

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

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12. Gaining Direction By Noting God's Work With The Tribe Of Asher (1 Chronicles 7:30-40 et al.)

I. Introduction

- A. In an era when spiritual darkness abounds in the world's and Christendom's **groups**, it is easy to become discouraged from living fervently for the Lord and His truth on the **individual** basis!
- B. However, the history of Israel's tribe of Asher reveals how valuable it is to stay spiritually fervent and faithful to the Lord as **INDIVIDUALS** regardless **what** spiritual failure occurs in the **MAJORITY**:

II. Gaining Direction By Noting God's Work With The Tribe Of Asher, 1 Chronicles 7:30-40 et al.

- A. The chronology of Israel's tribe of Asher given in 1 Chronicles 7:30-40 mentions no key personality, but notes a typical achievement, that some in the tribe were mighty men of valor, 1 Chron. 7:40 (cf. 7:7, 11).
- B. Indeed, though Asher inherited "the fertile . . . coastline North of Mount Carmel to the North of Sidon, and eastward to the western slopes of the Galilaean hills (Jos. 19:24-31, 34)", it lacked obedience to God as seen in its failure to overcome its pagan inhabitants, Judges 1:31-32; 2:1-3; Z.P.E.B., vol. One, p. 354.
- C. For this reason, no significant male leader in Scripture came from Asher, it did not control its coast cities, its name is missing in some lists in David's reign and Solomon gave some of its cities to Tyre, Ibid.
- D. However, in Scripture there appeared a significant woman from the tribe of Asher as "the only Asherite of any significance was the prophetess Anna who praised God at the presentation of Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2:36)," Ibid. We thus view Anna's life in contrast to her tribe of Asher for insight on this fact:
 - 1. Though the tribe of Asher as a whole made a league with the godless Canaanites in their land, the woman Anna of Asher held to separation from sinners for decades:
 - a. The tribe of Asher historically made leagues with the godless Canaanites of their land, so the Lord refused to help them drive these oppressors out of their land, Judges 1:31-32; 2:1-2.
 - b. In great contrast, the woman Anna of the tribe of Asher maintained great separation from sinners, and that for sixty years: (1) Anna had lived with her husband for seven years from the time she had first wed him until he had died, Luke 2:36. (2) As most women wed in their mid-teens in that day, she had been widowed by her early twenties! (3) That widowhood revealed her husband had been disobedient to God, for, under the Mosaic Law, such a short life span indicated God had judged him for sin, cf. Exodus 20:12! (4) However, Anna herself had not slipped into spiritual bitterness or faithlessness in God just because she had been widowed at such an early age due to the sinful failure of her husband; rather, she spent the next sixty years living separate from sinners and from a sinful life, being accordingly blessed by God with great longevity, Luke 2:36b, 37a with Psalm 34:12-16!
 - 2. Though the tribe of Asher as a whole failed to stand against false beliefs of the Canaanites (Judges 1:32; 2:1-2), the woman Anna of Asher was deeply devoted to God's truth for sixty years (Luke 2:37b):
 - a. The tribe of Asher historically had tolerated the errant beliefs of the godless Canaanites in their land, so the Lord had refused to help them drive out these oppressors from the land, Jud. 1:32; 2:1-2.
 - b. In sharp contrast, Anna of Asher for sixty years had stayed at God's temple, serving Him with fastings and prayers in faithful fervency, and God had used her as a prophetess, Luke 2:37b, 36a!
 - 3. Hence, the tribe of Asher as a whole failed to be blessed by God with any significant blessing where the woman Anna of Asher gained God's blessing of living long decades in rich worship and prophetic service to God until she saw Him fulfill His promise of bringing Messiah to Israel, Jud. 2:3; Luke 2:38!
 - 4. Indeed, Anna was given the **special blessing** of **heralding Messiah's arrival to Jerusalem**; she spoke of the infant Messiah Jesus to all in Jerusalem who looked for God's messianic redemption, Luke 2:38!

Lesson: *Though the tribe of Asher as a whole failed to separate from sinners and error only to miss God's blessing, the woman, Anna of that same tribe individually gained God's blessing by separating from sinners and error to worship and serve God faithfully and fervently!*

Application: *May we not be discouraged from living godly lives by the spiritual failure of the group around us, but individually trust and obey the Lord for personal blessings He so richly provides!*