

### The Book of Joshua

*"The period of history covered by Joshua, Judges, and Ruth is transitional and therefore pivotal. These books bridge the period between the end of Israel's wilderness wanderings and the establishment of her monarchy...These three books comprise a unit of Israel's history and they this deserve to be studied together."*

**Joshua** – The book of conquests. Israel has been under the leadership of Moses through the wilderness for 40 years. As his minister for that time, Joshua is well qualified to take the lead of the people (Ex. 24:13; Jos. 1:1). The book details the conquering of Canaan (1:1-13:7), the division of the land among the tribes (13:8-22:34), and Joshua's final speech to Israel as her leader (23-24). The book of Joshua covers about 25-30 years of Israel's history.

**Judges** – The book of unfaithfulness. 2:16-19 is the key passage of the book. Judges picks up where Joshua left off and discusses the fact that Israel did not drive out the inhabitants of Canaan like they had been instructed by Moses and Joshua. The book details the events of 13 of Israel's judges whom God would appoint when Israel would repent and seek Him.

- 1:1-3:6 discusses the fact that Joshua and those who served with him died and the following generation was unfaithful to God. 1:27-36 reveals that Israel did not drive out the Canaanites as instructed. 3:1-6 reveals that in time Israel started to intermarry with them and worship their gods.
- Othniel (3:7-11). 40 years of peace after 8 years of oppression from Mesopotamia.
- Ehud (3:12-30). 80 years of peace after 18 years of oppression from Moab.
- Shamgar (3:31). No details given.
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- Abimelech (9). 3 years as judge.
- Tola (10:1-2). 23 years as judge.
- Jair (10:3-5). 22 years as judge.
- Jephthah (10:6-12:7). 6 years after 18 years of oppression from Philistia and Ammon.
- Ibzan (12:8-10). 7 years as judge.
- Elon (12:11-12). 10 years as judge.
- Abdon (12:13-15). 8 years as judge.
- Samson (13-16). 20 years as judge after 40 years of oppression from Philistia.
- Chapters 17-21 record the further decline in the twelve tribes and the fact that there was no visible leadership (17:6; 21:25).
- The book covers about 410 years of Israel's history.

**Ruth** – The book of ancestry. There is no specific date given. Many commentators feel it belongs somewhere around Judges 12 or 13. Ruth is one of only two books in the Bible bearing a woman's name. The purpose of the book is to trace the lineage of David which ultimately led to the Christ. Ruth was a Gentile (Moabitess) who married into the seed-line of Christ (Boaz from Bethlehemjudah).

## **Joshua 1**

1:1-9 – Reassurance of God's presence with the new leader.

- Verses 1-5 address the extent of the land inheritance for Israel.
- Verses 6-9 address God's presence with Joshua throughout the journey.
  - Notice the terms: strong, courage (v. 6); strong, very courageous, observe to do (v. 7); meditate on the law (v. 8); prosper, good success (v. 8); strong, good courage, not afraid (v. 9).
  - It takes courage and strength to do the right thing, but God has promised to be with us. *"Courage is not the absence of fear, but the presence of faith."*

1:10-18 – Preparation for entering the land.

- A reminder is given to the three tribes that were Promised Land on the Eastern side of the Jordan River.
- Numbers 32:1-5.

## **Joshua 2**

Two men are sent to Jericho to spy out the land and they enter the house of Rahab.

The views on these events are interesting!

- *"It does not appear that the spies entered Rahab's house with any evil intent."*
- *"As soon as these men hit town, they made a bee-line to the most popular whorehouse in town – not to do anything wrong?"*

This passage causes a lot of discussion concerning Rahab's lie and her mentions in the New Testament (Heb. 11; Jas. 2).

- We do know that she did lie – 2:4-5.
- For what was she commended?
  - She received the spies with peace – Hebrews 11:31.
  - She received the messengers and sent them out another way – James 2:25.
- Why did she receive the spies? Joshua 2:8-11.
- She showed them a "kindness" (v. 12) by saving their lives and she, in turn, requests a kindness from them.

