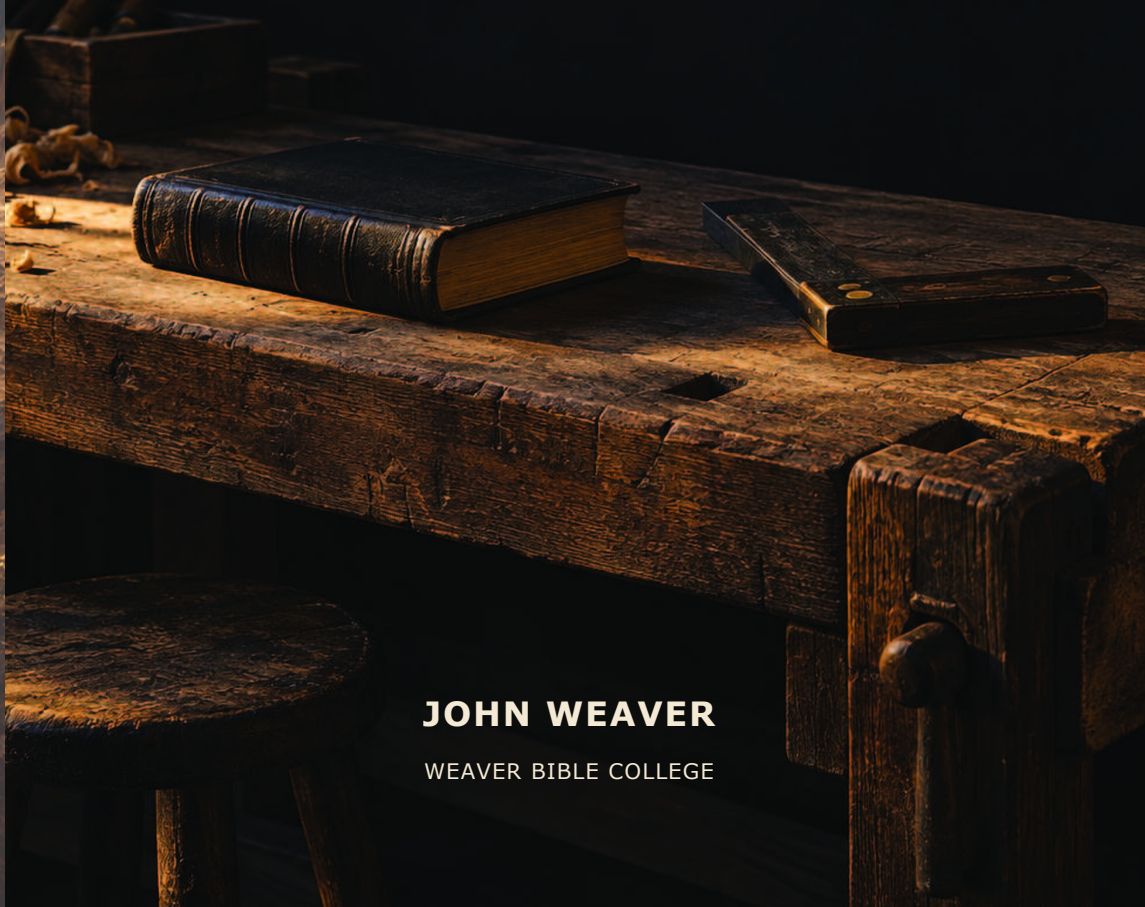
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BIBLICAL STUDIES

Raising Men

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

PSALM 119:105



JOHN WEAVER

WEAVER BIBLE COLLEGE



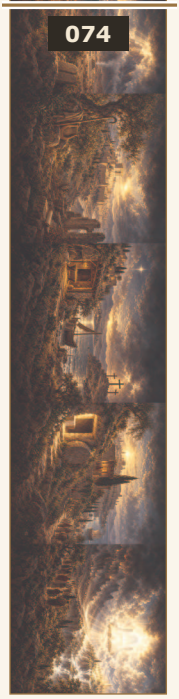
Train up a child in the way he should go.

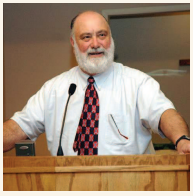
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Contents

Chapter 1: Raising Men - Part One of Two 5

Introduction: The Failure to Raise Men 5

The Foundation of Education and Early American Learning 6

The Value of 1 and 2 Chronicles 6

Biblical Men of Valor in 1 Chronicles 26–27 7

Modern Illiteracy and Moral Decline 8

The Loss of Practical Manhood 11

The Levites as Porters, Teachers, and Guardians 12

The Sons of Korah and Their Redemption 16

Contrast with Modern Preachers and Fathers 17

Call for God to Raise Up Men 19

Chapter 2: Raising Men - Part Two of Two 23

Introduction and Review 23

The Father's Responsibility in Education 24

Introduction to Benaiah 26

Benaiah's Role and the Cherethites and Pelethites 27

Benaiah: A Man of Conviction 30

Benaiah: A Man of Courage 33

Benaiah: A Man of Character 36

Applications for Today 39

Topical Index 45

Scripture Index 47

Study Guide Link 49

CHAPTER 1

Raising Men

Part One of Two

Introduction: The Failure to Raise Men

This introductory message, entitled “Raising Men,” is in two parts. Lord willing, the second part will be brought next Sunday. In 1 Chronicles 26:1, the Bible says, “Concerning the divisions of the porters: of the Korhites was Meshelemiah, the son of Kore, of the sons of Asaph.” There are other verses that will be considered as well.

There is an interesting thing about this chapter, and it should become apparent momentarily. In light of this chapter, it should be obvious that today we are failing, and have failed, our children in America. We fail to raise our young boys to be men, and we fail to raise our young girls to be ladies. We are not only failing, but have failed to give all our children what we would call a biblical work ethic. We have also failed to teach them valor, courage, duty to God, and duty to others. These failures concern both how we raise our sons and how we raise our daughters, and they reveal how far we

have departed from the pattern and instruction presented in Scripture.

A few years back, I preached a message which I entitled, "Where Are the Real Women?" Interestingly, all the women in the church, especially some of the single ones, said, “You need to preach on where all the real men are.” So I did. I brought three messages. However appropriate it would be to repeat those messages, I am not going to do so, although much of the material there would be exceedingly relevant.

The Foundation of Education and Early American Learning

Let me give you something that you and I must grasp and understand: the foundation of all education for a child is laid from the ages of three to eleven. If you do not inculcate certain truths and doctrines in children at those ages, you will probably never get to do so. What we forget is the education of the early Christians and how they were really grounded in the Word of God.

We also forget the education of the early colonials. In colonial America, many children from the ages of five to eight could read, write, and speak Greek, Hebrew, and Latin. Those three languages in early America were required for entrance into college; they were not learned in college.

That is why someone like Sam Adams would go as a diplomat to Russia at fourteen years of age. He had already graduated with a master’s degree from college. These people were very educated, that is for sure.

The Value of 1 and 2 Chronicles

Many Christians fail to read or study 1 and 2 Chronicles. The reason some give is that there are a lot of hard names to pronounce. That is true; there are indeed a lot of hard names. But these two books also give what you and I would call detailed information, and sometimes that information is difficult. Sometimes we think it is over our heads.

However, when you understand 2 Timothy, chapter 3, verses 16 and 17, those passages also apply to 1 and 2 Chronicles: "All scripture

is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." Therefore, 1 and 2 Chronicles are just as inspired and just as beneficial as any other book of the Bible.

When we come to these hard names, we need to slow down, look at them, break them into syllables, and pronounce them the best that we can. I've often thought about this, and it has been kind of amusing to me that when we get to heaven and we get to meet

All the saints that are in heaven—we asked one, “So now, what is your name?” And he says, “Well, Meshelemiah, didn’t you know me? You read about me in the book of 1 Chronicles, didn’t you? You read my name over and over.” No, we didn’t read that name because we skipped it. We thought it was so hard to pronounce. But if we slow down and break these names into syllables, we can pronounce them.

Moreover, if we take the time to look at the context, we can probably come up with the proper application to all the difficult material. When I read through 1 and 2 Chronicles recently, what really struck me in 1 Chronicles chapters 26 and 27 was that these sons, these children of these men, turned out to be real men. They were brave, courageous, and men of valor. They were steadfast in their duty.

Biblical Men of Valor in 1 Chronicles 26–27

When I was in the university, one of Dr. Bob Jones, Sr.’s favorite sayings was plastered on the walls: “The greatest ability is dependability.” That is certainly true. Pure old dependability—something and someone you can count on—is absolutely one of the greatest traits there is today. So look very quickly at 1 Chronicles 26, and note again verse 1: “Concerning the divisions of the porters.”

