

OT-OV

Lesson 79

1. Last week we continued our study of the Book of Judges.

2. When time expired I had just finished teaching the discipline of the Tribe of Benjamin by the armies of Israel for their failure to judge homosexuality, rape and murder.

3. Let's review some of that learned and then we will pick up with new material on page two.

3.1 The Book of Judges was written somewhere around 1100 B.C. by an unknown, most of the events recorded in the book occurred between 1400-1100 B.C. It is a story of tribal rights under a theocracy and the success of the system even amidst terrible personal failures on the part of the individual Judges.

3.2 In historical sequence it covers the period of Israel's history between Joshua and Samuel. The book teaches how vile the unrestrained volition of man can be.

3.3 Once more the mighty acts of God were displayed as a number of judges responded to the call of God to lead the Israelites in military exploits to rout the oppressing nations.

3.4 The Book describes a series of religious and political cycles of sin, sorrow and supplications. Some of the Judges were contemporaries serving in different parts of the country. God raised up "Judges" to deliver Israel at various times. Though each judge ruled in his tribe and in the main solved only intra-tribal problems, God in periods of exigency used certain heroes to resolve inter-tribal problems.

3.5 God restrains mankind during the period of the Judges by using their geographical neighbors. The Philistines, the Moabites, Amorites, Amalekites etc. are used to rein-in Israel. God in his permissive will and infinite wisdom permits certain judges to deliver Israel from tribal discipline.

4. And now to complete our study of Israel's apostasy: Jdg 17:1-21:25

4.1 Michah's idolatry, Jdg 17:1-13

4.2 Danite migration, Jdg 17:14-18:31

4.3 Gibeah's atrocity, Jdg 19:1-30

4.4 The Benjamite war, Jdg 20:1-48

4.5 Wives for the Benjamites, Jdg 21:1-25

Jdg 21:1 The men of Israel had taken an oath at Mizpah: "Not one of us will give his daughter in marriage to a Benjamite."

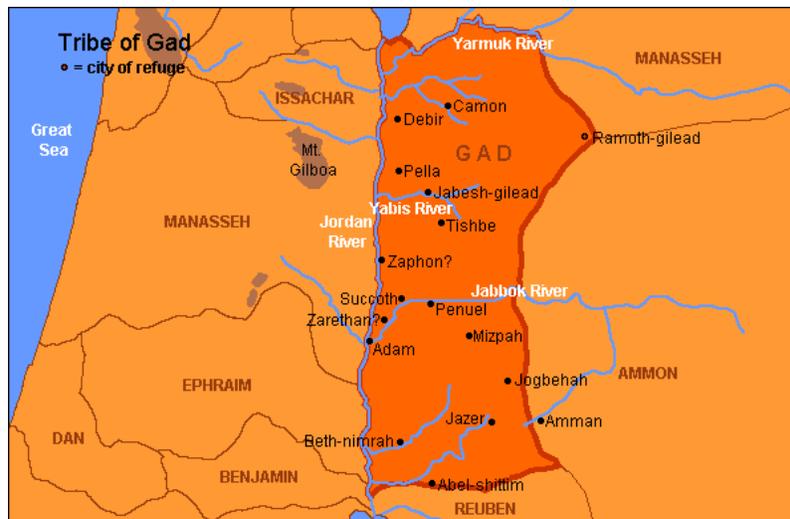
Jdg 21:2 The people went to Bethel, where they sat before God until evening, raising their voices and weeping bitterly.

Jdg 21:3 "O LORD, the God of Israel," they cried, "why has this happened to Israel? Why should one tribe be missing from Israel today? ...

Jdg 21:6 Now the Israelites grieved for their brothers, the Benjamites. "Today one tribe is cut off from Israel," they said.

Jdg 21:7 "How can we provide wives for those who are left, since we have taken an oath by the LORD not to give them any of our daughters in marriage?"

Jdg 21:8 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 (See map of Gad) had come to the camp for the assembly.



Jdg 21:9 For when they counted the people, they found that none of the people of Jabesh Gilead were there.

