

Jeremiah 35:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thus have we obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab our father in all that he hath charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, nor our daughters;

Analysis

Thus have we obeyed the voice of Jonadab (לִקְרָא וַיִּשְׁמָעוּ shama'nu b'qol)—The verb shama' means both 'hear' and 'obey,' the same word God used of Israel's covenant obligation (Deuteronomy 6:4, the Shema). **To drink no wine all our days**—The abstinence from יַיִן (yayin) wasn't Nazirite asceticism (Numbers 6) but memorial discipline, keeping alive the memory of wilderness dependence.

The comprehensive obedience—**we, our wives, our sons, nor our daughters**—demonstrates multi-generational covenant faithfulness. What Judah failed to pass to their children (knowledge of Yahweh, Jeremiah 9:3-6), the Rechabites successfully transmitted: a living tradition of obedience. Their fidelity magnifies Judah's failure—if pagans' descendants keep ancestral commands, how much more should covenant children obey the living God?

Historical Context

This testimony occurred during the Babylonian siege (605-586 BC), when the Rechabites fled to Jerusalem for refuge (v. 11). Even under existential threat—war, displacement, famine—they maintained their ancestral vows, demonstrating that true obedience persists through crisis, not just prosperity.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What spiritual disciplines have you maintained 'all your days' with the Rechabites' consistency, or do you obey God only when convenient?
2. How effectively are you transmitting obedience to the next generation—wives, sons, daughters—or does faithfulness die with you?
3. Why do you think the Rechabites' obedience to a fallible ancestor shames many Christians' selective obedience to an infallible God?

Interlinear Text

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|---------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|-------|
| וַנִּשְׁמָע ע | בְּקוֹל וּל | יְהוֹנָדָב ב | בְּנֵי יוֹנָדָב | רַכָּב | אָבִי יוֹנָדָב | |
| Thus have we obeyed | the voice | of Jonadab | our sons | of Rechab | our father | |
| H8085 | H6963 | H3082 | H1121 | H7394 | H1 | |
| לְכָל ר | אֲשֶׁר | צִוָּנוּ | לִבְלֹתָ י | שִׁתּוֹת | יַיִן | כָּל |
| H3605 | H834 | in all that he hath charged | H1115 | us to drink | no wine | H3605 |
| | | H6680 | | H8354 | H3196 | |
| יָמֵינוּ | אֲנִי חָנוּ | נָשֵׁינוּ | בְּנֵי יוֹנָדָב | וּבָנֵינוּ: | | |
| all our days | H587 | we our wives | our sons | nor our daughters | | |
| H3117 | | H802 | H1121 | H1323 | | |

Additional Cross-References

Colossians 3:20 (Parallel theme): Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.

Proverbs 6:20 (Parallel theme): My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

Proverbs 4:10 (Parallel theme): Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many.

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