

**1 AND 2 CHRONICLES: GAINING DIRECTION OUT OF THE AIMLESSNESS OF APOSTASY**  
**Part I: Gaining Direction From God's Work In Our History From Furthest Antiquity, 1 Chronicles 1-9**  
**B. Gaining Direction From Noting God's INTERACTION With Past Groups In The Faith, 1 Chronicles 4-8**  
**8. Gaining Direction By Noting God's Work With The Tribe Of Benjamin**  
**(1 Chronicles 7:6-12 et al.)**

**I. Introduction**

- A. Though God wants men to take responsible leadership as we learned in our last lesson on the tribe of Issachar, such oversight should be considerate, not cruel toward subordinates.
- B. The history of God's dealings with the tribe of Benjamin reveals the need for leaders not to be cruel:

**II. Gaining Direction By Noting God's Work With The Tribe Of Benjamin, 1 Chronicles 7:6-12 et al.**

- A. 1 Chronicles 7:6-12 repeatedly notes that the men of the tribe of Benjamin were "heads [of the house] of their fathers, mighty men of valor," revealing they were valiant leaders and warriors, 7:7b, 9b and 11b.
- B. Though valiant in leadership and war, Scripture reveals that at times they were also wickedly cruel:
  - 1. Jacob's Genesis 49:27 (ESV) prediction of his youngest son, Benjamin noted his descendants would be like a "ravenous wolf, in the morning devouring the prey and at evening dividing the spoil."
  - 2. Hence, they would be "successful in war, but also cruel," Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978 ed., fn.
- C. The history of the tribe reflects how this prediction by the patriarch Jacob came to pass (as follows):
  - 1. On the one hand, under Deborah and Barak, the men of Benjamin helped overcome the Canaanites (Judges 5:14), and their marksmanship in war was legendary, cf. Judges 20:15-16.
  - 2. However, vile men in Benjamin sexually abused a concubine of a Levite, killing her in the process, an atrocity that led to civil war where the other eleven tribes nearly annihilated Benjamin, Judges 19-20.
  - 3. Also, king Saul was of the tribe of Benjamin, and he had a very mixed record of good leadership and success in war followed by faithless cruelty toward the innocent (with eventual personal defeat):
    - a. Initially, Saul from the tribe of Benjamin (1 Sam. 9:1-2) was anointed king (1 Sam. 9:27-10:1) and was used of God to lead Israel to overcome the nation's wicked, threatening foes, 1 Samuel 11:1-15.
    - b. However, Saul failed to obey God's directive from the prophet Samuel regarding his need to wait for Samuel to offer a burnt offering, and he unbiblically offered the sacrifice himself, 1 Samuel 13:8-12.
    - c. Accordingly, Samuel predicted God would replace Saul with another man after God's own heart who would (generally) submit to the Lord's leading and obey God for blessing, 1 Samuel 13:13-14.
    - d. When that replacement in the form of the future king David was anointed and blessed by God (1 Samuel 16:1, 13), Saul became jealous and repeatedly sought to kill David, 1 Sam. 18:7-11, 29.
    - e. Eventually, Saul's lack of faith and obedience to God led to his loss of God's help, and he ended up committing suicide in battle with the Philistines, 1 Samuel 31:1-5.
- D. Yet, **by God's GRACE**, another man from Benjamin, the Apostle Paul, **began** as a *cruel persecutor* of innocent Christians only to end up nurturing them as an apostle, writing nearly half of the New Testament and becoming the most effective missionary for Christ in Church History!
  - 1. The Apostle Paul, whose initial name was Saul, was from the tribe of Benjamin (Acts 9:1; Phil. 1:1; 3:4-5), began as an ardent persecutor of the Christian Church, Acts 7:59-8:3 with 1 Timothy 1:12-13.
  - 2. However, in **grace**, Christ intercepted Saul while he was headed to Damascus to find and persecute Christians, and Paul was converted to Christ in the process, Acts 9:1-19, 20.
  - 3. Saul's name was changed to "Paul" (Acts 13:9, 13), and he was sent as an Apostle of Christ to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15-16; 1 Timothy 1:1), becoming a very nurturing Apostle (cf. 1 Thess. 2:7-8).
  - 4. Paul wrote at least 13 of the New Testament's 27 books we have (as we do not know who authored the Epistle to the Hebrews), and evangelized a large part of the Roman Empire (Romans 15:19) before dying as a martyr for the Christian faith that he had once so cruelly persecuted, 2 Timothy 4:6, 16!

***Lesson:*** (1) *Though the men of Benjamin were noble, successful leaders in war, they also tended to be cruel toward innocent, vulnerable people.* (2) *Yet, by God's grace and the work of the Holy Spirit, Paul from the tribe of Benjamin revealed such cruelty could be overcome to make one a great, gentle leader!*

***Application:*** *May we men lead responsibly, but in the HOLY SPIRIT'S power, that our responsibility be tempered by gentleness and kindness toward weak, vulnerable, innocent subordinates and other people!*