

# project 4:4

one year one bible one church one lord

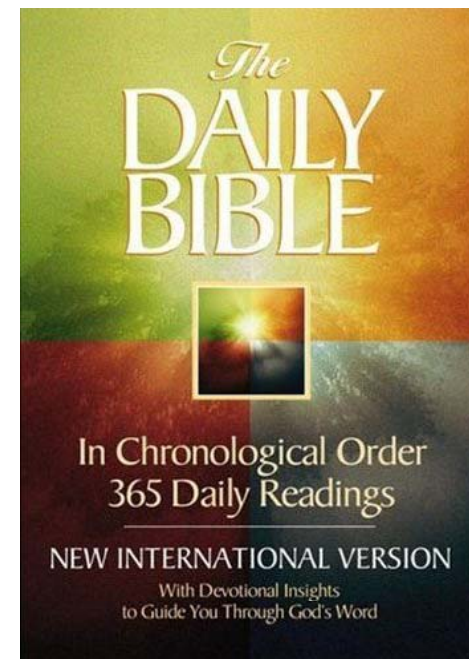
## Lesson 12 Apostasy and the Judges

March 21, 2010

# This Week

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- ▶ We'll cover readings for March 14-20
- ▶ Joshua 22 – Judges 12
  - ▶ Joshua's Farewell Addresses (Joshua 22-24)
  - ▶ The Failure of Israel to Complete the Conquest (Judges 1-2)
  - ▶ The Deliverance of Israel during the Seven Cycles (Judges 3-16)



# Division of the Land

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- ▶ The remainder of the Promised Land is now ready to be divided among the seven tribes that have not received their portion
  - ▶ Benjamin
  - ▶ Simeon
  - ▶ Zebulun
  - ▶ Issachar
  - ▶ Asher
  - ▶ Naphtali
  - ▶ Dan
- ▶ Joshua commissions a survey of the remaining land and the tribes cast lots at Shiloh for the parcels



# Tribal Bo

► And here's



# Promises Fulfilled

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▶ Joshua 21:43-45 (p. 338)

- ▶ <sup>43</sup>So the LORD gave Israel all the land he had sworn to give their forefathers, and they took possession of it and settled there. <sup>44</sup>The LORD gave them rest on every side, just as he had sworn to their forefathers. Not one of their enemies withstood them; the LORD handed all their enemies over to them. <sup>45</sup>**Not one of all the LORD'S good promises to the house of Israel failed; every one was fulfilled.**



# Choose This Day ...

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▶ Joshua 24:2 (p. 341)

- ▶ “This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: ‘Long ago your forefathers, including Terah the father of Abraham and Nahor, lived beyond the River and worshiped other gods.’”

▶ Joshua 24:14-15 (p. 342)

- ▶ <sup>14</sup>“Now fear the LORD and serve him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods your forefathers worshiped beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. <sup>15</sup>But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. **But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.**”



# Occupying the Land

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- ▶ The tribes then proceed to go up into their assigned regions and take possession of the Land
- ▶ However, things don't seem to go exactly as planned
  - ▶ Not all of the Land is (or can be?) taken
- ▶ Look at the list of failures to complete the conquest listed on pages 345-346
  - ▶ Not an isolated problem



# For Discussion

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- ▶ Why do you think the Israelites failed to completely drive out the Canaanites?
  - ▶ Lack of military strength?
  - ▶ Loss of will?
  - ▶ Lack of faith?
  - ▶ Too busy?
  - ▶ Too content?



# A Warning

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- ▶ Deuteronomy 20:16-18

- ▶ <sup>16</sup>However, in the cities of the nations the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, **do not leave alive anything that breathes.** <sup>17</sup>Completely destroy them—the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites—as the LORD your God has commanded you. <sup>18</sup>Otherwise, they will teach you to follow all the detestable things they do in worshiping their gods, and you will sin against the LORD your God.

- ▶ As we'll see, the Israelites fail to follow through with this command



# Faithful Under Joshua

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▶ Judges 2:6-9 (p. 347)

- ▶ <sup>6</sup>After Joshua had dismissed the Israelites, they went to take possession of the land, each to his own inheritance. <sup>7</sup>The people served the LORD throughout the lifetime of Joshua and of the elders who outlived him and who had seen all the great things the LORD had done for Israel. <sup>8</sup>Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of a hundred and ten. <sup>9</sup>And they buried him in the land of his inheritance, at Timnath Heres in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash.



# Apostasy!

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▶ Judges 2:10-13 (p. 347)

- ▶ <sup>10</sup>After that whole generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation grew up, who knew neither the LORD nor what he had done for Israel. <sup>11</sup>Then the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD and served the Baals. <sup>12</sup>They forsook the LORD, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of Egypt. They followed and worshiped various gods of the peoples around them. They provoked the LORD to anger <sup>13</sup>because they forsook him and served Baal and the Ashtoreths.



