

A People of the Book
8-Year Curriculum
Year 4, Quarter 2

A Study of
Selected Texts from

Joshua,
Judges,
and Ruth

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Joshua, Judges, Ruth Overview

Introduction

The books of Joshua, Judges and Ruth provide the reader with a historical view of God's relationship with the Israelites from the time they finally enter Canaan until they ask for a king. The books cover the time period of 1400-1100 BC. These books are important to the New Testament Christian because they demonstrate God's faithfulness to fulfill all of his promises and the effects of sin on the chosen nation.

Recommended Study Aids

Schedule

- 1) May 2 – Introduction, Overview of Time Period
- 2) May 9 – Joshua: Rahab & Spies, Crossing Jordan, Circumcision at Shechem

- 3) May 16 – Joshua: Jericho, Ai, Achan, Law at Mt. Ebal

- 4) May 23 – Joshua: Division of Land, Farewell Address
- 5) May 30 – Judges: Background, Apostasy
- 6) June 6 – Judges: Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah, Gideon
- 7) June 13 – Abimelech
- 8) June 20 – Judges: Samson, Civil War
- 9) June 27 – Ruth

Introduction & Chronology

Read Joshua 1-3

Historical Setting

Joshua, Judges and Ruth give the history of the Israelites from their entry into Canaan until the selection of their first king, covering approximately 300 years from 1400 BC until 1100 BC. The descendants of Abraham received the bountiful land of Canaan as their inheritance from the Lord, which throughout most of world history, was sandwiched between opposing world powers. The many small kingdoms that controlled the land politically were extremely wicked, practicing idolatry, religious prostitution and child sacrifice.

Under Joshua's leadership the many kingdoms of Canaan were subdued, but not completely driven out. This proved to be a snare for Israel for the next 600 years until God sent 10 tribes of Israel to destruction at the hands of the Assyrians and Judah into captivity for 70 years in Babylon. During the time of the Judges, these wicked influences caused Israel to go through repeated cycles of apostasy followed by calling on the Lord, repentance and deliverance.

Summary of Books

Joshua

The book of Joshua traces the fulfillment of God's promises to Abraham to make his descendants into a great nation and to give them the land of Canaan as an inheritance (Genesis 12:1-7; 15:1-21). It is a book of victory for God's people as they are led by God's champion, Joshua. Joshua's name is the Hebrew equivalent of the Messiah's Greek name, Jesus. Joshua is a type of Jesus as he leads God's people to claim their inheritance from the Lord. The theme of the book is "Be strong and courageous!"

Judges

The events of Judges immediately follow the time of Joshua's leadership. We see the destructive cycle that generation by generation destroyed Israel's devotion to God. The theme of Judges is "Everyone did what was right in his own eyes." Throughout this period, God continued to deal with his people with patience and discipline as he allowed them to suffer for their sinfulness then raised up a deliverer when they called to him.

Ruth

The story of Ruth provides a glimpse into a more peaceful era in the days when Judges ruled. This narrative accounts for the migration of an Israelite family - Elimelech, Naomi, and their two sons - to Moab when there was a famine in Judah. Here the two sons married two Moabite women, Ruth and Orpah. After the death of her husband and

both of her sons, Naomi returned to Bethlehem accompanied by Ruth. In the course of time, Ruth was married to Boaz and subsequently figured in the Davidic lineage of the royal family in Israel {and Messiah - TVP} (Old Testament Speaks, 114)

Thought Questions

- 1) What benefit is there for Christians to understand the events of Joshua, Judges and Ruth?

- 2) How is Joshua a type of Jesus?

- 3) Why did God wait until the time of Joshua to fulfill his promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob?

- 4) In what way did God prepare Joshua to assume leadership after Moses? What can the church learn from this?

Your Questions...

What questions do you have from the reading? Write them below, leaving space to answer each based on class discussions.

