

**LESSON 8 - JUDGES AND RUTH**

# **LOGOS**

**A General and Light Survey of the Bible**

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# Lesson 8

## JUDGES

- The book of Judges takes its name from its contents—the stories of people raised up as judges to deliver Israel in a time of decline and disunion after the death of Joshua.
- The nature of the book places emphasis on the spiritual significance of events recorded and not on chronological continuity.
- The author of the book is not named, though Jewish tradition attributes it to Samuel.
- Central Message: Failure Through Compromise.
  - Paul wrote, *“As God has said: ‘I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people. Therefore, Come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty’”* (2 Corinthians 6:16-18).
  - But, *“In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit”* (Judges 17:6).

## OUTLINE

- Prologue (Chapters 1-2)
  - Though the land was given by God, and conquered under and divided by Joshua, it was still necessary for each tribe to fight to displace the Canaanites yet remaining.
  - The LORD gave victories to the tribes of Judah, Simeon, Ephraim, and Manasseh, as well as Caleb’s people as they fought and displaced the Canaanites.
  - However (1:27-36):
    - *Manasseh did not drive out the people of Beth Shan or Taanach or Dor or Ibleam or Megiddo... they pressed the Canaanites into forced labor but never drove them out completely.*
    - *Nor did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites living in Gezer, but the Canaanites continued to live there among them.*
    - *Neither did Zebulun drive out the Canaanites living in Kitron or Nahalol, so these Canaanites lived among them, but Zebulun did subject them to forced labor.*
    - *Nor did Asher drive out those living in Akko or Sidon or Ahlab or Akzib or Helbah or Aphek or Rehob. The Asherites lived among the Canaanite inhabitants of the land because they did not drive them out.*
    - *Neither did Naphtali drive out those living in Beth Shemesh or Beth Anath; but the Naphtalites too lived among the Canaanite inhabitants of the land, and those living in Beth Shemesh and Beth Anath became forced laborers for them.*
    - *The Amorites confined the Danites to the hill country, not allowing them to come down into the plain... they too were pressed into forced labor.*
  - *“After that whole generation had been gathered to their ancestors, another generation grew up who knew neither the LORD nor what he had done for Israel. Then the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD and served the Baals. They forsook the LORD, the God of their ancestors, who had brought them out of Egypt. They followed and worshiped various gods of the peoples around them”* (2:10-12).
  - *“Then the LORD raised up judges, who saved them out of the hands*

*of these raiders. Yet they would not listen to their judges but prostituted themselves to other gods and worshiped them... Whenever the LORD raised up a judge for them, he was with the judge and saved them out of the hands of their enemies as long as the judge lived... But when the judge died, the people returned to ways even more corrupt than those of their ancestors, following other gods and serving and worshiping them. They refused to give up their evil practices and stubborn ways” (2:16-19).*

- The Judges (Chapters 3-16).

*\*Notice the pattern: sin – suffering – supplication – salvation.*

- Othniel (3:7-11).

- *The Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD; they forgot the LORD their God and served the Baals and the Asherahs (v. 7).*
    - *The anger of the LORD burned against Israel so that he sold them into the hands of Cushan-Rishathaim king of Aram Naharaim, to whom the Israelites were subject for eight years (v. 8).*
    - *But when they cried out to the LORD, he raised up for them a deliverer, Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb’s younger brother, who saved them (v. 9).*
    - *So, the land had peace for forty years, until Othniel son of Kenaz died (v. 11).*

- Ehud (3:12-30).

- *Again, the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD, and because they did this evil the LORD gave Eglon king of Moab power over Israel (v. 12).*
    - *Again, the Israelites cried out to the LORD, and he gave them a deliverer—Ehud, a left-handed man... The Israelites sent him with tribute to Eglon, king of Moab... Ehud made a double-edged sword about a cubit long, which he strapped to his right thigh under his clothing. He presented the tribute to Eglon king of Moab, who was a very fat man... he ...said, “Your Majesty, I have a secret message for you.” The king said to his attendants, “Leave us!” ...Ehud then approached him while he was sitting alone... “I have a message from God for you.” ...Ehud reached with his left hand, drew the sword from his right thigh and plunged it into the king’s belly. Even the handle sank in after the blade, and his bowels discharged. Ehud did not pull the sword out, and the fat closed in over it (vv. 15-22).*

- Shamgar (3:31).

*After Ehud came Shamgar son of Anath, who struck down six hundred Philistines with an oxgoad. He too saved Israel.*

- Deborah (4-5).

- *Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD, now that Ehud was dead. So the LORD sold them into the hands of Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor. Sisera, the commander of his army, was based in Harosheth Haggoyim. Because he had nine hundred chariots fitted with iron and had cruelly oppressed the Israelites for twenty years, they cried to the LORD for help (4:1-3).*
    - *Now Deborah, a prophet... held court.. between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites went up to her to have their disputes decided. She sent for Barak...*

and said to him, “The LORD, the God of Israel, commands you: ‘Go, take with you ten thousand men of Naphtali and Zebulun and lead them up to Mount Tabor. I will lead Sisera, the commander of Jabin’s army, with his chariots and his troops to the Kishon River and give him into your hands.’ Barak said to her, “If you go with me, I will go; but if you don’t go with me, I won’t go.” “I will go with you,” said Deborah. “But because of the course you are taking, the honor will not be yours, for the LORD will deliver Sisera into the hands of a woman.” (4:4-9).

