

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

LESSON SERIES

Old Testament Survey - Unit II
The Book of Joshua
The Book of Judges
The Book of Ruth

for

CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE
CHRISTIAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

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THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

INTRODUCTION

JOSHUA AND THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

Joshua was the son of Nun, of the tribe of Ephraim, one of the two sons of Joseph by his Egyptian wife Asenath. Originally he had the Hebrew name Hoshea, which was changed by Moses to the more significant form of Jehoshua, meaning "Jehovah is salvation" (Deuteronomy 32:44; Numbers 13:8,16). It later developed into Joshua. The Greek form of the Hebrew name is Jesus. Joshua is seen as a type of Jesus the Son of God, both in name and life.

The Book of Joshua is important for three main reasons:

- The book records the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham and descendents of Canaan as their inheritance;
- The book reveals how God helped Israel to victory in a critical period of history;
- Reveals God's own righteousness and His standards for those who follow Him.

QUESTION: What of the rights of the Canaanites, whose lands were invaded and possessed?

The answer to this question is found in Deuteronomy 9:4; 20:16-18 and Numbers 33:52,53. Their wickedness to the extreme had placed them in the category of Sodom and Gomorrah, to be utterly destroyed. Archaeology has confirmed Canaanitish religion was utterly licentious and cruel, ritual prostitution and child sacrifices were "normal" (Luke 19:44).

According to Jewish tradition Joshua wrote the book that bears his name. Internal evidence that Joshua wrote at least part of the book is recorded in chapter 24:25-26.

The OVERALL PURPOSE OF THE BOOK, like the five books of Moses, is to reveal God to His people and His plans for their redemption. Joshua like Moses and Paul (many centuries later), is preaching the doctrine of the unmerited grace of God, because of His choice and love of His people and not because of any righteousness of their's (chapters 23,24).

The **CONTENTS** of the book of Joshua fall into three divisions:

- The Conquest of Canaan;
- The Division of the Land, and the Permanent Settlement of each of the Twelve Tribes of Israel;
- Joshua's Farewell Addresses.

OUTLINE**A. THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN, CHAPTERS 1-12.**

1. Commission and Command of Joshua, chapter 1
2. Contact of spies with Rahab, chapter 2
3. Crossing the Jordan, chapter 3
4. Construction of 2 Memorials, chapter 4
5. Conditioned for Conquest, chapter 5
6. Frontal attack, chapters 6-8
 1. Jericho
 2. Ai
7. Campaign against South, chapters 9-10
8. Campaign against North, chapters 11-12

B. THE DIVISION OF THE LAND AND THE PERMANENT SETTLEMENT OF EACH OF THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL. CHAPTERS 13-22

1. Command of Joshua terminated - Confirmation of land to 2 and 1/2 tribes, chapter 13
2. Caleb given Hebron, chapter 14
 1. Dividing of land to the tribes of Israel, chapters 15-19
 2. Cities of Refuge, chapter 20
 3. Cities of Levites, chapter 21
4. Command to 2 and 1/2 Tribes to return home - Construction of altar to "See To", chapter 22

C. JOSHUA'S FAREWELL ADDRESSES, CHAPTERS 23-24

1. Call to Leaders of Israel for Courage & Certainty, ch. 23
2. Call to all Tribes of Israel for Consecration and consideration of Covenant with God - Death of Joshua, chapter 24

THE BOOK OF JUDGES**INTRODUCTION**

The book of Judges describes the **first three centuries of Israel's occupation of the land of Canaan** - not a detailed history, but a selective one.

Joshua defeated the main forces of opposition, yet many locales remained in the hands of the Canaanites and others. Joshua warned Israel not to mix or intermarry. The record indicates they were only partially obedient.

Israel had no political capital in the days of the judges. Shiloh was established as a religious center. There was no central place where judges officiated. The judges rose to leadership as the local or national situation demanded it. Some were military leaders, while others were magistrates to whom the people looked for legal and political decisions.

The writer of the Book of Judges is unknown. However, judging by the phrase which occurs four times, "In those days there was no king in Israel" (17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25), the book was written during the period of the monarchy. Cf. also 18:30,31. Many scholars are of the opinion that the Book of Judges, along with 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, and 1 & 2 Chronicles were probably written by the prophets from the 11th to the 8th centuries B.C., chief of whom was the prophet Samuel.

The Book of Judges serves a twofold purpose.

- Historically it records the history of the nation from the death of Joshua to Samuel, the last of the judges and the first of prophets. It bridges the gap between Joshua and the rise of the monarchy. There was no leader to take Joshua's place in the way he had taken Moses' place. This was the trial period of the theocracy after they entered the land.
- Morally it was the time of the deep declension of the people as they turned from the unseen leader and descended to the low level of "**In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.**" (Compare Judges 1:1 with 20:18.) This should have been an era of glowing progress, but it was as dark day of repeated failure.