Verse 6 says, “Also unto Shemaiah his son were sons born, that ruled throughout the house of their father: for they were mighty men of valor.” We are now talking about sons and grandsons: they were rulers and mighty men of valor. Verse 7 says, “The sons of Shemaiah; Othni, and Rephael, and Obed, Elzabad, whose brethren were strong

men, Elihu, and Semachiah." They were strong men. Verse 8 says, "All these of the sons of Obed-edom: they and their sons and their brethren, able men for strength for the service, were threescore and two of Obed-edom." Verse 9 says, "And Meshelemiah had sons and brethren, strong men, eighteen." Strong men—the Bible says eighteen of them. Then, in verse 14: "And the lot eastward fell to Shelemiah. Then for Zechariah his son, a wise counsellor,"

They cast lots; and his lot came out northward.

Among the Hebronites was Jerijah the chief, even among the Hebronites, according to the generations of his fathers. In the fortieth year of the reign of David they were sought for, and there were found among them mighty men of valor at Jazer of Gilead.

Now, in chapter 27, verse 1, we read: "Now the children of Israel after their number, to wit, the chief fathers and captains of thousands and hundreds, and their officers that served the king in any matter of the courses, which came in and went out month by month throughout all the months of the year, of every course were twenty and four thousand." So here were 24,000 individuals that could serve the king in any matter. It did not matter what it was; they could. So far, you know nothing about these men I have just read about, with the exception that they were really indeed men.

They were men of education. They were men of training. They were men of faith. They were what you and I would call real, genuine men. I think that you have noticed that there is a deficit of men today. I'm not referring to males in general, because there are plenty of males around, but I'm talking about men who were made of a different cut. I'm talking about men that are revealed in 1 Chronicles chapter 26: men who were wise, who could be counselors, who were brave, who had valor and strength. These men had character and ability.

Modern Illiteracy and Moral Decline

When you think about these people in 1 Chronicles 26–27, early Christians, and early America, you have to come to the realization that we are bringing forth and siring and putting out individuals today who can't read, who can't think, who can't calculate. Since

Bible reading and prayer have been taken out of government schools, since they've been forbidden, we are now producing not only illiterate, functionally illiterate children, but also raising young children without ethics and morality. I want to read an article to you that might shock you. We're talking about Washington, D.C. January the 18th, 2018.

"Willie Nolan has a car, but he can't drive it. He has the hands of a craftsman, but he can't follow blueprints. He has a high school diploma, but he can't read. This is what happens when schools put statistics over students, when they value smoke and mirrors over real academic achievement." Nolan said, "I sat in a classroom doing nothing, and then all of a sudden they told me I was graduating. I couldn't even read the diploma."

Nolan is fifty-seven years old and graduated from the D.C. public school system in 1982. But a newly released investigation by the Office of the State Superintendent showed that at least one out of every ten students graduating from a D.C. public high school last year missed most of the academic year. How well do you think some of those students can read? D.C. public schools have been churning out Willie Nolans for decades.

During a discussion at the annual Conservative Political Action Conference, Senator Tommy Tuberville, Republican, Alabama, said, "Half the kids in this country when they graduate can't read their diploma."

At Tuberville's office, a spokesperson shared the data points the senator was relying upon: 50% of U.S. adults are unable to read an eighth-grade-level book; 46% of United States adults can't understand labels on prescriptions; 66% of American 12th graders are rated basic or below basic in reading achievement; and only 37% of 12th graders reached or exceeded the academic preparedness benchmarks for both math and reading that would qualify them for entry-level college courses. Only 37%. It goes on: "Graduating from high school without reading."

Researchers interested in investigating whether the high school education system is producing illiterate graduates explored three types of illiteracy: functional, cultural, and moral. The most

disturbing news is that the level of functional literacy among high school graduates is wanting. Functional literacy is the ability to read or write well enough to accomplish everyday tasks in modern society. According to Lederman, 14% of American adults are functionally illiterate. In addition, 29% of American adults have only the literacy level of a fifth- to seventh-grade graduate, while 25% of high school graduates have only an eighth-grade level or below.

In the late 1970s or early 1980s, I was in Wayne County, Georgia. I went to a hardware store and bought two or three dollars' worth of tools, nuts, bolts, or whatever it was. I handed the young man behind the cash register a twenty-dollar bill. He had a big high school graduation ring on his finger.

When he gave me my change, I counted it as he gave it to me, and I still had my hand open. I looked at him and said, "Son, that's not right." He had given me too much money. He said, "Oh, I'm sorry," and threw two more ones in my hand. He could not even make change from a $20 bill.

The next year, the hardware store was closed. I understand why, if that was the level of its employees. Back in the 1980s, a young man in California graduated unable to read and sued the Department of Education. The superintendent of schools in Wayne County, Georgia, said—and it was in the paper, I read it—“This is not going to happen in Wayne County. We're going to make sure that each one of our graduates can at least read the TV guide.” What kind of education is merely being able to read a TV guide?

The point I'm trying to make is this: today's educational system is more of an indoctrination system. We're churning out young people who are nothing more than little statists, little communists, little socialists, or little Marxists. They cry out for government to do all, support all, and be everything, so that they need not do anything. They want cradle-to-the-grave security.

Vladimir Lenin said it like this: “Give me four years to teach the children and the seed I have sown will never be uprooted.” On top of educational illiteracy, think about this: most modern-day men—not boys—cannot shoot. They cannot hunt. They cannot skin, gut, or prepare game.

The Loss of Practical Manhood

They can't plant a garden. They can't build a shelter. They can't find their way in a forest. They can't start a fire in the rain. They can't set traps. They can't drive machinery. They can't teach and they can't communicate. And we are talking about men. To illustrate this point, I want you to listen to this quote by a man by the name of Lazarus Long. Here is what he said: "A man should be able to change a diaper, plan an invasion, butcher a hog, control the movements of a ship, design a building, write a sonnet, balance accounts, build a wall, set a bone, comfort the dying, take orders, give orders, cooperate, act alone, solve equations, analyze a new problem, pitch manure, program

I doubt we have too many men like that around today. When I was a young child and student, our public schools even had shooting teams. As a teenager, I would drive to high school with rifles and shotguns in our trucks. None of us ever shot anyone. There was never a disturbance and never an incident. We had them because after school we were going hunting.

I have a picture of a school shooting team, and it happens to be all girls. Over it are these words: “Back in the 1950s and even later, many high schools had shooting ranges. Students even brought their own rifles to school. What changed in society that we could trust such activities then but not now?”

The truth of the matter is this: we do not have a gun problem; we have a morality problem. What in the world do we expect when the Ten Commandments have been banned—they cannot be posted, read, or talked about—prayer has been banned, Bible reading has been banned, and students are being taught that there are no absolutes, that everything is absolutely relevant?

When I was in school, and I went to public school all of my life, we had exercise time, rest periods, Bible reading, and prayer. Each day began with Bible reading and prayer. Young ladies would even sing hymns and gospel songs afterward. One of them, Peggy Jean Utto, had a beautiful voice and sang regularly. I have never forgotten one of her favorite songs, “It Is No Secret What God Can Do.” We had those things all the time.

The truth that struck me as I recently read through 1 Chronicles and 2 Chronicles was how the sons of these young men, these young fathers, turned out. They did not turn out simply to be males; they turned out to be men—men of valor, men of courage, men of education, and men of understanding.

The Levites as Porters, Teachers, and Guardians

Now, here is the interesting thing. These men being discussed in 1 Chronicles chapters 26 and 27 were men that most people would never think of as being what you and I would call men. Go back and look at 1 Chronicles 26 and verse 1. I read it earlier, but let me read it again: "Concerning the divisions of the porters: of the Korhites was Meshelemiah, the son of Kore, of the sons of Asaph." When you read on through this, it is not just the porters who are being discussed, but the storehouse keepers, the accountants, and the people over the treasury. So, when you read 1 Chronicles 26–27, we are talking about doorkeepers, accountants, and teachers.

I will say this another way: we are also talking about preachers, because that is what the Levites did. They worked with the priests, and they worked for the priests. Of course, the priests themselves were Levites as well. These Levites not only had spiritual duties, but they also had physical duties.

