

## Psalm 105, I Timothy 1-6 (#81)

**Psalm 105** — The psalmist recounts Israel’s miraculous deliverance from famine, slavery, and their conquest of Canaan, giving glory to God for all that he has done. *Why did God do this for the Israelites?*

**I Timothy**— Paul sends a personal letter from Macedonia to his son in the faith, Timothy, who is serving in a leadership capacity in the church of Ephesus about 64 A.D. He encouraged Timothy to lead the church into godliness, to instruct those who taught false doctrine, to establish church order through the proper choice of elders and deacons, and various practical instructions for church life. Timothy was raised in Lystra by a Greek father and a godly Jewish mother and grandmother. He was said to be the first “second generation Christian leader” in the New Testament. He was a companion of Paul on his second and third missionary journeys and was used by Paul as his trouble shooter to help him in churches that had various problems or needs.

**I Timothy 1**— The first reason for this letter to Timothy was for him to combat false teachings in the church in Ephesus. These false teachers involved the church in endless and irrelevant questions and speculations that got the church off track from its focus on the person and work of Jesus Christ, and its goal of love coming from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith. Although these men set themselves up as great teachers of the law, they only knew how to lead people into the bondage of legalism which is unable to transform hearts (vv. 1-11). On the other hand, the gospel of grace that liberates is able to take a blasphemer, a persecutor, a chief of sinners and transform him into the Apostle to the Gentiles. The awesome mercy and patience of God had chosen Paul to be an example to those in the future who would believe on Jesus for eternal life. Now Paul encourages Timothy to strongly engage in the battle with a firm grip on his faith and a clear conscience, not like Hymenaeus and Alexander who suffered the shipwreck of their faith (12-20). *What were the vital elements of living a godly life given by Paul in chapter 1?*

**I Timothy 2**— Paul directs Timothy into the importance of prayer as part of the church’s worship. Prayer is to be made for everyone in general and for kings and rulers in particular. We are to pray for their salvation and also that we may lead a quiet and tranquil life (vv. 1-3). Verses 4 to 6 give us basic facts about the gospel. Paul speaks of the behavior of the men and women at their worship services in the assembly. Men are to make sure that when they lift their hands in worship, they are living a pure and holy life without anger or controversy. Women are to be modest, gentle, sensible, and defer to male leadership in the church without usurping the role that God designed for men. *Give four truths of the gospel that Paul states in verses 4 to 6. What other teachings or religious systems do these verses contradict?*

**I Timothy 3**— Because of the false teaching in the church at Ephesus and the need for godly leaders, Paul taught Timothy the proper organization and the qualifications of those who would oversee the church. As the church at Ephesus was growing, it was needful to evaluate and choose new overseers (elders) by determining their spiritual competency and gifting. Paul then lists 15 qualifications that should be used to properly vet the candidates. Then Paul listed nine characteristics of the deacons (servants) but does not include the responsibility of teaching or the overall direction of the church. The deacons were responsible for the various areas of service that needed to be done in the church. The word “wives” could also mean “women” who would serve as deacons (or deaconess) to minister to the various needs of the church (see the deaconess Phoebe in Romans 16:1). Since the local church is the pillar and foundation of the truth, Paul declares that the purpose for this letter was that Timothy will know how people ought to conduct themselves. The chapter ends with an early church hymn that declared the basic truths of Christ’s divinity, humanity, preeminence, and purpose. *List the 15 qualifications for overseer/elder. Of these, what are two or three you in which have made progress during the last year? In which one of these do you need to grow more?*

**I Timothy 4**— This chapter describes obstacles that keep the church from experiencing proper unity and blessing. Paul speaks of the false teachers who forbid marriage and demand abstinence from certain foods. However, in reality, these are gifts of God that will spur us on to thanksgiving for God’s goodness (vv. 1-5). The rest of the chapter gives instructions to Timothy on fulfilling his leadership role and pastoral duties properly. First, Timothy was exhorted to make sure that the believers were instructed in the words of faith and good doctrine. He was to train himself in godliness which has eternal value and to set his hope on the living God (vv. 6-10). Paul was concerned that Timothy would communicate the truth of God’s Word as well as demonstrate that truth through his life. Although Timothy was younger than many, Paul did not want the older believers to look down on him. He was to be an example by his speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity and devote himself to the public reading of scripture, to preaching, and to teaching. *Verse 8 says, “For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come (NIV).” Next Level Core Value #4 says, “Our bodies are God’s dwelling place and property so it is important that we honor Him not only with morally pure lives but also through proper nutrition, exercise, and rest.” Do you feel you are properly taking care of your body through appropriate nutrition, exercise, and rest? If not, what can you do to grow in this area? Do you need an accountability partner to help you?*

**I Timothy 5**— Timothy was to treat the believers of the church just as he would members of his family. The church in Ephesus continued the tradition of the church in Jerusalem (Acts 6:1-6) by taking care of the widows in their assembly. Paul set up guidelines for those widows that would be supported by the church. No widow would be supported if she had family members who could take care of her since it was an obligation for each family to provide for their own. Verses 9 to 11 give qualifications for the widows that are to be put on the official support

list. Younger widows were not to be put on the list but are encouraged to marry because of the various temptations that would come and cause them to renounce their previous vow. The general principle is that the church should not be burdened with the support of all widows but could help those widows that meet the qualifying criteria (1-16). Paul now gives instructions concerning elders including supporting those who work hard at preaching and teaching. No elder is to be faced with an accusation against them unless it is supported by two or three witnesses. When there is sin involved in the life of an elder, there should be a public rebuking, and the process should be carried out without partiality or favoritism. No elder should be quickly appointed, but first there must be a careful examination of each one since the real spiritual life of a leader may not be immediately obvious (vv. 17-25). *What are some specific ways a church can determine the true material needs of the believers and the elderly in the church, and how should these needs be met? #14, p. 1679*