2:17-21 – The spies instruct her on what to do in order to save her family when Jericho fell.

## **Joshua 3**

Israel crosses the Jordan River.

3:1-6 – Preparations are made for the crossing.

- They were to be led by the Ark of the Covenant, the priests, and Levites (v. 3).  
God has always had specific orders for His people!

3:7-8 – One purpose of this event was to "exalt" Joshua in the eyes of the people. It would serve as a comfort for people who were following a new leader.

3:9-17 – The order to cross the river.

## **Joshua 4**

Israel crosses the Jordan and sets up a memorial.

4:1-9 – The command to gather the stones and the reason behind it.

4:10-14 – Joshua is exalted in the eyes of the people.

4:15-24 - The river returns and Joshua speak to the people. Judges 2:10. When we are dead and gone will our children and grandchildren have a strong faith that began at home?

### **Joshua 5**

5:1 - The Canaanites hear of the crossing and lose heart.

5:2-12 - The generation who had been born in the wilderness are circumcised.

5:13-15 - Joshua meets the Commander of the army of the Lord. There are many who believe that this was a manifestation of then pre-incarnate Christ. This is the same Angel of the Lord that we read of in other places in the OT. Exodus 3:2; 23:20, 23; Numbers 22:31; Judges 6:11-12, 20-22; Judges 13; Daniel 3, 6.n (1) He accepted Joshua's worship and (2) His presence made the place holy. Revelation 22:8-9 reveals that angels did not accept worship and nothing is ever said of angels making the ground where they are standing holy.

### **Joshua 6**

6:1-7 - The plan for taking Jericho is laid out.

6:8-21 - The plan is enacted and the city is taken. The "accursed" thing is something we should understand (7:21). All the things from Jericho were to either (1) be utterly destroyed (6:21) or (2) be devoted to God (6:19). 6:21 is a difficult verse for many to accept. How could a loving God kill "innocent" children. Genesis 15:16; Leviticus 18:24-29.

6:22-25 - Rahab and her family are saved from the destruction.

6:26-27 - A curse is pronounced on anyone who attempted to rebuild the city. 1 Kings 16:29-34 reveals that King Ahab saw this prophecy fulfilled.

### **Joshua 7**

The sin of Achan and its effect on Israel.

7:1-9 - Israel is defeated at Ai and Joshua responds. The items that were taken by Achan are listed in 7:20-21. They were told before the battle that certain items were to be devoted to the Lord (6:19). The word "accursed" in 7:1 could be literally translated as set aside or devoted and is translated as such in the ASV. The text reveals that Ai was small and Israel sent between 2,000-3,000 men for the battle. Israel was defeated and 36 men died as a result of Achan's sin.

7:10-19 records God's instructions on how to handle the situation. Joshua was to go from tribe to house, to family until the guilty party was discovered. The concept of public confession is seen in verse 19. James 5:16 teaches the same principle.

7:20-26 - Achan confesses and the penalty is enforced. Israel sets up another heap of stones that would serve as a reminder of the seriousness of sin. Achor means "trouble."

### **Joshua 8**

The defeat of Ai and Joshua reads the book of the law to the people.

8:1-20 - The plan to take the city is an ambush. Some of the Israelites were to draw the men out of the city and then 30,000 Israelites would come in from behind and burn the city down. Why would God destroy all these people? Leviticus 18:24-29.

8:21-29 - The results of the campaign against Ai.

8:30-35 – After the defeat Joshua built an altar, they offered sacrifices, and the law of Moses was read to the people. The “blessing and cursing” passage is Deuteronomy 28:2, 15, 45. The reading of this passage and the events with Achan served as a reminder that God means what He says. The audience included everyone (8:35).

### **Joshua 9**

The Gibeonites play a trick on Israel so they will not be defeated in battle.

The people of Gibeon had “heard of the fame of the Lord and all that He had done” (9:9-10).

The problem with this situation is stated in verses 14-15.

The scheme is found out within a few days (v. 16).

Israel was permitted to make a treaty with nations that were far away (Deut. 20:10-15).

