



Failure in Canaan 05

Judges are chosen to rule the people of Israel.

After Joshua died, the tribes of Israel continued to fight against the Canaanites (**Judges 1**), but they did not drive out all the people who had lived in the land. In addition, the tribes of Israel were also surrounded by other peoples who were not friendly.

At this time, the Israelites began to forget the promises they had made to the Lord while Joshua was still alive. Some of them worshiped the Canaanite gods, Baal, and Astarte, as well as idols of other gods from nearby lands.

The Lord was so angry that he let the surrounding nations raid Israel's lands and steal their crops and possessions (**Judges 2:6-15**).

When the people cried out for help, God felt sorry for them. Help came from special leaders known as judges. The judges sometimes settled legal cases (**Judges 4:4-5**), but most of them were more well known as military leaders chosen by God to lead the Israelites in battle against their enemies.

The lives of these judges are described in Judges chapters 3—16.

Samuel: Prophet, Priest, and Leader

Near the end of the period of the judges, a boy named Samuel was born to Hannah and Elkanah. (**1 Samuel 1**).

They took him to Shiloh, where he was dedicated to the Lord by the priest Eli. Samuel stayed with Eli in Shiloh and helped Eli serve the Lord. While Samuel was still very young (**1 Samuel 3**), the Lord chose him to be his special servant and he grew up to be the Lord's prophet (**1 Samuel 3:19; 4:1; 7:3-5**).

Samuel also served as a priest (**1 Samuel 7:9-10**) and was a leader in Israel all his life.

1 Samuel 7:15, *And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life.*

Because his time as Israel's leader immediately followed the period of judges, he is sometimes called the last of Israel's judges.

Kings and Kingdoms

When Samuel was getting old, the leaders of Israel's tribes asked him to choose a king to rule over them, because all the lands around them were ruled by kings. Samuel did not really like this idea.

1 Samuel 8:7, *And the Lord said to Samuel, "Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them."*



He believed that a king would not treat the people well (**1 Samuel 8:9-18**), and he thought that the people's request for a king showed their lack of trust in the Lord as their leader (**1 Samuel 10:17-19**).

But when Samuel prayed about the situation, the Lord told him to go ahead and give the people a king (**1 Samuel 8:1-22**).

This was a major change in the history of the Israelite people.

For a long time, they had been a loosely connected group of tribes with one God but separate leaders. Now, they were about to become a single nation made up of tribes united not only by one God, but also under a king.

The people of ancient Israel were ruled by kings.

Saul (about 1030 to 1010 B.C.)

David (1010 to 970 B.C.)

Zedekiah (597 to 587 B.C.)

Some of the kings were strong rulers who remained faithful to God. But other kings actually led the people away from worshiping God, made bad agreements with Israel's enemies, and treated the people cruelly and unfairly.

The history of the kings is told in **1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, and is retold in 1 and 2 Chronicles.**

Saul: Israel's First King

The period of the kings is divided into two main parts.

The first part is known as the time of the United Israelite Kingdom, when there was just one king for all the Israelite people and tribes.

Samuel chose Saul to be the first king of Israel 1 Samuel 9,10 and he was accepted by the tribal leaders because of his courage and military abilities **1 Samuel 11**.

He ruled for about twenty years and did much to bring the tribes together and to defeat some of Israel's enemies.

But Saul was also a troubled man who was unfaithful to God at times.

David Becomes Israel's King

While Saul was still king the Lord told Samuel to go to Bethlehem to find the next king. This turned out to be David, the youngest son of Jesse (**1 Samuel 16:1-13**).

David soon entered Saul's court as a special servant who played the harp to console the troubled king (**1 Samuel 16:14-23**). Another account of David's life shows him to be an amazingly brave soldier who trusted in the Lord.

David killed the giant Philistine Goliath (**1 Samuel 17:1-54**) and impressed the king so much that Saul made him a high officer in the army (**1 Samuel 18:5**).

Eventually, the king became suspicious of David and jealous of his military successes. Saul tried several times to have David killed but was never successful. Eventually, Saul committed suicide after being injured in battle against the Philistines (**1 Samuel 31:1-13**).