- So, Barak went down Mount Tabor, with ten thousand men following him... the LORD routed Sisera and all his chariots and army by the sword... Sisera... fled on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite... Jael went out to meet Sisera and said to him, “Come, my lord, come right in. Don’t be afraid.” ...and she covered him with a blanket... “Stand in the doorway of the tent,” he told her. “If someone comes by and asks you, ‘Is anyone in there?’ say ‘No.’” But Jael... picked up a tent peg and a hammer and went quietly to him while he lay fast asleep, exhausted. She drove the peg through his temple into the ground, and he died... And the hand of the Israelites pressed harder and harder against Jabin king of Canaan until they destroyed him (4:14-24).
- Gideon (6-9).
  - The Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD, and for seven years he gave them into the hands of the Midianites (6:1). When the Israelites cried out to the LORD because of Midian, he sent them a prophet, who said... you have not listened to me” (6:7-10).
  - The angel of the LORD... appeared to Gideon... “The LORD is with you, mighty warrior.” “Pardon me, my lord,” Gideon replied, “but if the LORD is with us, why has all this happened to us?” The LORD turned to him and said, “Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian’s hand. Am I not sending you?” “Pardon me, my lord,” Gideon replied, “but how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family.” The LORD answered, “I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites, leaving none alive.” Gideon replied, “If now I have found favor in your eyes, give me a sign that it is really you talking to me. Please do not go away until I come back and bring my offering and set it before you.”
 

...Gideon went inside, prepared a young goat, and from an ephah of flour he made bread without yeast. Putting the meat in a basket and its broth in a pot, he brought them out and offered them to him under the oak. The angel of God said to him, “Take the meat and the unleavened bread, place them on this rock, and pour out the broth.” And Gideon did so. Then the angel of the LORD touched the meat and the unleavened bread with the tip of the staff that was in his hand. Fire flared from the rock, consuming the meat and the bread. And the angel of the LORD disappeared.

...That same night the LORD said to him, “Take the second bull from your father’s herd... Tear down your father’s altar to Baal and cut down the Asherah pole beside it. Then build a

proper kind of altar to the LORD your God on the top... Using the wood of the Asherah pole that you cut down, offer the second bull as a burnt offering." So, Gideon took ten of his servants and did as the LORD told him... In the morning when the people of the town got up, there was Baal's altar, demolished, with the Asherah pole beside it cut down and the second bull sacrificed on the newly built altar! ...When they carefully investigated, they were told, "Gideon son of Joash did it." The people of the town demanded of Joash, "Bring out your son. He must die... But Joash replied... "Are you going to plead Baal's cause? Are you trying to save him? ...If Baal really is a god, he can defend himself... So, because Gideon broke down Baal's altar, they gave him the name Jerub-Baal that day, saying, "Let Baal contend with him." ...Then the Spirit of the LORD came on Gideon, and [summoned] ...the Abiezrites to follow him. He sent messengers throughout Manasseh... Asher, Zebulun and Naphtali... Gideon said to God, "If you will save Israel by my hand as you have promised—look, I will place a wool fleece on the threshing floor. If there is dew only on the fleece and all the ground is dry, then I will know that you will save Israel by my hand, as you said." And that is what happened... Then Gideon said to God, "Do not be angry with me. Let me make just one more request. Allow me one more test with the fleece, but this time make the fleece dry and let the ground be covered with dew." That night God did so. Only the fleece was dry; all the ground was covered with dew (6:11-40).

- ...The LORD said to Gideon, "You have too many men. I cannot deliver Midian into their hands, or Israel would boast against me... Now announce to the army, 'Anyone who trembles with fear may turn back and leave Mount Gilead.' " So twenty-two thousand men left, while ten thousand remained. But the LORD said to Gideon, "There are still too many men... So Gideon took the men down to the water. There the LORD told him, "Separate those who lap the water with their tongues as a dog laps from those who kneel down to drink." Three hundred of them drank from cupped hands, lapping like dogs. All the rest got down on their knees to drink. The LORD said to Gideon, "With the three hundred men that lapped I will save you and give the Midianites into your hands. Let all the others go home." ...During that night the LORD said to Gideon, "Get up, go down against the camp, because I am going to give it into your hands. If you are afraid to attack, go down to the camp with your servant Purah and listen to what they are saying. Afterward, you will be encouraged to attack the camp." So he and Purah his servant went down to the outposts of the camp... Gideon arrived just as a man was telling a friend his dream... "God has given the Midianites and the whole camp into his hands." When Gideon heard the dream and its interpretation, he bowed down and worshiped. ...Dividing the three hundred men into three companies, he placed trumpets and empty jars in the hands of all of them, with torches inside... Gideon and the hundred men with him reached the edge of the camp at the beginning of the middle

watch, just after they had changed the guard. They blew their trumpets and broke the jars that were in their hands... Grasping the torches in their left hands and holding in their right hands the trumpets they were to blow, they shouted, "A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!" While each man held his position around the camp, all the Midianites ran, crying out as they fled. When the three hundred trumpets sounded, the LORD caused the men throughout the camp to turn on each other with their swords. The army fled... So, all the men of Ephraim were called out... They pursued the Midianites and brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon, who was by the Jordan (7:1-25).