However, the inhabitants of Canaan were not to be spared (Deut. 20:16-18).

Israel keeps the covenant to not destroy the Gibeonites, but they were made a workforce for Israel (9:27). The reason stated for not destroying them is in verse 19.

### **Joshua 10**

Five kings make an alliance in an attempt to defeat the Gibeonites (1-27).

This chapter also records Israel’s campaign against Southern Canaan (28-43).

Perhaps the most well-known event from this chapter is the sun standing still until Israel had defeated the enemy.

JB Coffman quotes two theories that exist:

1. This is simply poetic language.
2. There was a total eclipse of the sun.

Another commentator put forth the idea that God caused an “atmospheric reflection” that prolonged the visibility of the sun.

Verses 13-14 destroy all of the above theories.

Notice that the success of Joshua’s efforts is tied directly to his obedience to God (40-43).

### **Joshua 11**

The kings of the North create an alliance to fight against Israel.

Verse 15 again emphasizes the necessity of obedience.

Verse 23 is extremely important!

### **Joshua 12**

A review of the areas conquered by Moses (1-6) and Joshua (7-24).

Moses’ conquests gained land for Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh (v. 6).

Joshua’s conquests covered from Kadesh-Barnea in the South to Hermon in the North.

### **Joshua 13**

This is a record of the land that remained to be conquered and the land that was divided among the tribes East of the Jordan.

Verse 13 is significant.

### **Joshua 14-15**

A record of the inheritance of Caleb and the tribe of Judah.

15:63 is significant.

### **Joshua 16-17**

The inheritance of Joseph’s children, Ephraim and Manasseh.

16:10 and 17:12-13 are significant.

### **Joshua 18**

Seven tribes had not yet received their inheritance (1-2).

Three men from each remaining tribe were to go survey the land and bring a record back to Joshua (3-10).

Verses 11-28 show the inheritance of Benjamin.

### **Joshua 19**

1-9 – The inheritance of Simeon. Their land was within Judah because there was enough room.

10-16 – The inheritance of Zebulun

17-23 – The inheritance of Issachar

24-31 – The inheritance of Asher

32-39 – The inheritance of Naphtali

40-48 – The inheritance of Dan

49-51 – The inheritance of Joshua

### **Joshua 20**

The cities of refuge were safe-havens for people who accidentally killed someone.

Numbers 35 contains Moses' instructions to Israel on this subject.

What does the Bible say about capital punishment?

- Numbers 35:16-21
- Romans 13:1-4 (Acts 25:10-11)

### **Joshua 21**

The inheritance of the Levites. The sons of Levi were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari (Num. 3:17). The responsibilities of each family are recorded in Numbers 3:21-4:33).

21:43-45 is extremely important! God's promise to Abraham has been fulfilled.

### **Joshua 22**

Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh return to the Eastern side of Jordan.

Numbers 32 records their request for a larger portion of land and the fear that Moses had once they got to the land.

They had done all that was required of them in the conquering of the land (v. 2-3).

They are admonished to keep the commandments of the Lord and sent on their way (v. 5-9).

Trouble arises when it is found out that they built a great altar by the Jordan as they were getting ready to cross.

Two dangers are brought forth in this event:

- Hear-say – v. 11.
- Presumptuous judging – v. 16.

The actual motivation for the altar is stated in verses 24-28.

### **Joshua 23**

Joshua's farewell address.

He begins by reminding them of God's activity on their behalf (v. 3-5).

Based on this knowledge they should remain faithful to the Lord and not become mixed up with the inhabitants of the land (v. 11-13).

He reassures them of the goodness and severity of God (v. 14-16).

### **Joshua 24**

Joshua renews the covenant with Israel and puts a choice before them.

He begins with a historical reminder of God's deliverance of the people of Israel (v. 2-5).

He reminds them of God's actions throughout the wilderness (v. 6-7).

He reminds them of the conquest of the land (v. 8-13).

Based on all this information they had a choice to make (v. 14-15). Good, strong leadership will set the right example and allow the followers to make their own choices. We cannot force anyone to do that which is right, but we can encourage them to make right decisions.