Crossing Jordan and Jericho

Read: Joshua 3-6

Review of the Reading

- 1) Why were the people to consecrate themselves? (3:5)
- 2) What was the Lord going to do for Joshua (3:7)
- 3) What was the purpose for the twelve stones carried by a man from each tribe? (4:6-7)
- 4) What two purposes does Joshua mention for the Lord to have dried up the Red Sea and Jordan River? (4:23-24) What impact did this have on the people of the land? (5:1)
- 5) What was the reason for stopping at Gilgal? {Gibeath Haaraloth} (5:4-6)
- 6) When did the manna from heaven stop appearing for the Israelites? (5:12)
- 7) Who appeared to Joshua? (5:13-15)
- 8) What were the Israelites to do with the spoils of Jericho (6:18)
- 9) What would happen to anyone who tried to rebuild Jericho? (6:26)
- 10) Name the only survivors from the city of Jericho? (6:25)

Thought Questions

- 1) In light of Joshua 3:7, what should an aspiring leader in the church do to prepare himself for leadership?
- 2) Why did God command Israel to setup 12 stones from Jordan where they camped the next night? What can the Christian learn from this example?

- 3) Who is the Commander of the Lord's Army who appeared to Joshua, angel or Jesus? Give reasons for your answer.

- 4) What Biblical principal was at work when God commanded that the city of Jericho be completely devoted to the Lord?

- 5) What is the purpose of the memorial stones setup in the middle of Jordan that would be underwater once the waters started flowing again?

Your Questions...

What questions do you have from the reading? Write them below, leaving space to answer each based on class discussions.

Achan's Sin, Renewal of Covenant, Gibeon Deception

Read: Joshua 7-10

Review of the Reading

- 1) Against who did God's anger burn because of Achan's sin? (7:1)
- 2) How many men first went up to conquer Ai? What was the result of the battle? (7:4)
- 3) What did Israel do to purge the sin from their midst? (7:24-26)
- 4) How many men went up the second time to conquer Ai? (8:3)
- 5) What was the altar made of at Mt Ebal? (8:31)
- 6) What did Joshua read to the people assembled in front of Mt. Ebal and Mt. Gerizim? (8:34)
- 7) What deception did the Gibeonites attempt? (9:1-15)
- 8) Why were the Israelite leaders deceived? (9:14)
- 9) Why was Joshua obligated to defend Gibeon from the attack brought against them by the 5 kings of the Amorites?
- 10) What miracle occurred while Joshua was attacking the 5 Amorite kings? (10:12-14)

Thought Questions

- 1) Why did a loving God command his servants to commit genocide against the inhabitants of Jericho, Ai and the rest of Canaan? How can this be reconciled with a God who desires that all men be saved?
- 2) What can we learn about walking faithfully with God from Joshua when he doubted God's ability to deliver the people after the defeat at Ai?

- 3) How do you explain to an unbeliever God's justice as applied to Achan and his family?

- 4) What lesson should we learn about sin in our lives from the swift action taken against Achan for his sin?

- 5) Is it possible for God to change the duration of a day? Does this open Christianity up to the charge of being based on a myth?

- 6) What mistake did the leaders of Israel make in dealing with Gibeon? How might Christians today make the same error?

Your Questions...

What questions do you have from the reading? Write them below, leaving space to answer each based on class discussions.

Division of Land, Farewell Address

Review of the Reading

- 1) What was the purpose of the altar built by the tribes living east of Jordan? (22:25-29)
- 2) What did the Western tribes intend to do to the Eastern tribes? (22:12)
- 3) Who served other gods beyond the river? (24:2)
- 4) What did God place between Israel and Egypt at the Red Sea? (24:7)
- 5) Who tried to curse Israel? (24:9-10)
- 6) What did God give to the people? (24:13)
- 7) What choice did Joshua place before the people? (24:15)
- 8) What answer did the people give? (24:16)
- 9) What did Joshua set up as witness to the covenant made at Shechem? (24:26)
- 10) How long did Israel remain faithful to the covenant they made with God at Shechem? (24:31)

Thought Questions

- 1) What should the Christian parent or grand parent do to help future generations remain faithful to God like the Eastern tribes did in Israel?
- 2) Is God pleased with the zeal of Israel in removing perceived sin from their midst? How did Israel avoid destroying the innocent in their zeal?
- 3) In spite of all the signs done in Israel, the next generation moved away from serving God. How can one generation encourage the next to remain faithful to God?

- 4) Why would Joshua seemingly attempt to talk the people of Israel out of making the covenant with God?

Your Questions...