Hold 1 Chronicles 26, and turn to 2 Chronicles chapter 30. I could multiply the examples, but these will be sufficient. Look at verse 22: "And Hezekiah spake comfortably unto all the Levites that taught the good knowledge of the LORD: and they did eat throughout the feast seven days, offering peace offerings, and making confession to the LORD God of their fathers." Note the phrase, "the Levites that taught the good knowledge of the LORD." These Levites were teachers; they were preachers, so to speak.

Look also at 2 Chronicles chapter 35 and verse 3: "And said unto the Levites that taught all Israel, which were holy unto the LORD, Put the holy ark in the house which Solomon the son of David king of Israel did build; it shall not be a burden upon your shoulders: serve now the LORD your God, and his people Israel." Again, note the words, "and said unto the Levites that taught all Israel." These people were teachers; they were preachers.

In Nehemiah chapter 8 and verse 9, the Scripture says: "And Nehemiah, which is the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, This day is holy unto the LORD your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law." Notice that it was the Levites that taught the people.

Here is the question that you need to ask yourself: Why in the world do you need men of courage, men of valor, men of bravery, and men of understanding to be porters who are doorkeepers, accountants, teachers, and preachers? I am going to tell you why, and I am going to show it to you from Scripture. It was the responsibility of these men to take life when it was necessary. These men knew the difference between self-defense, defending others, and murder, and they knew it based upon the Word of God.

So let me show you. In Numbers chapter 1 and verse 53, the fourth book in the Old Testament, it says: "But the Levites shall pitch round about the tabernacle of testimony, that there be no wrath upon the congregation of the children of Israel: and the Levites shall keep the charge of the tabernacle of testimony." The Levites had now been given a charge, and they were to keep that charge.

The Hebrew word for "keep" is shamar. The word shamar literally means to guard and to protect. It is the same word used in Genesis chapter 2 and verse 15 when God commanded Adam to keep the garden. The word "keep" there does not mean simply to pull weeds or prune the bushes. He was to guard and protect the garden, which he failed to do. There was the serpent, and there was sin; therefore, he was expelled from the garden.

The word "keep" means to guard and protect. When he said, "and keep the charge," the word "charge" means to guard as a sentry. So there were guarders; they were sentries.

They had a physical duty as well. In fact, the Hebrew word is mishmaroth, a military term meaning a sentry post, a watch, or an act of custody. God had given the Levites this charge, in which they were to keep.

In Numbers chapter 3, verses 5 through 10, we read: “And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Bring the tribe of Levi near, and

present them before Aaron the priest, that they may minister unto him." The Levites had a primary ministry of ministering to Aaron, his family, and his sons. Now notice what he says about the Levites: "And they shall keep his charge." They were to guard Aaron, the high priest. "And they shall keep his charge, and the charge of the whole congregation before the tabernacle of the congregation, to do the service of the tabernacle."

They were responsible for guarding the people as they came to worship as well. Verse 8 says: "And they shall keep all the instruments of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the charge of the children of Israel, to do the service of the tabernacle." They had a duty and responsibility to protect everything in that tabernacle, and later in the temple. Verse 9 continues: "And thou shalt give the Levites unto Aaron and to his sons: they are wholly given unto him out of the children of Israel. And thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall wait on their priest's office: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death."

In this passage, the terms "keep" and "charge" appear repeatedly. In verse 7, "they shall keep his charge": they had to guard and protect Aaron and his family. Again in verse 7, they were to "keep the charge of the whole congregation"; they had to guard and protect them as well. In verse 8, "they shall keep"—that is, guard and protect—"all the instruments of the tabernacle of the congregation." Note again verse 10: "And the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death."

In light of the fact that these Levites had been given a charge to keep, whose responsibility and duty was it to put to death the stranger who came near? It would have been the Levites, because they had been given the duty of guarding and protecting. They guarded and protected Aaron and the people, as well as everything in the tabernacle and, later, in the temple.

Many of those things were solid gold and silver, including the vestments, so there was considerable monetary value. These porters were doorkeepers and gatekeepers. They opened the doors of the tabernacle and, later, the temple. Their duty was to guard and protect Aaron and the congregation, together with all the

instruments in the tabernacle and temple. They opened and closed the doors.

In the New Testament, the captains of the temple came out to arrest the disciples and Jesus. Who were the captains of the temple? They were these porters, these Levites. Their office carried over into the New Testament.

John Trapp writes: “Doorkeepers, sextons, an office of good account. Their ordinary employment was to see that the Temple was not at any time polluted by profane persons or practices, as also that none of the sacred vessels or vestments were stolen away. Of these were 24 reliefs or exchanges as well as priests, Levites, and singers.”

He also writes: “The division of the porters, there were four classes of these. Each of which belonged to one of the four gates of the temple, which opened to the four cardinal points of heaven. The eastern gate fell to Shelemiah, the northern to Zechariah (1 Chronicles 26:14), the southern to Obed-edom (1 Chronicles 26:15), and the western to Shuppim and Hosah (1 Chronicles 26:16). These several persons were captains of these porter bands or doorkeepers at the different gates. There were probably a thousand men under each of these captains, as we find in 1 Chronicles 23 that there were four thousand in all.”

In 1 Chronicles 23:5 we read: “Moreover four thousand were porters; and four thousand praised the LORD with the instruments which I made, said David, to praise therewith.”

So there were 4,000 doorkeepers, or porters, and 4,000 that praised the Lord with instruments. And so these men that were named were evidently captains over all of these porters, because each one had a thousand under him. Four gates, so there were four thousand porters. Now if you look in your Bibles at 1 Chronicles chapter 9, 1 Chronicles chapter 9, and I want you to look at verses 18 and 19. 1 Chronicles chapter 9, look in verses 18 and 19, then we're going back to 1 Chronicles 26. So 1 Chronicles 9, if you'll look there at verse 18: "Who hitherto waited in the king's gate eastward: they were porters in the companies of the children of Levi."

Now watch verse 19: "And Shallum the son of Kore, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, and his brethren, of the house of his

father, the Korahites, were over the work of the service, keepers of the gates of the tabernacle: and their fathers, being over the host of the LORD, were keepers of the entry." Remember the word "host" means army. They were over the army of the Lord, were keepers of the entry.

Now, I want you to go back to 1 Chronicles chapter 26 and look again at verse 1 and then verse 19. Please, look at this. We're talking about men. Look in verse 1, 1 Chronicles chapter 26: "Concerning the divisions of the porters: of the Korhites was Meshelemiah the son of Kore, of the sons of Asaph." Now, look if you would, in verse 19: "These are the divisions of the porters among the sons of Kore, and among the sons of Merari." Now, the sons of Kore were the sons of Korah. I don't know if you remember Korah or not. We just, of course, read about him in 1 Chronicles 9. But Korah was the leader of the insurrection and rebellion against Moses and Aaron in Numbers chapter 16. Not only with Korah was Dathan and Abiram, who were Reubenites. Korah was a Levite. And you remember it was Korah and his family that were swallowed alive in the earth, and the earth closed up upon them. Those 250 princes who had their censers before the Lord were burned to death by God with a fire sent from heaven. Now, so my question would be this: if the household

The Sons of Korah and Their Redemption

of Korah was destroyed, how in the world could he have sons? Well, I want you to look in your Bibles to the book of Numbers chapter 26. Numbers chapter 26, and you're going to see the answer to that. Numbers 26 at verses 10 and 11. Numbers 26 verses 10 and 11. Look at this. This is absolutely astounding in one sense of the word. Numbers 26 verse 10: "And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up together with Korah, when that company died, what time the fire devoured two hundred and fifty men: and they became a sign." Look at verse 11: "Notwithstanding the children of Korah died not." The children of Korah sided with Moses and Aaron. And they were not involved when they were destroyed, or the family was destroyed. The sons of Korah sided with Moses and Aaron. Now I want you to go back in your Bibles to 1 Chronicles chapter 9. We were there just a little bit earlier, but I want to finish reading from 1

Chronicles chapter 9, and let's begin reading there with verse 19. 1 Chronicles chapter 9 and

verse 19, and we'll read through verse 27. 1 Chronicles chapter 9, verse 19. Look at this. We're talking about the sons of Korah, the Korahites. "And Shallum the son of Kore, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, and his brethren, of the house of his father, the Korahites, were over the work of the service, keepers of the gates of the tabernacle: and their fathers, being over the host of the LORD, were keepers of the entry. And Phinehas the son of Eleazar was the ruler over them in time past, and the LORD was with him." So Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the high priest Eleazar, ruler of Aaron's sons, was ruler over all of these Korahites. Okay. Verse 21: "And Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah was porter of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation."