**I Timothy 6**— This last chapter deals with various matters; the honoring of masters by slaves, the description of sin and ungodliness in the life of a false teacher, the teaching about the uses and abuses of wealth (repeated in verses 17 to 19), a personal challenge to Timothy, and the closing doxology. To honor the Lord's name and teaching, slaves are to regard their masters with all respect, and especially those who have masters who are believers (vv1-2). Timothy was to stay away from false teachers who were proud, disputatious, depraved, bereft of the truth, and who exploit the church for material gain (vv. 3-5). Christians are to find contentment in living Christ-honoring lives and by enjoying the blessings of simplicity through having their basic needs met. A love of money and the desire to be rich leads to a path of pain, regret, and self-destruction (vv. 6-10). Paul encourages Timothy to pursue holiness and the fruit of the Spirit, to fight the good fight for the faith, and to seize eternal life in its fullness (vv. 11-12). He ends this personal letter with two themes; a crescendo of praise and worship describing our awesome Trinitarian God, and a challenge to the financially rich to be generous with those in need, not to put their hope in unpredictable and fleeting riches, and to invest their wealth in building God's Eternal Kingdom (13-21). *Read verses 6 to 10 and 17 to 19. What are the temptations and traps of being rich (or wanting to be rich)? What are the obligations for Christians who have wealth? What are the advantages of believers who are not rich?*

*Sources for summary and questions: 1. Serendipity Bible for Groups . c. 1988 Littleton, CO. 2. MacArthur Study Bible ESV. 1997 Thomas Nelson, Inc. 3. Life Application Bible HCSB c. 1988 Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. 4. The Complete Bible Companion c.2014 Barbour Publishing, Inc. Uhrichsville, OH. 5. ESV Study Bible c. 2008 Crossway Bibles, Wheaton, IL. 6. The World Bible Handbook, Lawrence Richards, Word Inc. Waco, TX. 7. The Quest Study Bible NIV, c. 1994 Zondervan Publishing & Christianity Today, Grand Rapids, MI & Wheaton, IL. 8. The Transformation Study Bible, c. 2009, David C. Cook. 9. Halley's Bible Handbook, c. 2000, Zondervan Publishing, Grand Rapids, MI. 10. 500 Questions & Answers from the Bible, c. 2006, Barbour Publishing, Uhrichsville, OH. 11. Understanding the Bible c. 2000, Holman Publishers, Nashville, TN. 12. Homan Bible Handbook, c.1992, Homan Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN. 13. Moody Bible Commentary, c. 2014, Moody Publishers, Chicago, IL. 14. Life Essentials Study Bible, c. 2011, Holman Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN.*

## Psalm 106, II Kings 1-6, Deuteronomy 12, 14-18 (#82)

**Psalm 106**— This is a psalm contrasting God’s faithful providence and Israel’s waywardness. *Consider the sins of the Israelites and God’s responses (hint: look for “they” and “he”). How does God deal with their sinfulness?*

**II Kings**— This book is a continuation of I Kings and begins with the King Ahaziah of Israel and the transition between the prophets Elijah and Elisha. In chapter 17 we see the captivity and permanent dispersion of the Northern Kingdom by Assyria. The book ends with the destruction of Jerusalem and the captivity and exile of Judah to Babylon. II Kings began about 850 B.C. and ended with the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

**II Kings 1**— Now Elijah has a confrontation with the son of Ahab, Ahaziah, who is the king of Israel. After becoming seriously injured in the palace, Ahaziah sent messengers to Ekron in the territory of the Philistines to inquire of Baal-zebub to see if he would recover from his injury. Being informed by the angel of the Lord what was happening, Elijah intercepted the messengers and asked “Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to inquire of Baal-zebub?” He then told the messengers that the king would certainly die. Upon hearing Elijah’s message, the king sent back to Elijah a captain with 50 soldiers and demanded that Elijah appear before the king. Elijah called down fire from heaven and consumed all the men. After this happened to a second group of 50 with their captain, a third captain and his 50 men showed great humility and pleaded for mercy on their lives. Elijah spared them and went with them to declare in person to the king that he would certainly die. *What does this story show about (1) the spiritual state of King Ahaziah who had three opportunities to repent, (2) the hearts of the three captains, and (3) lost humanity today? See II Peter 3:8-9.*

**II Kings 2**— The final days of Elijah’s ministry were coming to a close and soon he would be taken up to heaven in a whirlwind. Although he tried to convince Elisha to not go with him, Elisha would not be deterred and stayed with Elijah until his translation into heaven in a chariot of fire drawn by horses. Upon coming to the Jordan River, Elijah struck the waters with his cloak and the river parted so that they could cross the river on dry land. Elisha asked Elijah for a double portion of his spirit and received it. Returning from Elijah’s translation to heaven, Elisha came again to the Jordan River and struck the waters with Elijah’s cloak that was left behind, and the waters parted as before. Upon crossing the river, the sons of the prophets all recognized that the spirit of Elijah was now resting on Elisha. The prophets complained because of the bitter water and unfruitful land. Elijah put salt in a new bowl and threw the salt into the spring, and the water became purified at that moment. Because a group of young men mocked Elisha saying, “Go up baldy,” Elisha cursed them, and two bears came out of the woods and mauled 42 of them. *Was Elisha justified in cursing the young men who called him names? Why or why not?*

