

Judges

Introduction:

The book gives an account of the lives, actions, and office of the 13 Judges. God was still the King in Israel and so during this time God raised up men and women to accomplish specific purposes during extraordinary times. The book begins with compromise and ends in anarchy. It is a record of Israel forsaking God and of His forsaking her because of disobedience.

Key Theme – Compromise leads to Defeat

Key Word – Deliverer – occurs 28 times

Key Verse – Final Verse (21:25)

“In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes”

Key Chapter – Chapter 2:10-19 is a miniature version of the entire book

Structure and Outline:

I. Prologue 1-2

II. Main Narrative 3-16

III. Illustrative Epilogue 17-21

I. Prologue – Chapters 1-2

Chapter 2 provides the three themes that characterize the entire book:

1. God’s people failed to pass on their faith to the next generation - 2:10
2. God’s people turned to worship other false gods -2:11-13
3. God’ people fell into a cycle of sin 2:14-19



II. Main Narrative – Chapters 3-16

The recurring pattern in the book of Judges is often referred to as the **“Four S’s.”**

- **Sin:** The people fall into sin, as they worship false gods or intermarry with the Canaanites.
- **Servitude:** The people’s sin brings on a period of servitude in which Israel becomes subject to people they once controlled.
- **Supplication:** After a time in servitude, Israel cries out to God in supplication.
- **Salvation:** After supplication God raises up a leader to bring the people salvation.

Sin	Servitude	Supplication	Savior
3:5-8	Mesopotamia – 8 years	3:9	Othniel 3:9-11
3:12-14	Moab - 18 years	3:15	Ehud 3:15-30
4:1-3	Canaan -20 years	4:3	Deborah/Barak 4:4-5:31
6:1-10	Midian – 7 years	6:6-7	Gideon 6:11-8:35
10:6-18	Philistines – 18 years	10:10	Jephthah 11:1-12:7
13:1	Philistines – 40 years	N/A	Samson 13:2-16:31

III. Illustrative Epilogue - Chapters 17-21

- Confusion in the religious life of the nation - 17-18
- Confusion in the moral life of the nation - 19
- Confusion in the political life of the nation - 21

Personal Application in The Book of Judges:

What was so appealing about Baal and Ashoreth?

I have often asked myself when reading the Bible – Why did God’s people keep going back over and over to the Baals and the Ashoreths? What was it about them that made them so hard to walk away from? The people during this time lived in an agricultural society. If they did not get rain or proper sunlight, then their crops would not prosper and they would not have anything to eat. **So, this boils down to a trust issue.** Rather than relying on God to provide for them, their constant temptation was to trust in what they could see and touch. And today, this is still our greatest temptation. Whether trusting in the blessings of God more than God Himself through materialism or trusting in ourselves resulting in stress/worry – we also must constantly choose – Will we trust in God?

The Prominence of Women in the Book of Judges:

In Judges 1-3 a woman is featured as the reward for the most valiant warrior. In Judges 4 a woman (Deborah) receives the Word from the Lord, and another woman (Jael) is exalted for luring a powerful enemy to his death. In Judges 6-9, it is a woman who takes out one of the Judges with a millstone. In Judges 10-12 a woman receives a death sentence because of her father’s incompetence. In Judges 13-16, it is a woman (Delilah) who lures the Israelite warrior (Samson) to his death.

All over the book, we see women stepping up and leading while we see anemic men failing to lead. The application is a challenge to men – This was the LOWEST point in the history of God’s people and it came at the time when the men of God refused to step up and be the Godly leaders they had been called to be. Men, may our families, communities, and churches not get into this condition on our watch!

Jesus is the Final Judge

Each time God’s people were defeated by the enemy, they cried out to God and He raised up for them a Judge. The Judges served two purposes. The Judge rescued the people from divine judgment. The Judge was used so that God could provide divine mercy. The people would experience salvation from the enemy during the Judges lifetime, but after the Judge died the enemy once again defeated them. This looked forward in anticipation to the day when a Judge would come that would permanently rescue people from divine judgment and forever provide divine mercy. **This was fulfilled in Jesus Christ.** God raised up Jesus from among His people. Jesus provides rescue from divine judgment through His death on the cross, and provides divine mercy through His resurrection from the dead!