# Names of God

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- ▶ El Elyon - The Most High God (Gen 14:20)
- ▶ El Roi - God Who Sees Me (Gen 16:13)
- ▶ El Shaddai - The All Sufficient God (Gen 17:1)
- ▶ El Olam - The Everlasting God (Gen 21:33)
- ▶ El Elohe Israel - God, the God of Israel (Gen 33:20)
- ▶ El-Kanno - The Jealous God (Exo 20:5)
- ▶ El Rachum - The God of Compassion (Deut 4:3)
- ▶ El Hanne'eman - The Faithful God (Deut 7:9)
- ▶ El Haggadol - The Great God (Deut 10:17)



# Names of God (cont.)

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- ▶ El Yeshurun - The God of Jeshurun ("the righteous (yashar) people") (Deut 32:15)
- ▶ Yahweh - Exodus 6:2b-3
  - ▶ <sup>2b</sup>God also said to Moses, "I am the LORD. <sup>3</sup>I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob as God Almighty ("El Shaddai"), but by my name the LORD ("Yahweh") I did not make myself known to them.
  - ▶ English transliteration: **YHVH**
- ▶ Other Terms
  - ▶ Bethel ("Beth-El") – House of God
  - ▶ Israel ("Isra-El") – He Struggles with God



# E1

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- ▶ The semitic word “el” simply refers to a “god”
- ▶ “El” was the head of the Canaanite pantheon
  - ▶ The supreme god, the father of humankind and all creatures
  - ▶ Husband of Asherah
  - ▶ Father of numerous gods: Hadad (Ba’al), Yam, Mot
- ▶ Worshipped throughout the Levant (lands of the western Mediterranean)



# Perspective

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- ▶ Depending on one's view:
  - ▶ “El Shaddai” (Yahweh, the God of the Nation of Israel) derived over time from “El” the Canaanite god
    - ▶ - or -
  - ▶ Yahweh was the only true God from the Beginning
- ▶ A very important distinction to make
- ▶ However, the distinction between the two began to blur over time



# Modern View

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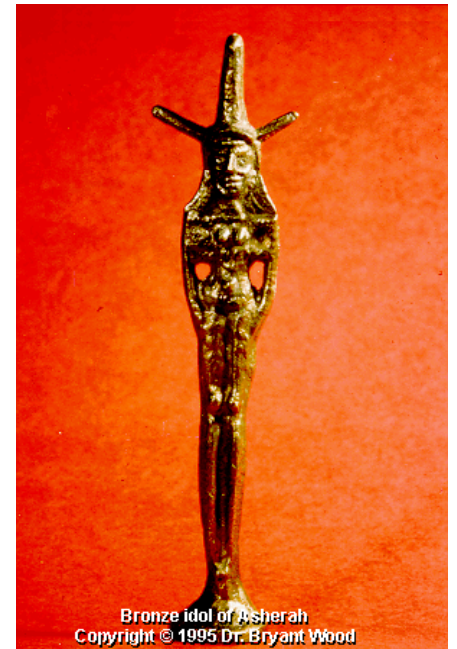
- ▶ According to *The Oxford Companion To World Mythology* (David Leeming, Oxford University Press, 2005)
  - ▶ "It seems almost certain that the God of the Jews evolved gradually from the Canaanite El, who was in all likelihood the 'God of Abraham'...If El was the high god of Abraham - Elohim, the prototype of Yahveh - Asherah was his wife, and there are archeological indications that she was perceived as such before she was in effect 'divorced' in the context of emerging Judaism of the seventh century B.C.E. (See 2 Kings 23:15)"



# Asherah

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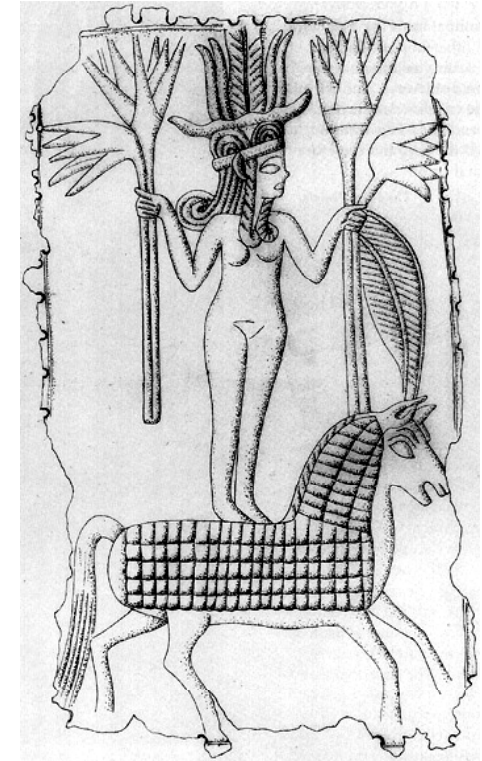
- ▶ The “Mother Goddess”
  - ▶ Also known as the “Queen of Heaven” and will be referred to often by Jeremiah the Prophet
- ▶ Her symbol was the stem of a tree deprived of its boughs, and rudely shaped into an image, and planted in the ground (“groves”)
- ▶ Was the consort or wife of “El”
- ▶ Asherah gradually became known as the consort of Yahweh, the God of Israel, as the distinction between the God of Israel and the “god” of Canaan blurred



