**Planning to Grow**

**God’s Plan in the Historical Books**

**I. Definition of the Historical Books**

**2 Samuel 23:8** - *These are the names of the mighty men whom David had: Josheb-basshebeth a Tahchemonite; he was chief of the three. He wielded his spear against eight hundred whom he killed at one time.*

**II. Themes in the Historical Books**

A. Focusing on the Lord brings blessing while forgetting the Lord brings ruin

#1 City of Ai and the importance of holiness in Holy War

**Joshua 7:2-5** - *Now Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is near Beth-aven, east of Bethel, and said to them, “Go up and spy out the land.” So the men went up and spied out Ai. They returned to Joshua and said to him, “Do not let all the people go up; only about two or three thousand men need go up to Ai; do not make all the people toil up there, for they are few.” So about three thousand men from the people went up there, but they fled from the men of Ai. The men of Ai struck down about thirty-six of their men, and pursued them from the gate as far as Shebarim and struck them down on the descent, so the hearts of the people melted and became as water.*

**Joshua 8:3** - *So Joshua rose with all the people of war to go up to Ai; and Joshua chose 30,000 men, valiant warriors, and sent them out at night.*

**Joshua 8:18, 26** - *Then the Lord said to Joshua, “Stretch out the javelin that is in your hand toward Ai, for I will give it into your hand.” So Joshua stretched out the javelin that was in his hand toward the city…For Joshua did not withdraw his hand with which he stretched out the javelin until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai.*

#2 Judges Generations and the Northern Kings

**Judges 2:10** - *All that generation also were gathered to their fathers; and there arose another generation after them who did not know the Lord, nor yet the work which He had done for Israel.*

**1 Kings 12:25-32** - *Jeroboam built up Shechem in the Ephraimite hill country and lived there. From there he went out and built up Penuel. Jeroboam then thought to himself: “Now the Davidic dynasty could regain the kingdom. If these people go up to offer sacrifices in the Lord’s temple in Jerusalem, their loyalty could shift to their former master, King Rehoboam of Judah. They might kill me and return to King Rehoboam of Judah.” After the king had consulted with his advisers, he made two golden calves. Then he said to the people, “It is too much trouble for you to go up to Jerusalem. Look, Israel, here are your gods who brought you up from the land of Egypt.” He put one in Bethel and the other in Dan. This caused Israel to sin; the people went to Bethel and Dan to worship the calves. He built temples on the high places and appointed as priests people who were not Levites. Jeroboam inaugurated a festival on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, like the festival celebrated in Judah. On the altar in Bethel he offered sacrifices to the calves he had made. In Bethel he also appointed priests for the high places he had made.*

B. A Fully Human Ruler/King Can Never Fully Satisfy the needs of the people

**Deuteronomy 17:14-20** - *When you come to the land the Lord your God is giving you and take it over and live in it and then say, “I will select a king like all the nations surrounding me,” you must select without fail a king whom the Lord your God chooses. From among your fellow citizens you must appoint a king—you may not designate a foreigner who is not one of your fellow Israelites. Moreover, he must not accumulate horses for himself or allow the people to return to Egypt to do so, for the Lord has said you must never again return that way. Furthermore, he must not marry many wives lest his affections turn aside, and he must not accumulate much silver and gold. When he sits on his royal throne he must make a copy of this law on a scroll given to him by the Levitical priests. It must be with him constantly and he must read it as long as he lives, so that he may learn to revere the Lord his God and observe all the words of this law and these statutes and carry them out. Then he will not exalt himself above his fellow citizens or turn from the commandments to the right or left, and he and his descendants will enjoy many years ruling over his kingdom in Israel.*

C. God is active in the midst of our chaos to move His plan toward completion

**2 Samuel 7:8-16** - *“So now, say this to my servant David: ‘This is what the Lord of hosts says: I took you from the pasture and from your work as a shepherd to make you leader of my people Israel. I was with you wherever you went, and I defeated all your enemies before you. Now I will make you as famous as the great men of the earth. I will establish a place for my people Israel and settle them there; they will live there and not be disturbed any more. Violent men will not oppress them again, as they did in the beginning and during the time when I appointed judges to lead my people Israel. Instead, I will give you relief from all your enemies. The Lord declares to you that he himself will build a dynastic house for you. When the time comes for you to die, I will raise up your descendant, one of your own sons, to succeed you, and I will establish his kingdom. He will build a house for my name, and I will make his dynasty permanent. I will become his father and he will become my son. When he sins, I will correct him with the rod of men and with wounds inflicted by human beings. But my loyal love will not be removed from him as I removed it from Saul, whom I removed from before youYour house and your kingdom will stand before me permanently; your dynasty will be permanent.’ ”*

**III. How do the Historical Books Point to Christ?**

A. Jesus is the perfect King

B. Jesus is the one who establishes a perfect, never ending kingdom

**Matthew 1:1** - *This is the record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.*

Take Aways

1. Skim read Joshua – 2 Kings.

2. Invest in the kingdom that Jesus builds.

3. Rejoice in God’s plan and in God’s power which enables him to keep his plan even among human failure.