What questions do you have from the reading? Write them below, leaving space to answer each based on class discussions.

JUDGES

Background

The book of Judges relates to the time when judges ruled Israel in the years between the death of Joshua and the rise of Samuel. The term Judge refers to a person with a great deal of authority, whose power came, not from heredity or election, but from God, the only king in Israel. They lacked the power to create or change law, but served as God's lieutenant, executing his will precisely.

Timeline

Abraham	Exodus	Canaan Conquest	Judges	Saul
2000 BC	1445 BC	1400 BC	1400-1100 BC	1095 BC

Author

Likely Samuel wrote the book according to the Jewish Talmud and early Christian scholars

Purpose/Theme

The purpose of the book is to enforce the truth that forgetting the commands of God in order to embrace pagan culture invites disaster in the form of God's judgment.

Read: Judges 1-3

Review of the Reading

- 1) Who was to go up first against the Canaanites? (1:2)
- 2) What important city did Judah capture? (1:8)
- 3) How did the people of Joseph get into the city of Bethel? (1:23)
- 4) What did the tribes fail to do? (1:27-36)
- 5) Who appeared to Israel in 2:1?
- 6) What complaint did he bring? (2:2)
- 7) How long did Israel remain faithful after the death of Joshua? (2:10)
- 8) Who did God raise up to save the people? (2:16)
- 9) With whom did they intermarry? (3:5-6)

Thought Questions

- 1) Describe the reasons that Israel did not remain faithful after the death of Joshua.
- 2) What is the role of a judge in Israel?
- 3) How does the command not to make a covenant with the people of the land relate to the New Testament admonition not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers in 2 Corinthians 6:14?
- 4) What were the conditions/provisions of the covenant between God and Israel (2:2)? Did Israel uphold them? Did God?
- 5) Was God just in permitting the inhabitants of the land to harass Israel? (2:11-15)

Your Questions...

What questions do you have from the reading? Write them below, leaving space to answer each based on class discussions.

Read: Judges 3-8**Review of the Reading**

- 1) Who did Israel serve instead of the Lord? (3:7)
- 2) Why did God deliver his people from the king of Mesopotamia? (3:9)
- 3) Was Ehud left-handed or right-handed? (3:15)
- 4) What made the king of Canaan so powerful? (4:3)
- 5) Who was the prophetess in Israel during the time when the king of Canaan oppressed Israel? (4:4)
- 6) Who did Deborah call for to fight against Sisera, commander of the Canaanite army? (4:6)
- 7) Who received the glory for the defeat of Sisera? (4:9, 21)
- 8) Where was Gideon when God called him to deliver Israel from Midianite oppression? (6:11)
- 9) What God did Gideon's family worship? (6:25)
- 10) What was a snare to Gideon and his descendants? (8:27)

Thought Questions

- 1) Since God created man with freewill, does he have the right to be angry when Israel chose to worship other Gods? Why?
- 2) Why was it proper for Deborah, a woman, to serve as prophetess for Israel?
- 3) Who was the person that appeared to Gideon when he was threshing wheat?
- 4) Was it proper for Gideon to make the gold Ephod (8:27)? Why did it become a snare to him and his family?

Your Questions...

What questions do you have from the reading? Write them below, leaving space to answer each based on class discussions.

Read: Judges 9-12

Review of the Reading

- 1) What region was Abimelech from? (9:1)
- 2) What did Abimilech use the 70 pieces of silver for? (9:4)
- 3) What happened to the 70 sons of Gideon (Jerubaal)? (9:5)
- 4) What was the curse of Jotham? (9:16-20)
- 5) What did God place between Abimelech and the leaders of Schechem? (9:23)
- 6) How was Abimelech killed? (9:53-54)
- 7) To whom did God send Israel to cry out for deliverance from their enemies? (10:14)
- 8) What did the king of the Ammonites accuse Israel of doing? (11:13)
- 9) What tragic vow did Jephthah make to the Lord? (11:31)
- 10) What was the cause of civil war between Jephtha (Gilead) and the Ephraim? (12:1-3)

Thought Questions

- 1) Should Jephthah have honored the vow he made to God even though it would cost him his daughter?
- 2) What was the result of Israel's disobedience to the Lord?
- 3) Do you sense from the study of Judges that Israel was strongly united together or independent?
- 4) Why did God permit the Civil War and bloodshed in Israel?