# Ashtoreth

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- ▶ Known as Astarte to the Phoenicians
  - ▶ Ashtoreth was the Hebrew transliteration
- ▶ The principal goddess of the Phoenicians, representing the productive power of nature
  - ▶ A goddess of fertility and sexual love
- ▶ Some confusion among scholars as to where Ashtoreth and Asherah are the same goddess
  - ▶ Most see them as different



# Baal

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- ▶ Baal or Ba'al literally means “master” or “lord”
- ▶ The Phoenician God of hilltops, mountains, and “high places”
  - ▶ Sometimes referred to as the “Lord of Heaven”
- ▶ Was also used as a generic term and referred to numerous local spirit-deities
- ▶ When the Israelites worshiped the “Baals”, it could refer to any number of pagan gods



# The Lord's Anger

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▶ Judges 2:14-15 (p. 347)

- ▶ <sup>14</sup>In his anger against Israel the LORD handed them over to raiders who plundered them. He sold them to their enemies all around, whom they were no longer able to resist. <sup>15</sup>Whenever Israel went out to fight, the hand of the LORD was against them to defeat them, just as he had sworn to them. They were in great distress.



# Judges Raised Up

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▶ Judges 2:16-19 (p. 347)

- ▶ <sup>16</sup>Then the LORD raised up judges, who saved them out of the hands of these raiders. <sup>17</sup>Yet they would not listen to their judges but prostituted themselves to other gods and worshiped them. Unlike their fathers, they quickly turned from the way in which their fathers had walked, the way of obedience to the LORD'S commands. <sup>18</sup>Whenever the LORD raised up a judge for them, he was with the judge and saved them out of the hands of their enemies as long as the judge lived; for the LORD had compassion on them as they groaned under those who oppressed and afflicted them. **<sup>19</sup>But when the judge died, the people returned to ways even more corrupt than those of their fathers,** following other gods and serving and worshiping them. They refused to give up their evil practices and stubborn ways.



# Reflection

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- ▶ God has spent the last 500 years of history calling His chosen Nation away from the pagan gods
  - ▶ Beginning with Abraham
- ▶ He has repeatedly demonstrated Himself to be exactly who He claims to be
  - ▶ Yahweh
  - ▶ El Shaddai
  - ▶ THE Lord God Almighty
- ▶ Yet as soon as each leader of the Nation dies, they run headlong back into idolatry
  - ▶ Time and again throughout Judges



# For Discussion

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- ▶ Why do you think the Israelites failed to completely drive out the Canaanites?



# God's Answer

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▶ Judges 2:20-23 (p. 347)

- ▶ <sup>20</sup>Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel and said, “**Because this nation has violated the covenant that I laid down for their forefathers and has not listened to me,** <sup>21</sup>**I will no longer drive out before them any of the nations Joshua left when he died.** <sup>22</sup>I will use them to test Israel and see whether they will keep the way of the LORD and walk in it as their forefathers did.” <sup>23</sup>The LORD had allowed those nations to remain; he did not drive them out at once by giving them into the hands of Joshua.



# For Discussion

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- ▶ It sounds as though God intentionally left the pagan people and their gods in the land to be a snare to the Israelites
  - ▶ Why would he do this?
  - ▶ How do you reconcile that with a loving God?
  - ▶ Does God operate like this today?
- ▶ It is often said that the church is only one generation away from apostasy
  - ▶ Do you agree with that statement?
  - ▶ How do we prevent this from happening?



# The Answer

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▶ Deuteronomy 6:6-9 (p. 211)

- ▶ <sup>4</sup>Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. <sup>5</sup>Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. <sup>6</sup>These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. **<sup>7</sup>Impress them on your children.** Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. <sup>8</sup>Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. <sup>9</sup>Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.



## Your Turn ...

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- ▶ What insights have you gained from this week's study?
- ▶ What did you find in these passages that you have never seen before?
- ▶ How did the Lord speak to your heart through the Word this week?
- ▶ How will your walk with Him be different as a result?



# Next Week

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- ▶ Readings for March 21-27
  - ▶ The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

# Questions?