"All these which were chosen to be porters in the gates were two hundred and twelve." Those were probably the captains, because there was a thousand at each gate. These were reckoned by their genealogy in their villages, whom David and Samuel the seer did ordain in their set office. So they and their children had the oversight of the gates of the house of the LORD, namely, the house of the tabernacle, by wards. In four quarters were the porters, toward the east, west, north, and south. Their brethren, which were in their villages, were to come after seven days from time to time with them. In other words, they would change every seven days.

For these Levites, the four chief porters, were in their set office, and were over the chambers and treasuries of the house of God. So now we have accountants and storekeepers. They lodged round about the house of God, because the charge was upon them, and the opening thereof every morning pertained to them. Certain of them had the charge of the ministering vessels, that they should bring them in and out by tale. You can go on and read all about these.

Contrast with Modern Preachers and Fathers

So the question is this: Do you understand why God demanded that these men be real men? These were chosen Levites. These men were teachers, preachers, and accountants. We would sometimes call them diplomats. Here is the contrast I want you to see: the

difference between these men in 1 Chronicles 26 and 27 and what we have today—the difference between the preachers and teachers there and the preachers and teachers we have today.

Some years ago I preached a message entitled "The Black Robed Regiment," about the preachers of the American Revolution, or the First War for Independence. I preached about Jonas Clark, James Caldwell, and many others. Jonas Clark was the pastor at Lexington. The first battle was at Lexington and Concord. Everybody reads about Lexington Green, but they never understand that Lexington Green was the churchyard. When John Hancock and Sam Adams arrived late that night, before the next morning's fight began, the question they had for Jonas Clark was, "Would his men fight?"

Jonas Clark answered, “They will fight. For this very hour I have trained them, and they will fight and, if need be, die if necessary.” And some did. Notice that he said, “For this very hour I have trained them.” He did not train them only physically. He trained them mentally and emotionally. He certainly trained them scripturally. Here is a preacher training his men to fight and to stand for biblical principle and biblical right.

Some of you may remember the message I preached many years ago on the great revival in the Confederate armies. When you read about some of those Confederate chaplains, you find that they not only preached and prayed, but suffered with their men. They also fought with their men when it was necessary.

So you have to ask this question: Where are the men today like the men in 1 Chronicles 26 and 27? Where are the men who have courage, bravery, valor, and knowledge—men who know when to fight, why to fight, where to fight, as well as how to fight? You look around at the average preacher today, and he is wimpy, effeminate, sweet, and sickly. Most of them turn out to be nothing but administrators and CEOs. They have no desire to get their hands dirty, and they do not want to stand because someone might think ill of them, or they might offend or hurt someone. Where are the preachers? I know there are some exceptions. I understand that. I know some. But as a general rule and principle, we do not have very many men in the pulpit today.

Let me ask you another question: Who are the fathers today? Do you understand that it is the father's responsibility to teach his children? “Ye fathers, bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” It is the father's responsibility. Yes, mama may help, but she helps under his direction and authority.

Where are most fathers today? They do not teach their children. They leave it to mama, and mama leaves it to public school or someone else. If you do not teach and train your children, no one else will except the world and the ungodly. We recently had a family at our house with six children, and you should have seen the boys eat. I said, “Man, look at those boys eat.” He said, “You know, I never had to train them to eat.” I said, “That is true. And you never had to train them to sin either.”

Where are the fathers? That is why we have sired a generation of children with blue hair, nose rings, earrings, tattoos, and crazy clothes, who cannot think, will not work, and want only to be supported so they can have their fun, smoke their pot, and do what they want. That is where we are today. They have no work ethic, no morality, no businesses, and no desire for such.

Call for God to Raise Up Men

I stopped at Walmart the other day to get something for Alice. As I pulled into a parking place, beside a woman loading her groceries, I saw that she had two teenage daughters with her. The woman had bright red, painted hair, and each daughter had either a blue streak or a green streak in her hair. I thought, "Lord, what in the world is wrong with these people?" I do not see many people going around putting gray in their hair, but they will put blue, green, purple, and pink in it. I am just saying, we have failed a whole generation of young people.

Let me give you a quote. I do not think this is any longer true, but here is a quote from Admiral Yamamoto of the Japanese Navy during World War II: "You cannot invade mainland America. There would be a rifle behind every blade of grass."

What did he mean by that? He meant that everybody in America was armed, knew how to shoot, knew how to defend themselves,

their families, and their country, and had a will to fight and understood character, courage, bravery, and valor. I have said publicly that there is no way in the world today that we can send our armed forces off to war. We do not have enough lipstick, rouge, earrings, and skirts for them. It is insane and absolutely ridiculous.

We have turned out to be a sick generation. We have not only lost our educational sense; we have lost our moral compass. We have failed to learn the principles of the Word of God. We have denied Him, turned our backs upon Him, and turned our backs upon the Bible. The reason there are so many ignorant Christians is that they do not read their Bible. They simply do not read it.

If you're just reading your Bible over and over, you may not be a theologian, but you'll know what the Bible says and what it doesn't say. It's like that old adage: “The Bible says every tub has to sit on its own bottom.” No, the Bible doesn't say that. That's not in the Bible; it's just an old wives' saying.

I'm just saying we are totally, absolutely ignorant. We've got pastors and preachers who are fearful of their own people and afraid to say, “Thus saith the Lord.” They don't want to stir up controversy. I've had preachers tell me, “I believe such and such, but I don't preach it because it would upset my people.” I'm sorry, but if the truth upsets you, you're just going to have to be upset. That's all there is to it.

We've gotten to the place where we will not stand for truth because we're afraid we might hurt someone's feelings. We need to pray that God would give us men—real men, biblical men, godly men, men of character and valor like these doorkeepers. I now understand that verse where David said, “I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.” His doorkeepers were men.

Josiah Gilbert Holland wrote: “God, give us men! A time like this demands strong minds, great hearts, true faith, and ready hands. Men whom the lust of office does not kill; men whom the spoils of office cannot buy; men who possess opinions and a will; men who have honor; men who will not lie; men who can stand before a demagogue and damn his treacherous flatteries without winking; tall

men, sun-crowned, who live above the fog in public duty and in private thinking; for while the rabble, with their thumb-worn creeds, their large professions, and their little deeds, mingle in selfish strife, lo, Freedom weeps, Wrong rules the land, and waiting Justice sleeps."

That is true. In 2 Chronicles 16:9, the prophet speaks to King Asa, telling him that he has sinned greatly. This is a wonderful passage to memorize, at least the first half: "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro"

The prophet tells King Asa, "Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars." But look at the first part of that verse: "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth." What is God doing, looking throughout the whole earth? He is looking for someone whose heart is perfect toward him, that he might show himself strong in and through that man. God is looking for men. God is more than willing to do what needs to be done; he is looking for men through whom he can do it and will do it, men who will stand for truth and righteousness.

I still love that verse in John 1:6 concerning John the Baptist: "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John." I read that and look at it: There was John, and God looked at him and said, "There was a man." There was a man, and John the Baptist was indeed a real man. That is why I began, "God, give us men."

Next week I am going to show you a man who is exceedingly blessed of God and unique. Many people say, "You have used the wrong word. You are talking about raising men. Don't you mean rearing men?" You raise cattle, and you raise crops. I would think you raise children, but I do not mind the word rear. Rearing children means raising them by using their rear end when it needs to be paddled and whipped. You can rear them too, but in rearing them, you raise them to be men and young ladies.

God, give us men. Father, help us today to love Thee, live for Thee, and honor Thee. Make us men You can use, men ready, willing, and able to be used. Lord, help us raise our young sons into biblical, godly, faithful men of valor and understanding. Give us Your grace,

Lord; we need it desperately. Teach us and build us up in the most holy faith. In Thy name we pray, Amen.

CHAPTER 2

Raising Men

Part Two of Two

Introduction and Review

First Chronicles 27, verse 1: "Now the children of Israel after their number, to wit, the chief fathers and captains of thousands and hundreds, and their officers that served the king in any matter of the courses, which came in and went out month by month throughout all the months of the year, of every course were twenty and four thousand." Verse 5: "And the third captain of the host for the third month was Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, a chief priest, and in his course were twenty-four thousand." "This is that Benaiah, who was mighty among the thirty, and above the thirty, and in his course was Amazabed, his son." In the first part of Raising Men, I pointed out mainly our failure in this country in actually teaching and training our young boys and bringing them into real biblical manhood. One of the leading failures, I think, that we have experienced in this country is that we actually fail to communicate and teach our young boys what it takes to become a man. We failed to inculcate biblical principles of manhood, of courage, of valor, of wisdom as well. And

the point in 1 Chronicles 26 is all of these men who were mighty men of valor and strong and courageous, when you look at that, they all turned out to be Levites.

