

# The Rechabites

**Introduction.** Throughout the prophets, God uses object lessons to illustrate spiritual truths. In Jeremiah 35, the Rechabites were used as a rebuke to the Israelites for their unfaithfulness to God.

They were a separatist group, stemming from Jonadab (or Jehonadab, c. 840 B.C.; cf. 2 Kings 10:15-23). Desiring to return to the simplicity of the nomadic life, they banned all idle occupations. As relations of the Kenites, they were kindred of Jethro, Moses' father-in-law (cf. Judges 1:16; 1 Chronicles 2:55). Their ancestor Jonadab was prominent in purging the northern kingdom of Baal worship in the time of Jehu (c. 840 B.C.). The Rechabites lived in the southern deserts (1 Samuel 15:6) and in Israelite territory (Judges 4:17; 5:24). With the fall of the northern kingdom, they moved south into Judah.

We live under Christ's covenant and we have made a commitment to follow God. The Rechabites were used to show the sin of the Israelites, and they can also help us see our responsibilities before the Lord.

## I. ***Their Test (vss. 1-5)***

- A. We too will fall into trials but they are not from God (James 1:2-4, 12-15).
- B. God does not tempt, but He examines the heart (Jeremiah 17:10 20:12).
- C. God will protect us in trial (Revelation 3:10, 1 Corinthians 10:13).

## II. ***Their Obedience (vss. 6-11)***

- A. You cannot pick and choose commandments (1 Samuel 15:22).
- B. We are either obeying God or Satan (Romans 6:16).
- C. We must be willing to bring everything into subjection (2 Corinthians 10:5).

## III. ***Their Example (vss. 12-17)***

- A. Christ is our example (John 13:15; 1 Peter 2:21).
- B. The apostles are our examples (1 Corinthians 11:1; Philippians 3:17).
- C. The Old Testament worthies are also our examples (Hebrews 12:1).

## IV. ***Their Reward (vss. 18-19)***

- A. If we live righteously we have a sure reward (Proverbs 11:18).
- B. In Christ, we have all spiritual blessings (Ephesians 1:3).
- C. We must endure to the end (Revelation 2:10).

**Conclusion.** Are you following the example of the Rechabites or of the Israelites? We should fear lest we fall short (Hebrews 4:1). Paul warned

Timothy of a time when many will turn aside to fables having itching ears (2 Timothy 4:3-4). Like the Rechabites, you need to be faithful to God's covenant. If you are ready to become a member of God's chosen people, we will give you the chance to obey. If you have not been faithful to the covenant to which you have been called, respond while we sing our invitation song.