After Saul's death, there was a short period when the people of Israel were divided between loyalty to Saul's only living son, **Ishbosheth**, and to David, the powerful military leader.

David became king of the people of Judah at Hebron (**2 Samuel 2:4**). Then king of all of Israel after the murder of Saul's son (**2 Samuel 5:1-3**).

He then conquered the Jebusite city Jerusalem and made it the capital of the United Israelite Kingdom (**2 Samuel 5:6-12**).

He put the sacred chest on the hilltop where the temple would later be built (**2 Samuel 6:1-19**).

The prophet Nathan told David that God would dwell in the great temple in Jerusalem someday. But he said that David's son would build it, not David (**2 Samuel 7:1-17**).

One of greatest things David did was to defeat the Philistines in battle and took control of all the land east of the Jordan River and north of Damascus in Syria as far as the Euphrates River (**2 Samuel 8**).

Psalms and the books of the prophets describe David as a model king who had a close relationship with God.

In many ways, he became a symbol of new life for God's people and of God's rule in the world (**2 Samuel 23:5; Psalm 89:3-4; Isaiah 9:1-7; Jeremiah 33:14-26; Micah 5:2-5**).

However, David also had his faults.

Solomon: Israel's Wisest King

David's son, Solomon, became king after David died and ruled from about **970 to 931 B.C.**

Solomon was known as a wise man (**1 Kings 2:9; 3:12, 28; 4:29-34**), and he was in charge of building Israel's first temple in Jerusalem (**1 Kings 5-8**).

He expanded his father David's kingdom, built an enormous palace (**1 Kings 7:1-12**)

Solomon built many fortresses, established store cities, and made Israel a very rich country (**1 Kings 4:20-28**).

But in doing this he married foreign wives and allowed them to set up shrines and monuments to other gods (**1 Kings 11:1-13**), things which were certainly not pleasing to the Lord.

Solomon brought the idol worship into Israel and made the people to sin against God.

Divided Kingdom



When Solomon died around **922 B.C.**, his son **Rehoboam** became king. Shortly after that, the ten northern tribes rebelled against the king and formed their own kingdom. This period of Israel's history became known as the Divided Kingdom.

The tribes of **Judah and Benjamin** in the south became known as the **kingdom of Judah** (or the **southern kingdom**). The rest of the tribes to the north formed the **kingdom of Israel** (or the **northern kingdom**).

Each kingdom had its own king.

In Judah, the kings continued to be descendants of King David.

In Israel the tribal and military leaders had to fight to become king.

Sometimes a family would reign for a period of years, only to be defeated by an opponent who then ruled for a time.

The **capital of Judah** was still **Jerusalem** where the people of Judah continued to worship the Lord in the temple.

But in Israel, **King Jeroboam I** made a shrine in **Bethel** so that people could offer sacrifices there instead of going to the temple in Jerusalem (**1 Kings 12:25-33**).

Later, **Samaria** became the **capital city of Israel** (**1 Kings 16:24-29**).

Israel: The Northern Kingdom

In the northern kingdom of Israel, some rulers allowed the people to worship idols such as the Canaanite god Baal.

This practice was condemned by several the prophets who preached in Israel during this time. For example, the prophet **Elijah** spoke out against **King Ahab and his wife Queen Jezebel**, who openly encouraged the worship of Baal and supported Baal's prophets (**1 Kings 18:1—19:18**).

The practice of allowing the people to worship other gods led to Israel's downfall.

They fought civil wars with Judah and battled with neighbours like Syria and Moab.

Eventually, the Assyrians invaded Israel and attacked the **capital city of Samaria**. In **722 B.C.** the city was conquered and many of the Israelites were captured and taken away to Assyria as prisoners.

Others stayed in the area, lived with, and sometimes married the people the Assyrians brought in to settle the land.

The northern kingdom of Israel never regained its power as a nation.

Judah: The Southern Kingdom

Meanwhile, Judah in the south had its own problems. Though many of its kings, such as Hezekiah and especially Josiah, were faithful to God and followed the teachings of the Law of Moses (**2 Kings 18:1-8**), other kings, like Manasseh, did things to make the Lord angry (**2 Kings 21:1-18**).