Jdg 21:10 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.

Jdg 21:11 "This is what you are to do," they said. "Kill every male and every woman who is not a virgin."

Jdg 21:12 They found among the people living in Jabesh Gilead four hundred young women who had never slept with a man, and they took them to the camp at Shiloh (See map of Ephraim) in Canaan.

Jdg 21:13 Then the whole assembly sent an offer of peace to the Benjamites at the rock of Rimmon.

Jdg 21:14 So the Benjamites returned at that time and were given the women of Jabesh Gilead who had been spared. But there were not enough for all of them.

Jdg 21:15 The people grieved for Benjamin, because the LORD had made a gap in the tribes of Israel.

Jdg 21:16 And the elders of the assembly said, "With the women of Benjamin destroyed, how shall we provide wives for the men who are left? ...

Jdg 21:18 We can't give them our daughters as wives, since we Israelites have taken this oath: 'Cursed be anyone who gives a wife to a Benjamite.'

Jdg 21:19 But look, there is the annual festival of the LORD in Shiloh, to the north of Bethel, and east of the road that goes from Bethel to Shechem, and to the south of Lebonah."

Jdg 21:20 So they instructed the Benjamites, saying, "Go and hide in the vineyards

Jdg 21:21 and watch. When the girls of Shiloh come out to join in the dancing, then rush from the vineyards and each of you seize a wife from the girls of Shiloh and go to the land of Benjamin.

Jdg 21:22 When their fathers or brothers complain to us, we will say to them, 'Do us a kindness by helping them, because we did not get wives for them during the war, and you are innocent, since you did not give your daughters to them.'"

Jdg 21:23 So that is what the Benjamites did. While the girls were dancing, each man caught one and carried her off to be his wife. Then they returned to their inheritance and rebuilt the towns and settled in them ...

5. Book of Ruth - The author of Ruth is unknown, most think the book was written in approximately 900 B.C. and again Jewish tradition tells us Samuel was the author.

5.1 Introduction

Rth 1:1 In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land, and a man from Bethlehem in Judah, together with his wife and two sons, went to live for a while in the country of Moab.

Rth 1:2 The man's name was Elimelech, his wife's name Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem, Judah. And they went to Moab and lived there.

Rth 1:3 Now Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died, and she was left with her two sons.

Rth 1:4 They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth. After they had lived there about ten years,

Rth 1:5 both Mahlon and Kilion also died, and Naomi was left without her two sons and her husband.

Rth 1:6 When she heard in Moab that the LORD had come to the aid of his people by providing food for them, Naomi and her daughters-in-law prepared to return home from there.

Rth 1:7 With her two daughters-in-law she left the place where she had been living and set out on the road that would take them back to the land of Judah.

Rth 1:8 Then Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back, each of you, to your mother's home. May the LORD show kindness to you, as you have shown to your dead and to me.

Rth 1:9 May the LORD grant that each of you will find rest in the home of another husband." Then she kissed them and they wept aloud.

5.1.1 Naomi and her husband, Elimelech, moved from Bethlehem to Moab because there was a famine in Judah. She had two sons named Mahlon and Kilion; Ruth and Orpah married Mahlon and Kilion respectively.

5.1.2 Elimelech, Mahlon and Kilion died leaving the three ladies widowed; Naomi chose to return to Judah, Orpah chose to stay in Moab and Ruth elected to go with Naomi.

5.1.3 In wholeheartedly endorsing these marriages, Elimelech's family either ignored the statute preserved in Deu 23:3-4 forbidding Jews to accept Moabites into their assembly, or was unaware of this prohibition.

Deu 23:3 An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD; even to their tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the LORD forever:

Deu 23:4 Because they met you not with bread and with water in the way, when ye came forth out of Egypt; and because they hired against thee Balaam the son of Beor of Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse thee.

5.1.4 Ruth was remarkable in her willingness to forsake her own homeland for a foreign land, somewhat like Abraham's venturing into a land he had never seen.

