

## OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

### Joshua

Joshua belongs to a group of writings known as the “historical books” which record the span of about a thousand years of Israel’s history from Joshua to Esther. It continues the story from Deuteronomy with Joshua as God’s chosen servant tasked with bringing the Israelites into the Promised Land.

Joshua is a book of the inheritance: its conquest and distribution. It portrays Israel as God’s instrument of wrath that He uses to execute just punishment on the nations to purge the land of evil in order to bring the Israelites into their promised rest. The land and the accompanying rest conclude the salvation that God began for His people at the exodus from Egypt.

**“Trusting a faithful savior to lead God’s people to land and rest”**

### Outline of Joshua

#### **I. The Entrance into the Land (1:1-5:12)**

- A. Joshua’s Commission (1:1-18)
- B. The Reconnaissance of Jericho (2:1-24)
- C. Crossing the Jordan (3:1-4:24)
- D. Consecration of the People at Gilgal (5:1-12)

#### **II. The Conquest of the Land (5:13-12:24)**

- A. The Initial Battles (5:13-8:35)
  - 1. Victory at Jericho (5:13-6:27)
  - 2. Achan’s sin (7:1-26)
  - 3. Victory at Ai (8:1-29)
  - 4. The renewal of the covenant (8:30-35)
- B. The Campaign in the South (9:1-10:43)
  - 1. The treaty with the Gibeonites (9:1-27)
  - 2. The long day of Joshua (10:1-15)
  - 3. The southern cities conquered (10:16-43)
- C. The Campaign in the North (11:1-23)
- D. The Defeated Kings of Canaan (12:1-24)

#### **III. The Distribution of the Land (13:1-21:45)**

- A. Areas Yet to be Conquered (13:1-7)
- B. The Land Assigned to the Transjordan Tribes (13:8-33)
- C. The Division of the Land of Canaan (14:1-19:51)
- D. The Cities Assigned to the Levites (20:1-21:45)

#### **IV. Epilogue: Tribal Unity and Loyalty to the Lord (22:1-24:33)**

- A. The Altar of Witness (22:1-34)
- B. Joshua’s Farewell Exhortation (23:1-16)
- C. A Second Renewal of the Covenant 24:1-28)
- D. The Death and Burial of Joshua and Eleazar (24:29-33)

## **Major Themes**

### **God's Righteous Judgment**

- God had been patient with the Canaanites but they refused to turn from their evil ways (Genesis 15:16, Deuteronomy 9:4-5).
- The Israelites were also sinners and were deserving of punishment like the Canaanites but because of God's goodness and mercy He chose to preserve them. They also had to answer for their sins (7:12).
- Sin and idolatry are acts of war against the rightful reign of a holy God that merit His wrath (Romans 6:23).

### **The Promises of God Fulfilled**

#### **-Promise of People**

- Beyond sheer numbers there was a unity under God amongst all of the tribes of Israel. The Israelites walked in the faith of their forefather, showing themselves to be true children of Abraham (Romans 9:6-8).

#### **-Promise of Place**

- Possession of the land was the goal and conclusion of the deliverance of God's people.
- It was an extension of God's provision and a precursor to Israel as a kingdom under a earthly monarchy.

#### **-Promise of God's Presence**

- God was present with Israel in His going to war for them against their enemies and through His relationship with and guidance of their leader Joshua.

#### **-Promise of Blessing to the Nations**

- Rahab and her family were saved out of the judgment on Jericho and brought into the community of the Israelites.
- Aliens were also included with Israel at the renewal of the covenant (8:33, 35) and were allowed to take shelter in the cities of refuge (20:9, see also Numbers 35:9-15, 22-28)

### **Covenant Rest**

- Rest was the goal for God's people (1:13-15; 21:44; 22:4; 23:1, see also 11:23; 14:15).
- The theme of rest points forward to a coming time of complete rest and security for God's people (Hebrews 4:1-11).

## OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

### Judges

Judges continues the story from Joshua in post-conquest Canaan. It is believed to have been written shortly after the events took place. As with Joshua, the book of Judges begins with the death of Israel's leader but after Joshua there was no one chosen to take his place to lead the Israelites (Joshua 24:31).

When the Israelites lived among the Canaanites they began living like the Canaanites. They lost sight of their identity as God's people and attached themselves to the people of Canaan, rejecting the kingship of the Lord. Throughout the time of the judges, Israel is shown to be in constant need of a saviour in order to retain what they had gained from God.