Eventually Judah could no longer hold out against the attacks of its powerful neighbours.

The kingdom of Babylon finally invaded and destroyed Jerusalem and its temple in **587 B.C.** Many of the people of Judah were taken to Babylon as prisoners.

During the next fifty years this group of Israelites remained in Babylon and could not return to their own land.

This period of time is known as "the exile."

Prophets of Israel

Jonah	810-790 BC	2 Kings 13-14
Joel	790-760 BC	2 Kings 11-15
Amos	780-760 BC	2 Kings 14-15
Hosea	785-725 BC	2 Kings 15-18
Isaiah	750-695 BC	2 Kings 15-20
Micah	745-725 BC	2 Kings 15

Prophets of Judah

Nahum	660-630 BC	2 Kings 15-18
Zephaniah	630-620 BC	Isaiah 10

Habakkuk **620-610 BC** **2 Kings 23**
Jeremiah **628-588 BC** **2 Kings 22-25**

God kept sending prophets one after the other to get the attention of the people of God, but they refused to listen and deliberately disobeyed the voice of the Lord.

This can be easily summarised by the Prophecy spoken by God through the **Prophet Isaiah 30th Chapter**.

Isaiah 30:1-5, *“Woe to the rebellious children,” says the Lord, “Who take counsel, but not of Me, And who devise plans, but not of My Spirit, That they may add sin to sin; ² Who walk to go down to Egypt, And have not asked My advice, To strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, And to trust in the shadow of Egypt! ³ Therefore the strength of Pharaoh Shall be your shame, And trust in the shadow of Egypt Shall be your humiliation. ⁴ For his princes were at Zoan, And his ambassadors came to Hanes. ⁵ They were all ashamed of a people who could not benefit them, Or be help or benefit, But a shame and also a reproach.”*

The colloquial phrase denoting something failing or severely misbehaving is, “It’s going south”. Located to the south of Israel, the repeated biblical warning is not to return to go south or return to Egypt, a symbol of the old life of slavery from which God redeemed us.

But there are times when Christians DO “go south” in their returning to their old lifestyle.

The Bible calls this “rebellion”.

Because to have known God, embraced Him, and adhered for a time to His ways, and then in spite of that experience choose to return south to the old life, this is the very definition of rebellion.



You can only “rebel” against something you are intimately acquainted with.

How does God deal with people that “go south”?

What are the characteristics that define someone as being “rebellious” against God?

They “execute a plan, but not Mine, and make an alliance, but not of My Spirit”.

They exchange God’s ways for their own and enter a relationship with someone/something else.

Observation: The phrase “make an alliance” in v.1 in the Hebrew literally reads, “pours out a drink offering”. It’s the same wording found in **Exodus 24:8** describing Moses’ sprinkling of blood to confirm God’s covenant with Israel.

Why would an alliance with Egypt be particularly bad?

Old Testament Law specifically forbade Israel from making such alliances in general because God was to be their protection.

But because God brought them out of Egypt so that they would be His people and He would be their God – the very act of salvation – “Egypt” became a biblical teaching representing the old life. This is a picture of coming into a relationship with God, then forsaking that relationship to return to the old life one had been originally saved from.

When they saw themselves in danger and distress, they would not consult God. They would do things of their own heads, and not advise with God, though they had a ready and certain way of doing it by Urim or prophets.

They were so confident of the prudence of their own measures that they thought it needless to consult the oracle.

They could not confide in God. They did not think it enough to have God on their side, nor were they at all solicitous to make him their friend, but they strengthened themselves in the strength of Pharaoh.

The shadow of Egypt was the covering in which they wrapped themselves.

They were, in profession, God's children but, not trusting in Him. They were justly stigmatized as rebellious.

If we distrust God's providence, we do in effect withdraw ourselves from our allegiance.

What is the visible proof of spiritual rebellion?

V 2, Who walk to go down to Egypt, And have not asked My advice, To strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, And to trust in the shadow of Egypt!



To “take refuge” and “to seek shelter” in someone or something else other than God.