- The Israelites said to Gideon, "Rule over us—you, your son and your grandson—because you have saved us from the hand of Midian." But Gideon told them, "I will not rule over you, nor will my son rule over you. The LORD will rule over you."  
"I do have one request, that each of you give me an earring from your share of the plunder." ...So, they spread out a garment, and each of them threw a ring from his plunder onto it. The weight of the gold rings he asked for came to seventeen hundred shekels (about 40lbs)... Gideon made the gold into an ephod, which he placed in Ophrah, his town. All Israel prostituted themselves by worshiping it there, and it became a snare to Gideon and his family (8:22-27).
- Jerub-Baal (Gideon)... went back home to live. He had seventy sons of his own, for he had many wives. His concubine, who lived in Shechem, also bore him a son, whom he named Abimelek. Gideon... died at a good old age and was buried in the tomb of his father Joash in Ophrah of the Abiezrites. No sooner had Gideon died than the Israelites again prostituted themselves to the Baals. They set up Baal-Berith as their god and did not remember the LORD their God, who had rescued them from the hands of all their enemies on every side. They also failed to show any loyalty to the family of Jerub-Baal (Gideon) in spite of all the good things he had done for them (8:29-35).
- Abimelek son of Jerub-Baal (Gideon) went to his mother's brothers in Shechem and said to them and to all his mother's clan, "Ask all the citizens of Shechem, 'Which is better for you: to have all seventy of Jerub-Baal's sons rule over you, or just one man?' Remember, I am your flesh and blood." When the brothers repeated all this to the citizens of Shechem, they were inclined to follow Abimelek, for they said, "He is related to us." They gave him seventy shekels of silver from the temple of Baal-Berith, and Abimelek used it to hire reckless scoundrels, who became his followers. He went to his father's home in Ophrah and on one stone murdered his seventy brothers, the sons of Jerub-Baal. But Jotham, the youngest son... escaped... Then all the citizens of Shechem and Beth Millo gathered beside the great tree at the pillar in Shechem to crown Abimelek king (9:1-6).  
After Abimelek had governed... three years, God stirred up animosity between Abimelek and the citizens of Shechem... God did this in order that the crime against Jerub-Baal's sev-

enty sons... might be avenged... Gaal son of Ebed moved with his clan into Shechem, and its citizens put their confidence in him... Ebed said, "Who is Abimelek, and why should we... be subject to him? ...If only this people were under my command! Then I would get rid of him... So Abimelek and all his troops set out by night and took up concealed positions near Shechem... So Gaal led out the citizens of Shechem and fought Abimelek... Zebul drove Gaal and his clan out of Shechem... Abimelek pressed his attack against the city until he had captured it and killed its people. Then he destroyed the city and scattered salt over it... the citizens in the tower of Shechem went into the stronghold of the temple of El-Berith... So, all the men cut branches and... piled them against the stronghold and set it on fire with the people still inside... all the people... about a thousand men and women... died. Next Abimelek went to Thebez and... captured it. Inside the city... was a strong tower, to which all the men and women... had fled... Abimelek went to the tower and attacked it. But as he approached the entrance to the tower to set it on fire, a woman dropped an upper millstone on his head and cracked his skull. Hurriedly he called to his armor-bearer, "Draw your sword and kill me, so that they can't say, 'A woman killed him.'" So, his servant ran him through, and he died. When the Israelites saw that Abimelek was dead, they went home... (9:22-57).

- Tola (10:1-2).  
*After the time of Abimelek, a man of Issachar named Tola son of Puah, the son of Dodo, rose to save Israel. He lived in Shamir, in the hill country of Ephraim. He led Israel twenty-three years; then he died and was buried in Shamir.*
- Jair (10:3-5).  
*Jair of Gilead... led Israel twenty-two years. He had thirty sons, who rode thirty donkeys. They controlled thirty towns in Gilead... When Jair died, he was buried in Kamon.*
- Jephthah (11-12)
  - Background: *Again, the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD. They served the Baals and the Ashtoreths... because the Israelites forsook the LORD and no longer served him, he became angry with them. He sold them into the hands of the Philistines and the Ammonites, who that year shattered and crushed them. For eighteen years they oppressed all the Israelites on the east side of the Jordan in Gilead... Then the Israelites cried out to the LORD, "We have sinned against you, forsaking our God and serving the Baals." The LORD replied, "When the Egyptians, the Amorites, the Ammonites, the Philistines, the Sidonians, the Amalekites and the Maonites oppressed you and you cried to me for help, did I not save you from their hands? But you have forsaken me and served other gods, so I will no longer save you. Go and cry out to the gods you have chosen. Let them save you when you are in trouble!" (10:6-14)*
  - *Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty warrior. His father was Gilead; his mother was a prostitute. Gilead's wife also bore him sons, and when they were grown up, they drove Jephthah away. "You are not going to get any inheritance in our fami-*

ly," they said, "because you are the son of another woman." So, Jephthah fled from his brothers and settled in the land of Tob, where a gang of scoundrels gathered around him and followed him (11:1-3).