**“Requiring a perfect saviour to maintain God’s people’s land and rest”**

### Outline of Judges

#### **I. Prologue: Incomplete Conquest and Apostasy (1:1-3:6)**

- A. Israel's Failure to Purge the Land (1:1-2:5)
- B. God's Dealings with Israel's Rebellion (2:6-3:6)

#### **II. Oppression and Deliverance (3:7-16:31)**

##### Major Judges

- A. Othniel Defeats Aram Haharaim (3:7-11)
- B. Ehud Defeats Moab (3:12-30)
  
- C. Deborah Defeats Canaan (4:1-5:31)
- D. Gideon Defeats Midian (6:1-8:35)
  - Abimelech, the Anti-Judge (9:1-57)

##### Minor Judges

- Shamgar (3:31)
  
- Tola (10:1-2)
- Jair (10:3-5)
  
- Ibzan (12:8-10)
- Elon (12:11-12)
- Abdon (12:13-15)
  
- E. Jephthah Defeats Ammon (10:6-12:7)
  
- F. Samson Checks Philistia (13:1-16:31)

#### **III. Epilogue: Religious and Moral Disorder (17:1-21:25)**

- A. First Episode (17:1-18:31)
  - 1. Micah's corruption (17:1-13)
  - 2. The Danites' departure from their tribal territory (18:1-31)
- B. Second Episode (19:1-21:25)
  - 1. Gibeah's corruption of morals (19:1-30)
  - 2. The Benjamites' near removal from their tribal territory (20:1-21:25)

## **Major Themes**

### **“Israel Had No King; Everyone Did as He Saw Fit” (17:6, 21:25)**

- After the deaths of Joshua and of the elders who outlived him, Israel had no leader to guide them in the ways of the Lord. The monarchy had not yet begun and the people had rejected God as their heavenly king (8:23).
- Without God’s laws as their moral standard, each person was left to do whatever his sinful nature desired – religious and moral degeneracy and national disunity.

### **-Israel’s Constant Stubbornness and Sin**

- Israel’s failure to clear the land of its inhabitants opened the door for the Israelites to fall under their influence because they didn’t keep themselves set apart (2:1-2).
- There were repeated cycles of disobedience and apostasy with Israel descending into greater wickedness each time a judge died.

### **-The Need for a Perfect Saviour to Obtain True Rest**

- God used flawed individuals to deliver a deeply flawed nation. Many of the judges were characterized by the same sins that provoked God to anger with Israel.
- All of the judges ultimately died and their accomplishments came to an end.
- The inherent shortcomings, limitations, and mortality of all of the judges point us to our need for one who is perfect in character and deed and who will live on in headship

### **The Patience and Grace of God**

- Despite Israel’s constant provocation, God didn’t forsake them. He didn’t do to Israel as He had done to the nations before them.
- God continued to provide deliverers for His people knowing how quickly they would turn away once the leader died.
- God preserved His people and kept them from being overwhelmed and absorbed by the pagan nations around them.

## OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

### Ruth

The events of Ruth took place during the early days of the judges (see Matthew 1:5 and Joshua 2:1). In contrast to the book of Judges which takes a high-level look at Israel as a nation and at the tribes that it was comprised of, the book of Ruth focuses on the life of a single Israelite family.

Although God is mentioned throughout the book of Ruth, there are few places where He is shown acting directly on the events of the story (E.g., 1:6; 4:13). A closer reading is required to see the providence of God directing the circumstances of the lives of Naomi and Ruth through difficult times in order to bring salvation to them and to Israel.

### Outline of Ruth

#### **“God’s providence in times of trial for the good of His people”**

- I. Introduction: Naomi Emptied (1:1-5)**
- II. Ruth Clings to Naomi (1:6-22)**
- III. Ruth and Boaz Meet in the Harvest Fields (2:1-23)**
  - A. Ruth Begins Work (2:1-7)
  - B. Boaz Shows Kindness to Ruth (2:8-16)
  - C. Ruth Returns to Naomi (2:17-23)
- IV. Naomi Sends Ruth to Boaz's Threshing Floor (3:1-18)**
  - A. Naomi Instructs Ruth (3:1-5)
  - B. Boaz Pledges to Secure Redemption (3:6-18)
- V. Boaz Arranges to Fulfill His Pledge (4:1-12)**
  - A. Boaz Confronts the Unnamed Kinsman (4:1-8)
  - B. Boaz Redeems Naomi's Property (4:9-12)
- VI. Conclusion: Naomi Filled (4:13-17)**
- VII. Epilogue: Genealogy of David (4:18-22)**

## **Major Themes**

### **Redemption**

- Redemption refers to the recovery of something, often from an unpayable debt when the kinsman-redeemer was involved.
- The kinsman-redeemer was responsible for protecting the interests of needy members of the extended family – purchasing back properties and people sold into slavery.
- Boaz as the kind and faithful kinsman-redeemer is a type of Christ.
- God would later work through Ruth and Boaz's great-grandson David to redeem Israel.

### **God's Providence**

- God used a famine to bring Naomi's family into the land of Moab where Ruth joined her family, and He ended the famine to bring the two of them back to Bethlehem.
- He guided Ruth to Boaz's field where Boaz took notice of her.
- He enabled Ruth to conceive and give birth to Obed.

### **God's Provision**

- God provided for Naomi through Ruth and for both Ruth and Naomi through Boaz.
- He provided for Israel by coming to their aid to end the famine.
- He would later provide for Israel through Ruth and Boaz's descendant David.