And they were all teachers and all storekeepers or accountants, as we would say. And it's very surprising how all of these were men of courage and men of strength and men of might. And these guys were men who just kept the gates. They were protectors of the tabernacle, later the temple. They were protectors also of the priests. And this is where in the New Testament, the captains of the temple came as well.

I gave a quote from Lenin: He said, "Give me four years to teach your children. The seed I've sown will never ever be uprooted." And we actually give the enemies of Jesus Christ and the enemies of Christianity not just four years, but 12 years in government school, and that does not count the four years many of them spend in college, and sometimes five, six, and seven. And somehow, after giving the government 12 years to train our children, and maybe four years in college, we expect them to turn out to be moral, principled, and courageous individuals.

And that is certainly not going to happen. In fact, we're so deceived that we think that somehow if we were faithful to each service of our local church, if we were there Sunday morning and Sunday night and Wednesday night, you're talking about three hours of teaching, basically, compared to 40 hours of teaching during the week. And somehow we think that these three hours are going to overcome the 40 hours. No. Someone is going to object and say, "Well, now you're calling these governmental schools. They're actually public schools."

The Father's Responsibility in Education

If you really think that, I challenge you just to try to walk in one anytime you please, just to visit your child and see how far you get. And moreover, if you really think they're public schools, you try standing up at your local school board meeting and crying out for biblical principles and that which is honest and right and just, and again, see how far you get. And the truth of the matter is, usually, once they have your child, you have about zero chance of getting that

child back. Deuteronomy chapter 6, verse 4 is known as the Shema Israel. And the reason it's known as the Shema Israel is because in the Hebrew, the scholars would say, "Shema Israel, Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai echad." "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD." Verse 5: "And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy might. And these words which I command thee this day" "shall be in thine heart." Now, if they're in your heart, here's what you're going to do: "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children. And thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house"—when you have leisure time—"and when thou walkest by the way"—when you're taking them with you—"and when thou liest down"—that is, before you go to bed or as you go to bed—"and when thou risest up"—first thing in the morning. "And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes." You're to keep the principles of the Lord's Word always before you. "And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates. And it shall be, when the LORD thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he sware to thy fathers, Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildest not," and he goes on. And then in verse 12 he says, "Then beware lest thou forget the LORD." So God is telling us that we are to be teaching and training our children basically 24 hours a day. And the truth of the matter is, we really are. We're just not training them the way they should be trained. In Ephesians chapter 6 and verse 4, God says particularly, "And you fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and the admonition of the Lord."

So it's the father's responsibility to teach and to communicate biblical principles. It is a father's responsibility to lead in the education of the children. Yes, mother may help, but father must direct. And yet when you look around today, you will find that most modern-day fathers and mothers have zero influence upon their children, and most never lift a finger to make sure that their children are educated in the faith. To me it seems absolutely foolish to think that somehow we can turn our children over to others who do not have our biblical convictions and do not understand our biblical doctrine, but we can turn our children over to others to be educated by them when we do not lift our fingers to teach them, and then hope

somehow that our children are going to turn out to be principled, moral, honest, hardworking, Bible-believing, and godly Christians. The truth of the matter is, it's absolutely foolish to assume that, because we are violating the Scripture ourselves.

You can educate your child in the truth 24 hours a day, but education by itself is worthless. God must make the blessing of that education real to that child. It was old Dr. Bob Jones Sr. used to say, "Education is worthless unless the man is converted, because you can take an uneducated man and teach him to write, and all you've got now is a criminal who will forge checks and forge signatures." And so an uneducated fool can become an educated fool, but without biblical principles, he's absolutely nothing more still than an educated fool. So there's a unique man in 1 Chronicles chapter 27. This unique man is not just mentioned in this passage, but he's mentioned in plenty of other passages and books of the Bible as well.

Introduction to Benaiah

His name is Benaiah. He says in verse 5, "The third captain of the host for the third month was Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, a chief priest. In his course were twenty and four thousand." Verse 6: "This is that Benaiah, who was mighty among the thirty, and above the thirty, and in his course was Amazabed his son." Benaiah was one of the military officers that had charge over a course in taking care of the king's needs for one month, and in his course he had 24,000. Moreover, Benaiah was from Kabziel, a city of the tribe of Judah, which of course was not a Levitical city. So Benaiah did things that the average man could only dream of doing. He was the third captain. In other words, there were only two before him. But Benaiah is here called, in verse 5, he's called "the son of Jehoiada, a chief priest."

The word "priest" has different meanings. There was indeed a priest in the Bible by the name of Jehoiada. You'll find him in 2 Kings chapter 11 as well as in the book of Chronicles as well. But at this time the priests were Zadok and Abiathar. And before them the priest was Abimelech. So how in the world do we explain the fact that the Bible tells us that Benaiah was the son of Jehoiada, a chief priest? The word for "chief" in the Hebrew is the word "rosh," which

literally means a head, a top, a summit, an upper part, a chief, a height, or a front, or a beginning.

His father was a leading man, or as we would say colloquially, he was a top dog. He was ahead of a lot.

The Bible also said he was "the son of Jehoiada, a chief priest." The word "priest" in the Hebrew is the word "kohen," and it literally means a priest, principal officer, or a chief ruler. So it does not have to mean that he was a Levitical priest. First Chronicles 27, verse 1 says, "Now the children of Israel after their number, to wit, the chief fathers and captains of thousands and hundreds, and their officers that serve the king in any matter of the courses." So these are military men. So a chief priest would be here, in the context, a chief prince, someone who had lots of authority as well.

So Benaiah was his son, and moreover, Benaiah was from the city of Kabziel, which was in southern Judah, which was not a Levitical city. So in 2 Samuel 23 and verse 10, the Bible says, "Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man of Kabziel." So now the chief priest is called a valiant man. So Benaiah now is not only listed as David's mighty men or one of those mighty men, but he is now listed in the top three. Second Samuel 23, verse 22 says: "These things did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and he had the name among three mighty men." So here was a man who was very mighty.

Second Samuel 8, verse 18 says that "Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites, and David's sons were chief rulers." Now the Bible says he was over the Cherethites and Pelethites. So the question has to be asked, who were the Cherethites and who were the Pelethites?

Benaiah's Role and the Cherethites and Pelethites

What does it mean that he was over them? Matthew Poole and Adam Clarke answer the question, "Who were the Cherethites and Pelethites?" Matthew Poole: "The Cherethites and the Pelethites were undoubtedly soldiers, and as such were eminent for their valor and fidelity to the king, as is evident from 2 Samuel 15, 2 Samuel 20, 1 Kings 1, and 1 Kings—yeah, 1:38 and verse 44—and most probably they were the king's guards, which consisted of these two bands, who

might be distinguished either by their several weapons and or by differing time or manner of their service. They're supposed to be thus called either first from their office, which was upon the king's command—listen carefully—to cut off or to punish offenders and preserve the king's person, as their names in the Hebrew tongue may seem to imply, or secondly, from some country or place to which they had relation. As for the Cherethites, it is certain that they were a branch of the Philistines, or a people neighboring to them, and confederate with them, as is manifest from 1 Samuel 30, Ezekiel 25, and Zephaniah 2. And so might the Pelethites be too, though they may not be related in Scripture. And these Israelites and soldiers of David might be so called either because they went and lived with David when he dwelt in those parts, or from some notable exploit against them or victory over these people, as among the Romans, the name of Asiaticus and Africanus were given for the same reason." "One of the exploits against the Cherethites is in part related in 1 Samuel chapter 30. It is likely that they did many others against them and against other people, among which the Pelethites might be one."

Adam Clarke said: "The Cherethites and the Pelethites: the former supposed to be those who accompanied David when he fled from Saul, that would be the Cherethites; the latter, the Pelethites, those who came to him at Ziklag. But the Targum translates these two names as 'the archers' and 'the slingers,' and this is by far the most likely. It is not at all probable that David was without a company of archers and slingers. The bow is celebrated in the funeral lamentation over Saul and Jonathan, and the sling was renowned as the weapon of the Israelites. And how expert David was in the use of it, we learn in the death of Goliath." "I take for granted that the Chaldean paraphrase is correct. No weapons then known were equally powerful with these. The spears, swords, and javelins of other nations were as stubble before them. The bow was the grand weapon of our English ancestors, and even after the invention of firearms, they were with difficulty persuaded to prefer them and to leave their archery." So they're saying that these men were not only just the king's bodyguards, but they had special duty of executing criminals, and also preserving the king's life, and they could be known as the archers and the slingers as well. The strength and the

power it takes to shoot an English longbow and what it will do is absolutely astounding and amazing. When I used to hunt with a bow, I had a compound bow that was a 90-pound pull.

