

Oneness in Christ: Lesson #2 Causes of Disunity

Memory Verse

Proverbs 9:10 (NKJV) *“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”*

Disobedience led to disunity between themselves and God.

Deuteronomy 4:5–6 (NKJV) *“Surely I have taught you statutes and judgments, just as the Lord my God commanded me, that you should act according to them in the land which you go to possess. Therefore be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.’*

Deuteronomy 28:1–6 (NKJV) *“Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the Lord your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. ² And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the Lord your God: ³ ‘Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the country. ⁴ ‘Blessed shall be the fruit of your body, the produce of your ground and the increase of your herds, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks. ⁵ ‘Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. ⁶ ‘Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out.*

“Return, O Backsliding Children”

The history of the people of Israel is filled with stories of disobedience and trouble, followed by a return to God and obedience.

Jeremiah 3:12–13 (NKJV) *Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say: ‘Return, backsliding Israel,’ says the LORD; ‘I will not cause My anger to fall on you. For I am merciful,’ says the LORD; ‘I will not remain angry forever. Only acknowledge your iniquity, That you have transgressed against the LORD your God, And have scattered your charms To alien deities under every green tree, And you have not obeyed My voice,’ says the LORD.*

Jeremiah 3:14–15 (NKJV) *“Return, O backsliding children,” says the Lord; “for I am married to you. I will take you, one from a city and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion. ¹⁵ And I will give you shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.*

***Jeremiah 3:22** (NKJV) *“Return, you backsliding children, And I will heal your backslidings.” “Indeed we do come to You, For You are the Lord our God.*

Hosea 14:4 (NKJV) *“I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely, For My anger has turned away from him.*

Hosea 5:5 (NKJV) *The pride of Israel testifies to his face; Therefore Israel and Ephraim stumble in their iniquity; Judah also stumbles with them.*

Kick Each Other

I’ve heard when threatened by wolves, thoroughbred horses will form a circle with their heads together and, with their back legs kick at the enemy, donkeys on the other hand will do just the opposite; they will circle with their heads facing out and kick each other.

Proverbs 26:20 (NKJV) *Where there is no wood, the fire goes out; And where there is no talebearer, strife ceases.*

1 Timothy 5:13 (NKJV) *And besides they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, and not only idle but also gossips and busybodies, saying things which they ought not.*

Right in His Own Eyes

Judges 17:6 (NKJV) *In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.*

Judges 2:11–13 (NKJV) *Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served the Baals; ¹² and they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt; and they followed other gods from among the gods of the people who were all around them, and they bowed down to them; and they provoked the Lord to anger. ¹³ They forsook the Lord and served Baal and the Ashtoreths.*

Judges 3:5–7 (NKJV) *Thus the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. And they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons; and they served their gods. So the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD. They forgot the LORD their God, and served the Baals and Asherahs.*

2 Corinthians 6:14–15 (NKJV) *Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? ¹⁵ And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?*

“The Lord had through Moses set before His people the result of unfaithfulness. By refusing to keep His covenant, they would cut themselves off from the life of God, and His blessing could not come upon them. At times these warnings were heeded, and rich blessings were bestowed upon the Jewish nation and through them upon surrounding peoples. But more often in their history they forgot God and lost sight of their high privilege as His representatives.”—Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 20, 21.

The Division of the Hebrew Nation

1 Kings 11:1–3 (NKJV) *But King Solomon loved many foreign women, as well as the daughter of Pharaoh: women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites—²from the nations of whom the Lord had said to the children of Israel, “You shall not intermarry with them, nor they with you. Surely they will turn away your hearts after their gods.” Solomon clung to these in love.³ And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart.*

1 Kings 11:11 (NKJV) *Therefore the Lord said to Solomon, “Because you have done this, and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant.*

1 Kings 12:3–6 (NKJV) *that they sent and called him. Then Jeroboam and the whole assembly of Israel came and spoke to Rehoboam, saying,⁴ “Your father made our yoke heavy; now therefore, lighten the burdensome service of your father, and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you.”⁵ So he said to them, “Depart for three days, then come back to me.” And the people departed.⁶ Then King Rehoboam consulted the elders who stood before his father Solomon while he still lived, and he said, “How do you advise me to answer these people?”*

Schism in Corinth

***John 13:35** (NKJV) *By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”*

1 Corinthians 1:10–13 (NKJV) *Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.¹¹ For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe’s household, that there are contentions among you.¹² Now I say*

*this, that each of you says, “I am of Paul,” or “I am of Apollos,” or “I am of Cephas,” or “I am of Christ.”¹³ Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? *Romans 16:17–18* (NKJV) *Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them.*

2 Timothy 2:23–24 (NKJV) *But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife.²⁴ And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient,*

Titus 3:10–11 (NKJV) *Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition,¹¹ knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned.*

Philippians 2:2–4 (NKJV) *Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy,² fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.³ Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.⁴ Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.*

“Wolves Will Come”

Acts 20:28–31 *Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.*

Ezekiel 3:17 (NKJV) *“So you, son of man: I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore you shall hear a word from My mouth and warn them for Me.⁸ When I say to the wicked, ‘O wicked man, you shall surely die!’ and you do not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand.⁹ Nevertheless if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul.*