- Sometime later, when the Ammonites were fighting against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to get Jephthah... "Come," they said, "be our commander, so we can fight the Ammonites." Jephthah said to them, "Didn't you hate me and drive me from my father's house? Why do you come to me now when you're in trouble?" The elders of Gilead said to him, "...come with us to fight the Ammonites, and you will be head over all of us who live in Gilead." Jephthah answered, "Suppose you take me back to fight the Ammonites and the LORD gives them to me—will I really be your head?" The elders of Gilead replied, "The LORD is our witness; we will certainly do as you say." (11:4-10)

Then the Spirit of the LORD came on Jephthah... Jephthah made a vow to the LORD: "If you give the Ammonites into my hands, whatever comes out of the door of my house to meet me when I return in triumph from the Ammonites will be the LORD's, and I will sacrifice it as a burnt offering." Then Jephthah went over to fight the Ammonites, and the LORD gave them into his hands... When Jephthah returned to his home in Mizpah, who should come out to meet him but his daughter, dancing to the sound of timbrels! She was an only child. Except for her he had neither son nor daughter. When he saw her, he tore his clothes and cried, "Oh no, my daughter! You have brought me down and I am devastated. I have made a vow to the LORD that I cannot break." "My father," she replied, "you have given your word to the LORD. Do to me just as you promised... But grant me this one request," she said. "Give me two months to roam the hills and weep with my friends, because I will never marry." ...And he let her go for two months. She and her friends went into the hills and wept because she would never marry. After the two months, she returned to her father, and he did to her as he had vowed... (11:29-39)

- Ibzan (12:8-10).  
After him, Ibzan of Bethlehem led Israel. He had thirty sons and thirty daughters. He gave his daughters away in marriage to those outside his clan, and for his sons he brought in thirty young women as wives from outside his clan. Ibzan led Israel seven years. Then Ibzan died and was buried in Bethlehem.
- Elon (12:11-12).  
After him, Elon the Zebulunite led Israel ten years. Then Elon died and was buried in Aijalon in the land of Zebulun.
- Abdon (12:13-15).  
After him, Abdon son of Hillel, from Pirathon, led Israel. He had forty sons and thirty grandsons, who rode on seventy donkeys. He led Israel eight years. Then Abdon son of Hillel died and was buried at Pirathon in Ephraim, in the hill country of the Amalekites.
- Samson (13-16).
  - Again, the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD, so the LORD delivered them into the hands of the Philistines for forty years. (13:1)



- *A certain man of Zorah, named Manoah, from the clan of the Danites, had a wife who was childless, unable to give birth. The angel of the LORD appeared to her and said, "You are barren and childless, but you are going to become pregnant and give birth to a son. Now see to it that you drink no wine or other fermented drink and that you do not eat anything unclean. You will become pregnant and have a son whose head is never to be touched by a razor because the boy is to be a Nazirite, dedicated to God from the womb. He will take the lead in delivering Israel from the hands of the Philistines." (13:2-5)*
- *Samson went down to Timnah and saw there a young Philistine woman. When he returned, he said to his father and mother, "I have seen a Philistine woman in Timnah; now get her for me as my wife." His father and mother replied, "Isn't there an acceptable woman among your relatives or among all our people? Must you go to the uncircumcised Philistines to get a wife?" But Samson said to his father, "Get her for me. She's the right one for me." ...Samson went down to Timnah together with his father and mother. As they approached the vineyards of Timnah, suddenly a young lion came roaring toward him. The Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon him so that he tore the lion apart with his bare hands as he might have torn a young goat... Then he went down and talked with the woman, and he liked her. Sometime later, when he went back to marry her, he turned aside to look at the lion's carcass, and in it he saw a swarm of bees and some honey. He scooped out the honey with his hands and ate as he went along. When he rejoined his parents, he gave them some, and they too ate it. But he did not tell them that he had taken the honey from the lion's carcass. (14:1-9)*
- *...Samson held a feast, as was customary for young men. When the people saw him, they chose thirty men to be his companions. "Let me tell you a riddle," Samson said to them. "If you can give me the answer within the seven days of the feast, I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty sets of clothes. If you can't tell me the answer, you must give me thirty linen garments and thirty sets of clothes." "Tell us your riddle," they said. "Let's hear it." He replied, "Out of the eater, something to eat; out of the strong, something sweet." For three days they could not give the answer. On the fourth day, they said to Samson's wife, "Coax your husband into explaining the riddle for us, or we will burn you and your father's household to death... on the seventh day he finally told her, because she continued to press him. She in turn explained the riddle to her people. Before sunset on the seventh day the men of the town said to him, "What is sweeter than honey? What is stronger than a lion?" ... He went down to Ashkelon, struck down thirty of their men, stripped them of everything and gave their clothes to those who had explained the riddle. Burning with anger, he returned to his father's home. And Samson's wife was given to one of his companions... (14:10-20)*
- *...Samson took a young goat and went to visit his wife... But her father would not let him go in. "I was so sure you hated*