You come to believe there is something of greater comfort and protection than God.

How will God deal with rebellion?

V 3-4, Therefore the strength of Pharaoh Shall be your shame, And trust in the shadow of Egypt Shall be your humiliation. ⁴For his princes were at Zoan, And his ambassadors came to Hanes.

He will destroy the very thing the rebellious have trusted in so that they will plainly see – to their shame – the futility of their trust in something other than the One True God.

Placing a higher priority in something other than Christ always works until times of testing and trials, at which time the true strength/weakness of both our trust and the object of that trust is exposed.

Isaiah 30:6-7, The burden against the beasts of the South. Through a land of trouble and anguish, From which came the lioness and lion, The viper and fiery flying serpent, They will carry their riches on the backs of young donkeys, And their treasures on the humps of camels, To a people who shall not profit; ⁷For the Egyptians shall help in vain and to no purpose. Therefore I have called her Rahab-Hem-Shebeth.

Is this prophetic judgment literally against animals in the desert region between Israel and Egypt?

This is describing the delegation sent by Israel to Egypt, a caravan of donkeys and camels carrying wealth and riches to secure the alliance with Egypt. This is how political alliances of the day were made.

Why have they had to navigate such a harsh environment and dangerous obstacles to secure this alliance with Egypt?

It reflects both their present circumstances and their spiritual condition.

These things can only be truly overcome through a right relationship with God, yet they risk the same dangers in a futile gesture away from Him.

What is the meaning of God's calling Egypt by the name "Rahab"?

The word "Rahab" indicates ferocity, haughtiness, boasting, and audacity. All qualities closely associated with strength derived from pride.

In the original language this phrase most likely has the colloquial meaning, "***courageous in talking, cowardly in acting***" to describe how they LOOK like a source of strength but in reality, they are quite opposite.

The unspoken truth of our seeking comfort and protection is that we ourselves cannot provide it and must seek something greater that can.

Whether we seek it from God or another, it requires personal sacrifice and commitment on our part. Our deception is in believing that sacrifice to something other than God will provide that comfort and protection.

If we sit still in a day of distress, hoping and quietly waiting for the salvation of the Lord. Using only lawful regular methods for our own preservation, this will be the strength of our souls both for services and sufferings. This will engage divine strength for us.

We weaken ourselves, and provoke God to withdraw from us, when we make flesh our arm, for then our hearts depart from the Lord. When we have tired ourselves by seeking for help from creatures, we shall find it the best way of recruiting ourselves to repose in the Creator.

Isaiah 30:8-11, *Now go, write it before them on a tablet, And note it on a scroll, That it may be for time to come, Forever and ever: ⁹ That this is a rebellious people, Lying children, Children who will not hear the law of the Lord; ¹⁰ Who say to the seers, "Do not see," And to the prophets, "Do not prophesy to us right things; Speak to us smooth things, prophesy deceits. ¹¹ Get out of the way, Turn aside from the path, Cause the Holy One of Israel To cease from before us."*

What is the root cause that leads to rebellion, and to seek a replacement for God?

Complete and total rejection of God's Word in all forms.

They don't want to see it, hear it, or be in the presence of anyone that speaks of it.

What is it that they earnestly desire instead of God's Word?

"Speak to us pleasant words, prophesy illusions."

They no longer have a desire for the truth.

What is ironic about God's command in V8 as it relates to this condition?

They have rejected God's Word.

Yet God commands that this very rejection be written down just the same as all His Word. It will be a tool used on the other side of judgment for those that recover spiritually.

Rebellion is always accompanied and evidenced by a rejection of God's Word.

Therefore, alternate alliances are attempted, because they say the things those that reject God's Word want to hear in its place.

The prophets told them of their faults and warned them of their misery and danger by reason of sin, and they could not bear that.

The prophets stopped them in their sinful pursuits and stood in their way like the angel in Balaam's road, with the sword of God's wrath drawn in their hand.

So that they could not proceed without terror. They took that this as a great insult.

The prophets were continually telling them of the Holy One of Israel, what an enemy he is to sin and how severely he will reckon with sinners.