That bow, although now it's many years old, would shoot an arrow the length of a football field in one second. And it was just a 90-pound pull. So you could be at the end of a football field, and if my aim was correct and I let that arrow go, by the time you said "one thousand one," it hit you. That's how fast that 90-pound bow was. I was in Washington State, and I took my bow into a bow shop to have something done, I forget, and the man asked me what pound pull. I said, "It's a 90-pound pull." And he said, "Pick up that bow right there and pull it back."

You're not supposed to dry fire a bow. I said, "Sure." I picked up that little bow and went to pull, and I got it about six or eight inches and I couldn't go any further. I said, "My goodness, what is the weight? What is the pull weight of this bow?" He said, "150 pounds." I said, "My goodness, who can pull back a 150-pound bow?"

He said, "The arm wrestling champion in the state of Washington." Well, he could. But when you talk about an English longbow, it was a 200-pound pull. If you want to know how strong these bows were, especially the English longbow, you go study the Battle of Agincourt in France under Henry V. The French came with mail armor on, and all their horses; the English were totally outnumbered. And when the English archers began to shoot, the arrows penetrated through that chain mail, went out. They were absolutely devastated. So the bow, as they said, was a very hardy weapon and a weapon that was very fearful. If you watch some of these mighty archers in some of these English films, like Mel Gibson in Braveheart, you notice how all those arrows go; they were shooting for a long way as well. So these men were very capable.

Second Samuel 8, verse 16: "And Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the host; Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder." Joab is over the host, the general of the army. First Kings 4, verse 4 says, "And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the host, and Zadok and Abiathar were the priests." Joab was the general of the army. But now, Joab is no more the general of the army. Now, Benaiah is the

general of the army. How did Benaiah get to be the general of the army, and Joab cease to be the general of the army?

Benaiah: A Man of Conviction

Three points demonstrate biblical manhood. First, Benaiah was a man of conviction. So we found that Joab was a general over the entire host. Now Benaiah is the general over the entire host. What happened to Joab? Remember that Joab, first of all, was a murderer. He murdered Abner the son of Ner, and he also murdered Amasa. But yet he was still captain of the host for a while, or general, so to speak. So also Joab participated in the conspiracy of Adonijah when he tried to steal the throne from David as David was dying.

Now he did not participate with Absalom. In fact, he's a man who fought against Absalom and killed Absalom, but he was with Adonijah. First Kings chapter 2 answers this question and shows the Cherethites and the Pelethites doing the work of the king as executioners. Beginning in verse 23: "Then King Solomon sware by the LORD, saying, God do so to me, and more also, if Adonijah have not spoken this word against his own life." Now Adonijah was a half-brother of Solomon. Solomon's on the throne, and after he gets on the throne, he's asking for Abishag to be his wife, which was an underhanded way to try to get to Solomon. And Solomon said, "He's spoken this word against his own life. Now therefore, as the LORD liveth, which hath established me, and set me on the throne of David my father, and who hath made me an house, as he had promised, Adonijah shall be put to death this day." "And King Solomon sent by the hand of Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and he fell upon him, and he died. And unto Abiathar the priest, said the king, Get thee to Anathoth into thine own fields, for thou art worthy of death. But I will not at this time put thee to death, because thou barest the ark of the Lord GOD before David my father, and because thou hast been afflicted in all wherein my father was afflicted. So Solomon thrust out Abiathar from being priest unto the LORD, that he might fulfill the word of the LORD, which he spake concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh." Verse 28: "Then tidings came to Joab, for Joab had turned after Adonijah, though he had not turned after Absalom. And Joab fled into the tabernacle of the LORD, and caught hold of the horns of

the altar. And it was told King Solomon that Joab was fled into the tabernacle of the LORD, and behold, he is by the altar."

> "Then Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and said, Go fall upon him"—that is, execute him. "And Benaiah came to the tabernacle of the LORD, and said unto him, Thus saith the king, Come forth. And he said, Nay, but I will die here. And Benaiah brought the king word again, saying, Thus said Joab, and thus he answered me. And the king said unto him, Do as he said, and fall upon him, and bury him, that thou mayest take away the innocent blood which Joab shed from me, and from the house of my father. And the LORD shall return his blood upon his own head, who fell upon two men more righteous and better than he, and slew them with the sword, my father David not knowing thereof, to wit, Abner the son of Ner, captain of the host of Israel, and Amasa the son of Jether, captain of the host of Judah. Their blood shall therefore return upon the head of Joab, and upon the head of his seed for ever. But upon David, and upon his seed, and upon his house, and upon his throne, shall there be peace for ever from the LORD."

"So Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up and fell upon him and slew him, and he was buried in his own house in the wilderness. And the king put Benaiah the son of Jehoiada in his room over the host, and Zadok the priest did the king put in the room of Abiathar." Benaiah is the one who executed not only the king's half-brother but also Joab as well. This explains 1 Kings 4 in verse 4 when the Bible said, "And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the host, and Zadok and Abiathar were the priests." So after Joab was killed, after he was executed for his wickedness and for his sins and for his crime, then the king made Benaiah over the host. Some people object to this, saying, "But listen, when you are promoting Benaiah, when you're saying this is an excellent example of a man full of conviction, you are promoting a man who's a killer, a man who's a murderer." No. Not by any stretch of the imagination. There is a vast difference between a killer or murderer and someone who has been ordained of God and ordained by the lawful government to execute wicked doers. And that's exactly what Benaiah was doing.

He was executing those who deserved death. What does the Bible say? "Whosoever killeth man, by man shall he be killed." In other words, it is biblical justice. It is not murder. It is not killing. It is justice. So you would have to ask this question: What about the executioners of today? When someone has been convicted of a crime that merits a death penalty, and he's been incarcerated until the time that his execution is to be made, what about the man who pulls the switch and sends electricity in that electric chair? Or what about the man who pushes the needle into the arm full of that deadly cocktail? Are they murderers? Are they killers? Of course not. They're men who are executing justice. Benaiah was a man who believed in justice, and he did not hesitate to apply biblical justice. One of our greatest problems today is most people have no idea what biblical justice even is. They're not even really interested in justice, and certainly not interested in executing justice.

Psalm 89, verse 14 says, "Judgment and justice are the habitation of thy throne." So God in His habitation, in His holy throne, is surrounded by judgment and justice. Proverbs 21, verse 3 says, "To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice." God had rather have judgment, God had rather have justice, than sacrifice. In Isaiah 59, verse 4, God complains and He says this: "None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth. They trust in vanity, and they speak lies; they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity." In Isaiah 59, verse 14 He says, "And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off, and truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter."

It is true that we cannot be just mere executioners on our own. But if we're really interested in justice, we can cry out to God for justice. We can do everything we can to expose wickedness and demand biblical justice in any and every situation and circumstance. And in order to do that, we must know the essence of justice.

You can go into your Strong's Concordance or any concordance and look up the Hebrew word for "justice." Then look up the Hebrew word for "righteousness." The Hebrew word for "justice" and the Hebrew word for "righteousness" is one and the same word. Why? Because if something is just, then it is right. If something is right, then it is just. So righteousness and justice are actually synonyms.

They go together. You cannot have one without the other. So what is injustice? It is unrighteousness. What is righteousness? It's justice. So when we cry to the Lord for justice, we're not crying for what the world calls today "social justice." We're not crying out for humanistic justice. We're crying out for biblical justice. And the only justice that exists, the only justice in reality, is God's justice. And God is the one who defines justice.

So we find that Benaiah then was a man of conviction because he understood justice and he knew exactly what justice was. And when it became necessary, he knew exactly what to do.

Benaiah: A Man of Courage

Secondly, Benaiah was not only a man of conviction, but also a man of courage. Courage is not the absence of fear. Courage is the ability to do what is right in the presence of fear. It's the ability to do what needs to be done regardless of what you think or what you feel. One definition says: Courage is also called bravery or valor, and is the choice and willingness to confront agony, pain, danger, uncertainty, or intimidation. Valor is courage or bravery, especially in battle. Physical courage is bravery in the face of physical pain, hardship, even death, or threat of death. While moral courage is the ability to act rightly in the face of popular opposition, shame, scandal, discouragement, and personal loss. So we're going to find that Benaiah was exceedingly courageous and brave. He did some of the most brave acts when they were absolutely what you and I would call harrowing.

