

**TOUGH QUESTIONS FOR GOD**  
**MAJOR THEMES OF THE BIBLE**  
**JOSHUA – ESTHER**

**OPENING:** Tells us the history, what happened.

**I. JOSHUA**

- a. JOSHUA 7:10 – “The Lord said to Joshua, “Stand up! What are you doing down on your face? Israel has sinned; they have violated my covenant, which I commanded them to keep. They have taken some of the devoted things; they have stolen, they have lied, they have put them with their own possessions. That is why the Israelites cannot stand against their enemies; they turn their back and run because they have been made liable to destruction. I will not be with you anymore unless you destroy whatever among you is devoted to destruction.
- b. Story about how God moved the Israelites into Canaan and divided the land up
- c. God owns it all, it is His to do with as He wishes
  - i. He sees what is done in secret
  - ii. Sin is punishable by death
  - iii. He will not tolerate lies, deception, greed, disobedience
  - iv. BASIC PRINCIPLE: Live for God, He is with you. Live for yourself, you’re on your own.
- d. Jericho was defeated by ridiculous obedience – a trumpet blast

**II. JUDGES**

- a. God of Rebellion
- b. History of the nation from Joshua to Samson
- c. Judges were individuals, each from a different tribe of Israel, chosen by God, to . . .
  - i. Rescue the people from their enemies,
  - ii. Establish justice,
  - iii. Establish the practice of the Torah
- d. Judges show the pattern of human sin
  - i. Sin. The people rebel against God.

- ii. Judgement. God allows an enemy nation to subjugate the people
  - iii. Repentance. The people realize their predicament and cry out for rescue
  - iv. Deliverance. God raises up a judge, who conquers the oppressing enemy
  - v. Peace. The oppression ends and the people experience a season of peace.
- e. God is over everything, you must be loyal to Him completely

### **III. RUTH**

- a. God of Faithfulness and Redemption
- b. Story of the ancestors of the royal family of Judah
- c. Kindness will be rewarded
- d. Ruth is a symbol of loyalty and devotion
  - i. RUTH 1:16-17 – “Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you.”

### **IV. 1 SAMUEL**

- a. Covers a period of 115 years, from the birth of Samuel through the turbulent times of Saul to the beginning of David
- b. God reads the hearts of each and every person; He knows us better than we know ourselves.
- c. MAJOR THEME: God takes the initiative in love, we can only love Him because He first loved us
- d. The only reason anyone is ever rejected by God is because that individual has first rejected God.

### **V. 2 SAMUEL**

- a. MAJOR THEME: Unification of the Nation
- b. Saul was a king that did not put God at the center of his life
- c. David was a man after God’s own heart

- d. Saul was an unrepented sinner and died dragging his country and family with him.
- e. David was a repentant sinner and thus given victory over his enemies while saving many in the nation.

**VI. 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> KINGS**

- a. Contains the history of the Nation over a span of approximately 400 years
- b. The dysfunctional nature of the Nation and the constant turning away from God
- c. NOTEWORTHY:
  - i. David's death,
  - ii. Solomon's accession,
  - iii. Destruction of the Kingdom of Judah
  - iv. Desolation of Jerusalem
- d. God's promise . . .
- e. The recurrent apostasy of the kings
  - i. Apostasy is \_\_\_\_\_
- f. The judgment apostasy brings on Israel
- g. MAJOR THEME: Judgment is not punishment. Judgement is the God-ordained consequence of Israel's failure to worship Yahweh alone.
- h. NOTEWORTHY:
  - i. Only two people were raised from the dead
    - A. \_\_\_\_
    - B. \_\_\_\_
  - ii. The prophet Elijah left this earth without dying
  - iii. The waters of the Jordan River were rolled back twice
  - iv. God of Judgment and Promise

**VII. 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> CHRONICLES**

- a. The record made by the appointed historiographers of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel
- b. The official histories of those two kingdoms
- c. Israel's spiritual history and heritage
- d. Written after the time of the exile, focused on the elements of history that God wanted the returning Jews to meditate upon:
  - i. Obedience that results in God's blessings, and

- ii. The priority of the temple and priesthood.
- e. Consequences of the sins of the nations that resulted in the exile
- f. David's prayer in 1 CHRONICLES 29:10-19 summarizes the major themes of the book
  - i. Glory to God
  - ii. Gratitude for gifting David's family with leadership of the nation
  - iii. The desire that David's descendants continue to devote themselves to God
  - iv. Remaining faithful to God would reap blessings to the nation

## **VIII. EZRA**

- a. God of Restoration
- b. Historical record of the Israelite people during this time period
  - i. NOTEWORTHY: When their king was dethroned and captured, and the people exiled to Babylon, Judah as an independent nation ceased to exist.
- c. Provides an account of the Jews' regathering, of their struggle to survive and to rebuild what had been destroyed.
- d. Ezra declared that they were still God's people and that God had not forgotten them.
- e. After the original remnant had stopped work on the city walls, Ezra arrived with another 2000 people and sparked a spiritual revival.
- f. By the end of the book, Israel had renewed its covenant with God and had begun acting in obedience to Him.
- g. Two main issues faced by the returning exiles:
  - i. the struggle to restore the temple, and
  - ii. the need for spiritual reformation.
  - iii. Both were necessary in order for the people to renew their relationship with God.
- h. Through the prophets, God had ordained that His chosen people would return to their land after a 70-year exile
- i. They had a responsibility to pass it on.
- j. MAJOR THEME: God kept His Word, and it shows that when God's people remain faithful to Him, He would continue to bless them.

**IX. NEHEMIAH**

- a. God of Reconstruction
  - i. NOTEWORTHY: Nehemiah is the last historical book of the Old Testament and is an account of the rebuilding of the wall and city, and of the obstacles encountered and overcome.
- b. Records the reconstruction of the wall of Jerusalem, Judah's capital city.
- c. He and Ezra, directed the political and religious restoration of the Jews in their homeland after the Babylonian captivity, thus creating a Theocracy.
- d. MAJOR THEME: God uses all manner of people.

**X. God of the Gallows (pending death – preservation)**

- a. MAJOR THEME: God is there even when you can't tell.
  - i. NOTEWORTHY: Haman, the king's evil second-in-command, was a descendant of Agag, the king of the Amalekites, who were the enemies of God's people. He cast the lot, order to determine the day that the Jews would be exterminated.
- b. MAJOR THEME: God is at work behind the scenes coordinating "coincidences"
  - i. NOTEWORTHY: Esther was taken to the harem, risked her life before the king
  - ii. God is also the Great Promise Keeper
  - iii. Mordecai said to Esther, "If you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place and you and your father's house will perish."
  - iv. Mordecai's words reflected his faith that God would honor His eternal covenant with Abraham and David.