**II Kings 3**— Although King Joram, son of Ahab, was not as bad as his father, he still clung on to the sins of Jeroboam that caused Israel to go into idolatry. Since Moab had ceased to pay tribute that had been paid to Israel since the days of King Omri, King Joram formed a coalition with King Jehoshaphat of Judah and the king of Edom to go and attack Moab. Upon taking the route of the wilderness through Edom for seven days, they found no water for the army or the animals. Although King Joram thought it was their doom caused by the Lord, Jehoshaphat asked for a prophet of Yahweh so they could inquire of Him. Finding out that Elisha was near, the three kings went to Elisha who asked for music to be played so he could give prophecy. The Lord commanded them to dig trenches which were filled with water the next morning by the Lord. Not only did water come from the direction of Edom and fill the land, but also the water appeared to be blood to the King of Moab who thought the three kings had fought among themselves. Moab attacked the armies prematurely, and Israel and the coalition fought against Moab, and victory soon followed for them. Seeing defeat, Mesha, king of Moab sacrificed his firstborn son as a burnt offering to their god Chemosh. The chapter ends with these words, “The fury (wrath) against Israel was great; they withdrew and returned to their own land (v. 27b, NIV).” *Why was the fury or wrath very great against Israel? Explain the meaning of this verse (v. 27b).*

**II Kings 4**— This chapter gives four powerful miracles the Lord performed through Elisha. First, after the death of a prophet, his creditors wanted to take his widow’s two sons as slaves to pay off the debt the late prophet owed. Elisha multiplied the small amount of oil that the widow had so she could pay off the creditors and also have money to live on (vv. 1-7). Since he was an itinerate prophet, a wealthy Shunammite woman regularly offered Elisha meals and eventually built a small room on the roof of her house for him to stay every time he passed by Shunem (located in north central Israel). Because of her great kindness to Elisha, the Lord gave the woman and her husband a son whose birth Elisha had predicted a year earlier. In time, the son became sick and died, and through the power of the Lord, Elisha raised him from the dead (vv. 8-36). During the time of a famine in the land, Elisha ordered the attendant to prepare a large pot of stew for the sons of the prophets. One of the young men gathered herbs and wild gourds to put into the pot but didn’t realize that they were poisonous. Upon finding out the stew was deadly, Elisha threw flour into the pot which purified it and made it edible (vv. 38-41). Finally, Elisha fed one hundred prophets by multiplying twenty individual loaves of bread so that all would be able to eat. This miracle happened according to the Word of the Lord (vv. 42-44). *What might be the reasons why God would allow the Shunammite’s son die? See also II Kings 8:1-6.*

**II Kings 5**— This incredible story of Naaman, the commander of the army of Aram (Syria), is also told by Christ in Luke 4:27 where Naaman would represent the Gentiles who would believe in Him. A captive servant girl from Israel tells Naaman's wife about a prophet in Samaria who could cure her master of his leprosy. The king of Aram sends this valiant Naaman, loaded with gifts, to Samaria to be healed, but the king of Israel instead thinks he is picking a fight. After hearing of the king's consternation, Elisha has the king send Naaman to him. Upon Naaman's arrival, Elisha sends his servant Gehazi to tell Naaman to go to the Jordan River (32 miles away from Samaria) and immerse himself seven times in the river. After the immediate reaction of rage for lack of respect and such a simplistic solution, and through the encouragement of his servants, he went to the Jordan River, dipped seven times, and was healed of his leprosy. Naaman desired to say thank you by delivering great gifts, but Elisha refused them. Elisha's servant, Gehazi, secretly ran after Naaman and asked for some of the gifts. Upon his return, he was confronted by Elisha and was struck by this same disease of leprosy that Naaman once had because of his lying, deception, and greed. Describe the faith (or lack of it) and values of the five key individuals in this chapter: (1) the young captive girl from Israel, (2) Naaman, (3) the king of Israel, (4) Elisha, and (5) Gehazi. #6. p. 206.

**II Kings 6**— As the school of the prophets grew in number, there was need to expand their facilities to accommodate the students. Going to the Jordan River to cut down trees for lumber for the new building, an iron axe head fell into the water. Since the axe was borrowed, there was anxiety in the heart of the one who had lost it. Elisha had them cut a stick, throw it into the place where the axe head had dropped, and the iron axe head floated to the top of the water (vv. 1-7). The king of Aram (Syria) was waging war against Israel, and every time they formed a strategy to fight against the Israel's army, Elisha would warn the king of Israel and keep Aram from gaining victory. Finding out that it was Elisha who was warning the king of Israel, the king of Aram sent a large army to Dothan to capture Elisha and keep him from informing the king of Israel. After striking the army of Aram with blindness, Elisha led the army to Samaria to stand before the king of Israel. Elisha advised the king to give the army a feast and send them back to the king of Aram (vv. 8-23). Some time later, King Ben-hadad of Aram marched up to Samaria and besieged the city for an extended period of time so that eventually the city was suffering great starvation. When an act of cannibalism was heard by the king, he put the blame on Elisha and then went to take Elisha's life. The king knew the Lord was the one who caused the famine and siege and figured there was no way the Lord could reverse it. *What are the lessons we are taught by the story of Elisha's servant who had his eyes opened to the invisible protection of God upon them (v. 17)? See also Psalms 34:7, Psalm 91:11, Hebrews 1:13-14, and Matthew 26:53.*

