

## Judges

### Israel's Spiritual Dark Age

Have you ever wanted to “do your own thing”? Maybe you were tired of listening to others telling you what to do, or tired of trying to follow God's Word, or you just felt like everyone else was having fun so why shouldn't you. The book of Judges describes a period of time in the nation of Israel's history when seemingly everyone \_\_\_\_\_ God and just did what \_\_\_\_\_ wanted!

The book of Judges gets its name from the twelve \_\_\_\_\_ and one \_\_\_\_\_ who served as judges (\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ leaders) during the period of time following Joshua's death, up until the time of Samuel, the last \_\_\_\_\_ and the first \_\_\_\_\_ in a continuous line of prophets (Acts 3:24), and the setting up of Israel's \_\_\_\_\_. None of the judges were national leaders like Joshua or Moses, but all were leaders who ruled \_\_\_\_\_ over \_\_\_\_\_ geographical areas. The judges did not all rule consecutively, but had \_\_\_\_\_ periods of rulership over different \_\_\_\_\_ of Canaan.

Following the death of the godly leader, Joshua, Israel plunged into a \_\_\_\_\_-year spiritual dark age. The book of Judges describes this period as \_\_\_\_\_ cycles of sin, servitude, supplication, and salvation. The book closes with two \_\_\_\_\_ illustrations of Israel's depravity and a sad epitaph of the nation's condition, *“In those days there was no \_\_\_\_\_ in Israel; everyone did what was right in his \_\_\_\_\_ eyes”* (Judges 21:25).

The book of Judges records the \_\_\_\_\_ of Israel's \_\_\_\_\_ due to the nation's \_\_\_\_\_, and sets the stage for the nation's future \_\_\_\_\_. Whereas the book of Joshua is a book of Israel's \_\_\_\_\_, the book of Judges is a book of Israel's \_\_\_\_\_.

Judges can be divided as follows:

<u>Chapters</u>	<u>Topic</u>
1-3	The _____ of Apostasy
4-16	The _____ of Apostasy
17-21	The _____ of Apostasy

**Some key events:**

1. Israel \_\_\_\_\_ to drive the idolatrous Canaanites from the land (Judg. 1:21,27-33; 2:1-3).
2. The \_\_\_\_\_ generation of Israelites did not know \_\_\_\_\_ or His \_\_\_\_\_ in the past (Judg. 2:10).
3. The Israelites became \_\_\_\_\_ and worshiped the gods of the Canaanites (Judg. 2:11,12).
4. The people \_\_\_\_\_, God sent judges to \_\_\_\_\_ them, but then the people \_\_\_\_\_ again (Judg. 2:18,19).
5. The terrible pattern: "*The sons of Israel \_\_\_\_\_ did \_\_\_\_\_ in the sight of the Lord*" (Judg. 2:11; 3:7,12; 4:1; 6:1; 10:6; 13:1).
6. **Ehud**, the \_\_\_\_\_ judge, stabs the overweight Moabite king in the \_\_\_\_\_ (Judg. 3:15-23,30).
7. **Deborah**, the only \_\_\_\_\_ judge, defeats Jabin the king of Canaan. Another \_\_\_\_\_ (Jael) kills Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army (Judg. 4:1-9, 17-21).
8. **Gideon** \_\_\_\_\_ God's clear calling and puts out the \_\_\_\_\_ (Judg. 6:36-40).
9. **Gideon** \_\_\_\_\_ the Midianites, but then \_\_\_\_\_ idolatry (Judg. 8:22-28).
10. **Jephthah** \_\_\_\_\_ the Ammonites, keeps his vow, and gives his \_\_\_\_\_ up to God as an \_\_\_\_\_ (Judg. 11:30-40).

11. **Samson** was a \_\_\_\_\_ from birth, meaning he could not \_\_\_\_\_ wine or \_\_\_\_\_ the dead or \_\_\_\_\_ his hair (Judg. 13:5)—all things he violated! He touched a \_\_\_\_\_ lion (Judg. 14:8,9), \_\_\_\_\_ with pagans (Judg. 14:10), picked up a \_\_\_\_\_ donkey’s jawbone (Judg.15:15), and \_\_\_\_\_ 1000 Philistines with it (Judg. 15:15). And when he \_\_\_\_\_ his hair (Judg. 16:17), that was “the last straw,” and he \_\_\_\_\_ his supernatural power from God. But then his hair grew back (Judg. 16:20–30)!
12. A Levite’s concubine (mistress) is \_\_\_\_\_ to death and the angry Levite \_\_\_\_\_ the concubine’s corpse into twelve pieces and \_\_\_\_\_ these twelve body parts throughout Israel (Judg. 19:22–30)!
13. A civil war ensues between the sons of Israel and the tribe of Benjamin in \_\_\_\_\_ for the death of the concubine. As a result, the tribe of Benjamin is \_\_\_\_\_ (Judg. 20:44–48).
14. The decimation of the tribe of Benjamin leads to a need for women to be \_\_\_\_\_ for the surviving Benjamite men. This results in two bizarre events used to \_\_\_\_\_ wives for the Benjamites: first, the \_\_\_\_\_ of all the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead, except for \_\_\_\_\_ girls who would be given as wives to the Benjamites (Judg. 21:10–12), and second, the \_\_\_\_\_ of girls from Shiloh who were on their way to a \_\_\_\_\_ (Judg. 21:19–21).

