utter rout. However, Ramoth-Gilead and the northern part of the Trans-Jordan remained in the hands of Aram.

The Battle of Karkar (1 Kings 22)

The Assyrians had been building up their power during the time that the kings of Palestine and Syria were engaged in their petty wars. Assurnasirpal II renewed Assyria's expansionist policies, his armies invading Syria and northern Phoenicia, including Arvad, Biblos, Tyre, and

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Sidon. His son Shalmaneser III continued these campaigns and reached the Amanus mountains. In about 853 B.C. Shalmaneser set out from Nineveh to the central region of Syria. He crossed the Euphrates in flood, near Pethor, going by way of Aleppo. He conquered several cities, including Karkar.

Leaving their quarrels for the time being, the kings of the west, including Ahab, formed a league to meet the Assyrian threat. This league included armies gathered from Syria, Palestine and Egypt. The biblical Ben-Hadad, the enemy of Ahab, Irhuleni king of Hamath, and Ahab's Israelite army itself, stood at the head of the league. Ahab had raised 2,000 chariots, comprising more than half of the mounted forces of the league, an indication of the military strength of Israel at this time.

According to Shalmaneser's history, Assyria was the winner. However, the kings of the league succeeded in undermining Assyria's influence in the area. Four years were to pass before Shalmaneser came back on another campaign. With the danger from Assyria past, the petty struggles between the members of the League were renewed.

Ahab and Jezebel; Baal Worship (1 Kings 16)

Ahab was the 7th king of Israel, married to Jezebel the daughter of the King of Sidon (Phoenicia). Jezebel had brought in Baal worship from Phoenicia. When this new curse was about to engulf the kingdom, God raised up Elijah, and later Elisha, to cry out against the Baal worship. The Baal worship was much worse than the calf worship had ever been, so the prophets spent their energies on this very serious problem.

In various archaeological expeditions in Palestine a great deal of evidence, in the form of seals and inscriptions on pottery fragments, has turned up that the name "Baal" appears in the personal

names of the people who lived in the Northern Kingdom. The fact that Jewish parents were naming their children after false gods shows what a great impact the Baal worship introduced by Jezebel had upon the land of Israel.

Ahaziah's Idolatry

Ahab's son, Ahaziah, ruled Israel from 853 to 852 B.C. He continued the wicked practices of his parents by worshipping Baal (1 Kings 22:51-53). When he became ill, he sent messengers into Philistine territory to get help from their god at Ekron and to ask whether he would recover from his disease. The messengers were met by Elijah, who asked why they were going to Ekron when there was a God in Israel. He told them that the king was not going to recover from his illness. Ahaziah died and was succeeded by his brother Jehoram (852-841 B.C.), another son of Ahab.

Relations between Judah and Israel

During this period, King Jehoshaphat (870 to 848 B.C.), the fourth king of Judah, had introduced a period of close relationships between Israel and Judah, by marriages between the royal families, by adopting the same names for their children, and by frequent visits with each other. They made joint ventures in foreign trade, establishing a merchant navy at Ezion-geber, where Solomon had established his seaport about a hundred years earlier. At various times Israel and Judah joined military forces, as at the battle at Ramoth-gilead (1 Kings 22) and in putting down the rebellion of the Moabites (2 Kings 3:6,7).

These alliances were an entanglement to Judah because the kings of Israel were so idolatrous. Judah's spiritual progress was undermined. Elisha preached specifically against the alliance of Israel and Judah against the Moabites (2 Kings 3:13,14).

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History I, Lesson 2 Questions

Instructions

The following questions relate to your study of this lesson.

Respond to the questions as required.

You have choices about sending the quiz back to *Grace Notes*.

- If you received an email file containing the questions, you can use the REPLY feature of your e-mail application to open the file. Enter your responses in the reply message. Then SEND the message to *Grace Notes*.
- You can enter your answers on these pages, then send the whole file back to *Grace Notes* as a file attachment. This is handy, but these lessons will average 100K to 200K in size. As an alternative,
- After you answer the questions here, copy and paste the whole list of questions into a new MS Word document; then, send the new file to *Grace Notes* as an attachment. The new file will, of course, be much smaller than this main file.
- Finally, you can print the Quiz pages on your printer and send your response back to *Grace Notes* in the regular mail. If you do this, send the mail to:

Grace Notes

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Austin, Texas 78757 USA

Whichever transmission method you use, when *Grace Notes* receives your response, we will send you the next lesson in the series.

Questions on History I, Lesson 2

1. What command of *God* did the people of *Babel* disobey?

Answer:

2. National destruction came on every nation that _____.

Answer:

3. The events in the Bible covering Abraham and his direct family took place over a period of 150 years. [True/False]

Answer:

4. During David's reign from 1000 to 961 BC, what part of the world did the *Greeks* colonize?

Answer:

5. When were the first Olympic games held in *Greece*?

Answer:

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6. The prophet _____ tore Jeroboam's garment into 12 pieces, symbolizing the breakup of Solomon's kingdom.

Answer:

7. Jeroboam set up centers of idol worship in _____ and _____.

Answer:

8. Two prophets carried on a ministry during the reign of Ahab and Jezebel; they were _____ and _____.

Answer:

9. During the reign of Jeroboam, _____, King of Egypt, came to Palestine and stole Temple treasures.

Answer:

10. What was the main cause of the problems of both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms during the reigns of the kings following David and Solomon?

Answer:

End of Quiz