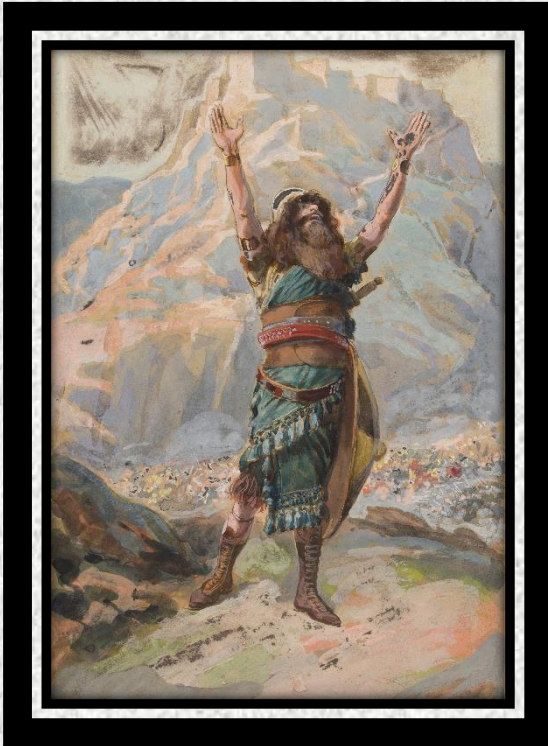


JOSHUA, JUDGES, RUTH

Divine Grace amid the Turmoil of Life



History is not exactly the forte of 21st century Americans—or of 21st century American Christians—which may go far toward explaining our casual disregard of (and all-but-complete disdain for) the Old Testament books of “history.” As a result, a major portion of the Old Testament is rarely read; its wisdom unappreciated.

This series seeks to overcome our lack of interest in early Hebrew history by recalling that Jews refer to these “historical” books as prophecy. That is, the books are primers that teach us to interpret the big events and everyday occurrences of life in light of God’s instruction.

Joshua – The Hebrew Tribes Take Over Canaan

Weeks 1–5 — [Week 1 – Joshua 1–5] After 39 years of nomadic wandering in the Sinai wilderness following their successful exodus from Egypt, the Hebrew people finally enter Canaan—the “land of promise.” [Weeks 2–3 – Joshua 6–12] Not unexpectedly, military battles have to be fought, which continue for several years. [Week 4 – Joshua 13–21] In time, enough of the land is safely in the hands of the Hebrew people so that Joshua can distribute it among the twelve tribes (as ordered originally by Moses) on the basis of tribal population and divine allotment. [Week 5 – Joshua 22–24] The book closes with a moving farewell by Joshua not long before his death, as well as an inspired service of covenant renewal that re-binds the people’s loyalty to God.

Judges – The Canaanization of Israel

Weeks 6–11 — [Week 6 – Judges 1–2] Despite the hopeful conclusion to the Book of Joshua, Judges opens with the sad admission that events in Israel have quickly spiraled out of control. [Weeks 7–9 – Judges 3–16] For the next century (or two), the Hebrew people pay less and less heed to their covenant with God. During these decades of faithlessness, God repeatedly raises up judges, who consistently deliver the people from the oppressive servitude that other nations foist on them. [Weeks 10–11 – Judges 17–21] And yet, the people respond to God’s graciousness not with gratitude but with an even deeper commitment to the very evils that are the cause of their ongoing pain. The book concludes with the jaw-dropping declaration that the people are shrugging their shoulders at God’s deliverance, turning away their faces from God, and doing as they please.

Ruth – A Homecoming Breath of Fresh Air

Week 12 [Ruth 1–4] — At the very time that God’s covenantal commitment to the Hebrew people appears to have been a colossal mistake, hope springs eternal in a small remnant of a tribal clan that has experienced great personal loss. Not even living in Israel when the spotlight falls on them, an aged widow and her non-Hebrew (Moabite) daughter-in-law return to Judah, hoping for a new life. The contrast between their response and that of Israel in the Book of Judges to God’s gracious blessings could not be starker.

**Weekly Schedule
for
Joshua, Judges, Ruth**

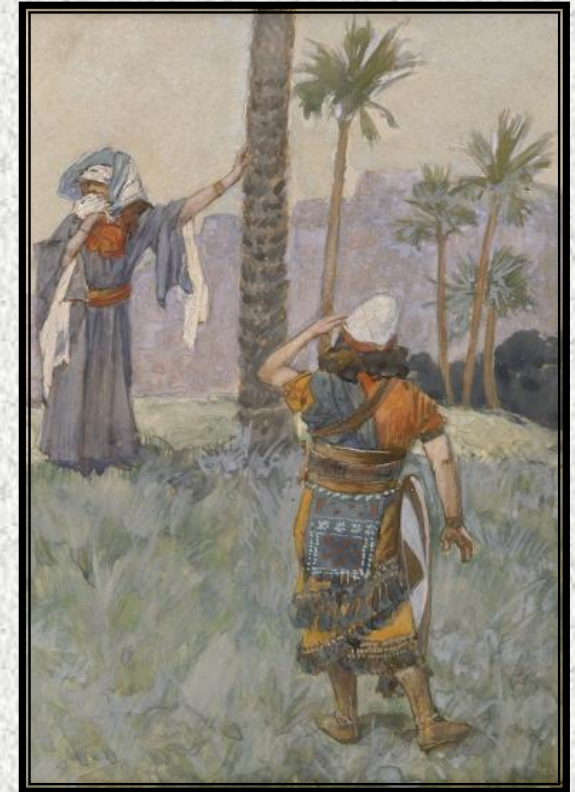
- ◆ **August 18 — Introduction, Joshua 1–5**
(Crossing the Jordan, entering Canaan)
- ◆ **August 25 — Joshua 6–8**
(Victory, sin, and covenant renewal)
- ◆ **September 1 — Joshua 9–12**
(Military campaigns in the south, north)
- ◆ **September 8 — Joshua 13–21**
(Distribution of the land to tribes)
- ◆ **September 15 — Joshua 22–24**
(Moving on from Joshua and Eleazar)
- ◆ **September 22 — Judges 1–2**
(Problems in the Promised Land)
- ◆ **September 29 — Judges 3–5**
(Othniel, Ehud, Deborah)
- ◆ **October 6 — Judges 6–12**
(Gideon, Jephthah)
- ◆ **October 13 — Judges 13–16**
(Samson)
- ◆ **October 27 — Judges 17–18**
(Religious disorder)
- ◆ **November 3 — Judges 19–21**
(Moral disorder)
- ◆ **November 10 — Ruth 1–4**
(From distress to hope)

**Sunday Morning
Bible Study
9:15–10:15 am**



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