The book of Judges ends with this very sad commentary, *“In those days there was no king in Israel; and everyone did what was right in his own eyes”* (Judg. 21:25).

## Ruth

### Beauty and the Boaz

Almost everyone enjoys reading a good \_\_\_\_\_ story, especially one that starts out “ugly” but ends up beautiful! The book of Ruth is such a story. Set amidst the ugliness of the period of \_\_\_\_\_, when every man was doing what was right in his \_\_\_\_\_, the story of Ruth (Ruth means “beauty”) shines forth like a beautiful bright star in a very dark sky.

During a period of great \_\_\_\_\_, Ruth displays high moral standards. In an age of great \_\_\_\_\_, Ruth portrays great selflessness. At a time when much of Israel is turning to \_\_\_\_\_, Ruth is turning from idolatry to the one true God. While the guilt-filled people around her are committing horrific \_\_\_\_\_ of passion, Ruth is innocently committing simple \_\_\_\_\_ of love.

Ruth is a Moabite \_\_\_\_\_ who leaves her homeland (Moab) to live with her widowed, \_\_\_\_\_ mother-in-law in the city of Bethlehem. While humbly following her mother-in-law’s instructions to glean in the grain fields, Ruth gleanes more than just grain! She attracts the attention of the \_\_\_\_\_ of the field, Boaz, who falls in love with her and \_\_\_\_\_ her!

Ruth’s personal \_\_\_\_\_ is in stark contrast to the national \_\_\_\_\_ of Israel.

Ruth is redeemed by her kinsman redeemer, Boaz. The redemption of Ruth by her kinsman redeemer is a beautiful portrayal of how \_\_\_\_\_ is our Kinsman Redeemer and redeems us, taking us as his \_\_\_\_\_.

The book of Ruth is one of only two books of the Bible named after a \_\_\_\_\_. The other one is the book of \_\_\_\_\_.

And Ruth is one of only \_\_\_\_\_ women mentioned in Jesus’s genealogy in Matthew 1—three of the four being \_\_\_\_\_.

The book of Ruth can be divided as follows:

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Theme</u>
1	Ruth _____ With Naomi
2	Ruth _____ in Boaz's Field
3	Ruth _____ at Boaz's Feet
4	Ruth _____ Boaz

**The key players:**

1. Elimelech, the father, whose name means \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Naomi, the mother (in-law), whose name means \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Mahlon, the son, whose name means \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Chilion, the other son, whose name means \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Orpah, the daughter-in-law, whose name means \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Ruth, the other daughter-in-law, whose name means \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Boaz, the kinsman redeemer, whose name means \_\_\_\_\_.

**Some key events:**

1. Due to famine in Bethlehem (the house of \_\_\_\_\_), Elimelech moves his family to the pagan land of Moab (God's \_\_\_\_\_, Psa. 108:9), where his sons \_\_\_\_\_ Moabitesses. While there, Dad and his three sons all \_\_\_\_\_, leaving behind three \_\_\_\_\_ (Ruth 1:1-5).
2. Naomi hears that there is food back home, so she tells her daughters-in-law to go back to their \_\_\_\_\_ families and beliefs while she returns home to Judah (Ruth 1:8,14,15).
3. Ruth declares her \_\_\_\_\_ to Naomi and to God and goes with Naomi (Ruth 1:16,22).
4. Ruth gleans in Boaz's field and gets \_\_\_\_\_ (Ruth 2:1-3,8-10).
5. Ruth puts the "\_\_\_\_\_" on Boaz (Ruth 3:1-6).
6. Boaz discovers that "a \_\_\_\_\_ was lying at his feet" and agrees to \_\_\_\_\_ (marry) her (Ruth 3:8-13).

7. Boaz meets with the elders of the city and arranges to \_\_\_\_\_ (marry) Ruth (Ruth 4:9,10).
8. Boaz and Ruth \_\_\_\_\_ and have a son, Obed, who became the grandfather of \_\_\_\_\_, and the ancestor of \_\_\_\_\_, the Kingsman Redeemer (Ruth 4:13,14,17).