her,” he said, “that I gave her to your companion...” So, he went out and caught three hundred foxes and tied them tail to tail in pairs. He then fastened a torch to every pair of tails, lit the torches and let the foxes loose in the standing grain of the Philistines... So, the Philistines went up and burned her and her father to death... He attacked them viciously and slaughtered many of them... Then three thousand men from Judah... said to Samson, “Don’t you realize that the Philistines are rulers over us? ...We’ve come to tie you up and hand you over to the Philistines.” So, they bound him with two new ropes and led him up from the rock. As he approached Lehi, the Philistines came toward him... The ropes on his arms became like charred flax, and the bindings dropped from his hands. Finding a fresh jawbone of a donkey, he grabbed it and struck down a thousand men. (15:1-15)

- One day Samson went to Gaza, where he saw a prostitute. He went in to spend the night with her. The people of Gaza... surrounded the place and lay in wait for him... But Samson... took hold of the doors of the city gate, together with the two posts, and tore them loose, bar and all. He lifted them to his shoulders and carried them to the top of the hill that faces Hebron. (16:1-3)
- Sometime later, he fell in love with a woman... whose name was Delilah. The rulers of the Philistines went to her and said, “See if you can lure him into showing you the secret of his great strength... Each one of us will give you eleven hundred shekels of silver.” So, Delilah said to Samson, “Tell me the secret of your great strength...” Samson answered her, “If anyone ties me with seven fresh bowstrings that have not been dried, I’ll become as weak as any other man.” Then... she tied him with them. With men hidden in the room, she called to him, “Samson, the Philistines are upon you!” But he snapped the bowstrings as easily as a piece of string snaps when it comes close to a flame... Then Delilah said to Samson, “You have made a fool of me; you lied to me. Come now, tell me how you can be tied.” He said, “If anyone ties me securely with new ropes that have never been used, I’ll become as weak as any other man.” So, Delilah took new ropes and tied him with them. Then, with men hidden in the room, she called to him, “Samson, the Philistines are upon you!” But he snapped the ropes off his arms as if they were threads. Delilah then said to Samson, “All this time you have been making a fool of me and lying to me. Tell me how you can be tied.” He replied, “If you weave the seven braids of my head into the fabric on the loom and tighten it with the pin, I’ll become as weak as any other man.” So, while he was sleeping, Delilah took the seven braids of his head, wove them into the fabric and tightened it with the pin. Again, she called to him, “Samson, the Philistines are upon you!” He awoke from his sleep and pulled up the pin and the loom, with the fabric. Then she said to him, “How can you say, ‘I love you,’ when you won’t confide in me?” With such nagging she prodded him day after day until he was sick to death of it. So, he told her everything. “...I have been a Nazirite dedicated to God from my mother’s womb. If my head were shaved, my strength

would leave me...” After putting him to sleep on her lap, she called for someone to shave off the seven braids of his hair... And his strength left him. Then she called, “Samson, the Philistines are upon you!” He awoke from his sleep and thought, “I’ll go out as before and shake myself free.” But he did not know that the LORD had left him. Then the Philistines seized him, gouged out his eyes... Binding him with bronze shackles, they set him to grinding grain in the prison. But the hair on his head began to grow again after it had been shaved. (16:4-22)

- Now the rulers of the Philistines assembled to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god and to celebrate... While they were in high spirits, they shouted, “Bring out Samson to entertain us.” So, they called Samson out of the prison, and he performed for them. When they stood him among the pillars, Samson said to the servant who held his hand, “Put me where I can feel the pillars that support the temple, so that I may lean against them.” ...all the rulers of the Philistines were there, and on the roof were about three thousand men and women watching Samson perform. Then Samson prayed to the LORD, “Sovereign LORD, remember me. Please, God, strengthen me just once more, and let me with one blow get revenge on the Philistines for my two eyes.” Then Samson reached toward the two central pillars on which the temple stood. Bracing himself against them... Samson said, “Let me die with the Philistines!” Then he pushed with all his might, and down came the temple on the rulers and all the people in it. Thus he killed many more when he died than while he lived... They brought him back and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of Manoah his father. He had led Israel twenty years. (16:23-31)
- Epilogue (Chapters 17-21)
  - ...a man named Micah... said to his mother, “The eleven hundred shekels of silver that were taken from you and about which I heard you utter a curse—I have that silver with me; I took it.” Then his mother said, “The LORD bless you, my son!” When he returned the eleven hundred shekels of silver to his mother, she said, “I solemnly consecrate my silver to the LORD for my son to make an image overlaid with silver. I will give it back to you.” So, after he returned the silver to his mother, she took two hundred shekels of silver and gave them to a silversmith, who used them to make the idol. And it was put in Micah’s house... and he made an ephod and some household gods and installed one of his sons as his priest. In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit. A young Levite from Bethlehem in Judah, who had been living within the clan of Judah, left that town in search of some other place to stay... Then Micah said to him, “Live with me and be my father and priest, and I’ll give you ten shekels of silver a year, your clothes and your food.” So, the Levite agreed to live with him... and the young man became his priest... And Micah said, “Now I know that the LORD will be good to me, since this Levite has become my priest.” (17)
  - ...And in those days the tribe of the Danites was seeking a place of their own where they might settle, because they had not yet come into an inheritance among the tribes of Israel... So, the Danites sent five of their leading men... to spy out the land and explore it... So, they