Gen 12:1 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

5.2 The Book of Ruth is a beautiful love story and an account of God's purpose for Israel. Here we read of the joys and sorrows of a Godly family from Bethlehem. Ruth, the Moabitess, became a worshiper of Jehovah. After the sorrow of losing her first husband, Ruth returned to Bethlehem with her mother-in-law where she marries Boaz.

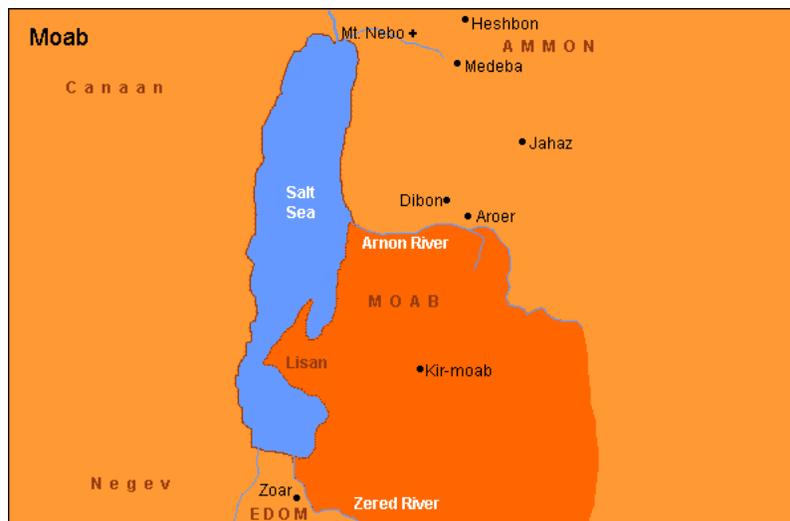
5.2.1 In this way she became an ancestress of King David and in the line of Christ. Biblical scholars find some clues to the time of composition within the book itself.

5.2.2 Since David is mentioned in the book (Rth 4:17), it could not have been written before the tenth century B.C. How much later than the time of David is a matter of conjecture.

Rth 4:17 And the women her neighbors gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed: he is the father of Jesse, the father of David.

6. The Doctrine of Ruth

6.1 Ruth was a Moabitess who had the unique distinction of marrying two Jewish farmers, Mahlon, one of the sons of Elimelech and Naomi and Boaz, a kinsman of Elimelech.



6.2 Mahlon had at least two kinsmen in Judah, the nearest relation being referred to only as a kinsman-redeemer and a man named Boaz.

Rth 2:1 Now Naomi had a relative on her husband's side, from the clan of Elimelech, a man of standing, whose name was Boaz ...

Rth 3:12 Although it is true that I am near of kin, there is a kinsman-redeemer nearer than I.

Rth 3:13 Stay here for the night, and in the morning if he wants to redeem, good; let him redeem. But if he is not willing, as surely as the LORD lives I will do it. Lie here until morning."

6.2.1 As was permitted the nearest kinsman could take the widow and marry her in order that the brothers line be not cut-off.

6.3 As we will see Boaz takes a serious shine to Ruth and approaches the unnamed nearest kinsman asking his intentions; when the unnamed kinsman elects not to strike his option (apparently for economic reasons) Boaz jumps at the opportunity to take Ruth as his bride.

6.4 Let's see how all this takes place.

6.4.1 Because of her love for Naomi Ruth desired to remain with her mother-in-law, to become a Jew and exchange her god, probably Chemosh, for Naomi's God.

Rth 1:15 "Look," said Naomi, "your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her."

Rth 1:16 But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God.

Rth 1:17 Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me."

Rth 1:18 When Naomi realized that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped urging her.

Rth 1:19 So the two women went on until they came to Bethlehem. When they arrived in Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them, and the women exclaimed, "Can this be Naomi?"

6.4.2 Ruth's devotion transcended Naomi's pessimism, which ascribed her utter "emptiness" to the Almighty and urged the women of Bethlehem to call her Mara (meaning "bitter."Rth 1:19-21)

Rth 1:19 So the two women went on until they came to Bethlehem. When they arrived in Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them, and the women exclaimed, "Can this be Naomi?"