**Deuteronomy 12**— God lays out clear instructions regarding statutes and judgments to the nation of Israel. When Israel dispossesses another nation, all places of worship to false gods must be utterly destroyed. The true God

must be worshipped in accordance with the instructions which He had given to Moses. God will choose and reveal the places, things, and practices that will honor and glorify Him. When they would finally inherit the Promised Land, then they would put into action all that He has commanded regarding sacrifices, tithes, burnt offerings, and all freewill offerings which they will give to Yahweh. God warns Israel not to be ensnared by the false gods of the nations they are dispossessing, but they must constantly and diligently guard against them. When these gods are identified, they must be destroyed. *Why did God prohibit Israel from worshipping Him in the same manner as other nations?*

**Deuteronomy 14**— God chose Israel as a people for Himself; a special treasure above all other nations on the face of the earth. God commands that they follow His explicit instructions in relation to the animals they are allowed to eat and the prohibition of eating other animals (vv. 1-21). The Lord gives various laws regarding tithing (vv. 22-29). *Name one or two reasons for God's prohibitions of certain foods?*

**Deuteronomy 15**— At that end of every seven years God commanded a release of debts. Every creditor is to cancel permanently any debt of money he has lent to his neighbor. This provision was not intended for foreigners or those who stayed in the land temporarily. There is a direct correlation between the generosity of His people and the abundance that God would give to them in the Promised Land. The slaves were to be released after six years. When they completed their service, the former owner would not only release them and set them free but also make provision for them so they could make a new start. If a slave did not want to leave his master, then he could become a slave for life (or bondslave) by piercing his ear with an awl. *As a follower of Jesus Christ, what should be our response to the poor? See verses 7 and 11. What can we do to keep irresponsible individuals from taking advantage of our generosity?*

**Deuteronomy 16**— Moses discusses the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks, the Feast of Tabernacles (Booths), and the administration of justice. The Passover lamb was sacrificed in the place God would choose to put His name. This was to be done so that Israel would always remember the day of their deliverance out of the land of Egypt (vv. 1-8). The Feast of Weeks was celebrated seven weeks after the Feast of Firstfruits (Number 23:9-14, barley harvest). It was also called the "Feast of Harvest" (Ex. 23:16) or the "day of firstfruits (wheat harvest)" (Leviticus 23:15-22). Eventually it would be known as "Pentecost" (Acts 2:1). This one-day festival began with a freewill offering and culminated with a time of rejoicing for God's people. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit came 50 days after the resurrection of Christ. The Feast of Tabernacles which is also called the "Feast of Ingathering" and the "Feast of Booths" (cf. Ex. 23:16; Lev. 23:33-43; Num. 29:12-39) lasted seven days.

Moses discusses the administration of justice and in particular the responsibilities of officials and their obligation to administer justice impartially. Moses appointed judges and officers. These judges adjudicated cases by applying the law. *Why was it, and is it important for both the Jews and Christians to celebrate special festivals and days?*

**Deuteronomy 17**— Moses begins this chapter by emphasizing God's displeasure with defective sacrifices. Offering a less than perfect sacrifice was an abomination. God always provides His best and expects that of His people. Local judges had to make sure that false worshippers were executed. Idolatry was dealt with swiftly and severely. Two or three witnesses were required to justify a guilty verdict. This was to ensure the validity of the charge brought against the accused (vv. 1-13). Moses anticipated a time when the people would ask for a king and gave explicit instruction concerning qualifications (vv. 14-20). *What were the four commands God gave to those who were anointed king (vv. 16-19)?*

**Deuteronomy 18**— Moses instructs that the Levitical priests and all the tribe of Levi will have no inheritance with Israel, but instead they will eat from the offerings of the LORD made by fire. In place of a land inheritance and as recognition of all their priestly functions, the priests were to live off of the offerings and gifts of God's people (vv. 1-8). Moses gives strict warnings not to imitate or do what the polytheistic Canaanites had done. Some of the abominations mentioned included the sacrificing of children in the fire, witchcraft, and being a medium. A medium was one who purported to communicate with the dead but actually was communicating with demons. These evil practices are why the Lord commanded that the Canaanites be driven out of the land (vv.9-14). Moses discusses the raising up of prophets by God in the future who will speak His commands to the people. False prophets will be exposed when what they have spoken on behalf of God does not come to pass. *What prophet do you think Moses was speaking about in verse 15? See Acts 3:20-23, 7:37, and John 1:21.*

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## Psalm 107, II Kings 7-12, Deuteronomy 19-24 (#83)

**Psalm 107** — This is a song which reminds us that God is faithful to forgive and rescue us when we falter. *This chapter describes different adversities that God allows us to endure, whether caused by our own choices or by circumstances we can't control. What did this adversity cause them to do? See verses 6, 13, 19, and 28. Have you ever had such an experience that you responded in the same way? If so, describe.*