entered the hill country of Ephraim and came to the house of Micah, where they spent the night. When they were near Micah's house, they recognized the voice of the young Levite... "Why are you here?" He told them what Micah had done for him... Then they said to him, "Please inquire of God to learn whether our journey will be successful." The priest answered them, "Go in peace. Your journey has the LORD's approval." So, the five men left and came to Laish, where they saw that the people were living in safety... at peace and secure... When they returned to... their fellow Danites... They [said] "Come on, let's attack them! We have seen the land, and it is very good... Then six hundred men of the Danites, armed for battle, set out... Then the five men who had spied out the land of Laish said to their fellow Danites, "Do you know that one of these houses has an ephod, some household gods and an image overlaid with silver? Now you know what to do." So, they turned in there and went to the house of the young Levite at Micah's place and greeted him... The five men who had spied out the land went inside and took the idol, the ephod, and the household gods... the priest said to them, "What are you doing?" They answered him, "Be quiet! ...Come with us, and be our father and priest... The priest was very pleased. He took the ephod, the household gods and the idol and went along with the people... When they had gone some distance from Micah's house, the men who lived near Micah were called together and overtook the Danites... Micah, seeing that they were too strong for him, turned around and went back home. Then they took what Micah had made, and his priest, and went on to Laish... They attacked them with the sword and burned down their city... The Danites rebuilt the city and settled there... There the Danites set up for themselves the idol, and Jonathan, son of Gershom, the son of Moses, and his sons were priests for the tribe of Dan... They continued to use the idol Micah had made... (18)

- ...Now a Levite who lived in a remote area... took a concubine from Bethlehem in Judah. But she was unfaithful to him. She left him and went back to her parents' home in Bethlehem... After she had been there four months, her husband went to her to persuade her to return... She took him into her parents' home, and when her father saw him, he gladly welcomed him... he remained with him three days, eating and drinking, and sleeping there... On the morning of the fifth day, when he rose to go, the woman's father said, "Refresh yourself. Wait till afternoon!" So, the two of them ate together. Then when the man, with his concubine and his servant, got up to leave, his father-in-law, the woman's father, said, "Now look, it's almost evening. Spend the night here; the day is nearly over. Stay and enjoy yourself. Early tomorrow morning you can get up and be on your way home." But, unwilling to stay another night, the man left and went toward Jebus (that is, Jerusalem)... they went on, and the sun set as they neared Gibeah in Benjamin. There they stopped to spend the night... That evening an old man... who was living in Gibeah... came in from his work in the fields... "You are welcome at my house," the old man said... While they were enjoying themselves, some of the wicked men of the city surrounded the house. Pounding on the door, they shouted to the old man who owned the house, "Bring out the man who came to your house so we can have sex with him." The owner of the house went outside and said to them, "No, my friends, don't be so vile. Since this man is my guest, don't do this outrageous thing. Look, here is my virgin daughter, and his concubine. I will bring them out to you

now, and you can use them and do to them whatever you wish. But as for this man, don't do such an outrageous thing." But the men would not listen to him. So, the man took his concubine and sent her outside to them, and they raped her and abused her throughout the night, and at dawn they let her go. At daybreak the woman went back to the house where her master was staying, fell down at the door and lay there until daylight. When her master got up in the morning and opened the door of the house... there lay his concubine, fallen in the doorway of the house... Then the man put her on his donkey and set out for home. When he reached home, he took a knife and cut up his concubine, limb by limb, into twelve parts and sent them into all the areas of Israel. Everyone who saw it was saying to one another, "Such a thing has never been seen or done, not since the day the Israelites came up out of Egypt..." (19)