Second Samuel 23, verse 20: "And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man of Kabziel, who had done many acts." "He slew two lion-like men of Moab. He went down also and slew a lion in the midst of a pit in the time of snow. And he slew an Egyptian, a goodly man, and the Egyptian had a spear in his hand, but he went down to him with a staff and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand and slew him with his own spear. These things did Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, and had the name among three mighty men." First of all, the Bible says he slew two lion-like men of Moab. They were called lion-like men because they were comparable to lions in their strength, in their courage, in their ferocity.

They were very ferocious men. They were very dangerous men. And so Benaiah goes and they're threatening him, and he ends up killing both of them. He also He went down into a pit and slew a lion in the midst of a pit in the time of snow. So he was in a pit, which is a most uncomfortable and inconvenient place to have a fight. Moreover, it was in a time of snow, which obviously was not the best time to fight, not only because of the cold, but because of ice and slickness. Moreover, this had to be in the winter, and during the wintertime, all the homestead animals are shut up, and lions are much more ferocious because they don't have much to eat. And so he's in this pit and he can't get out. So he either has to kill the lion or the lion's going to kill him, and he ends up killing the lion. He also faced a giant Egyptian that was well armed and dangerous, and he did not even have a weapon. He just had a staff, and he took that staff and went and snatched the spear out of the Egyptian's hand and then slew him with his own spear. First Chronicles 11, verse 22 gives additional insight about Benaiah. "Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man of Kabziel, who had done many acts, he slew two lion-like men of Moab. Also he went down and slew a lion in a pit in a snowy day. And he slew an Egyptian, a man of great stature, five cubits high, and in the Egyptian's hand was a spear like a weaver's beam. And he went down to him with a staff, and he plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand and slew him with his own spear. These things did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and had the name among three mighties." Once again, the Bible tells us that this Egyptian had a spear like a weaver's beam. The term "a weaver's beam" occurs four times in the Scripture. Each time it occurs, it is a weapon in the hand of an enemy combatant. The first time you read about it is 1 Samuel chapter 17 in verse 7, where David went to confront Goliath, and the Bible says, "And the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam"—now hang on to this—"and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron, and one bearing a shield went before him." The second time you read about a weaver's beam is in regard to Goliath's brother. 2 Samuel 21, verse 19: "And there was again a battle in Gob with the Philistines, where Elhanan, the son of Jaare-oregim, a Bethlehemite, slew the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the staff of whose spear was like a weaver's beam." Then in 1 Chronicles 11, verse 23, which we just read, is where Benaiah slew this Egyptian. And the last time you read about it is 1 Chronicles 20

in verse 5: "And there was war again with the Philistines, and Elhanan the son of Jair slew Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite, whose spear staff was like a weaver's beam."

I did some research on the weaver's beam and on the staff, and they took Goliath's spear. These were some folks who actually tried to figure everything out to the nth degree in relationship to this staff like the weaver's beam. Here is the quote: "Based off the looms used in that time, it would be common for a weaver's beam to be two or two and a half inches thick and more than five feet long. The biblical reference of a weaver's beam is most likely in respect to the unusual thickness and strength of the shaft rather than the length. The weaver's beam referenced contrasts the normal smaller, thinner spear that would be handled by an average-sized man." Then they say, "There are four verses in the Scripture that mention a weaver's beam like a spear," and then he gives them. Now, the fourth verse refers to a giant-sized Egyptian in that day who would measure over seven feet six inches tall.

When I was a teenager in high school, I was in the FFA, Future Farmers of America, and we had to clean up our ag building. And I was sweeping with a broom, and it wasn't one of those little thin-handle brooms. It was one of those brooms that had the handle about an inch, inch and a half thick. And I had a fella who was a little bit older than I am, a little bit bigger than I am.

His name was Cary McClellan. He ended up being a postman working for the post office. And Cary would always come up behind me and thump my ear, you know, anything to aggravate me. So I was sweeping, and I told Cary—he came up, slipped up on me, thumped my ear. And I turned around to Cary, "Leave me alone." I said, "I'm tired of this. I said, just leave me alone." And I said, "Don't do this anymore." And so I turned around, went back to sweeping. But I was kind of watching out of the corner of my eye, and sure enough, I saw the shadow of him coming up. I knew he was right there, and he came up by me to thump my ear, and when he did, I pushed that broom handle all the way up and caught it down by the bristles, and I turned around, and when he saw me draw that broom back, he turned around to run, and I hit him right across the shoulder and

right across the back so hard it not only knocked him to the floor, but it broke the broom handle. He jumped up.

He said, "Ha ha, that didn't hurt." Well, he never thumped my ear again. So I can assure you it did hurt, because that was a very thick broom handle. A weaver's beam is something two and a half inches thick. The research says: "For the physics of Goliath's spear to work properly with a 16-pound, 11-ounce spearhead—that's just the head of the spear—at the height of Goliath, we chose a 10-foot length, 2-inch diameter pole, including a 6-pound, 1.5-ounce counterweight, giving our spear a total length of 12 feet and 7 inches. This is not to say the spear could not have been even longer." "The Bible does not give us the exact width. However, the width we calculated for our replica would allow Goliath to have a center of balance to hold the spear easily with one hand about 62 inches from the tip." You're talking about a 16-pound, 11-ounce spearhead and then another 6-pound, 1.5-ounce counter? You're talking about 22 pounds not counting the staff of the spear.

And most of us, when we saw a weapon like that, would lose our courage very quickly, especially if a man is seven feet six inches tall. So Benaiah never backed down from any of these. Because Benaiah was trained and Benaiah was disciplined. He was able to control himself. He was able to control his emotions. He was able to control his fear. I'm sure it went through his mind, "Look how big this man is. Look how strong this man is." These men in 1 Chronicles 26 and 27 were trained, and their reliance was upon God. the name Benaiah simply means in the Hebrew "Jehovah has built" or "Yahweh has built up" or "established." In other words, Benaiah realized that God had placed him where he was, and he was there for a purpose, and that purpose was to honor God and obey God and do his duty as God had laid it upon him. So Benaiah was a man of conviction.

Benaiah: A Man of Character

Benaiah was a man of courage. Thirdly, Benaiah also was a man of character. Benaiah stood with King David when all of Israel seemed to be against him. Absalom tried to kill David, his own father, and ran him off the throne. All Israel, basically speaking, was with Absalom. That's what the Bible says. David had to get out of

Jerusalem. Now Benaiah was still with David. Joab was the man who ended up killing Absalom, and David is back on the throne. Now David is sickly and dying, and now Adonijah betrays his own father, tries to assert himself and make himself king without the blessing of his father. First Kings 1, verse 5: "Then Adonijah, the son of Haggith, exalted himself, saying, I will be king."

"And he prepared him chariots and horsemen and fifty men to run before him. And his father had not displeased him at any time in saying, Why hast thou done so? And he also was a very goodly man, and his mother bare him after Absalom." So he's Absalom's brother. "And he conferred with Joab the son of Zeruiah, and with Abiathar the priest, and they following Adonijah helped him. But Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and Nathan the prophet, and Shimei, and Rei, and the mighty men which belonged to David, were not with Adonijah. And Adonijah slew sheep, and oxen, and fat cattle by the stone of Zoheleth, which is by En-rogel, and called all his brethren the king's sons, and all the men of Judah the king's servants. But Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah, and the mighty men, and Solomon his brother he called not. Wherefore Nathan spake unto Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, saying, Hast thou not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith doth reign, and David our lord knoweth it not?"

"Now therefore come, let me, I pray thee, give thee counsel, that thou mayest save thine own life, and the life of thy son Solomon. Go, and get thee in unto the king David, and say unto him, Didst not thou, my lord, O king, swear unto thy handmaid, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne? Why then doth Adonijah reign? Behold, while thou yet talkest there with the king, I will also come in after thee, and confirm thy words." And Bathsheba went in unto the king into the chamber, and the king was very old, and Abishag the Shunammite ministered unto him. Verse 28: "Then King David answered and said, Call me Bathsheba"—you can read in between—"And she came into the king's presence and stood before the king. And the king sware and said, As the LORD liveth, that hath redeemed my soul out of all distress, even I sware to thee by the LORD God of Israel, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead, even so will I certainly do this day. Then

Bathsheba bowed with her face to the earth and did reverence to the king and said, Let my lord King David live for ever. And King David said, Call me Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada. And they came before the king. The king also said unto them, Take with you the servants of your lord, and cause Solomon my son to ride upon mine own mule, and bring him down to Gihon. And let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there king over Israel, and blow ye with the trumpet, and say, God save King Solomon. Then ye shall come up after him, that he may come and sit upon my throne, for he shall be king in my stead, for I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah. And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king and said, Amen. The LORD God of my lord the king say so too. As the LORD hath been with my lord the king, even so be he with Solomon, to make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David."