**II Kings 7**— When the king's messengers came to Elisha to declare the king's anger over the famine because of the siege, Elisha prophesied that within a day the city of Samaria would be delivered from the King of Aram, and the siege would be over, and food would be readily available. The incredulous captain responded that it would be impossible for that to happen and paid for his disbelief with his life the next day. God used lepers to advise the city of Samaria the next morning that the army of Aram had fled and left food, supplies, and animals behind. "The Lord had caused the Aramean camp to hear the sound of chariots, horses, and a great army (v. 6a, HCSB)." When the good news was heard by the people, they rushed out of the gate to gather the spoils and trampled to death the captain of the guard in fulfillment of Elisha's prophecy. *The lepers said, "We're not doing right. This is a day of good news and we are keeping it to ourselves (v. 9a, NIV)." As Christians we have the eternal good news of the gospel to offer. Give the names of those God has put in your life who need to hear the good news of Christ. How do you plan to reach them?*

**II Kings 8**— Elisha warned the Shunammite women to leave Israel because of the seven year famine the Lord would send. Obeying the word of the Lord, she moved her family to the land of the Philistines and returned to Israel when the famine was over. The very moment she went into the king to appeal for the return of her house and land, Elisha's servant Gehazi was relating, upon the request of the king, the miracles of Elisha including the raising of her son from the dead. Because of this, all of her land was restored by the king (vv. 1-6). King Ben-hadad of Aram received word that Elisha had come to Damascus, and so he sent Hazael, the commander of his army, to ask if he would recover from his illness. Elisha wept when he revealed to Hazael that he would become the next king and would do horrible atrocities to Israel. The next day Hazael killed Ben-hadad and became king in his place (vv. 7-15). Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat, became king of Judah and was married to Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, and did great evil in Judah. When Joram of Israel died, Ahaziah his son took his place and continued to do evil. (vv. 16-29). *Upon reading the story of the Shunammite woman in this chapter, what spiritual lessons can be applied to our own lives?*

**II Kings 9**— Elisha commissioned one of the young prophets to go to Ramoth-gilead and anoint Jehu to be king, and commanded him to eliminate every one of Ahab's descendents because of his evil and to avenge the blood of the prophets (vv. 1-13). Having been wounded in a war with Hazael, the king of Aram, King Joram of Israel returned to the palace in Jezreel to recuperate. King Ahaziah of Judah, a grandson of Ahab, came down to visit Joram. Coming to Jezreel with a company of soldiers, Jehu killed both Joram and Ahaziah and took their bodies to the field of Naboth to fulfill the prophecy of Elijah (vv. 14-28). Upon arriving at the palace in Jezreel and seeing Jezebel in the window of the palace above, he commanded the officials that were with her to throw her down. Her death fulfilled the prophecy of Elijah, "On the plot of ground at Jezreel dogs will devour Jezebel's flesh (v. 36b, NIV)." *Thinking of the horrific death of Ahab's descendents, why is sin, disobedience, and idolatry so evil?*

**II Kings 10**— After the death of Joram, Ahaziah, and Jezebel, this chapter details the complete purge of every one of Ahab's descendents including sons, relatives, close friends, and all Baal worshipers. Motivated by the zeal of the Lord, Jehu begins by the elimination of the 70 sons of Ahab. Fearing the fierce wrath of Jehu, the rulers, elders, and guardians delivered the heads of the 70 sons to the entrance of the gate of Jezreel. Next, all the close friends and priests of Ahab and the relatives of Ahaziah were slaughtered by Jehu's men. Finally, all the prophets, worshipers, and priests of Baal were summoned to the temple of Baal where they were killed, and the idols and worship center were destroyed. Although he did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam, God promises Jehu that four generations of his sons would sit on the throne of Israel because of his zeal to completely eliminate the line of Ahab. *Verses 31-32 revealed that although Jehu carried out God's instructions about Ahab's line, he didn't turn away from the sins of Jeroboam which included the worship of the golden calves. What was the result of incomplete obedience in the life of Jehu? Stop right now and ask the Lord to reveal to you any area of incomplete obedience in your life. If anything comes to your mind, confess it and fully surrender it to God*

**II Kings 11**— In this very dark history of Judah, Athaliah, daughter of Ahab and Jezebel and mother of Ahaziah who was killed by Jehu, began to destroy all the royal heirs. Jehosheba, the sister of Ahaziah and wife of Jehoiada the chief priest, stole the infant son Joash, the only living descendent of David, and kept him hidden in the Temple for six years. At the age of seven, Jehoiada anointed Joash as king of Judah with the help of the Levites and the military (vv. 1-12). Hearing the rejoicing of the coronation of King Joash, the self-proclaimed Queen Athaliah hurried to the temple to investigate what was happening. She was seized by the commanders and taken outside and executed. After making a covenant between the Lord, King Joash, and the people, the temple of Baal was torn

down and King Joash took his rightful place on the throne.