Isaiah 30:12-14, *Therefore thus says the Holy One of Israel: "Because you despise this word, And trust in oppression and perversity, And rely on them, ¹³ Therefore this iniquity shall be to you Like a breach ready to fall, A bulge in a high wall, Whose breaking comes suddenly, in an instant. ¹⁴ And He shall break it like the breaking of the potter's vessel, Which is broken in pieces; He shall not spare. So there shall not be found among its fragments A shard to take fire from the hearth, Or to take water from the cistern."*

In the context of rebellion, how does God summarise it in V 12?

They have rejected His Word.

This was the primary mechanism by which they were then able to transfer their reliance on God to a false substitute.

Although false believers, false teachers, false groups, or false spiritual movements go on for a time, that when their collapse occurs it seems sudden and irrecoverable.

It's exactly like that in V 13-14.

Slowly bulging outward until it results in total destruction.

What does the sherd represent?

It would be a surviving part of the pot that was big enough to still be usable to some degree, either to remove a coal from a fire or enough water to drink.

How vain it is to trust in something other than God because there is not even a marginal value in it. It is having absolutely no redeeming value whatsoever.

Rebellion is like all other addictive behaviours it takes a traumatic, rock-bottom experience to get the person to realize the true nature of their misplaced confidence.

The ruin they would hereby bring upon themselves should be,

a) A surprising ruin:

The breaking shall come suddenly, at an instant, when they do not expect it, which will make it the more frightful. When they are not prepared or provided for it, which will make it the more fatal.

b) An utter ruin, universal and irreparable:

Isaiah 29:16, *Surely you have things turned around! Shall the potter be esteemed as the clay; For shall the thing made say of him who made it, "He did not make me"? Or shall the thing formed say of him who formed it, "He has no understanding"?*

But broken to pieces as the potter's vessel.
He that has the rod of iron shall break it.

Psalms. 2:9, *You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.' "*

God shall not spare, shall not have any regard to it, nor be in care to preserve or keep whole any part of it.

But, when once it is broken so as to be unfit for use, let it be dashed, let it be crushed, all to pieces. So that there may not remain one sherd big enough to take up a little fire or water'-two things we have daily need of, and which poor people commonly fetch in a piece of a broken pitcher.

As a broken mug or glass, which is good for nothing, nor can ever be made whole again.

Isaiah 30:15-17, *For thus says the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel: "In returning and rest you shall be saved; In quietness and confidence shall be your strength." But you would not,¹⁶ And you said, "No, for we will flee on horses"— Therefore you shall flee! And, "We will ride on swift horses"—*

Therefore those who pursue you shall be swift! ¹⁷ One thousand shall flee at the threat of one, At the threat of five you shall flee, Till you are left as a pole on top of a mountain And as a banner on a hill.

What is the HUGE contrast between what God states in V15 as the right way to deal with their problems, versus their rebellious choice to pursue a futile alternative in V6-7?

To seek an alternate alliance, they had to gather together riches, form a delegation, and make it overcome the tremendous challenges and dangers of the desert it had to cross. It was a far greater effort they had to expend in rebellion than if they would put the same effort into reconciliation. Rebellions consumes, obedience produces.

How might V16 sound like a familiar, recurring biblical teaching in both Testaments?

It's a variation of "*you reap what you sow*" or "by your measure of judgment so you will be judged".

The consequences of sin are inevitable.

What is the meaning that in the end they will be like "a flag on a mountain top and as a signal on a hill"?

This is how "mass communication" worked in ancient times, signalling from one hill to the next by flags. It's a way of stating that God will make an example of them as a very visible warning to everyone else.

It is sadly ironic that it takes more time and energy and resources to engage in rebellious behaviour than to stay put and be spiritually reconciled.

The resulting lesson learned at one's personal expense will be a very public warning to everyone else about them.