In verses 16-18 they state that they will follow God.

Verses 19-25 contain a discussion between Joshua and the people about the fact that you cannot serve God and gods. This was the ultimate downfall of Israel in the future.

2 Kings 17:7-12

The death of Joshua and Eleazar the priest is recorded in verses 29-33.

This is a transitional period in Israel's history and Judges will pick up at this point.

## **A Study Outline of Judges**

**Judges** – The book of unfaithfulness. 2:16-19 is the key passage of the book. Judges picks up where Joshua left off and discusses the fact that Israel did not drive out the inhabitants of Canaan like they had been instructed by Moses and Joshua. The book details the events of 13 of Israel's judges whom God would appoint when Israel would repent and seek Him.

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### **Judges 1**

Further conquest of the land. This chapter also records the Israelite's failure to drive out certain inhabitants of the land.

1:1-7 - Judah and Simeon defeat Adoni-Bezek.

1:8-10 - Judah takes Jerusalem, the South, and Hebron.

1:11-15 - Othniel defeats Kirjath-Sepher.

1:16-21 - Judah and Simeon conquer the south land. Benjamin fails to drive out all the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

1:22-26 - Bethel is captured by the house of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh.

1:27-36 - Repeated failures of Israel to drive out the Canaanites. Verse 28 shows a spirit of compromise in Israel. They were completely disobeying God's revealed law - Deuteronomy 7:1-5.

### **Judges 2**

2:1-6 - The Angel of the Lord speaks to Joshua and the people. He spoke of what God had done, what God had promised, what God had expected, their disobedience, and their punishment.

2:7-10 - The death of Joshua and the leaders of his generation. Every generation must be grounded in the fundamentals of the faith. The Bible places the responsibility of teaching on the shoulders of the parents (Deut. 6:6-7; Eph. 6:4).

2:11-15 - Israel's idolatry and God's anger. When people do not know God's will they will do that which is wrong.

2:16-19 - The summation of the cycle of the judges. Joshua's influence lasted after his death, but the judge's influence died when he died (v. 19).

2:20-23 - The consequences of their disobedience.

### **Judges 3**

3:1-6 - The heathen nations that Israel did not drive out. Verse 6 shows that what God said would happen, happened. Deuteronomy 7:3-4.

3:7-11 - Othneil, the first judge. 8 years of oppression by the Mesopotamians. With Othneil Israel had rest for 40 years.

3:12-30 - Ehud, the second judge. 18 years of oppression from Moab. 2 Chronicles 7:14. Verses 15-29 record Ehud killing Eglon and Israel defeating 10,000 men of Moab. 80 years of peace followed this battle

3:31 – Shamgar, the third judge. Killed 600 Philistines with no length of his reign mentioned.

#### **Judges 4**

4:1-3 – Israel oppressed by Canaan for 20 years.

4:4-16 – Deborah serves as fourth judge for Israel and commissions Barak to fight against Sisera, the captain of Canaan's army. Verses 14-16 show the result of the battle.

4:17-24 – Sisera escapes the battle but is killed by Jael with a tent peg to the temple.

#### **Judges 5**

Deborah and Barak's song of praise for Israel's victory.

5:2 stresses the need for good leadership.

40 years of rest for Israel.

#### **Judges 6-8**

6:1-6 – Israel oppresses by Midianites for 7 years. Their enemies come from all around and greatly oppress them.

6:7-10 – A prophet speaks to Israel stating what God had done for Israel and how Israel responded.

6:11-8:35 – Gideon, the 5<sup>th</sup> judge of Israel.

6:13 – Gideon's response to God's call is interesting!

6:15-27 – The Angel of the Lord confirms that God is with Gideon. He is instructed to tear down the altars of Baal that are his father's.

6:28-32 – Gideon's name is changed to Jerubbaal because of his actions and the response.

6:33-40 – A coalition is made against Jerubbaal. He seeks a sign from God that he will be victorious in the battle.