*Upon the eradication of Ahab's family and Baal worship in Israel, Athaliah retaliated and killed all the descendents of King David (she thought). What does the Bible say about revenge for the Christian? See Matthew 5:38-48, Romans 12:17-21, and I Peter 3:8-9.*

**II Kings 12**— Joash became king, and reigned for 40 years, and did what was right in the sight of the Lord all the days of Jehoiada, the high priest, who instructed him. At the insistence of King Joash and the generosity of God's people, the great temple built by Solomon was repaired and restored. Sadly, upon the death of Jehoiada, King Joash listened to his officials and returned to the worship of idolatry. Then he ordered the death of Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada (see II Chronicles 24:17-25). Because of this evil, Hazael, king of Aram, came against Judah, and then Joash was assassinated. *What lesson is taught in verse 2? See also Proverbs 1:8, 12:15, 19:20. Are you accountable to a more mature Christian?*

**Deuteronomy 19**— Once the Israelites were living in the land that the Lord had promised to them, they were to set apart three cities of refuge. These cities were used as temporary places of refuge for those who had committed homicide until their individual cases could be adjudicated. This practice prevented the avengers of blood in their initial state of anger from prematurely executing a person who may have unintentionally caused the death of a victim. Eventually a trial would convene to determine whether the manslayer's actions were intentional or not. The matter could not be determined by the testimony of one witness. In homicide cases or any case concerning any wrongdoing a person may have committed, two or three witnesses were required. The Lord gave a law that acted as a safeguard against false witnesses because the punishment was so severe. Namely, a false witness would receive the same punishment that would have been meted out to the person he was accusing if that person had been found guilty. *What safeguards did God set up in Chapter 19 to protect the innocent?*

**Deuteronomy 20**— Despite the might of the enemy, when the Israelites went into battle they were never to fear for themselves personally or collectively. The command to be fearless was based on God's faithfulness and omnipotence. The most formidable opposition was no match when the Lord was on Israel's side, and she was fully obedient to Him. Yahweh had already proven Himself faithful to Israel against Egypt. In the case of the cities that

were distant from Israel and not a part of land that belonged to Israel's inheritance, God allowed those cities the chance to accept a peace offer from Israel. If a far city refused the peace offer and was defeated by Israel, all the men were killed, but the women and children were spared. *When Israel defeated a nation located in Canaan, God ordered that everyone be killed. Why was it different for the nations of Canaan than nations in distant lands? See verse 18.*

**Deuteronomy 21**— Moses discusses unsolved murders, female captives, firstborn inheritance rights, and the rebellious son. When the guilty party of a murder was unknown, and justice could not be served to the actual murderer, the people were held responsible to deal with the crime. The breaking of the neck of a heifer showed that the crime deserved to be punished (vv. 1-9). An Israelite conqueror who desired a female captive could take her home to be his wife. In this case however, unlike other nations, the Israelite had to allow one month for her to grieve the loss of her family. Shaving of her head, trimming of her nails, and removal of her clothes she wore as a captive was a show of kindness (vv. 10-14). Firstborn inheritance rights were set in stone. If a husband had two wives and both bore him sons, the designation of the firstborn would be determined by order of birth, not the preference of wives. The firstborn son of the man, whether from the favorite wife or not, was to receive the double portion of the inheritance. The father did not have the authority to transfer this right to another son. This did not apply to sons of a concubine (Gen. 21:9-13) or in cases of misconduct (Gen. 49:3, 4). *Explain the New Testament teaching that the Apostle Paul gave when he quoted verse 23 of this chapter. See Galatians 3:10-13.*

**Deuteronomy 22**— Moses discusses the law of loving your neighbor as applied to specific instances and relationships. For example, if you see your brother's ox going astray you will not ignore it, but rather intervene and return the ox to your brother. Moses discusses sexual immorality. If a husband accused his wife of having lied about her virginity, the father and mother of the woman would have the opportunity to provide evidence of her virginity to the elders of the city. If the elders agreed that the wife was a virgin, the husband would have to pay a penalty and would be prohibited from divorcing his wife. However, if she was found not to have been a virgin then her punishment was death. *The Old Testament law requires a man who rapes a virgin to marry her. Why force the victim of such a terrible crime to marry the perpetrator? #10 p. 30.*

**Deuteronomy 23**— Moses describes those who will be excluded from the congregation. This exclusion pertained to public offices, intermarriage, and participation in the religious rites at the tabernacle. The general rule was that strangers and foreigners were not allowed into the congregation until they were converted to God and to the Jewish faith. However, eunuchs, illegitimate children, Ammonites, and Moabites were excluded from entering the congregation. Eunuchs were forbidden because they were willfully mutilated which violated God's creation of man. These eunuchs probably refer to men who were made or made themselves eunuchs in the context of pagan worship. The illegitimate were excluded to discourage sexual immorality. People from Ammon and Moab were excluded on account of their hostility toward God and Israel. Note however, that individuals from all of these groups are offered and receive grace by Isaiah upon personal faith in the God of Israel (Is. 56:1-8). Ruth of Moab, King David's great-grandmother, is a wonderful example of God's grace (Ruth 1:4, 16). Other themes presented in the chapter are; fugitive slaves, cult prostitution, making interest on loans, keeping vows, and eating of the neighbor's crops. *Give what you think might be the basic purpose of God behind His commands concerning; (1) fugitive slaves, (2) cult prostitution, (3) interest on loans, (4) keeping vows, and (5) the eating of neighbor's crops. Give a reason (purpose) for each one.*

**Deuteronomy 24**— If a man finds some impurity in his wife besides adultery and legally divorces her, and then marries another man, and the new husband later dies or divorces her; then that wife could not go back to her first husband because this was detestable to the Lord (vv. 1-4). God also gives commands about the following; a man serving in the army that has a new bride (v. 5), loan security (v. 6, 10-13), kidnapping (v. 7), charity and generosity to the poor, foreigner, fatherless, and the widow (vv. 14-15, 17-22), and the principle that each person must be judged by their own actions (v. 16). *What did our Lord Jesus Christ and Paul teach about the subject of divorce? See Matt. 5:31-32; 19:4-9, and I Corinthians 7:10-15.*

Understanding the Bible c. 2000, Holman Publishers, Nashville, TN. 12. Homan Bible Handbook, c.1992, Homan Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN. 13. Moody Bible Commentary, c. 2014, Moody Publishers, Chicago, IL. 14. Life Essentials Study Bible, c. 2011, Holman Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN.

