



# Walking Thru The Bible

## JUDGES / RUTH

### JUDGES

**Author:** There is no statement or implication about the authorship of this 21 chapter book. Inspiration does not give us this information and we have only a tradition attributing the book to Samuel.

**Situation:** The book is a continuation of the history of the Jews in Canaan after their God-led deliverance from Egypt and the conquest of the land by Joshua. It is a book about and to the children of Israel (Judges 1:1).

**When Written:** The date of the book of Judges can be set with fair accuracy. Since the book is a continuation of history following the book of Joshua it is obvious that it was written after the death of Joshua, or after 1421 BC.

It was written even later than this, for Judges 18:1 and 19:1 imply that there was a king in Israel at the time of writing. That would necessitate a date of 1095 BC or later.

Based upon Judges 1:21, 29, it is believed that the book was written about 1000 BC. That would be during the lifetime of Samuel and the reign of the kings. There is neither an inspired statement nor an implication as to the place of composition.

**Why Written:** The book of Judges is chiefly a history of the Jews under 13 of the 15 judges: Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah, Gideon, Abimelech, Tola, Jair, Jephthah, Ibzan, Elan, Abdon and Samson. Eli and Samuel are found in the book of First Samuel.

We see a cycle of four stages of behavior that the people of the time of the Judges continually repeated: (1) sin, (2) oppression, (3) repentance, and (4) deliverance.

The book seems to have been written to give the Jews a history of their life in the promised land. However, the message that seems prominent is: Obey God and enjoy blessings; disobey God and suffer oppression. It is also seen that people can, and often do, depart from God. There has always been a need for someone like the judges to call God's people back to Him.

**Lesson:** Let us remember that we can fall from God's grace (cf. also Hebrews 12:15). May we realize that repentance is necessary when we fall and that repentance and obedience will bring deliverance.

### RUTH

**Author:** The 4 chapter book of Ruth does not contain the name of its author. Therefore, we cannot speak with any certainty, but most scholars think Samuel penned the book.

**Situation:** The book is another important part of Jewish history. It gives a link in the seed-line of the coming Christ. Perhaps this part of Jewish history pertaining to the coming Christ is most memorable because it is presented as a love story. There is pictured a loving husband, Elimelech, in a time of famine (1:1), a loving wife who was supportive of her husband's move (1:4), two loving sons, Mahlon and Chilion (1:1,2) who became husbands (1:4), and two loving daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth (1:6-14).

However, the primary love story has to do with the love of Ruth for her mother-in-law (1:14-22). The love was repaid with a husband, Boaz, and the blessing of bearing a child who would be in the seed-line of the Christ (4:17-22). How this brief bit of history must have thrilled the Jews when they heard and read it.

**When Written:** The events of the book of Ruth took place during the period of the Judges (verse 1 says "**when the judges ruled**") and hence its location in the Old Testament following that book. Ruth 4:17-22 gives an abbreviated genealogy from Pharez to David. David was the second of Israel's kings under the united kingdom (1 Samuel 9:27; 10:1; 15:1, 12, 13). Thus David had been born at the time the book was written down. With these facts we can date the writing of the book of Ruth to around 1100 BC. The last verses of the book date its composition in the days of Samuel whom we believe to have penned it by inspiration.

**Why Written:** There is no stated purpose within the book itself, however, we see one thing that is most important--information about the lineage of the Christ. God's providence is seen in His care for the seed through which Jesus would come. (Compare Matthew 1:5-6, "**And Boaz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse; and Jesse begat David the king.**") Matthew goes on to show that Christ came through that line (cf. Matthew 1:16). What God has promised He is able and faithful to do.

**New Testament Ties:** Matthew 1:5 refers to Ruth 4:13-17 and so does Luke 3:31-32. The principles of family ties exemplified in Ruth are magnified in the second covenant. It serves as an example of God's love for the Gentiles also.

## Judges

### Historical Outline

#### I. Social and Religious Decay after the Days of Joshua 1-2

1. Failures Ch. 1
2. Compromise, Departures, God's Anger Ch. 2
3. Heathen scourges, Religious-political cycles 3:1-4

#### II. Oppressions and Deliverers 3:5 - 16:31

- |                  |                    |             |
|------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| 1. Mesopotamians | - 1. Othniel       | 3:5-11      |
| 2. Moabites      | - 2. Ehud          | 3:12-30     |
| 3. Philistines   | - 3. Shamgar       | 3:31        |
| 4. Canaanites    | - 4. Deborah       | ch. 4 - 5   |
|                  | - 5. Barak         |             |
| 5. Midianites    | - 6. Gideon        | ch. 6 - 10  |
|                  | - 7. Abimelech (?) |             |
|                  | - 7. Tola          |             |
|                  | - 8. Jair          |             |
| 6. Ammonites     | - 9. Jephthah      | ch. 11 - 12 |
|                  | - 10. Ibzan        |             |
|                  | - 11. Elon         |             |
|                  | - 12. Abdon        |             |
| 7. Philistines   | - 13. Samson       | ch. 13 - 16 |
|                  | - 14. Eli          | (1 Samuel)  |
|                  | - 15. Samuel       | (1 Samuel)  |

#### III. Insets -- Incidents of the Judges Period Judges 17 - 21

1. The State of Religion Depicted
  - a. Religion of Micah and his house of gods ch. 17
  - b. Religion of the Danites ch. 18
2. The State of Social Life Depicted
  - a. The outrage of Gibeah ch. 19
  - b. Civil war ch. 20
  - c. The plight of Benjamin ch. 21

### Applications and Lessons From the Book of Judges

1. Judges depicts a cycle of history often repeated:
  - a. The people fall away from God (apostasy)
  - b. God permits enemies to fall upon them (oppression)
  - c. Under oppression the people repent and call upon God (repentance)
  - d. God called out a leader to deliver (deliverance)
2. National decay and religious problems will always happen when "Every man does that which is right in his own eyes." (Judges 17:6; 21:25).
  - a. Today in our nation, every man largely does that which is right in his own eyes and national decay has set in.
  - b. In religious circles no central source of authority is recognized.
  - c. "No king in Israel" was the reason for the anarchy in Israel. God was still King, but wasn't recognized as such. That is our situation also today.
3. Difficulty led the Jews back to dependance upon God and with renewed dependance upon God they comprehended the need for repentance.
  - a. Samson's cry was typical (16:28).
  - b. Difficulties become avenues leading back to God.
4. God uses men to achieve His will.
  - a. He raised up judges among the Jews.
  - b. He raised up the apostles in first century.
  - c. God's work needs god-fearing leaders.
5. "In his own eyes" is a trouble in the church today.
  - a. The Jews sank lower and lower living to own desires.
  - b. Christians sink lower-- living to own desires.
6. Like the Jews we have received a rich spiritual heritage.
  - a. The generation after Joshua "which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel." (Judges 2:20)
  - b. Our heritage began at Pentecost, Acts 2:42.
  - c. What heritage will we pass on to younger generation?
7. Ruth's choice sets before us a great example (Ruth 1:16)
  - a. She chose the true God- "Thy God shall be my God"
  - b. She chose the right path- "Whither thou goest I will go."
  - c. She chose a godly home- "Where thou lodgest I will lodge."
  - d. She chose godly associates- "Thy people shall be my people."
  - e. She made a wise choice-- a personal choice-- a determined choice-- and she was rewarded for her choice.