



PRAYING WITH PURPOSE MINISTRIES

BIBLICAL NOTES & HIGHLIGHTS

April 2021

Joshua • Judges • Ruth • 1 Samuel • Psalms 27 & 34

The Principle of Authority

OVERVIEW

In the historical books of the Bible — Joshua, Judges, Ruth and 1 Samuel, Israel goes from the rule of theocracy to monarchy. Theocracy is a form of government in which a deity (God) is recognized as the supreme ruling authority, giving divine guidance to human intermediaries that manage the day-to-day affairs of the government. Whereas, the Monarchy is a **political system** based upon the undivided sovereignty or rule of a single person. The term applies to states in which supreme authority is vested in the monarchy, an individual ruler who functions as the **head of state** and who achieves his or her **position** through heredity.

Under the theocracy rule, God gave authority to persons to lead the Israelites in the Promised Land; but He would be their heavenly King and work through these leaders. However, under the monarchy they would have an earthly king anointed by God to the lead the people. We will use the **Principle of Authority, which is God's plan to protect our lives**, to examine the challenges these leaders faced. We will use their challenges to examine the different levels of authority — spiritual, natural, and civil.

I. The Paradigm of Authority — A discipline-building principle

Discipline — a system of rules of conduct or method of practice; training to improve strength or self-control; train by instruction and practice.

“Every Scripture is God-breathed (given by His inspiration) and profitable for instruction, for reproof and conviction of sin, for correction of error and discipline in obedience, [and] for training in righteousness (in holy living, in conformity to God's will in thought, purpose, and action), So that the man of God may be complete and proficient, well fitted and thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (1Timothy 3:16–17 AMP)

Discipline — An automatic response to righteousness

Authority gives one the:

1. permission to act
2. power to influence

Authority is two-dimensional:

1. the position — job title, name, duty
2. the exercise — carrying out duty

II. Plan/Objective: To stay in position with God or under the Word of God

There is an orderly arrangement of the authority of God which consists of three kinds of authority.

- A. Spiritual — Word of God is sovereign over all — highest level of authority
 1. Know our position in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:4–6) — seated at the right hand with Christ Jesus — we are kings and priests according to Revelation 1:6
 2. Use authority Jesus gave us to bind and loose (Matthew 18:18–20) — carry out our duty as kings and priests
 3. Take our spiritual authority thru prayer — binding spiritual wickedness and principalities and rulers in the heavenly realm (Ephesians 6:12)
- B. Natural — authority one has over another (1 Corinthians 11:1-3)
 1. Cup of marriage (Ephesians 5:20–31)
 2. Cup of parenting (Ephesians 6:1–4)
- C. Civil — natural law of the land for the common good of all (Romans 13:1–7)

God commissioned Moses to anoint Joshua to lead the people before his death. So, when the Book of Joshua opens we see the rule of theocracy under the leadership of Joshua.

Notes: Book of Joshua

The Book of Joshua can be seen as a link between the Pentateuch and the remainder of Israel's history. There are three major military campaigns led by Joshua, their new leader. The people of Israel learn a crucial lesson under Joshua's leadership:

1. Victory comes through faith in God.
2. One must stay under the authority of God and His Word because it is not military might that brings victory — but Almighty God — Jehovah Sabaoth.

The Book of Joshua can be divided into three sections:

1. The entering of Canaan — crossing over the Jordan River (Chapters 1–5)
2. The conquering of Canaan (Chapters 6–13:7)
3. The occupying of the land of Canaan (Chapters 13:8–24)

In the first chapter of Joshua, God speaks to Joshua and tells him to arise and prepare to take the people into the Promised Land. He encourages Joshua that He, the Almighty God, will be with him wherever he goes. But God gives Joshua some very important instructions in Joshua 1:8–9:

⁸ *This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you^[a] shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. ⁹ Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.*” (NKJV)

God makes it clear to Joshua that if he is going to be successful in conquering the land, he must meditate in the Word of God day and night, not just sometimes. By meditating in the word, one is placing himself or herself under the authority of God and His Word, which will protect his or her life. Therefore, as children of God, we must meditate in the Word day and night, then we will make our way prosperous and have good success. We must come under **Spiritual Authority**.

(Remember under the principle of stewardship we talk about meditating in the Word — being wise stewards over the Word).