7:1-8 – Gideon's army is narrowed to 300 men. Verse 2 shows the reason why 32,000 men were too many. The 22,000 fearful are eliminated (v. 3). 9,700 who were not paying attention are eliminated (v. 4-6).

7:9-23 – Fear becomes apparent in Gideon again (v. 10-11). Gideon and the 300 divide into groups and defeat the Midianites.

7:24-25 – The Ephraimites are called to assist. They capture two princes, Oreb and Zeeb.

8:1-21 – Gideon and his 300 pursue the kings of Midian, Zeba and Zalmunna.

8:22-23 – Gideon refuses to be a "ruler" over Israel.

8:24-28 – Gideon uses the gold jewelry of the people to make an "ephod." You can go to [www.jewishencyclopedia.com](http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com) to learn more about the ephod.

8:29-35 – Israel has 40 years of peace in the days of Gideon. Gideon dies and Israel goes into idolatry.

#### **Judges 9**

Abimelech, Gideon's son, becomes the 6th judge of Israel.

Served as judge for 3 years (9:22).

9:1-6 – Abimelech kills his 70 brothers. Power corrupts! His uncles speak for him to the men of Shechem (v. 3).

9:7-21 – The youngest of the 70, Jotham, escaped and speaks a parable against Abimelech (7-15). He applies the parable to them in verses 16-21.



An "evil spirit" comes between Abimelech and Shechem (v. 23). This also happens between Saul and David (1 Sam. 16:14). When a person lives his life in conflict with the will of God there will be conflict that arises. Also, the murder of Gideon's 70 sons must be avenged.

9:22-41 - The men of Shechem are led by Gaal to set up an ambush against Abimelech (26-33). The plot is discovered by Abimelech and he defeats this ambush.

9:42-45 - Abimelech ambushes Shechem, kills the people, and ruined the fields.

9:46-49 - Those who escaped the city were hiding in the temple of a god of Shechem. Abimelech surrounded it with fire and kills 1,000 men and women inside.

9:50-57 - Abimelech pays for his sins. A woman crushed his head with a millstone dropped from a tower. Verses 56-57 illustrate the concept of vengeance belonging to God.

### **Judges 10**

Tola becomes 7th judge of Israel and ruled for 23 years (10:1-2).

Jair becomes 8th judge of Israel and ruled for 22 years (10:3-5).

10:6-18 - Israel departs from God again and asks for another leader.

They served the gods of Syria, Sidon, Moab, Ammon, and Philistia (10:6).

Verses 15-16 display the mercy and love of God.

### **Judges 11**

Jephthah becomes 9th judge of Israel and ruled for 6 years (12:7).

We learn that he was conceived by his father with a harlot and his brothers drove him out of their house (11:1-3).

The Gileadites request his help to fight against Ammon and he agrees as long as he will be made head (v. 9-11).

11:13-28 - The battle between Ammon and Israel is over land that God gave Israel over 300 years before these events (v. 26). God had given Israel this land as recorded in Numbers 21:21-25.

11:29-33 - Jephthah makes a vow for an offering if God will deliver the Ammonites into his hand.

11:34-40 - The vow is kept. This passage has caused a lot of debate as to its exact meaning. Some take it that he literally offered his daughter as a burnt offering. We will consider an alternative view.

- The OT forbids human sacrifice (Deut. 12:31) and it is obvious that Jephthah had knowledge of God (11:14-22).
- Would God have chosen such a leader as would offer to Him human sacrifice?
- If it is to be taken literally that he offered her as a sacrifice, why would she say what she said in verse 37?
- The text also says "she knew no man" (v. 39).
- Human sacrifice would suggest a corrupt Levitical priesthood.
- 1 Samuel 1:10-11, 24-28.
- Jephthah is mentioned in Hebrews 11:32 as one of the heroes of faith.
- She was his only child (v. 34). To dedicate her to a life of perpetual virginity would mean an end of his posterity.

## **Judges 12**

12:1-7 - Jephthah and the Gileadites (descendants of Manasseh – Num. 26:29) fight against Ephraim.

