

## Lesson for January 18, 2009

### Old Testament Survey

#### II Kings and I Chronicles (931 B.C. to 586 B.C.)

At the end of the reign of Solomon, the kingdom, which had been united under David and had continued to be united under Solomon, began to split. Shortly after the death of Solomon, because he allowed paganism to infiltrate the nation, a division occurred. Israel was split into two kingdoms. The Northern kingdom was comprised of ten tribes and the Southern kingdom the remaining two tribes (Judah and Benjamin).

The Northern kingdom was referred to as Israel and the Southern kingdom as Judah. The Southern kingdom continued to be ruled by the Davidic line with its capital in Jerusalem. The Northern kingdom made Jeroboam their king with its capital in Samaria. As you can imagine, the strife between these two kingdoms was ongoing as both vied for power in the region. Both kingdoms were eventually destroyed by the Assyrian army; the Northern kingdom in 722 B.C. and the Southern kingdom in 586 B.C. The majority of problems that the nation of Israel faced were self-imposed because of their idolatrous relationship with other nations. This is the reason that God had given them specific instructions, first in the Law of Moses and later in the Davidic covenant to “have no other God before Him.”

Most of the kings of Israel defied God and His Word and either worshipped idols or allowed the practice of idol-worship to exist within the nation. There were only a handful of kings in Israel that would be considered “good.” They were as follows: Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joash, Amaziah, Uzziah, Jotham, Hezekiah and Josiah. The remaining kings would be considered evil and idolatrous. When a client nation to God turns its back on God and His mandates, the end result is always destruction in some form. Such was the case for the nation of Israel, though it was restored several times in history and will be again in the future.

During this time period two great prophets of God arose, which we must consider in our study. The first is Elijah and the second is his student and successor, Elisha. Elijah, which means God is Jehovah, was one of the greatest prophets in the Bible. Elijah was a great man of faith, but suffered (as we all do) a few lapses in his faith on occasion. He was, however, bold before kings, even rebuking them in the name of the Lord for their sinful practices. Elijah is honored throughout the Scriptures as a follower of God and a man of faith. (Matthew 17:2) He was eventually translated into Heaven by a chariot of fire and never experienced a natural death. (II Kings 2:1-11)

Elisha, which means God is Savior, was also a great prophet in Israel and followed in the footsteps of Elijah. When Elijah was translated to Heaven he left behind his mantle (cloak), which was a sign of his supernatural power (by means of the Holy Spirit). Elisha was trained by Elijah and was given double the divine power. With this power of the Holy Spirit, Elisha performed even more miracles than his mentor Elijah. Though different in personality and style, these two men carried out the instructions of God when the nation of Israel was in jeopardy of being severely disciplined by God. The death of Elisha was ordinary as compared to Elijah's dramatic translation. In the Old Testament, spiritual gifts as we know them in the Church Age did not exist. "Prophet" was an office, though it was carried out under the empowerment (endowment) of the Holy Spirit.

Every believer in Jesus Christ during the Church Age receives at least one spiritual gift (some have multiple gifts) at salvation. A spiritual gift is a specific ability given by God the Holy Spirit to the believer. The word for gift in Greek is "charisma" and means "grace gift". Therefore, spiritual gifts are not earned or deserved. These gifts are divinely bestowed by the Holy Spirit in grace to those *He* chooses. The purpose for spiritual gifts, as stated in Scripture, is for the function of the body of Christ in the local church. (Romans 12:4-6; I Corinthians 12:11-31) Within the category of spiritual gifts there are permanent and temporary gifts. Permanent gifts were first given to believers in the early Church and will continue to be operational until the end of the Church Age, which ends at the Rapture. Spiritual gifts are a great blessing from God for the local church. Without the function of these gifts in the local body, the church could not properly operate. Each of us has at least one spiritual gift and it is up to us to discover those gifts and use them. The discovery of our gift may come from recognition from a person in authority in the local church, such as the pastor or a deacon. Temporary gifts were also given to believers in the early Church, but were foundational for the establishment of the Church and are no longer operational.