Joshua, stayed under the authority of God and His Word and had good success in defeating their enemies; except when Achan of the tribe of Judah didn't stay under the authority of God's Word after they defeated Jericho. They were told not to take any of the plunder (spoils) for themselves. Achan took some of the devoted things for himself. So, when they went to attack Ai the first time; they were defeated and 39 men lost their lives. They didn't have God's protection because of Achan's sin. When we come from under God's authority, we expose ourselves and even others to havoc and the wiles of devil. Let's look at Joshua 7:10–21:

¹⁰ *The LORD said to Joshua, “Stand up! What are you doing down on your face? ¹¹ Israel has sinned; they have violated my covenant, which I commanded them to keep. They have taken some of the devoted things; they have stolen, they have lied, they have put them with their own possessions. ¹² That is why the Israelites cannot stand against their enemies; they turn their backs and run because they have been made liable to destruction. I will not be with you anymore unless you destroy whatever among you is devoted to destruction.*

¹³ *“Go, consecrate the people. Tell them, ‘Consecrate yourselves in preparation for tomorrow; for this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: There are devoted things among you, Israel. You cannot stand against your enemies until you remove them.*

¹⁴ *“In the morning, present yourselves tribe by tribe. The tribe the LORD chooses shall come forward clan by clan; the clan the LORD chooses shall come forward family by family; and the family the LORD chooses shall come forward man by man. ¹⁵ Whoever is caught with the devoted things shall be destroyed by fire, along with all that belongs to him. He has violated the covenant of the LORD and has done an outrageous thing in Israel!”*

¹⁶ *Early the next morning Joshua had Israel come forward by tribes, and Judah was chosen. ¹⁷ The clans of Judah came forward, and the Zerahites were chosen. He had the clan of the Zerahites come forward by families, and Zimri was chosen. ¹⁸ Joshua had his family come forward man by man, and Achan son of Karmi, the son of Zimri, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was chosen.*

¹⁹ *Then Joshua said to Achan, “My son, give glory to the LORD, the God of Israel, and honor him. Tell me what you have done; do not hide it from me.”*

²⁰ Achan replied, “It is true! I have sinned against the LORD, the God of Israel. This is what I have done: ²¹ When I saw in the plunder a beautiful robe from Babylonia,^[a] two hundred shekels^[b] of silver and a bar of gold weighing fifty shekels,^[c] I coveted them and took them. They are hidden in the ground inside my tent, with the silver underneath.” (NIV)

So, I want to talk about a “covetousness spirit” that Achan had which cause defeat to the nation of Israel — 39 men lost their lives. And also Achan’s entire family was destroyed.

Covetousness is greed: an overly strong desire that leads us to be willing to obtain things in an unauthorized or improper way. In other words, covetousness causes us to come from under the Principle of Authority which is God’s plan to protect our lives. In this case, it was improper to take any of the spoils from Jericho, but Achan’s covetousness led him to keep them.

Notice that the sin began first with the eyes, then second moved to the heart, and third, finally showed itself in conduct. Achan said that he saw these items and then he coveted them. His eyes were the avenue by which the temptation entered his heart ... similar to the temptation of Eve. Then his heart desired them, and finally he gave in. Sin tempts us by appealing to our desires, but it becomes sin when we give in and allow it to lead us to do, say, or think that which violates God’s law.

When confronted, Achan identified exactly what his guilt was. Far too often Christians know they are guilty and what it was that they did wrong. And yet those who are guilty often want to make some minimal confession ... to hide their true guilt. They may say, “If I have said or done anything that may have hurt someone’s feelings ...” Such a confession does not actually admit guilt and surely does not acknowledge what the sin was.

Joshua commanded Israel to take those devoted things, Achan himself, and all his family and his possessions to a valley called the valley of Achor. There Israel stoned him, as God had commanded, then they burned them with fire and raised a great heap of stones over them.

This satisfied God’s justice and His anger was taken away. Joshua said Achan had troubled Israel, so the Lord would trouble Him. “Achan” means “trouble,” so he was rightly named.

Note this: When Christians know about sin among members of the body of Christ, we are responsible to deal with it. We must not ignore it because God will not bless us if we do.

The book of Joshua ends by Joshua giving a speech summarizing Israel’s history. He challenges the people to serve the Lord and not idols. He makes the famous statement in Joshua 24:15:

¹⁵ *And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of^[a] the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”*

The people served the Lord during Joshua and the elders lifetime; however, after they died a generation came up that didn’t know the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and served other gods which leads us to the book of Judges.

