

THE EMPTY  
THRONE



*A Study of the Books of*  
***Judges & Ruth***

July-September 2024

Wednesdays Adult Class

Open to the Public

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# Judges & Ruth

July 10	1) Introduction to <b><i>The Book of Judges</i></b>
July 17	2) Ch 1-2 Faltered Conquest & Fractured Covenant
July 24	3) Ch 3 Othniel & Ehud
July 31	4) Ch 4-5 Deborah & Barak
Aug 7	5) Ch 6-9 Gideon & Abimelech
Aug 14	6) Ch 10-12 Jephthah's Downfall
Aug 21	7) Ch 13-16 Samson's Misery
Aug 28	8) Ch 17-18 Religious Degeneration
Sept 4	9) Ch 19-21 Moral Degeneration
Sept 11	10) <b>Relief:</b> Introduction to <b><i>The Book of Ruth</i></b>
Sept 18	11) Ch 1-2 Crisis For The Royal Line
Sept 25	12) Ch 3-4 Rescue For The Royal Line
Oct 6	<i>Flex-Day: Catch-Up, Review, or Delayed Discussion on Hebrews 11:32</i>

## Outline of Judges:

1. Introductory Overview: The End from the Beginning 1:1-3:6
  - A) Faltering Conquest 1:1-2:5
  - B) Fractured Covenant 2:6-3:4
  - C) Summary Assessment 3:5-6
2. The Succession of Judges: Dissolution 3:7-16:31
  - A) Othniel: The exemplary Judge 3:7-11
  - B) Stage One: Triumph 3:12-5:31
    1. Ehud the Assassin 3:12-30
    2. Shamgar: Minor Judge, Major Achievement 3:31
    3. Deborah the Prophet 4:1-5:31
  - C) Stage Two: Transition 6:1-10:5
    1. Gideon: Ambiguity Embodied 6:1-8:32
    2. Abimelech the Usurper 8:33-9:57
    3. Minor Judges: Order Restored 10:1-5
  - D) Stage Three: Tragedy 10:6-16:31
    1. Jephthah: A Vow Tragically Kept 10:6-12:7
    2. Minor Judges: Measure of Mediocrity 12:8-15
    3. Samson: A Vow Tragically Broken 13:1-16:31
3. The Finale: A Decadent Community 17:1-21:25
  - A) Inverted War of Conquest 17:1-18:31
  - B) Inverted War of Covenant Justice 19:1-21:25

Please make every effort to read the material for that week & jot down a short answer to the questions. I want the class to be interactive so bring questions you have & don't be shy.

July 10 1) Introduction to *The Book of Judges*

Read an Introduction in a good study bible, bible dictionary, or an overview online.

1) Who wrote The Book of Judges? When & where did they write it? Who was it to? Why?

2) What type of book is it? What do we need to keep in mind when reading this type of literature?

3) What do we know about the title? What does the word “judges” mean? cf. 2:16-19

4) What are some of the main themes of *Judges*? How would you outline *Judges*?

5) What is the historical background of *The Judges*?

July 17 2) Judges 1-2 Faltered Conquest & Fractured Covenant

- 1) Is the conquest of The Land complete or incomplete? Why?
- 2) What cities appear in these chapters that will become very important to Israel?
- 3) Who is the angel of the Lord in Judges 2:1-5 & elsewhere?
- 4) Why tell the story of Caleb? Why restate the influence of Joshua? Cf. Josh 24:28-31
- 5) How does God respond to Israel's trouble? What caused this response?
- 6) How did Israel respond to the delivers God sent them?

July 24 3) Judges Ch 3 Othniel & Ehud

- 1) Why did God providentially allow Israel's enemies to remain?
- 2) What made God angry with Israel? What was His punishment for them?
- 3) Does "crying out" necessarily mean they are repenting?
- 4) How is Othniel described? What did he give Israel?
- 5) What did God do for Eglon, King of Moab, & why?
- 6) Was Ehud a good or bad man? Why?
- 7) What is the story of Shamgar?
- 8) How long are the two periods of rest in Chapter 3?

July 31 4) Judges 4-5 Deborah & Barak

- 1) How does the story in Chapter 4-5 differ from the stories in Chapter 3?
- 2) Who is “judging” Israel? Does Barak’s response to Deborah show weakness?
- 3) Why is Moses mentioned in this story?
- 4) How does Israel defeat the enemy? Is Jael good or bad?
- 5) What is the focus of the song in Chapter 5?
- 6) What surprises you about the song?
- 7) How long did the land have rest?

Aug 7 5) Judges 6-9 Gideon & Abimelech

- 1) Who is oppressing Israel now? How does God respond to Israel's cry?
- 2) How does Gideon respond to his call? What sign did God give him?
- 3) Did men support Gideon? What new name did Gideon receive from his father?
- 4) Was Gideon's fleece a moment of strong faith or weak faith? Why?
- 5) Does Gideon demonstrate faith or fear in Chapter 7? Why?
- 6) Did Gideon treat the men of Succoth & Penuel with justice? What about Zebah & Zalmunna?
- 7) What do the men of Israel ask Gideon to do in Ch 8? How does he respond?
- 8) Who is Abimelech? Who supported him? Who did he hire? Who did he kill?
- 9) Who is Jotham? What parable does he tell? What did it mean?
- 10) How does the Abimelech story end?