A Comparison of Two Generations – Which do you, your family, and this church look more like?

Joshua

Were victorious
Were at rest and liberty
Believed God
Advanced in progress
Were heavenly minded
Were faithful to God
Enjoyed God’s blessings
Had intimacy with God
Would not tolerate sin

Judges

Were defeated
Were in bondage
Did not believe in God
Slipped and Stalled
Were earthly minded
Compromised with false gods
Experienced God’s wrath
Broken fellowship with God
Condoned sin

Ruth

Introduction

According to verse 1, the book of Ruth clearly belongs to the period covered by the Judges. However, instead of violence and immorality we read of tenderness and love. Instead of unfaithfulness and compromise, we meet in Boaz a committed and Godly man. The book of Ruth is a love story. Many people have said that the Book of Ruth is the most beautiful short story ever written. It's been called the Cinderella of the Scriptures. The theme is love, although the word LOVE never appears in the entire story. It's an account of anxiety, fear, love, and commitment. It begins with great despair and ends with great delight. Ruth is the great-grandmother of David, and one of four women named in the line of Jesus Christ.

The Central Message – The Kinsman Redeemer

Outline/Structure

- I. Love's Choice – 1
- II. Love's Response – 2
- III. Love's Security 3
- IV. Love's Reward 4



Personal Application in The Book of Ruth:

1. A God who is in Control

In the book of Ruth, God uses a famine, an ungodly decision by Elimelech, a Moabite (Ungodly people), and a Prostitute (Boaz's mother) for His Glory! **Do you know how many times the word coincidence (or any other word like it) is used in the Bible? Zero.** Not one event in all of Scripture is ever spoken of as having been coincidental. God is in control and is always working to use even our bad decisions to bring glory to His name!

2. A Tale of Two Men

In the book of Ruth we see 2 men lead their families in 2 very different directions. Men, which better depicts your life?

Elimelech – name means *"God is my King"*

Led His Family to place where they were **away from** God's Presence and God's People

Results:

- Ungodly Marriages (1:4)
- Children died out of God's will (1:5)
- Emptiness/Bitterness (1:21)

Boaz – name means *"In Him is Strength"*

Remained in God's place with God's people following God's Word

- Godly Marriage (4:9)
- Children reached potential for God's glory (4:17)
- Fullness/Blessing (2:1)

Results:

3. Naomi – Women, will you be a Naomi?

a. Her life is a picture of the grace of God

- From Emptiness to Fullness (1)
- From Despair To Hope (2-3)
- From Barrenness to Inheritance (4)

b. Her life is a testimony of faithfulness to God

- Naomi lived a life such that Ruth was attracted to her God (1:16-17)
- She led her family back to the Lord (1:19)
- Naomi took Ruth under her wing and helped her fulfill God's will for her life (3:1-6)

4. A Blessed Redeemer

If a Jewish family experienced hard times, they sometimes had to sell property or possessions. If this happened, they could retain ownership if someone in their family (a Kinsman Redeemer) helped them. The law of the kinsman is found in Leviticus 25, Numbers 35, and Deuteronomy 19 & 25. There were three requirements of the Kinsman-Redeemer:

- a. He must be willing to redeem (Lev. 25:25, Gal. 4:4-5)
- b. He must be able to redeem (Ruth 4:4-6, John 10:11-18)
- c. He must be related by blood (Lev. 25:48-49, Hebrews 2:11)

In the book of Ruth, Boaz provides a beautiful picture of **our Kinsman Redeemer Jesus Christ:**

- Jesus Christ was willing to redeem (Phil 2:6-8).
- Jesus was able to redeem in that He was the only One qualified (John 1:19).
- Jesus is related by His blood that He shed on the cross for our sin!

Hallelujah, What a Savior – Phillip Bliss 1875

"Man of Sorrows!" what a name☐
 For the Son of God, who came☐
 Ruined sinners to reclaim.☐
 Hallelujah! What a Savior!

Bearing shame and scoffing rude,☐

In my place condemned He stood;☐
Sealed my pardon with His blood.☐
Hallelujah! What a Savior!

Guilty, vile, and helpless we;☐
Spotless Lamb of God was He;☐
"Full atonement!" can it be?☐
Hallelujah! What a Savior!