Notes: Book of Judges

In the Book of Joshua the people operated in the **Principle of Authority** (spiritual, natural and civil) under the leadership of Joshua and the elders. However, in the Book of Judges you have a people who are no longer under the authority of God and His Word. You have an idolatrous people who are defeated time and time again because of their rebellion against the Almighty God, who brought them out of Egyptian bondage and led them into the Promised Land. We can describe the Book of Judges according to the last chapter, Judges 21:25:

²⁵ In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes. (NKJV)

This leads to corruption from within and oppression from without. The nation of Israel endured this type of lifestyle for over three hundred years with seven distinct cycles of sin ... still under the rule of theocracy, just being rebellious.

The Book of Judges can be divided into three parts:

1. Deterioration (Chapters 1–3:4)
2. Deliverance (Chapters 3:5–16:3)
 - a. rebellion (sin)
 - b. retribution (salvation)
 - c. repentance (supplication)
 - d. restoration (salvation)
 - e. rest (silence)
3. Depravity (Chapter 17:1–21)

The judges that God raised up didn't just oversee legal matters, they also had military and administrative authority. In essence, the judges were both spiritual and political deliverers. As leaders, they operated in the **Principle of Authority** and God protected the people during their leadership.

I want to talk about the fourth judge who ruled over the Israeli people after the death of Joshua. It was not a man, but a woman. The Lord raised Deborah, a prophetess, to deliver the people from oppression and they had 40 years of rest.

Deborah lived in the Mountains of Ephraim, between Ramah and Beth-El. In the midst of the sin and idolatry, Deborah remained true to God and His Torah. In other words, she operated in the Principle of Authority. She was wise and God fearing, and the people flocked to her for advice and help. Deborah held court beneath a palm-tree, in the open air. She warned the Israeli people and urged them to leave their evil ways and return to God. The entire Jewish nation respected this great prophetess.

She encouraged and inspired Barak to gather an army to fight against their Canaanite oppressors. However, Barak refused to undertake this task by himself, without Deborah going with him; Deborah agreed to accompany him, but she warned him that although he would gain victory, the glory would not be his, but a woman's.

After the victory Deborah pens a song and Deborah herself glorified the brave Jael in the "Song of Deborah."

The land rests in peace and then the cycle repeats itself and God raises up Gideon and other leaders, as well as Samson to deliver the people from bondage when they cry out to Him. But let's talk about the depravity of Israel which is illustrated so vividly in Judges chapters 17–21. We see religious apostasy (an act of refusing to continue to follow, obey, or recognize a religious faith) and social and moral depravity.

The entire Benjamin tribe is almost wiped out because of their sexual immorality and not abiding under civil authority. If they had taken responsibility and punished the persons who committed the act, the entire tribe would have been spared. However, we see all Israel ... eleven tribes coming to fight the Benjamin tribe. The Benjamin tribe was almost annihilate, except for about 400 men.

Alter this Israel is sorry and weeps because one of the tribes is missing; but they made a foolish vow not to give their daughters in marriage to a Benjamin. In order to correct this, they allowed the Benjamin men to kidnap the women at the annual feast in Shiloh.

The Book of Judges is like a sequel to Joshua, still under theocracy; but for over 300 years there is a descending spiral of sin. The Israel tribes fought against themselves and nearly wiped out the tribes of Manasseh (Judges 12) and Benjamin (Judges 20–21). Yet, there were many heroes and heroines of faith. The message we can learn from Judges, as 21st Century Christians, is that God will not allow sin to go unpunished. God disciplined them for the following:

1. Their idolatry
2. Disobeying His sacrificial laws
3. Engaging in blatant immorality

THEREFORE, WE MUST COME UNDER HIS AUTHORITY, IF WE WANT HIS PROTECTION AND BLESSINGS!

Notes: Book of Ruth

In the days of Judges, when Israel's history was generally a desert of rebellion and immorality, the story of Ruth stands in the midst, as an oasis of integrity and righteousness. Ruth models for us the **Principle of Authority** by submitting to "spiritual and natural authority" according to Ruth 1:16–17:

¹⁶ *But Ruth said:*

*"Entreat^[a] me not to leave you,
Or to turn back from following after you;
For wherever you go, I will go;
And wherever you lodge, I will lodge;
Your people shall be my people,
And your God, my God.*

¹⁷ *Where you die, I will die,
And there will I be buried.
The LORD do so to me, and more also,
If anything but death parts you and me."* (NKJ)

Ruth placed herself under the authority of God, her mother-in-law, Naomi, and kinsman, Boaz. Ruth was a virtuous woman who demonstrated loyal love to both Naomi and Boaz. Because of her submission to natural authority, God protects and rewards her with a new husband, Boaz, a son Obed, and a privileged position in the lineage of David and Jesus Christ. She is the great-grandmother of David. In twenty-two short verses Ruth moves from widow-hood and poverty to marriage and wealth. The Lord compensated her according to Ruth 2:12:

¹² *The Lord recompense you for what you have done, and a full reward be given you by the Lord, the God of Israel, under Whose wings you have come to take refuge!* (AMPC)

Ruth actualized biblical concepts and truths which afforded her a successful life; and this Moabite woman is brought into the family line of David and eventually Jesus.