- Then all Israel... came together as one and assembled before the LORD in Mizpah... four hundred thousand men armed with swords... Then the Israelites said, "Tell us how this awful thing happened." So, the Levite, the husband of the murdered woman, said, "I and my concubine came to Gibeah in Benjamin to spend the night. During the night the men of Gibeah came after me and surrounded the house, intending to kill me. They raped my concubine, and she died. I took my concubine, cut her into pieces and sent one piece to each region of Israel's inheritance, because they committed this lewd and outrageous act in Israel..." All the men rose up together as one, saying, "None of us will go home... this is what we'll do to Gibeah: We'll go up against it in the order decided by casting lots... when the army arrives at Gibeah in Benjamin, it can give them what they deserve for this outrageous act done in Israel." The tribes of Israel sent messengers throughout the tribe of Benjamin, saying, "What about this awful crime that was committed among you? Now turn those wicked men of Gibeah over to us so that we may put them to death and purge the evil from Israel." But the Benjamites would not listen to their fellow Israelites... they came together at Gibeah to fight against the Israelites... The Israelites went up to Bethel and inquired of God. They said, "Who of us is to go up first to fight against the Benjamites?" The LORD replied, "Judah shall go first." ...The Israelites went out to fight the Benjamites and took up battle positions against them at Gibeah. The Benjamites came out of Gibeah and cut down twenty-two thousand Israelites on the battlefield that day. But the Israelites encouraged one another and again took up their positions where they had stationed themselves the first day. The Israelites went up and wept before the LORD until evening, and they inquired of the LORD. They said, "Shall we go up again to fight against the Benjamites, our fellow Israelites?" The LORD answered, "Go up against them." Then the Israelites drew near to Benjamin the second day. This time, when the Benjamites came out from Gibeah to oppose them, they cut down another eighteen thousand Israelites, all of them armed with swords. Then all the Israelites, the whole army, went up to Bethel, and there they sat weeping before the LORD. They fasted that day until evening and presented burnt offerings and fellowship offerings to the LORD. And the Israelites inquired of the LORD... "Shall we go up again to fight against the Benjamites, our fellow Israelites, or not?" The LORD responded, "Go, for tomorrow I will give them into your hands." Then Israel set an ambush around Gibeah. They went up against the Benjamites on the third day and took up positions

against Gibeah as they had done before. The Benjamites came out to meet them and were drawn away from the city. They began to inflict casualties on the Israelites as before... All the men of Israel moved from their places and took up positions at Baal Tamar, and the Israelite ambush charged out of its place on the west of Gibeah. Then ten thousand of Israel's able young men made a frontal attack on Gibeah. The fighting was so heavy that the Benjamites did not realize how near disaster was. The LORD defeated Benjamin before Israel, and on that day the Israelites struck down 25,100 Benjamites... Those who had been in ambush made a sudden dash into Gibeah, spread out and put the whole city to the sword... the Benjamites turned and saw the whole city going up in smoke... So, they fled before the Israelites in the direction of the wilderness, but they could not escape the battle. And the Israelites who came out of the towns cut them down there... Eighteen thousand Benjamites fell... As they turned and fled toward the wilderness... the Israelites cut down five thousand men along the roads. They kept pressing after the Benjamites as far as Gidom and struck down two thousand more. On that day twenty-five thousand Benjamite swordsmen fell... But six hundred of them turned and fled into the wilderness... where they stayed four months. The men of Israel went back to Benjamin and put all the towns to the sword, including the animals and everything else they found. All the towns they came across they set on fire. (20)

- ...The people went to Bethel, where they sat before God until evening, raising their voices and weeping bitterly. "LORD, God of Israel," they cried, "why has this happened to Israel? Why should one tribe be missing from Israel today?" Early the next day the people built an altar and presented burnt offerings and fellowship offerings... Now the Israelites grieved for the tribe of Benjamin, their fellow Israelites... Then they asked, "Which one of the tribes of Israel failed to assemble before the LORD at Mizpah?" They discovered that no one from Jabesh Gilead had come to the camp for the assembly... So, the assembly sent twelve thousand fighting men with instructions to go to Jabesh Gilead and put to the sword those living there, including the women and children... They found among the people living in Jabesh Gilead four hundred young women... Then the whole assembly sent an offer of peace to the Benjamites... So, the Benjamites returned... and were given the women of Jabesh Gilead who had been spared. But there were not enough for all of them... "The Benjamite survivors must have heirs," they said, "so that a tribe of Israel will not be wiped out. We can't give them our daughters as wives, since we Israelites have taken this oath... So, they instructed the Benjamites, saying, "Go and hide in the vineyards and watch. When the young women of Shiloh come out to join in the dancing, rush from the vineyards and each of you seize one of them to be your wife. Then return to the land of Benjamin. When their fathers or brothers complain to us, we will say to them, 'Do us the favor of helping them, because we did not get wives for them during the war. You will not be guilty of breaking your oath because you did not give your daughters to them.'" So that is what the Benjamites did... the Israelites left that place and went home to their tribes and clans, each to his own inheritance. In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit. (21)

# RUTH

- The Book of Ruth clearly belongs in the period of Judges, “*In the days when the judges ruled*” (1:1).
- The book is named for its heroine, Ruth.
- The book of Ruth is a love story. It is unique in the fact that Ruth was the great-grandmother of David, placing her in the line of Christ. Ruth is one of the four women named in the Messianic line along with Tamar, Rahab, and Bathsheba.

