

Light for My Path Youth Bible Studies

#9: Israel Becomes God's People

For over a year, the people of Israel camped at the foot of Mt. Sinai. During that time, God gave them His laws and statutes. Here they were officially organized into God's chosen nation.

Soon after they arrived at the mountain, God called Moses up into the mountain and spoke with him. He told the people to prepare themselves, because in three days He was going to come down and speak to them. On the third day, there was thunder and lightning from the cloud that surrounded the top of the mountain. From the cloud, the voice of God could be heard, speaking His law to the people. After He had finished, God told Moses to come up into the mountain. Moses went up, and God gave to him many rules for governing the people.



1. When Moses came down and told the people all the things God had said, what did the people say? Exodus 24:3.

"And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said will we do."

2. What did God tell Moses to build? **Exodus 25:8.**

"And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them."

3. What reason did God give for wanting them to build a sanctuary? **Exodus 25:8.**

"And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them."

Note: Over the camp there was a cloud by day that spread out over the camp, shielding the people from the hot desert sun. At night, instead of a cloud to shade them, it was like a cloud of fire that was light and warmth to the whole camp. This was a symbol of God's presence with them.

Later, God again called Moses up into the mountain. There He spoke with Moses, giving him instructions for the building of the sanctuary.

4. After He had finished talking with Moses, what did God give him? Exodus 31:18.

"And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God."

The Golden Calf

5. While Moses was gone, what did the people ask Aaron to make them? **Exodus 32:1.**

"And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him."



6. What did Aaron tell the people to do? **Exodus 32:2, 3.**

"And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them unto me. And all the people brake off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron."

7. What did Aaron then make for them? **Exodus 32:4.**

"And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt."

8. What does the second commandment tell us not to do? **Exodus 20:4.**

"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth."

Note: It had only been a few weeks since the people had promised to obey God, and to do all that He had asked them to do. How quickly they were ready to forget that promise and break the commandments of God that they had promised to obey!

God Hears Moses' Prayer

9. What did God tell Moses He was going to do to Israel? **Exodus 32:10.**

"Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation."

Note: When God told Moses that He would destroy the people, Moses began to plead with God to save them. James tells us: "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. James 5:16 God heard Moses' prayer and spared the lives of the people.

But notice this text closely—God said to Moses, "Let me alone that My wrath may wax hot etc." Could Moses stop God if God really wanted to destroy the people? No, of course not. So what we see here is actually an invitation to Moses to plead for the people so God could and would spare them. If God had really wanted to destroy them, Moses could not have stopped Him.

At last God told Moses that it was time for the people to resume their journey to the land of promise. It was only a few days journey to the borders of the land of Canaan, and the people expected to be in their new home in a very short time.

As the people approached the Promised Land, they sent twelve spies to spy out the land and bring back a report.

10. How long were the spies gone searching out the land? **Numbers 13:25.**

"And they returned from searching of the land after forty days."

Note: Of the twelve men who went up to spy out the land, ten brought back an evil report. They told the people that the land was full of giants and that it was not possible for them to drive them out. The people again showed that they had no faith. They forgot how God had delivered them from the powerful Egyptians. They didn't remember how God had supplied them with manna when there was no food in the wilderness. Because of this evil report, the people murmured against God and rebelled against Him.

11. Where did the people say they wanted to go? **Numbers 14:4.**

"And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt."

Note: As a result of this murmuring and rebellion, God sent the people back into the wilderness to wander for forty years; a year for each day that the spies searched out the land.

During these years of wandering in the wilderness, the people had many experiences that tested their faith. Time after time they murmured against God, showing that they had not yet learned the lesson of having faith in God. Of all the people that came out of Egypt, only two of them ever entered the Promised Land. The rest all died in the wilderness because of their doubting and murmuring.

The day finally came when the children of those who had come out of Egypt crossed the Jordan. By faith, they were able to drive out many of the wicked nations that lived in the land.