12:8-15 – Three judges:

    Ibzan – 7 years as Israel's 10<sup>th</sup> judge.

    Elon – 10 years as Israel's 11<sup>th</sup> judge.

    Abdon – 8 years as Israel's 12<sup>th</sup> judge.

## **Judges 13**

Chapters 13-16 cover the 20 year reign of Samson.

13:1 points out that there has been 40 years of oppression from the Philistines.

Chapter 13 covers the promise given to Manoah and his wife that they would have a son.

- 13:1-7 - The promise of a son and the revelation that he would be dedicated as a Nazarite.

Numbers 6:1-8 gives 4 requirements of one who took this vow:

1. Separate himself from wine and similar drink (v. 3).
2. Eat nothing that is from the vine, from seed to skin (v. 4).
3. No razor shall come upon his head (v. 5).
4. He shall not go near a dead body (v. 6-8).

The "dead body" issue seems to be an exception made for Samson by God, as he would need to be involved in battles.

- 13:8-14 - The angel instructs Manoah to "be careful" that the requirements be followed (v. 14). Verse 8 should be a prayer that all parents make to God!
- 13:15-25 - Manoah's hospitality and the identity of the "angel."

The one who appeared to them is identified as "The Angel of the Lord" (v. 16). Verse 18 refers to the Angel as "Wonderful." It is a Hebrew adjective meaning, "incomprehensible." Isaiah 9:6 refers to Christ as "Wonderful." This tells us who this Angel of the Lord is! Angel is a Hebrew noun (*malach*) meaning "messenger." Their response to seeing Him (v. 22) tells us clearly who this was.

Verses 24-25 show that God was with him as He had been with the previous judges.

## **Judges 14**

Samson marries a Philistine woman. The text (v. 4) reveals that this marriage was "of the Lord" so he could move against the Philistines. Joshua 13:3 shows that the Philistines were to be driven out of the land by Israel. It appears that Samson was going to do what he wanted, but the Lord would use this as an opportunity to deliver Israel.

- 14:7-9 - Samson goes to meet the woman and kills a lion on the way.
- 14:10-14 - Samson has a wedding party and tells a riddle that comes with a reward if it is solved.
- 14:15-20 - The riddle is solved because the Philistines "plowed with his heifer." In turn he kills 30 Philistines, returns home, and his wife is given to his "best man."

## Judges 15

- 15:1-5 - Samson goes to visit his wife, is forbidden by her father, burns down the grain fields and vineyards of the Philistines.
- 15:6-8 - The Philistines kill Samson's wife and family and he slaughters the Philistines.
- 15:9-20 - Samson devises a plan to kill more Philistines when he is arrested by men of Judah. He kills 1,000 men with a fresh jawbone of a donkey. Notice that he takes the credit for the slaughter (v. 16).

## Judges 16

Samson and Delilah. This chapter further illustrates his bad choice of women!

- 16:1-3 - Samson's lifestyle is further revealed to us here.
- 16:4-5 - Samson "falls" for Delilah but she will be used to find his weakness.
- 16:6-14 - Three attempts are made to discover his weakness:
  1. Bind me with 7 fresh bow strings (v. 7-9).
  2. Bind me with new, unused ropes (v. 10-12).
  3. Weave my hair into the web of the loom (v. 13-14).

How foolish is he??!!

- 16:15-22 - The real secret of his strength is revealed. The Philistines bind him and put out his eyes.
- 16:23-31 - The Philistines throw a party and rejoice that he has been subdued. He killed more in this instant than he did in his entire life! In verse 28 Samson uses three names of God:
  1. Lord - *Adonai* - meaning "my Lord."
  2. God - *Jehovah* - meaning "He who is."
  3. God - *Elohim* - meaning "strong one, powerful one."

The implication is that this is a sincere prayer for God to assist him in this final act.

Hebrews 11:32-34 places Samson with other heroes of faith. It appears that Samson died in service to God in that he destroyed the enemies of God's people.

## Judges 17

A theme that runs throughout chapters 17-21 is that there is no leader in Israel. (17:6; 18:1, 7; 19:1; 21:25).