Notes: Book of 1 Samuel

The Book of 1 Samuel records the critical transition in Israel from the rule of God through judges (theocracy) to His rule through kings (monarchy). The Book of 1 Samuel can be divided into three parts — the three stages of transition:

1. Eli to Samuel — (Chapters 1–7)
2. Samuel to Saul — (Chapters 8–15)
3. Saul to David — (Chapters 16–31)

In the first chapter of the Book of 1 Samuel, we are introduced to a woman named Hannah who prayed to the Lord out of her great anguish and grief. In other words, she prayed a fervent prayer and the Lord answered Hannah's prayer according to 1 Samuel 1:10–20:

¹⁰ *And [Hannah] was in distress of soul, praying to the Lord and weeping bitterly.*

¹¹ *She vowed, saying, O Lord of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your handmaid and [earnestly] remember, and not forget Your handmaid but will give me a son, I will give him to the Lord all his life; no razor shall touch his head.*

¹² *And as she continued praying before the Lord, Eli noticed her mouth.*

¹³ *Hannah was speaking in her heart; only her lips moved but her voice was not heard. So Eli thought she was drunk.*

¹⁴ *Eli said to her, How long will you be intoxicated? Put wine away from you.*

¹⁵ *But Hannah answered, No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I was pouring out my soul before the Lord.*

¹⁶ *Regard not your handmaid as a wicked woman; for out of my great complaint and bitter provocation I have been speaking.*

¹⁷ *Eli answered, “Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of him.”*

¹⁸ *She said, “May your servant find favor in your eyes.” Then she went her way and ate something, and her face was no longer downcast.*

¹⁹ *Early the next morning they arose and worshiped before the LORD and then went back to their home at Ramah. Elkanah made love to his wife Hannah, and the LORD remembered her. ²⁰ So in the course of time Hannah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel,^[a] saying, “Because I asked the LORD for him.” (NIV)*

We see Hannah is in distress and she gets up from the fellowship meal and goes to the temple to pray. Notice, how she opens her prayer by calling God, the Lord of Host — Jehovah Sabaoth (God of the armies of heaven). In other words, she was saying You are my Protector — placing herself under His authority. Because she is praying so fervently and her mouth is not moving Eli, the high priest, accuses her of being drunk. However, Hannah comes under natural and civil authority and addresses Eli in a humble way.

Eli who had authority because he had the position — title as high priest; exercise his authority by blessing her with a Word or promise from God ... telling her to go in peace and may the God of Israel grant her request. Hannah placed herself under the authority of the Word that was spoken by Eli and her countenance changed. She was no longer sad, but rejoicing. Hannah models how we can regain the joy of fellowship in the house of the Lord, when we pour out our heart to the Lord in prayer and received His Word with faith. The next morning, she goes to the temple with her husband and worship the Lord.

Now, after Samuel is born, she weans him and gives him to the Lord, just as, she had vowed. Samuel is about three years old. He was placed under the authority of God from birth by his mother, Samuel was a Nazirite like Samson from birth. Samuel stayed under the authority of God

(spiritual, natural, and civil authority) all his life, even though he grew up in an environment of wickedness. Eli's sons, **Hophni and Phinehas**, were known as notoriously wicked priests. Because Eli didn't correct his sons and have them come under the Principle of Authority, his family would be cut off from the office of high priest (1 Samuel 2:27–33).

Eli had dual accountability. He was their father and their high priest — they worked for him. Eli was a poor father and a bad boss. He honored his sons more than God according to scripture. Now, if Eli had been more afraid of offending God and less afraid of offending his sons, he would have corrected them. Both of Eli's sons died the same day in battle and upon hearing of their death, Eli falls back off his chair and breaks his neck ... dying.