#### Temporary Spiritual Gifts (I Corinthians 13:8-10; Hebrews 2:1-4)

Temporary spiritual gifts were foundational as the early Church was being formed. The purpose of gifts at that time was to confirm the spoken word of the apostles and disciples of the Lord. Some of these gifts were for the detection of heresy in the Church, which was rampant in the first century Church. Some gifts were given to evangelize the lost in their own language. When these known languages were spoken in the local church an interpreter was always required in order that the entire congregation could be taught. There were also temporary gifts that established the apostles' authority over all churches. And finally, there were certain gifts given to men for the teaching of doctrine not yet a part of the canon of Scripture.

### Communication Gifts

- 1) Apostleship – Established the apostle's authority over several churches. (I Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11)
- 2) Prophecy – Forthtelling or foretelling events not yet recorded in the canon of Scripture and teaching Bible doctrine. (Romans 12:6; I Corinthians 12:10, 28; Ephesians 4:11)

### Sign Gifts

- 1) Tongues – The ability to speak a known language not previously learned. (I Corinthians 12:10, 28)
- 2) Interpretation of Tongues – The ability to translate the unknown language into the common language spoken in the church. (I Corinthians 12:10)
- 3) Healing – The ability to heal at will regardless of the person's faith or lack of faith who was being healed. (I Corinthians 12:9, 28)
- 4) Miracles – The ability to perform miracles at will. (I Corinthians 12:10, 28)
- 5) Faith – A companion gift to healing and miracles involving the faith of the person with the gift, not the one receiving the miracle or healing. (I Corinthians 13:2)
- 6) Discerning of Spirits – The ability to detect heresy in the church. (I Corinthians 12:10)
- 7) Knowledge – Knowing Bible doctrine not yet in the canon of Scripture. (I Corinthians 13:2, 8)

### Permanent Spiritual Gifts

(Romans 12; I Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4)

Permanent spiritual gifts were given to the early church and continue to be operational throughout the Church Age in which we live. The purpose for these gifts, as stated in Scripture, is for the teaching of the believer, the edification of the believer and for divine production by the believer. Every spiritual need of the believer in this age is met by the function of one or more of these spiritual gifts.

### Communication Gifts

- 1) Pastor-Teacher – The ability to study, learn and teach Bible doctrine accurately in a systematic way because of his interest in the congregation understanding truth and growing spiritually. He also shepherds the local church, which means he protects them against apostasy and heresy through accurate interpretation and teaching. (Ephesians 4:11)

- 2) Evangelist – The ability to communicate the Gospel clearly and effectively for the main purpose of leading people to Christ. The evangelist is normally involved in outreach ministries and missionary activities. They normally have a charismatic and dynamic personality. (Ephesians 4:11)
- 3) Exhortation – The ability to stir people to action and encourage others with sound Scriptural advice. (Romans 12:8)
- 4) Teaching – The ability to study and teach systematically the truth of Bible doctrine as learned under their right pastor-teacher. This person will be a good educator. (Romans 12:7; I Corinthians 12:28)

#### Organizational Gifts

- 1) Word of Knowledge – The ability to study and categorize the truth of Bible doctrine and answer related questions. (I Corinthians 12:8)
- 2) Word of Wisdom – the ability to make proper application of Bible doctrine in a practical way. (I Corinthians 12:8)
- 3) Faith – The ability to have a vision for the advance of the local church. This person is optimistic about the future and trusts God in every situation. (I Corinthians 12:9)
- 4) Discernment – The ability to see clearly a course of action for the local church. This person asks the right questions, is a good listener and can see through the confusion in order to come up with the proper solution to any problem. (I Corinthians 12:10)

#### Service Gifts

- 1) Administration, ruling, governments – An organized person that has the ability to manage people, programs, finances, set up systems and delegate responsibilities. (I Corinthians 12:28; Romans 12:8)
- 2) Helps – The ability to serve behind the scenes without recognition. They are flexible and adaptable. They will do whatever needs to be done without complaint. (I Corinthians 12:28)
- 3) Giving – The ability to give above and beyond what the average believer is able to give. They are good with finances and know how money is spent and used for the good of the local church body. They are wise stewards of what God gives them. (Romans 12:8)
- 4) Ministering – The ability to render service to the physical needs of others, such as helping the poor with food, clothing, etc. (Romans 12:7)
- 5) Showing Mercy – The ability to empathize with the needs of others. They are sensitive, caring and concerned about the needs of others. They strive to reduce the pain of others and make good hospital visitors. (Romans 12:8)