Aug 14 6) Judges 10-12 Jephthah's Downfall

- 1) Who are Tola & Jair? After them, how long & how bad does Israel suffer?
- 2) How is Israel's crying out different this time?
- 3) Who was Jephthah? What did he require of the elders to help Gilead?
- 4) How did the Ammonites defend their invasion? How did Jephthah respond?
- 5) What did Jephthah want God to do? What infamous vow does he then make? Why?
- 6) How does Jephthah's daughter respond? What custom originates from this story?
- 7) What tribe is upset with Jephthah & why? Have they been upset before?
- 8) What type of marriages does Ibzan put his children in? What is unique about Abdon's burial?



Aug 21 7) Judges 13-16 Samson's Misery

- 1) What do we know about Samson's mother? His father? How is his birth story special?
- 2) What bible births are similar to Samson's?
- 3) What does Samson desire & why? What happens at the wedding feast?
- 4) How does Samson's riddle get found out? How does he respond?
- 5) What happens to Samson's wife? What happens when Samson returns for her?
- 6) Who tried to help the Philistines arrest Samson? How did he defeat them? What was his attitude?
- 7) Who does Samson visit in Gaza? How does he escape?
- 8) Who does Samson fall in love with next & whose side is she on? What is her complaint?
- 9) How did the Philistines treat him? How did Samson end his life?

Aug 28 8) Judges 17-18 Religious Degeneration

1) What had Micah done to his mother? How did his mother respond?

2) In addition to idolatry, what sin did Micah commit?

3) Who were Israel's leaders? Who was supposed to be their king? How did Israel behave?

4) What did Micah do with the Levite traveler? Did he treat him well? Why did he think God sent him?

5) What was wrong with the tribe of Dan? How would they solve the problem?

6) What did the spies find? What did they ask their fellow Danites? How did they respond?

7) What do they ask the Levite to do? Why does he agree? Why were Micah's men afraid?

8) What happened at Laish? Who became priest there? How long did that last?

Sept 4 9) Judges 19-21 Moral Degeneration

- 1) What were the leadership conditions in Israel? What did the Levite in Ephraim do?
- 2) How did the girl's father treat him? How long did they stay? Why? Why does he keep asking?
- 3) What story in Genesis is similar to this chapter?
- 4) Where did the servant want to stay? How did the Levite respond? Where did they stay?
- 5) Who finally takes them in? What sin did the men of Gibeah commit?
- 6) What does the old man offer? How do the men receive it? What do they do?
- 7) What does the Levite do with her the next day? How did "all Israel" respond?
- 8) Where did Israel assemble? What do they decide to do? How does Benjamin respond?
- 9) How do the battles go? What marriage arrangements are made?
- 10) How does the book of Judges conclude?

Sept 11 10) Relief: Introduction to ***The Book of Ruth*** (Roughly #1-6)

Sept 18 11) Ch 1-2 Crisis For The Royal Line (Roughly #6-9)

Sept 25 12) Ch 3-4 Rescue For The Royal Line (Roughly #9-12)

We will work our way through these questions & extra discussions over two or three classes.

Read an Introduction to Ruth in a good study bible, bible dictionary, or an overview online.

1) Who wrote Ruth? When & where did they write it? Who was it to? Why?

2) What type of book is it? What are the Jewish *Megilloth*? How should we read this type of literature?

3) What are some of the main themes of *Ruth*? How would you outline *Ruth*?

4) What is the historical background of *The Judges*? What is Levirate marriage? Dt 25:5-10

5) What does the book teach about God? What is *hesed* or God's trait of *loving-faithful-kindness*?

6) What do we know about each major character in Chapter 1? How does the story unfold?

7) What major character is introduced in Chapter 2? What do we know about "*gleaning in the fields*"?

8) What village does this occur in? How do the citizens treat each other? Why is this important?

9) What caused Boaz's initial interest in Ruth? How did he show her preferential treatment?

10) What is Naomi's plan in Chapter 3? How does Boaz exhibit nobility in response?

11) How do we see God's providence at work in Chapter 4? What shrewd plan does Boaz carry out?

12) What finally happens for Ruth & Naomi? How does this connect with Jesus?

## Oct 6 Hebrews 11:32 Addendum

1a) What do we know about the book we call “Hebrews”? Who? What? When? Etc.

1b) What type of book is it? (13:22)

2a) What is the main message of Hebrews?

2b) How would you fill in this outline:

- Ch 1-2 Christ is Better Than The \_\_\_\_\_
- Ch 3 Christ is Better Than \_\_\_\_\_
- Ch 4 Christ is Better Than \_\_\_\_\_
- Ch 5-6 Christ is Better Than \_\_\_\_\_
- Ch 7 Christ is Better Than \_\_\_\_\_
- Ch 8-10 Christ is A Better \_\_\_\_\_
- Ch 11-12 \_\_\_\_\_
- Ch 13 Living Life With Christ Our \_\_\_\_\_ v6

3) Are there other outlines worth considering? \*\*

4) Who is in the so-called “Hall of Faith”? How would you summarize them?

5) Who or what is the main point of the “Hall of Faith”?

6) [v32-34] In what order do the names of ‘the judges’ appear? Are others in the sentence?

7) What *exactly* is said about “the judges”? Can any positive action be affirmed?

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1:1-3 Introduction to God’s Final Word/Revelation

1:5-2:18 The Son & the angels

3:1-5:10 Jesus as a faithful & merciful high priest

5:11-10:39 Jesus as a perfect & eternal high priest

11:1-12:29 Faith & Perseverance

13:1-25 A God Honoring Life Style

11 Words or Less: Jesus is better than any OT person, concept, or sacrifice.