Chapters 17-18 deal with idolatry in one man's house that eventually spreads to many people.

- 17:1-4 give us greater insight into the moral and spiritual decay of Israel during this time period. You see a thieving son and an idolatrous mother doing things "in the name of the Lord."
- 17:5 - Micah consecrates his son, an Ephraimite, as a priest.
- 17:6 is the key phrase of chapters 17-21 as it is repeated 5 times. A king of God's people had certain requirements laid upon him - Deuteronomy 17:14-20. Civil government exists by the design of God, but that does not mean He approves of the actions of those in power.
- 17:7-13 - Micah "hires" his own priest. Just because a person does a religious act and has a "priest" does not mean that person is right with God (18:31). The text

repeatedly emphasizes that these events are taking place in Micah's house, not God's. It is also important to notice the Levite's response to the offer (v. 11). As a Levite he must have known about the house of God in Shiloh, yet he was hired to serve in a house of idols. This all goes back to verse 6! Shiloh was the site for the Ark of the Covenant and the tabernacle from Joshua's time to Samuel's and is about 10 miles N of Jerusalem.

### **Judges 18**

The idolatry of Micah spreads.

- 18:1-6 - The Danites are still seeking their land inheritance and ask for advice from God through Micah's Levite. Verses 5-6 show the depths of their ignorance.
- 18:7-10 - Notice the emphasis in verse 7. 5 spies go and check on Laish and find that it is "safe, quiet, and secure." The claim is made that "God has given it into your hands" (v. 10). The following verses show that these are not God-fearing people.
- 18:11-26 - 600 men of Dan prepare for battle and go on their way to take Laish. On their journey they stop at Micah's house, take his images, ephod, and priest and go on their way. Notice again the priests compliance with the offer made (v. 20). Verses 21-25 illustrate the concept of "might makes right."
- 18:27-31 - Dan takes Laish for their inheritance. Verse 31 shows the willful sin of the people. Deuteronomy 12 sets forth the laws Israel was to follow when they entered the land.

### **Judges 19**

The emphasis remains on a lack of leadership in Israel (19:1).

- 19:1-15 - A Levite marries a *concubine* who was from Bethlehem Judah, she commits adultery and goes to her father's house for four months. He goes after her, meets her father and stays there for five days. They leave her father's house and spend the night in Gibeah. The Levite's servant wanted to stay the night in Jebus, but it was still controlled by Canaanites (v. 12).
- 19:16-21 - Hospitality is shown to the travelers by an old man from Ephraim.
- 19:22-26 - The men of Gibeah make an advance on the visitors. This scene is very similar to what happened in Sodom (Gen. 19:4-5). *Belial* is from a word that literally means "worthlessness." Their actions show the true meaning of the term. The Levite's concubine is taken and abused all night. It seems at times that sin knows no bounds!
- 19:27-30 - The woman dies at the door and she is cut into twelve pieces, with a piece sent to each tribe of Israel. This whole scene, the rape and the dismemberment, is something that had never "been done or seen" before.

### **Judges 20**

The crime is avenged.

- 20:1-11 - 400,000 soldiers gather, along with all the leaders of the tribes gather to discuss what should be done to the inhabitants of Gibeah.
- 20:12-17 - Messengers are sent throughout the land of Benjamin to identify those who were guilty of the crime. Instead of doing what they should have done, the

Benjamites prepare for war! It is sometimes the case that when we approach a person about sin, instead of repenting, they will get angry and want to fight back.

- 20:18-23 - The Lord instructs Judah to go up first in the battle. Benjamin kills 22,000 Israelites in the first battle.
- 20:24-25 - In a second battle, 18,000 Israelites are killed. Why would God give them permission to go into battle and then allow 40,000 men to be killed?
  1. Perhaps Israel had assumed immediate success because they felt their cause was just. Perhaps they assumed that God was on their side (notice the wording of 20:8-11).
  2. The Bible does not teach fatalism, the belief that everything that happens in the world is planned out by God ahead of time. He does allow certain events to take place for His own purposes.
  3. Israel had prepared 400,000 men to go to battle against 26,700 men. They probably did not feel the need to seek God's advice on whether or not how to handle the situation. The only time they sought God's advice was to find out who should attack first (v. 18).
- 20:26-48 - Israel is finally humbled and seeks God's advice as to whether or not they should return to battle. 25,100 Benjamites are killed in an ambush. Out of the 26,700 warriors only 600 remained (v. 47).