Israel Desires a King

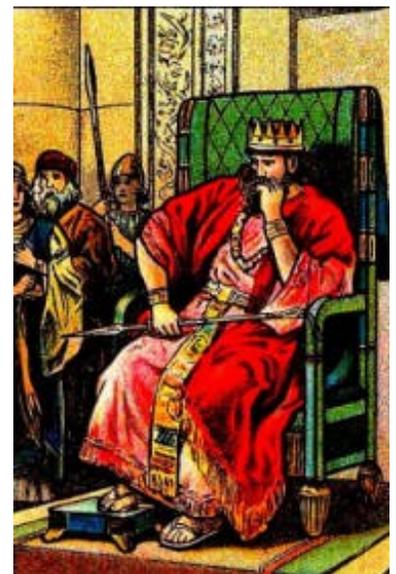
For many years, the leaders of Israel were prophets and judges. These men were teachers who instructed and led the people. One of the best of these judges and leaders was Samuel the prophet.

12. What did the people ask of Samuel? **1 Samuel 8:5.**

"And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations."

13. In asking for a king, who were the people rejecting as their Ruler?
1 Samuel 8:7.

"And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them."



Note: Though God allowed Israel to have a king, these kings led the people into great wickedness just as He had warned them would happen.

It is never wise, nor is it safe to go against God's will for us. Although there are times when God may allow us to have our own way, the things that we want that are opposed to God's will for us, are never a blessing.

Because of their great wickedness, and unfaithfulness to God, the kingdom was divided into two parts. God allowed the Assyrians to come against them the northern tribes and after a siege of three years, they went into captivity to Assyria in 721 B.C. For more than another one hundred years, God continued to plead with the southern tribes.

14. Whom did God send to warn the people to turn from their wickedness? **2 Chronicles 24:19.**

"Yet he sent prophets to them, to bring them again unto the LORD; and they testified against them: but they would not give ear."

15. What did God tell the people would happen to Jerusalem if they refused to obey Him? **Jeremiah 17:27.**

"But if ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the sabbath day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched."

16. Did the people listen to these prophets? **2 Chronicles 36:16.**

"But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy."

17. Under these kings, how did the wickedness of Israel compare to the wickedness of the nations that God had destroyed before Israel? **2 Kings 21:9.**

"But they hearkened not: and Manasseh seduced them to do more evil than did the nations whom the LORD destroyed before the children of Israel."

18. Because of this rejection of God's messengers, who came against King Jehoiakim in Jerusalem? **2 Kings 24:1.**

"In his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant three years: then he turned and rebelled against him."

Note: In rebelling against God, the people separated themselves from Him. Without God's protection and care, they were not safe from their powerful enemies. When their enemies came against them with their armies, God was not able to be their defence. Now, the wickedness of Judah was such that God was no longer their defines.

19. What did the King of Babylon do to the city of Jerusalem? **2 Chronicles 36:19.**

"And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof."

20. How long did God say the people were to serve the king of Babylon? Jeremiah 25:11.

"And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years."

Note: In ancient times, the great trade routes of the civilized world passed through the land of Canaan.

God placed Israel at the crossroads of the world so that they could be a light to the whole world. With God's blessing, Israel was to have been a powerful leader in the world. It was God's purpose that in placing Israel in this important position, the attention of the people of the world would be directed to them. Through them, God wanted to teach the other nations about Himself, the true God. However, because of Israel's rebellion and disobedience, they failed to be the light God intended them to be, and He was not able to bless them as He wanted to.

Many times, because of children's disobedience, parents are not able to do some of the good things for them that they would otherwise like to do. It is much the same way when we are disobedient to God. God has many blessings that He wants to give us, if we will only honor Him in all that we do.

Daniel Favoured by the King

Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, ordered that some of the best of the princes of Judah be brought to the royal court and educated in the ways of Babylon. It was his purpose that after their education was completed they would be given places of responsibility in his government.

21. What were the names of four of the princes of Judah the king chose to serve in his court?
Daniel 1:6.

"Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah."

Note: Though we know Daniel by his Hebrew name, the other three we know by the new names they were given in Babylon—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

There were a few among the nation of Israel who remained faithful to God. That these men might be the witness to the nations of the world that Israel had failed to be, God allowed them to be taken to those nations as captives. Because of their loyalty to God, God placed them in important positions in the nations, and through them, many gained knowledge of God that they would not otherwise have had. Even King Nebuchadnezzar eventually was converted and gave his heart to God.

God not only honoured these men by placing them in positions of great responsibility in the nation, that was at that time the most powerful nation in all the world, but He revealed to them many important future events. In our next lesson we will look at the experience of these men in the court of Babylon.

Do you want to be like Daniel and stand strong and true? Jesus did not promise that giving our lives to Him would always be easy, but He has given us many promises of His protection and care when we are obedient.