The Book of Judges falls naturally into three main divisions:

1. Introduction and an Outline of Israel's Cycle of History during the period of the judges
2. The cycle of History unfolding
3. Two added stories, The Danites and the Benjaminites

A. INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF JUDGES AND AN OUTLINE OF ISRAEL' S CYCLE OF HISTORY DURING THE PERIOD OF THE JUDGES, CHAPTERS 1-2.

B. ISRAEL'S CYCLE OF HISTORY UNFOLDING, CHAPTERS 3-16

- **1st Apostasy**; conquered by Mesopotamia; Delivered through Othniel, the Judge, 3:1-11

- **2nd Apostasy**; Conquered by Moabites and Philistines; Delivered through Ehud and Shamgar, the Judges, 3:12-31
- **3rd Apostasy**; Conquered by Jabin, King of Canaan; Delivered through Deborah and Barak, the Judges, 4:1-5:31
- **4th Apostasy**; Conquered by Midian; Delivered through Gideon, the Judge, 6:1-8:32
- **5th Apostasy**; Civil War; Delivered through Abimelech, Tola, Jair, the Judges, 8:33-10:5
- **6th Apostasy**; Conquered by Philistines and Ammonites; Delivered through Jephthah, Ibzan, Abdon, the Judges, 10:6-12:15
- **7th Apostasy**; Conquered by Philistines; Delivered partially through Samson, the Judge, chapters 13-16

C. TWO ADDED STORIES, CHAPTERS 17-21

In chapters 17 to 21, the writer records two additional stories which reveals the moral declension of the children of Israel ending with the words of 21:25, "**In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.**"

1. The first of these stories deals with the tribe of the Danites and their migration to the far north, including the story of how they robbed a certain Ephraimite, Micah.
2. The second is the story of the unspeakable crime at Gibeah, in the tribe of Benjamin; and how the other tribes of Israel almost wiped out the tribe of Benjamin in their war of vengeance against it

D. NOTEWORTHY FEATURE OF THE BOOK OF JUDGES

Women occupy quite an important role in Judges.

- Deborah, chapters 4 - 5
- Jael, 5:17-24
- The unknown woman who slew Abimelech, 9:53-54
- Jephthah's daughter, 11:29-40

THE BOOK OF RUTH

A. THE BOOK OF RUTH AND THE PERIOD OF THE JUDGES

Here in the Book of Ruth we have an example of the Biblical short story, a masterpiece which has been called one of the world's greatest short stories. It is simple, natural, complete, and so true to the life according to the customs of the day, that the reader would not willingly change any part of it.

Ordinary short stories, we think of as fiction. However, here is a true story, as delightfully presented as the best of fiction.

The events recorded in the story occurred in the days of the Judges, as the author announces to the reader at the outset. And from the context of the story, we infer that the writer lived after the events of his narrative, or about the time of David or a little later.

The story of Ruth reads like the calm after a storm. After reading the book of Judges and its stories of crime and bloodshed, of lawlessness and savage revenge, the reader once more is happy to come across such a lovely story of life as the common people no doubt really lived it.

The story of Ruth therefore supplements the book of Judges, by giving the reader a picture of domestic life such as he does not find in the other book, and thus tends to soften his judgment of the historical period of the Judges.

B. THE CONTENTS AND PURPOSE OF THE BOOK OF RUTH

In the days of the Judges, because of famine, a certain man of Bethlehem in Judea, Elimelech, went to live in the country of Moab, he and his wife Naomi, and their two sons.

While they were there, the two sons married two daughters of Moab, whose names were Ruth and Orpah. Time dealt harshly with Naomi, and her two daughter-in-laws, for the three men died and left them widows.

So when Naomi learned that the famine in her own country was no more, she blessed her daughter-in-laws and made ready to return to her own people at Bethlehem. Both young women wept. And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law and departed. But Ruth clung to her, because she loved her, and would not leave her. So Ruth returned with Naomi to Bethlehem.

How Ruth found a new husband in the substantial person of Boaz, Naomi's kinsman, and became the great-grandmother of David, is related in the remainder of the book. And it is for Ruth that the author has written and named his story.

At the close of the story, in verses 4:17-22, the writer puts his finger on the heart of the matter behind the story, and the reason no doubt for which the book of Ruth was written, namely, to reveal the genealogy of the Messiah.

Ages before, Abraham had been called to found a Nation for the purpose one day of bringing a Savior to mankind. Moses knew of God's plan and prophesied that "the Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me . . . Him you shall heed." **The book of Ruth describes the founding of the family within the Hebrew nation from which the Savior would come.**

From here on, every true Israelite knew that the Messiah was to spring from the family of King David. And, too, throughout the remainder of the old Testament, the writers again and again remind the reader of the "Branch" of David which should be the promised One.

The Gospel of Matthew follows the tradition stated here in the book of Ruth, that is, the line of Joseph (1:1-17). However, Luke's account differs from the genealogy of Ruth and Matthew, in that it gives the line of Mary, instead of the line of Joseph (Luke 3:23-38). Evidently Matthew traces the royal line of David, and Jesus as the legal heir of David. Luke seems to be tracing the human ancestry of Jesus, showing that Jesus was "of the seed of David according to the flesh." Romans 1:3.

END of Lesson

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