

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES: GAINING DIRECTION OUT OF THE AIMLESSNESS OF APOSTASY
Part I: Gaining Direction From God's Work In Our History From Furthest Antiquity, 1 Chronicles 1-9
B. Gaining Direction From Noting God's INTERACTION With Past Groups In The Faith, 1 Chronicles 4-8
11. Gaining Direction By Noting God's Work With The Tribe Of Ephraim
(1 Chronicles 7:20-29)

I. Introduction

- A. It is a very painful experience to face abuse from the ungodly as we are in sin and God is not aiding us.
- B. However, God's deliverance and victory over us awaits us if we but repent and trust and heed Him, a fact dramatically illustrated in the history of the tribe of Ephraim (as follows):

II. Gaining Direction By Noting God's Work With The Tribe Of Ephraim, 1 Chronicles 7:20-29.

- A. The 1 Chronicles 7:20-29 genealogy of Israel's tribe of Ephraim initially reveals a tragic loss that occurred to two of Ephraim's sons at the hands of Philistines due to their sinful way of seeking gain, 7:20-23:
 - 1. Ephraim's sons, Ezer and Elead were slain by some Philistines from Gath in retaliation for going down into the area of Gath to try to raid Philistine livestock, 1 Chronicles 7:21; Z. P. E. B., v. Two, p. 269.
 - 2. Ephraim deeply grieved over this event, for it was unjust for his sons to lose their lives for raiding livestock; yet, he was powerless to gain justice due to the strength of the Philistines. Thus, he named another son he fathered, Beriah, a negative term recalling this loss to his clan, 1 Chronicles 7:22-23.
- B. In response, Ephraim's daughter tried to achieve some gain and protection against the Philistines:
 - 1. Sherah, daughter of Ephraim and sister of his slain sons, founded the three cities of upper and lower Beth-horon and Uzen-sherah in Canaan during Israel's stay in Egypt, 1 Chr. 7:24; B.K.C., O.T., p. 600.
 - 2. These three highly fortified towns were located at the sharply descending, east-west Valley of Aijalon that "dominated one of the most historic roads in history", Int'l. Stand. Bible Ency., (1937) v. I, p. 446.
 - 3. Sherah thus tried to make secure financial gain in controlling the trade the Philistines of the lowlands had with people of the East, gain her brothers had vainly sought through their sin and tragic deaths!
- C. Yet, due to faith in God and obedience to His Word, a later descendant of Ephraim, Joshua, the son of Nun, and head of the tribe of Ephraim in his day, was mightily aided by God to defeat these Gentile foes:
 - 1. 1 Chronicles 7:27 ends the genealogy of Ephraim with "Jehoshua," the son of "Non". This is "Joshua" the son of "Nun" who became Israel's leader after Moses' death, Ibid., Bib. Kno. Com., O. T.; Jos. 1:1.
 - 2. Now, when Joshua did not seek God's aid, he was tricked into an alliance with Gibeon, Jos. 9:1-14.
 - 3. Though he knew the Gibeonites were Gentiles that God had wanted Israel to destroy (Deut. 7:1-2), as Joshua had sworn in God's name to protect them, and Ex. 20:7 called him to keep this oath, he made the Gibeonites Israel's slaves and did not retaliate against their ruse by killing them, Jos. 9:15-18, 27.
 - 4. Five other Canaanite kings then learned of Gibeon's treaty with Israel, so they laid siege to Gibeon, Jos. 10:1-5. Gibeon asked Israel to come to its aid, and Joshua honored his oath by doing so, Jos. 10:6-7.
 - 5. As Joshua **obeyed God** on this matter, He gave him **great victory** over his **tribe's historic failures**:
 - a. Joshua's foes fled down the Valley of Aijalon, past the same cities initially founded by his ancient tribal ancestress, Sherah in response to the unfair slaying of her brothers, Jos. 10:10f; 1 Chr. 7:20ff.
 - b. God caused more foes to die by hail than Joshua slew, and at his request, did the **unprecedented** to keep the **sun** and **moon** still for a whole day so he and Israel could **WIN**, Jos. 10:11-14; 1 Chr. 7:24!
 - c. Joshua then performed an edifying ritual to show Israel God would bless her as she heeded Him, Jos.10:15-27: (1) Joshua had Israel's leaders put their feet on the necks of the captured enemy kings to show God would give Israel victory over her foes if she heeded Him, Joshua 10:24-25. (2) Then, Joshua killed and disgraced these kings, hanging their bodies on trees until evening, Jos. 10:26-27.
 - 6. This victory led to God's helping Joshua route **all** of Israel's Gentile foes in the **area**, including Gaza, a **Philistine** city 25 miles **beyond Gath**, the city from which men had long before unjustly slain his tribal ancestors, Ezer and Elead, Jos. 10:28-40, 41-42; 1 Chron. 7:21; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, map 4!

Lesson: *For overcoming sinful failure by turning to heed the Lord, God gave the tribe of Ephraim victory over its Gentile foes where it had once known only tragic, painful defeat for its sin!*

Application: *May we repent of sin that has led to the withholding of God's blessing before great, unjust foes, and trust and heed God that He might turn our past failures before them into great triumph!*