### **Judges 21**

The tribe of Benjamin is rescued from extinction.

- 21:1-7 - Israel had made an oath about not marrying Benjamites, build an altar, and weep because one tribe had been lost.
- 21:8-15 - The people of Jabesh-Gilead did not come out to fight against Benjamin initially, so they are punished by the rest of Israel. Jabesh-Gilead is on the eastern side of the Jordan between the Dead Sea and the Sea of Galilee. The plan was to take the 400 virgin women and give them to Benjamin for wives, but it is not enough for all the men.
- 21:16-23 - The elders of Israel scheme that Benjamin can kidnap women who were dancing at the annual feast in Shiloh.
- 21:24-25 - Israel goes home with no standard of authority except "every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

## An Introduction to Ruth

Time period – 1:1.

Main characters:

Men – Elimelech (1:2).

Mahlon and Chilion (1:2).

Boaz (2:1)

Women – Naomi (1:2), Orpah and Ruth (1:4)

- Elimelech, Naomi, their sons, and Boaz are from the tribe of Ephraim (1:2).
- Ruth and Orpah are Moabites (1:4).

Main lessons from Ruth (JB Coffman's Commentary)

- Ruth emphasizes God's care, concern, and blessing of people in every nation who truly love and worship him.
- The providence of God is not limited by racial origins or national boundaries.
- God is pleased by family loyalty.

### Ruth 1

1:1-5 - Introduced to Elimelech and the sad story of his family.

1:6-18 - Naomi talks to her daughter's-in-law and tries to convince them to go home and remarry.

1:13 - Similar to Job 1:21

We never hear of Orpah again. Ruth's life and lineage is forever changed with her decision to stay with her mother-in-law.

2:12 speaks to Ruth's faith in this decision.

1:19-22 - Naomi and Ruth return to Bethlehem in poverty.

### Ruth 2

2:1-3 - Ruth goes to get food in the field of a man related to her dead father-in-law. The law of Moses made provisions for this type of situation (Deut. 25:5; Lev. 19:9-10). We should not shirk our responsibilities to family either!

2:4-17 - Boaz makes provisions for Ruth. He is shown to be a fair and caring man (2:11-12).

2:18-23 - Ruth informs Naomi of all that has happened and Naomi tells her to stay with the female workers of Boaz.

### Ruth 3

3:1-7 - Naomi devises a plan for Ruth to appeal to Boaz for marriage. There is nothing in the text to indicate that anything immoral was done. Also, 2:11-12 shows that Boaz respected Ruth for her morality and faith.

3:8-13 - The plan is executed. "*Spread thy skirt over me*" was a figure of speech seeking refuge and protection (Eze. 16:8) and carries the same meaning as a hen sheltering her chicks under her wings (Matt. 23:37; Ruth 2:12). Verse 11 also shows that nothing immoral was done in this instance.

3:14-18 - Boaz provides for Ruth and she reports back to Naomi.

#### **Ruth 4**

4:1-5 – Boaz seeks to fulfill the requirement of the Law about selling land to brethren (Lev. 25:25).

4:6-12 – When the relative of Elimelech heard that he needs to also marry Ruth, a Moabitess, he refused.

These actions cleared Boaz to purchase Elimelech's inheritance and marry Ruth.

Boaz is blessed by the elders of the city and they desired that his house be blessed with many children.

Bethlehem and Ephratah is a reference to the same place (Gen. 35:19). This is the location referenced in the prophecy of the birth of Christ (Mic. 5:2).

4:13-22 – Boaz and Ruth marry and have a son, Obed. He would become the grandfather of King David and through them would come the Christ (Matt. 1:5-6).