Rth 1:20 "Don't call me Naomi," she told them. "Call me Mara, because the Almighty has made my life very bitter.

Rth 1:21 I went away full, but the LORD has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi? The LORD has afflicted me; the Almighty has brought misfortune upon me."

6.4.3 Although Ruth was under no obligation, Ruth immediately took advantage of the season of the year in Bethlehem (barley harvest--from the middle to the end of May, preceding wheat harvest) to glean the fields and thus support herself and her mother-in-law.

6.4.4 The Israelite laborers were impressed by her devotion and told Boaz (Rth 2:10-14), who gave her special privileges.

Rth 2:10 At this, she bowed down with her face to the ground. She exclaimed, "Why have I found such favor in your eyes that you notice me-- a foreigner?"

Rth 2:11 Boaz replied, "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.

Rth 2:12 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."

Rth 2:13 "May I continue to find favor in your eyes, my lord," she said. "You have given me comfort and have spoken kindly to your servant--though I do not have the standing of one of your servant girls."

Rth 2:14 At mealtime Boaz said to her, "Come over here. Have some bread and dip it in the wine vinegar." When she sat down with the harvesters, he offered her some roasted grain. She ate all she wanted and had some left over.

6.4.5 Ruth told Naomi of Boaz's attention and compliments; at Naomi's suggestion Ruth is told to go to the threshing floor at night when Boaz would be merry with wine to try to persuade him to accept the responsibility of a kinsman.

6.4.6 Ruth accepts Naomi's advice and goes to the threshing floor and a rendezvous with an unsuspecting Boaz.

6.4.7 Boaz welcomed Ruth assenting to her desire to be his wife, and when the nearest kinsman waived his responsibility, Boaz voluntarily bought the property of Elimelech, Chilion, and Mahlon, and married Ruth (Rth 4:7-12).

Rth 4:7 Now this was the manner in former time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things; a man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbour: and this was a testimony in Israel.

Rth 4:8 Therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz, Buy it for thee. So he drew off his shoe.

Rth 4:9 And Boaz said unto the elders, and unto all the people, Ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi.

Rth 4:10 Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon In, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: ye are witnesses this day ...

6.4.8 Boaz followed the custom of the Levirate law of Deu 25:5-10, even though he was not Mahlon's brother but only a close relative.

Deu 25:5 If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband's brother unto her.

Deu 25:6 And it shall be, that the firstborn which she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother which is dead, that his name be not put out of Israel.

Deu 25:7 And if the man like not to take his brother's wife, then let his brother's wife go up to the gate unto the elders, and say, My husband's brother refuseth to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel, he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother.

Deu 25:8 Then the elders of his city shall call him, and speak unto him: and if he stand to it, and say, I like not to take her;

Deu 25:9 Then shall his brother's wife come unto him in the presence of the elders, and loose his shoe from off his foot, and spit in his face, and shall answer and say, So shall it be done unto that man that will not build up his brother's house.

Deu 25:10 And his name shall be called in Israel, The house of him that hath his shoe loosed.

6.4.9 In due time, Obed was born to Boaz and Ruth. Naomi's "bitterness" was assuaged in her joy over the grandchild, who became an ancestor of David (Rth 4:18-22) and of the Messiah.

Rth 4:18 This, then, is the family line of Perez: Perez was the father of Hezron,
Rth 4:19 Hezron the father of Ram, Ram the father of Amminadab,
Rth 4:20 Amminadab the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father of Salmon,
Rth 4:21 Salmon the father of Boaz, Boaz the father of Obed,
Rth 4:22 Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David.

6.4.10 Ruth was one of four women specifically mentioned in Matthew's genealogy of Jesus by way of Solomon to Joseph (Mat 1:5).

Mat 1:5 And Salmon begat Boaz of Rahab; and Boaz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse;

6.4.11 All these women were Gentiles, and apparently Matthew's intention was to emphasize the universal dimension of Jesus' background.

End Lesson