## Psalm 108, II Kings 13-18, Deuteronomy 25, 33 (#84)

**Psalm 108** — David recalls God's promises while asking for help against Israel's foes. *David feels like God has rejected Israel (vs. 11). What is his response? See verses 1-6, 12-13, also 7-9.*

**II Kings 13**— In 814 B.C. Jehoahaz, son of Jehu, became king and not only followed the sins of Jeroboam but also led Israel to worship the Asherah pole which was the Canaanite fertility goddess. Although at one time Jehoahaz sought the Lord's favor, and God heard him, yet because of his sin, the king of Aram continued to reduce the size of Israel's army until it numbered only 10,000 soldiers (vv. 1-9). In 798 B.C. Jehoash became king of Israel and continued to do evil as did all his predecessors. As Elisha was dying, King Jehoash went to see him and wept over him. Elisha revealed that Jehoash would have three victories over Aram, yet he could have had more had he struck the ground with his arrows more than three times when he was commanded to strike the ground by Elisha. One time when the body of a dead man touched the bones of Elisha, the man revived and stood up (vv. 10-21). After the death of Hazael, king of Aram, in fulfillment of the prophecy of Elisha, Jehoash defeated Ben-hadad three times and recovered some of the cities that had been lost (vv. 22-25). *Elisha becomes sick with an illness and dies. How would you answer those who say it is always the will of God to heal His children? See I Timothy 5:23, II Timothy 4:20, II Corinthians 12:7-9, and Galatians 4:13-15.*

**II Kings 14**— Amaziah became king of Judah and did what was right in the eyes of the Lord but not completely because he didn't take away the high places. After a victory over Edom in the Valley of Salt, Amaziah became overconfident and tried to pick a fight with King Jehoash of Israel but was soundly defeated by him. Jehoash not only captured Amaziah, but broke down part of the wall of Jerusalem and took gold and silver from the Lord's temple and the king's palace. Amaziah is assassinated and his son Azariah (also known as Uzziah) takes his place (vv. 1-22). In 793 B.C. Jeroboam, son of Jehoash, became king and gave Israel the greatest period of stability and territorial growth in the history of the Northern Kingdom. During his reign, Hosea and Amos were prophets who preached against materialism, self-centeredness, and oppression of the poor. Jonah was also a prophet at this time and foretold of the great land expansion of Israel and also reluctantly went to Nineveh to warn the Assyrians of God's judgment (vv. 23-29). *In this chapter, Amaziah became overconfident due to his victory over the Edomites and was soundly defeated by King Jehoash of Israel. Paul says that Christians should not think of themselves more highly than they ought to think but to think with sober judgment. How can we have an honest and accurate evaluation of ourselves? See Romans 12:3-8 and I Corinthians 4:7.*

**II Kings 15**— At 16 years of age Azariah (also called Uzziah), in 792 B.C., became king of Judah and did right in the sight of the Lord, but he didn't remove the high places. Towards the end of his reign he tried to offer incense in the temple which only a priest could do, was struck with leprosy, and ended his days quarantined in a separate house, and his son Jotham took his place (vv. 1-6 and II Chronicles 26:16-21). About the year 753 B.C., King Jeroboam II died, and his son Zechariah became king and fulfilled the promise of the Lord that four generations of Jehu's sons would sit on the throne of Israel. In the last 31 years of the history of the Northern Kingdom until the time that Assyria would carry them off into captivity, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah, and Hoshea become kings through assassinations, conspiracies, and power grabs (7-31). At the age of 25 in 750 B.C., Jotham becomes king of Judah in place of Azariah (Uzziah) and does what is right in the eyes of the Lord but not perfectly (vv. 32-38). *The assessment of both Azariah (Uzziah) and Jotham was that they did what was right in the Lord's sight but did not remove the high places. What were the high places, and why did they need to be removed?*

**II Kings 16**— In 735 B.C. Ahaz, the son of Jotham, became king and did great evil including; sacrificing his son on the altar of a pagan god, following the most detestable practices of the Canaanites, and satisfying the king of Assyria by building a new altar in the temple area. God comes in swift judgment, and Judah is defeated on every side, and the people of Judah are taken captive by Israel (II Chronicles 28). Instead of trusting and obeying the Lord (Isaiah 7:1-17), Ahaz seeks the help of Assyria to defend Judah against Aram and Israel. He takes silver and gold from the temple and the treasuries of the palace and sends it to Assyria. Becoming a vassal of Assyria, he does whatever is necessary to please the king of Assyria even to the point of forcing Uriah the priest to change the features of the temple. *The High Priest Uriah supported the king in changing the features of the temple including the altar, and did not oppose the king for his idolatry. Where are Christians tempted to compromise their beliefs and values today? Where are you most tempted?*