Your Questions...

What questions do you have from the reading? Write them below, leaving space to answer each based on class discussions.

Read: Judges 13-21**Review of the Reading**

- 1) What restrictions did the angel give to Samson's mother about her son? (13:4-5)
- 2) Why did the angel of God not give his name to Samson's parents? (13:17-18)
- 3) Where did Samson find a wife? (14:2)
- 4) What was the riddle that Samson posed to the Philistines? (14:14)
- 5) How did the Philistines get the answer to the riddle? (14:15)
- 6) What prompted Samson to burn the standing grain of the Philistines using the foxes? (15:2-3)
- 7) How did Delilah convince Samson to reveal the source of his strength?
- 8) How did Samson die? How many Philistines died with him? (16:29-31)
- 9) What tragic vow did Jephthah make to the Lord? (11:31)
- 10) What was the cause of civil war between Jephthah (Gilead) and the Ephraim? (12:1-3)
- 11) What happened to the concubine of the Levite in chapter 19?

Thought Questions

- 1) What can we learn about Godly parenting through the example of Samson?
- 2) Which relationship is more sacred Man-God or Man-wife?
- 3) Why was it necessary for wives to be provided for the tribe of Benjamin after the civil war?

Your Questions...

What questions do you have from the reading? Write them below, leaving space to answer each based on class discussions.

RUTH

Background

The story of Ruth provides a glimpse into a more peaceful era in the days when Judges ruled. This narrative accounts for the migration of an Israelite family - Elimelech, Naomi, and their two sons - to Moab when there was a famine in Judah. Here the two sons married two Moabite women, Ruth and Orpah. After the death of her husband and both of her sons, Naomi returned to Bethlehem accompanied by Ruth. In the course of time, Ruth was married to Boaz and subsequently figured in the Davidic lineage of the royal family in Israel {and Messiah - TVP} (Old Testament Speaks, 114)

Author

Unknown

Read: Ruth 1-4

Review of the Reading

- 1) When did the events recored in Ruth take place? (1:1)
- 2) To what country did Elimelech’s family flee during the famine in Judah? (1:2)
- 3) What tragedy occurred while the family was in this country? (1:3-5)
- 4) What did Naomi direct her daughters-in-law to do? (1:8)
- 5) What did each daughter-in-law decide to do? (1:14-18)
- 6) What name did Naomi want to be called when she returned to Bethlehem? (1:20)
- 7) Whose field did Ruth glean in? (2:1)
- 8) How did Ruth let Boaz know of her desire to be redeemed by him? (3:7)
- 9) What was the response of Boaz to Ruth’s gesture? (3:8-13)
- 10) What important Israelites is descended from Ruth-Boaz? 4:17)

Thought Questions

- 1) Was God concerned only with Israel from the time of Abraham until the church was established?
- 2) How was it proper for God to use a Moabite woman in the lineage of the Messiah? Wasn’t it a sin for the sons of Naomi to marry Moabite women?
- 3) What noble character traits do we see in Ruth that we should train our daughters to obtain?

Your Questions...

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8-Year Curriculum

	January - March	April - June	July - September	October - December
2007	<i>Matthew</i>	<i>Genesis</i>	<i>Galatians & Ephesians</i>	<i>Isaiah</i>
2008	<i>Exodus</i>	<i>I & II Timothy, Titus</i>	<i>Hebrews</i>	<i>Minor Prophets I (Hosea-Obadiah)</i>
2009	<i>Mark</i>	<i>Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy</i>	<i>Romans</i>	<i>Jeremiah and Lamentations</i>
2010	<i>I and II Thessalonians</i>	Joshua, Judges, Ruth	James, I & II Peter	Minor Prophets II (Jonah-Habakkuk)
2011	Luke	Samuel, Kings, Chronicles	I, II, III John & Jude	Daniel
2012	Acts	Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther	I Corinthians	Minor Prophets III (Zephaniah-Malachi)
2013	John	Job	II Corinthians	Psalms
2014	Philippians, Colossians & Philemon	Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon	Revelation	Ezekiel

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