God raises up Samuel to become judge, priest and prophet. Actually, Samuel functions as the last judge and the first prophet. His ministry leads to revival in Israel; return of the Ark and defeat of the Philistines.

Now, because the people longed for an earthly king (monarchy), God has Samuel to anoint Saul as king of Israel. Saul starts off well; but ends up disobeying God, not submitting to the authority of God and the Word of God; therefore, he loses his position as king and protection from God. The kingship leaves his family line because of sin; this transition of kingship is recorded in 1 Samuel 15, especially 1 Samuel 15:22–23:

²² *So Samuel said:*

*“Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices,
As in obeying the voice of the LORD?
Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice,
And to heed than the fat of rams.*

²³ *For rebellion is as the sin of ^[a]witchcraft,
And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.
Because you have rejected the word of the LORD,
He also has rejected you from being king.” (NKJV)*

After rejecting Saul, God commissioned Samuel to go and anoint one of Jesse's sons ... the anointing goes to the youngest son who is a shepherd boy, David. David is a young man who has placed himself under the authority of God and God's Word. Notice what he tells Goliath in 1 Samuel 17:41–47:

⁴¹ *The Philistine started walking toward David, with his shield bearer walking in front of him. He kept coming closer, ⁴² and when he got a good look at David, he was filled with scorn for him because he was just a nice, good-looking boy. ⁴³ He said to David, “What's that stick for? Do you think I'm a dog?” And he called down curses from his god on David. ⁴⁴ “Come on,” he challenged David, “and I will give your body to the birds and animals to eat.”*

⁴⁵ *David answered, “You are coming against me with sword, spear, and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the Israelite armies, which you have defied.*

⁴⁶ *This very day the LORD will put you in my power; I will defeat you and cut off your head. And I will give the bodies of the Philistine soldiers to the birds and animals to eat. Then the whole world*

will know that Israel has a God,⁴⁷ and everyone here will see that the LORD does not need swords or spears to save his people. He is victorious in battle, and he will put all of you in our power.” (NIV)

He also was under natural authority, the authority of his father according to 1 Samuel 17:17–20:

¹⁷ Then Jesse said to his son David, “Take now for your brothers an ephah of this dried grain and these ten loaves, and run to your brothers at the camp.¹⁸ And carry these ten cheeses to the captain of their thousand, and see how your brothers fare, and bring back news of them.”¹⁹ Now Saul and they and all the men of Israel were in the Valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines.

²⁰ So David rose early in the morning, left the sheep with a keeper, and took the things and went as Jesse had commanded him. And he came to the camp as the army was going out to the fight and shouting for the battle. (NKJV)

And lastly, he was under civil authority ... he served in Saul’s court, 1 Samuel 16:17–21:

¹⁷ So Saul said to his servants, ^[b]“Provide me now a man who can play well, and bring him to me.”

¹⁸ Then one of the servants answered and said, “Look, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, who is skillful in playing, a mighty man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, and a handsome person; and the LORD is with him.”

¹⁹ Therefore Saul sent messengers to Jesse, and said, “Send me your son David, who is with the sheep.”²⁰ And Jesse took a donkey loaded with bread, a skin of wine, and a young goat, and sent them by his son David to Saul.²¹ So David came to Saul and stood before him. And he loved him greatly, and he became his armorbearer. (NKJV)

Because of David’s submission to spiritual, natural and civil authority, he was protected many times by the Most High God, especially when Saul tried to kill him. David expresses what he is going through and his gratitude to God for deliverance in the many Psalms he penned.

Psalms really expresses his confidence in God as he speaks of the trouble he was facing from his enemies. The Psalm also expresses his desire for the Lord, especially v. 4:

*One thing I have desired of the LORD,
That will I seek:
That I may dwell in the house of the LORD
All the days of my life,
To behold the beauty of the LORD,
And to inquire in His temple. (NKJV)*

In Psalm 34 David praises the Lord for delivering him from King Abimelech when he went to Gath, fleeing from Saul. He encourages the readers and listeners to give praise and thanks to God; for in a time of trouble or need He will deliver you.

III. Purpose/Goal: To actualize biblical concepts/truths for successful Christian living

- A. Set under authority (Luke 7:1–11)
- B. Know the difference between position of authority and person in authority
- C. Exercise authority for the good of others

IV. Practical Application

- A. Remain “set under” authority — spiritual, natural, and civil
- B. Use your spiritual authority to pray for those in authority (1 Timothy 2:1–6)

THE SESSION ENDED PRAYING FOR THOSE IN AUTHORITY!!!