**II Kings 17**— The final king of Israel was Hoshea who did evil in the Lord's sight but not like the kings who preceded him. He became a vassal of Assyria and paid tribute money, but Hoshea had a conspiracy with the king

of Egypt against Assyria. Because of this, Israel was taken into captivity to Assyria, never again to become a nation (vv. 1-6). The next seventeen verses describe in detail why Israel was exiled including various types of idolatry, blatant disobedience to the Lord's commands, and the practicing of evil in every form imaginable (vv. 7-23). The Israelites were deported to the Assyrian empire, and many foreigners were sent to Israel to repopulate the land. Since the people who were sent to settle in Samaria and the cities of Israel did not fear the Lord, God sent lions among them. Upon hearing what was happening, the king of Assyria sent a priest back to Israel to teach these foreigners the requirements of Yahweh. Although the people feared the Lord, they also worshiped their own gods according to the customs of the nations from which they had come. The mixture of worshiping the Lord and idols continued on from generation to generation (vv. 24-41). *In four or five sentences give a synopsis of why Israel fell and was taken into captivity by Assyria. See verses 7-20.*

**II Kings 18**— Now II Kings records the history of the two best and most godly kings in Judah after David. These two kings are Hezekiah (chapters 18-20) and Josiah (chapters 22-23), who each follow the two most evil kings of Judah, Ahaz and Manasseh. Although he had not acted perfectly, Hezekiah trusted the Lord and tore down the high places and all the idols of Judah like no king has done since the time of Solomon, who had originally initiated the worship of false gods to please his wives. Because of his obedience and faithfulness, the Lord was with Hezekiah (715 B.C. to 686 B.C.), and he rebelled against Assyria and defeated the Philistines, their ancient enemy. Hezekiah was co-regent with his father Ahaz when he saw the deportation of the Israelites (722 B.C.) which must have motivated him to execute the reforms in Judah and seek the Lord (vv. 1-12). Although Hezekiah tried to appease the king of Assyria (Sennacherib) by sending him silver and gold, in 701 B.C. Sennacherib captured the fortified cities of Judah including Lachish and headed toward Jerusalem with his army of 185,000 soldiers to take it also. The Assyrian field commander, Rabshakeh, met with King Hezekiah's representatives outside the gate of Jerusalem. The message that Rabshakeh gave to Hezekiah is one of the most insolent and blasphemous recorded in the Holy Scriptures. First, Judah is rightly rebuked because of their trust in Egypt who is described as a splintered reed of a staff. Secondly, he wrongly accuses Hezekiah of offending Yahweh for tearing down the high places and the altars. God commanded Israel through Moses to centralize all worship in the temple in Jerusalem (vv. 13-37). *What was the reason that God allowed Assyria to deport the Israelites and take them into captivity? See verses 11-12. How does this apply to your life as a Christians? See Colossians 3:25, and I Corinthians 11:29-32.*

**Deuteronomy 25**— Yahweh is holy, just, and merciful, and so these attributes are reflected in the laws He gave to Moses. First he demands that a guilty party be punished, but that the punishment must fit the crime (vv. 1-3). Then Moses speaks to the marriage duty of a surviving brother to preserve the family line. The brother of a man

who died without children was to marry his widow so that his brother who died would have an heir (vv. 4-10). “Moses prohibits indecent methods of combat by either men or women (vv. 11-12).” #8 p332 The law requires that weights and measures be according to a standard in order for there to be fairness and equity (vv. 13-16). God demanded that the evil Amalekites be completely destroyed (vv. 17-19). Verse 4 says, “Do not muzzle an ox while it treads out grain (HCSB).” This verse shows God’s care for animals. What did Paul say was the broader application of this verse that we should apply in the context of the local church? I Corinthians 9:9-12 and I Timothy 5:17-18.

**Deuteronomy 33**— The final exhortation of Moses to God’s people was a list of the blessings to each of the tribes of Israel, except for Simeon. Some of the blessings include praises to God. The Law of Moses was given in kindness in order to shower temporal and eternal blessings to those who obey God. Moses prays for each tribe, emphasizing their strengths and prophesying their future blessings. *Of all of the tribes, Moses omits only Simeon in this chapter. What happened to the Simeonites? Did they cease to exist? See Genesis 49:5-7, Joshua 19:1-9 and 1 Chr. 4:24-43, Revelation 7:7).*

*Sources for summary and questions: 1. Serendipity Bible for Groups . c. 1988 Littleton, CO. 2. MacArthur Study Bible ESV. 1997 Thomas Nelson, Inc. 3. Life Application Bible HCSB c. 1988 Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. 4. The Complete Bible Companion c.2014 Barbour Publishing, Inc. Uhrichsville, OH. 5. ESV Study Bible c. 2008 Crossway Bibles, Wheaton, IL. 6. The World Bible Handbook, Lawrence Richards, Word Inc. Waco, TX. 7. The Quest Study Bible NIV, c. 1994 Zondervan Publishing & Christianity Today, Grand Rapids, MI & Wheaton, IL. 8. The Transformation Study Bible, c. 2009, David C. Cook. 9. Halley’s Bible Handbook, c. 2000, Zondervan Publishing, Grand Rapids, MI. 10. 500 Questions & Answers from the Bible, c. 2006, Barbour Publishing, Uhrichsville, OH. 11. Understanding the Bible c. 2000, Holman Publishers, Nashville, TN. 12. Homan Bible Handbook, c.1992, Homan Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN. 13. Moody Bible Commentary, c. 2014, Moody Publishers, Chicago, IL 14. Life Essentials Study Bible, c. 2011, Holman Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN.*