Isaiah 30:18-22, *Therefore the Lord will wait, that He may be gracious to you; And therefore He will be exalted, that He may have mercy on you. For the Lord is a God of justice; Blessed are all those who wait for Him. ¹⁹ For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem; You shall weep no more. He will be very gracious to you at the sound of your cry; When He hears it, He will answer you. ²⁰ And though the Lord gives you The bread of adversity and the water of affliction, Yet your teachers will not be moved into a corner anymore, But your eyes shall see your teachers. ²¹ Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," Whenever you turn to the right hand Or whenever you turn to the left. ²² You will also defile the covering of your images of silver, And the ornament of your moulded images of gold. You will throw them away as an unclean thing; You will say to them, "Get away!"*

How does V 18 summarize God's point of view about rebellion?

He desires to show His grace and mercy.

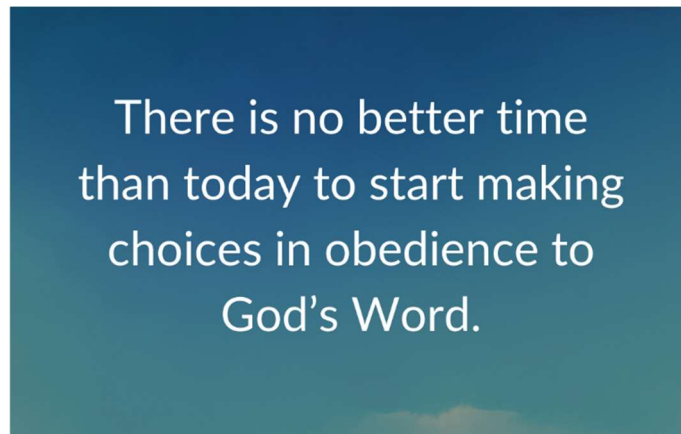
Therefore, this process of God's justice is necessary to shatter the rebellious to bring them back to Him. It is contrasted by those that never engage in rebellion, who experience the blessings of never longing for anyone else except Him alone and therefore don't have to undergo this experience.

How do the remedies of V 19-22 speak to the original causes of rebellion?

The core problem that led to all subsequent problems was derived from rejecting God's Word, from wanting to only hear what was pleasing to their own ear.

The initial steps of God's healing all involve coming back to His Word, of embracing it personally more than ever before.

The cure for disobedience is ALWAYS obedience.



What is the visible proof of a restored relationship?

Destroying and removing everything that acted even in the slightest as a substitute for Him.

You won't just put those things away in a closet lest you return to them someday but will destroy them so that they will never be used or returned to again.

Every true spiritual revival in the history of the church has been accompanied by a revival of commitment to His Word.

True repentance must be accompanied by a true commitment to God's Word to change one's behaviour permanently and irrevocably.

Isaiah 30:23-26, *Then He will give the rain for your seed With which you sow the ground, And bread of the increase of the earth; It will be fat and plentiful. In that day your cattle will feed In large pastures. ²⁴ Likewise the oxen and the young donkeys that work the ground Will eat cured fodder,*

Which has been winnowed with the shovel and fan. ²⁵ There will be on every high mountain And on every high hill Rivers and streams of waters, In the day of the great slaughter, When the towers fall. ²⁶ Moreover the light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, And the light of the sun will be sevenfold, As the light of seven days, In the day that the Lord binds up the bruise of His people And heals the stroke of their wound.

How are these verses a contrast to their original efforts described in V6-7?

Whereas they were ready to give up their personal prosperity for the comfort and protection of another, their reconciliation of comfort and protection in God MULTIPLIES their prosperity.

Is this effect of prosperity limited to physical comforts?

No.

These are all parallel references to spiritual blessings as well in the biblical use of such things as seed, bread, pasture, winnowed grain, water, light, etc.

The promise here is that there are far greater spiritual blessings to be enjoyed by a right relationship with God than even physical blessings can afford.

Even at their momentary best, a substitute for God could only provide a very temporary benefit and could never provide the spiritual assurance we need both for this life and the next.

Conclusion:

Even today God is speaking to you to return to Him!

You may not have physical idol but what idol you have in your heart?

God is long suffering and patience but there is a time limit for everything.

For Israel it was closer 250 years.

For Judah it was close to 125 years.

You don't know how long it is for you?

Will you repent and come closer to Him and surrender your life??

We **repent**
enough to be
forgiven,
but do we
surrender
enough to be
changed?