"So Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites and the Pelethites went down and caused Solomon to ride upon King David's mule and brought him to Gihon." Benaiah is a man of character. He was not going to be swayed by popular opinion. He was not going to be swayed by anything or anyone. He knew that David was God's man. He knew that God had anointed David. He knew that God had promised David that Solomon would be king after him. Didn't matter what the people said, didn't matter what the people wanted. "I'm sticking with what I know is right."

Where is that attitude today among our modern-day politicians? Today, people go with the flow. They go with popular opinion. They go with what everybody wants. Here was a man of absolute character because he realized that compromise and political correctness was nothing but death and destruction. And he was going to stay with the king and stay with the one that God had ordained. We have lost so much in this country.

The title of the message is "Make America Great Again." Everybody knows that term, MAGA. But have you ever asked this question: When was America great? What made America great? And why is it not great now? And the Bible tells you exactly how to make a nation great.

Applications for Today

Benaiah was a real man. First, We need men. We need men like Benaiah, who happened to be a man of conviction, a man of courage, and a man of character. We have to discipline and train our children while they are young. The foundation of all a child ever learns is laid from the age of 3 to 11. That's astounding. We need to inculcate biblical principles and truth in our young boys. If you as fathers, if you as Christian fathers, do not inculcate biblical principles in your son, if you do not teach and train your son, who will?

I can assure you it would be the state. And the state will make sure that they turn out good little statists with no discipline, no understanding, no character, and you will sire a generation of lazy, indolent, sullen welfare recipients. Because that's what we have today. We need a generation of godly men. Disciplined men, honest men, just men, men who have character and courage and conviction, men who are brave and full of valor, men who will not compromise, men who will not give one inch against that which is right.

So we have to educate and we have to train our own. The world is not going to do it. The state is not going to do it. And our enemies certainly are not going to do it. We have to train our own. Education in and of itself, as I mentioned earlier, will not work just by itself.

We need the blessing of God. It's just like the promise when God said in Proverbs 23, "Beat thy child" or "Beat thy son with a rod; if thou beatest him with a rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt save his soul from hell." Well, if you took that verse literally, one of the best means of evangelism would be to take a rod and go around beat everybody. But obviously that's not what it means. It means with the blessing of God upon that discipline, that child will be converted to learn what is right. And so with the blessing of God upon his education, when he's trained right and disciplined right, he will act right as well.

Secondly, we have to admit and we have to confess that our strength is not in ourselves. And John 15, verse 5, our Lord said it very plainly: "Without me, you can do nothing." This is a negative truth. "Without me, you can do nothing." You have to realize, "I cannot train my child. I cannot discipline my child the way it should

be in and of myself. I need wisdom. I need God's wisdom. I need God's help." The negative is "without me you can do nothing." But the positive is found in Philippians 4 and verse 13.

"Through Christ I can do everything"—through Christ who strengthens me. "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." So through Jesus Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit, we may do whatever God commands us to do. Benaiah had as his source of power God Himself. His name meant "Yahweh has established" or "Jehovah has built." Psalm 62, verse 11 says: "God hath spoken once; yea, twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto the LORD." And Psalm 68, verse 28: "Thy God hath commanded thy strength. Strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us." "Thy God hath commanded thy strength. Strengthen, O God, for us that which we have wrought, and thou hast wrought in us and through us." And then Psalm 16, verse 35: "O God, thou art terrible out of thy holy place. The God of Israel is he that giveth strength and power to his people. Blessed be God." Then in Psalm 18, verse 29, he said, "For by thee I've run through a troop, and by thee I've leapt over a wall." David is saying all of my greatness was only because of the blessing and the power of God. So we've got to come to this conclusion: If we're going to have men in this country, we must raise them. We must teach them. We must train them. We must discipline them. We must give our children conviction and courage and character by the grace of God, inculcating in them biblical principles and standing for that which is right.

I tell young people this on a regular basis: God will use you on credit the first few years of your life. After that, He'll use you on character. And if you don't have any character, you might as well forget it. God's not gonna use you. Having taught history for so many years and still teaching history, especially Southern history, I sometimes get to smiling and thinking about things.

I wondered what would happen if we had a thousand men like Stonewall Jackson in Washington, D.C., or a thousand men like General Nathan Bedford Forrest in each of the state capitals, or a thousand men like Jeb Stuart or Robert E. Lee or General Ewell or General Polk. We have lost so much. If we want a generation of godly

young men and women, we must teach them and train them and discipline them and raise them the way God said to and seek His blessing upon them. May God give us men. Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we ask for Your grace. We ask for Your mercy, Your goodness and kindness, Lord, for all these families that have young boys and young girls. Lord, I pray that You'd bless them and help them to teach them and raise them, Lord, with discipline and strength and courage and valor, and Lord, that You would bless their efforts, and not only, Lord, save them, bring them to Thyself, but Lord, make them real men and women of conviction and courage and character. Give us, Lord, a desire to raise our children for Thee. And may, Father, Your hand be upon us. In the name of Jesus Christ, we ask and pray. Amen.

Source Notes

Chapter 1: Raising Men - Part 1 of 2
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Chapter 2: Raising Men - Part 2 of 2
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Topical Index

Chapter titles and section headings are listed with the pages on which they begin.

A

Applications for Today p. 39

B

Benaiah's Role and the Cherethites and Pelethites p. 27

Benaiah: A Man of Character p. 36

Benaiah: A Man of Conviction p. 30

Benaiah: A Man of Courage p. 33

Biblical Men of Valor in 1 Chronicles 26–27 p. 7

C

Call for God to Raise Up Men p. 19

Contrast with Modern Preachers and Fathers p. 17

I

Introduction and Review p. 23

Introduction to Benaiah p. 26

Introduction: The Failure to Raise Men p. 5

M

Modern Illiteracy and Moral Decline p. 8

R

Raising Men p. 5

Raising Men - Part 1 of 2 p. 5

Raising Men - Part 2 of 2 p. 23

T

The Father's Responsibility in Education p. 24

The Foundation of Education and Early American Learning p. 6

The Levites as Porters, Teachers, and Guardians p. 12

The Loss of Practical Manhood p. 11

The Sons of Korah and Their Redemption p. 16

The Value of 1 and 2 Chronicles p. 6

Scripture Index

Scripture references identified in chapter readings, headings, and manuscript text are listed with their page locations.

Numbers

Numbers 26 p. 16, p. 17

1 Samuel

1 Samuel 30 p. 27, p. 28

2 Samuel

2 Samuel 8 p. 27, p. 29, p. 30

2 Samuel 15 p. 27, p. 28

2 Samuel 20 p. 27, p. 28

2 Samuel 21 p. 34, p. 35

2 Samuel 23 p. 27, p. 33

1 Kings

1 Kings 1 p. 27, p. 28, p. 36, p. 37

1 Kings 4 p. 29, p. 30, p. 31

1 Chronicles

1 Chronicles 9 p. 15, p. 16

1 Chronicles 11 p. 34, p. 35

1 Chronicles 20 p. 34, p. 35

1 Chronicles 23 p. 15

1 Chronicles 23:5 p. 15

1 Chronicles 26 p. 7, p. 8, p. 9, p. 12, p. 15, p. 17, p. 18, p. 23, p. 24, p. 36

1 Chronicles 26:1 p. 5

1 Chronicles 26:14 p. 15

1 Chronicles 26:15 p. 15

1 Chronicles 26:16 p. 15

1 Chronicles 27 p. 23, p. 24, p. 27

2 Chronicles

2 Chronicles 16:9 p. 21

Psalm

Psalm 16 p. 40

Psalm 18 p. 40

Psalm 62 p. 40

Psalm 68 p. 40

Psalm 89 p. 32

Proverbs

Proverbs 21 p. 32

Proverbs 23 p. 39

Isaiah

Isaiah 59 p. 32

Ezekiel

Ezekiel 25 p. 27, p. 28

Zephaniah

Zephaniah 2 p. 27, p. 28

John

John 1:6 p. 21

John 15 p. 39, p. 40

Philippians

Philippians 4 p. 39, p. 40

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