## OUTLINE

- A man from *Bethlehem* named *Elimelek* traveled to *Moab* because *there was a famine in the land*. The man had two sons, *Mahlon* and *Kilion*. His wife’s name was *Naomi*. (1:1-2)
- *Elimelek* died in *Moab* and his two sons married *Moabite* women, *Orpah* and *Ruth*. After *about ten years both Mahlon and Kilion also died*. (1:4-5).
- *Naomi* heard the famine had ended in Israel and decided to go back home. *Orpah* decided to stay in *Moab*, but *Ruth* told her mother-in-law, “*Where you go, I will go, and where you stay, I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried*” (1:16-17). So, the two women traveled back to *Bethlehem*.
- Once they were back in *Bethlehem*, *Ruth* went to the wheat field to glean food for them to eat. So she went out, entered a field and began to glean behind the harvesters. *As it turned out, she was working in a field belonging to Boaz, who was from the clan of Elimelek* (2:3).
- *Boaz* took an interest in *Ruth*: *So, Boaz said to Ruth, “My daughter, listen to me. Don’t go and glean in another field and don’t go away from here. Stay here with the women who work for me. Watch the field where the men are harvesting and follow along after the women. I have told the men not to lay a hand on you. And whenever you are thirsty, go and get a drink from the water jars the men have filled... I’ve been told all about what you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband—how you left your father and mother and your homeland and came to live with a people you did not know before. May the LORD repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge*” (2:8-12).
- ...*Then Ruth told her mother-in-law about the one at whose place she had been working...* “*The LORD bless him!*” *Naomi* said to her daughter-in-law. “*He has not stopped showing his kindness to the living and the dead.*” She added, “*That man is our close relative; he is one of our guardian (kinsman)-redeemers*” (2:19-20)
  - NOTE: The kinsman-redeemer is a male relative who, according to Mosaic Law, had the privilege or responsibility to act on behalf of a relative who was in trouble, danger, or need. The Hebrew term (*go el*) designates one who delivers or rescues or redeems property or person.
  - “*If one of your fellow Israelites becomes poor and sells some of their property, their nearest relative is to come and redeem what they have sold*” (Leviticus 25:25).
  - “*If a foreigner residing among you becomes rich and any of your fellow Israelites become poor and sell themselves to the foreigner or to a member of the foreigner’s clan, they retain the right of redemption after they have sold themselves. One of their relatives may redeem them: An uncle or a cousin or any blood relative in their clan may redeem them*” (Leviticus 25:47-49).
- *One day Ruth’s mother-in-law Naomi* said to her, “*My daughter, I must find*

*a home for you, where you will be well provided for. Now Boaz, with whose women you have worked, is a relative of ours. Tonight, he will be winnowing barley on the threshing floor. Wash, put on perfume, and get dressed in your best clothes. Then go down to the threshing floor, but don't let him know you are there until he has finished eating and drinking. When he lies down, note the place where he is lying. Then go and uncover his feet and lie down. He will tell you what to do..." So, she went down to the threshing floor and did everything her mother-in-law told her to do. When Boaz had finished eating and drinking and was in good spirits, he went over to lie down at the far end of the grain pile. Ruth approached quietly, uncovered his feet, and lay down. In the middle of the night something startled the man; "...Who are you?" he asked. "I am your servant Ruth," she said. "Spread the corner of your garment over me, since you are a guardian-redeemer of our family." "The LORD bless you, my daughter," he replied... don't be afraid. I will do for you all you ask... Although it is true that I am a guardian-redeemer of our family, there is another who is more closely related than I. Stay here for the night, and in the morning if he wants to do his duty as your guardian-redeemer, good; let him redeem you. But if he is not willing, as surely as the LORD lives, I will do it..." So, she lay at his feet until morning... [Then] he said, "Bring me the shawl you are wearing and hold it out." When she did so, he poured into it six measures of barley and placed the bundle on her. Then he went back to town. When Ruth came to her mother-in-law... Naomi said, "Wait, my daughter, until you find out what happens. For the man will not rest until the matter is settled today." (3)*

- *Boaz went up to the town gate and sat down there just as the guardian-redeemer he had mentioned came along. Boaz said, "Come over here, my friend, and sit down." So, he went over and sat down. Boaz took ten of the elders of the town... Then he said to the guardian-redeemer, "Naomi, who has come back from Moab, is selling the piece of land that belonged to our relative Elimelek. I thought I should bring the matter to your attention and suggest that you buy it..." For no one has the right to do it except you, and I am next in line." "I will redeem it," he said. Then Boaz said, "On the day you buy the land from Naomi, you also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the dead man's widow... At this, the guardian-redeemer said, "Then I cannot redeem it because I might endanger my own estate. You redeem it yourself. I cannot do it." (in earlier times in Israel, for the redemption and transfer of property to become final, one party took off his sandal and gave it to the other...) So, the guardian-redeemer said to Boaz, "Buy it yourself." And he removed his sandal. (4)*
- *So, Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife... and she gave birth to a son... And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David. (4:13-16)*

**NEXT WEEK: 1 Samuel**