Bible Training Institute

To proactively accelerate the spiritual growth of Grace Bible Church for the purpose of knowing God more intimately and becoming more effective servants of God in the world

Judges & Ruth

Introduction to Judges

- Title
  - Hebrew and LXX– "Judges"
- Author–unknown
- Date of events– From the death of Joshua (ca. 1390 B.C.) to death of Samson (ca. 1055 B.C.)

Historical and Theological Themes

- The Judges Themselves

  - Background of the judges–Ex 18:13-27; Num 11:16-17; Deut 1:9-17; Josh 8:33; 23:2:24-1

  - List of judges

    - Primary judges: Othniel, Ehud, Deborah, Gideon, Jephthah, Samson

    - Secondary judges: Shamgar, Tola, Jair, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon

Historical and Theological Themes

- Incomplete Obedience of Israel (chpts 1-2)
- The Cycle (2, 3, 4-5, 6-8, 10-12, 13-16)
    - Israel's Sin–Rebellion
    - Israel's Servitude–Retribution
    - Israel's Supplication–Repentance
    - Israel's Salvation–Rescue
    - NOTE: The cycles get progressively worse each time

Historical and Theological Themes

- Provovation YET Protection of YHWH (2, 3, 4, 6-8, 10)
  - Judges 2:11-13 VS. Psalm 106:1
- The Spirit of YHWH (3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6, 19; 15:14)
- The Angel of YHWH ("Angel of the Lord")—preincarnate Son of God
- Brutality of a Godless Society (3, 4, 5, 9, 12, 14-16, 19-21)
- Shadow of Coming Kingship—8:22; 17:6

Purpose of Judges

The failure of Israel during the period of the Judges demonstrated Israel's need for a righteous human King.

Literary Structure

I. Israel's Disobedience (1-2)

II. Israel's Deliverance (cycles) (3-16)

III. Israel's Debauchery (17-21)

Interpretive Issues

- Gideon's Fleeces–
  - To determine God's will?
  - To assurance of God's presence.
- Chronological Problem:--Adding up the years of the judges = 410, but period of judges only 325 years long
- Solution: Overlapping judgeships (see chart in MacArthur Study Bible)

Importance of Judges for Us

- People become like the god they worship
- Men and women sink to debased nature
- Explains why God commanded Israel to destroy Canaanites

"American evangelicalism needs Judges more than any other book because we think we can also worship the gods of our culture and NOT BE affected. We want to tolerate the paraphernalia of the secular gods and think that it won't impact us." Keith Essex

- Ultimately—God's people must have a righteous human king

Introduction to Ruth

- Title
  - "Ruth" in Hebrew and LXX
- Date of Events: time of the judges
- Canonical connection: between Proverbs and Song of Solomon
- This is the story of godly people living in the wicked age of the Judges

Historical and Theological Themes

- Sovereignty of God
  - The Obstacles (1:1, 4, 11-13)
  - The Action of Yahweh (1:6; 4:13)
  - The Answers to Prayer (1:8, 9; 2:12, 20; 3:10; 4:11-12, 14)
- Judgment of God for Covenant Unfaithfulness
  - Elimelech and his sons (cf. curses of Deut 28)
- Providence of God in Human Affairs (2:3, 20)

Historical and Theological Themes

- Godly Individuals
  - Naomi
  - Ruth
  - Boaz
- Redemption (2:20; 3:9, 12, 13; 4:1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 14)
- The Plan of God (4:22)

Purpose of Ruth

YHWH sovereignly, but in a hidden way, effected the birth of His King through the actions of His people.

Literary Structure—*chiastic*

A Family History: The Family of Elimelech (1:1-5)

      B The Women of Elimelech's Family and the Questioning of Bethlehem (1:6-22)

        C Barley Field Scene (2:1-23)

           (a) Ruth Leaves Naomi (2:1-3)

           (b) Ruth and Boaz in the Barley Field (2:4-17)

           (c) Ruth Presents Food to Naomi (2:18-23)

        C1 Threshing Floor Scene (3:1-18)

           (a)1 Naomi Dispatches Ruth (3:1-7)

           (b)1 Ruth and Boaz at the Threshing Floor (3:8-15)

           (c)1 Ruth Presents Food to Naomi (3:16-18)

      B1 The Men of Elimelech's Family and the Blessing of Bethlehem (4:1-17)

A1 Family History: The Family of Elimelech's Kinsmen (4:18-22)

Interpretive Issues

- The night at the threshing floor
  - Ruth was inappropriate?
  - Ruth was a woman of character and acted appropriately (Ruth 3:11).