

# God Keeps His Promise – A Study in Joshua, Judges, Ruth

## Table of Contents

Introduction to Joshua and Judges .....	2
Lesson 1: Entering Canaan .....	3
Daily Devotional - Lesson 1 .....	4
Lesson 2: Conquests in Central Canaan .....	5
Daily Devotional - Lesson 2 .....	6
Lesson 3: Conquests in Southern & Northern Canaan.....	7
Daily Devotional - Lesson 3 .....	8
Lesson 4: Dividing the Inheritance .....	9
Daily Devotional - Lesson 4 .....	10
Lesson 5: Special Allotments.....	11
Daily Devotional - Lesson 5 .....	12
Lesson 6: Israel’s Apostasy.....	13
Daily Devotional - Lesson 6 .....	14
Lesson 7: Deliverance by the Judges.....	15
Daily Devotional - Lesson 7 .....	16
Lesson 8: Gideon’s Deliverance .....	17
Daily Devotional - Lesson 8 .....	18
Lesson 9: Jephthah’s Deliverance .....	19
Daily Devotional - Lesson 9 .....	20
Lesson 10: Samson.....	21
Daily Devotional - Lesson 10 .....	22
Lesson 11: Moral Standards Perverted.....	23
Daily Devotional - Lesson 11 .....	24
Lesson 12: The Book of Ruth Part 1 .....	25
Daily Devotional - Lesson 12 .....	26
Lesson 13: The Book of Ruth Part 2 .....	27
Daily Devotional - Lesson 13 .....	28

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We are pleased to share these lessons for your spiritual enrichment. As with the ACTS magazine, we would like to take a moment and remind our readers that the General Council Churches of God, (Seventh Day), is in a state of constant growth and we all have different backgrounds, it is possible that your views may differ somewhat from those presented in this study. We pray these lessons may be used as a point of entry for your own study.

*“Test all things; hold fast what is good” (1 Thessalonians 5:21).*

# Introduction to Joshua and Judges

## Joshua

The book of Joshua is a continuation of the history of the Pentateuch. Joshua is an indispensable bridge between the books of Moses and the history of Israel in the land of Canaan. Just as Exodus is the story of God leading His people out of Egypt, so Joshua is the story of God leading His people into the Promised Land. It records Israel's crossing the Jordan River into Canaan after Moses' death, as well as the conquest and settlement of Canaan by the twelve tribes under Joshua's leadership. The Biblical date for Israel's invasion of Canaan is about 1405 B.C. The book covers the next 25-30 years of Israel's history. Joshua would complete the good work He began despite the unbelief of the nation. The people hadn't changed; they were still faithless. Nevertheless, God's promise would be fulfilled and the seed of Abraham would be planted in the covenant land to take root and grow.

The authorship of the book is credited to Joshua by Jewish tradition and was completed after his death by Eleazar the high priest and his son Phinehas. Internal evidence strongly indicates that the author was an eyewitness of the conquest.

The events of this book follow those recorded in the last chapter of Deuteronomy. The people of Israel were encamped on the Plains of Moab, east of the Jordan River. Moses had died, and Joshua had become the leader. The book divides into three sections. The first section describes Joshua's commissioning by God as Moses' successor and Israel's preparation for entering Canaan, their crossing the Jordan, and their first covenant activities in the land. The second section describes how Israel marched obediently against well-armed cities with fortified walls. God gave His people decisive victories in central, southern, and northern Canaan. The highly unusual manner in which Jericho was conquered clearly demonstrated to Israel that God was in charge of their salvation. Section three records the distribution of the land by Joshua to the twelve tribes, the inheritance of Caleb, the six cities of refuge, and the 48 Levite cities among the tribes.

Joshua's name is the Hebrew equivalent of the name "Jesus" in the New Testament. In his role of leading Israel into the promised land, Joshua is an Old Testament type or foreshadowing of Jesus, whose role is to bring many sons to glory. The man Joshua is a picture of our Lord Jesus Christ who won the victory over sin and Satan and who gives rest to those who trust Him. Joshua's career illustrates the victory we have through faith. Each of us has an inheritance to claim, a "land" to conquer, and Joshua tells us how to do it.

## Judges

Although the authorship of Judges is uncertain, the Jewish Talmud and early Christian tradition say that Judges, Ruth, and Samuel were all written by Samuel.

The book of Judges is the main historical link between Joshua and the time of Israel's kings. The period of the judges dates from about 1375 to 1050 B.C. during which time Israel was a confederacy of tribes. The book derives its name from the individuals whom God raised up periodically to lead and deliver the Israelites after they had backslidden and fallen under the oppression of foreign neighbors. Judges is the book of "no king". God was to be their King, but the nation refused to obey Him. Their disobedience led to defeat, discipline, and decay. Eight times we are told that the people "did evil" in God's sight and therefore had to be chastened. When God disciplined them, they cried out for mercy and were delivered, but then they lapsed back into their evil ways and had to be disciplined again. Thirteen judges were raised up at different times to deliver Israel. The judges were military leaders and civil magistrates from different tribes. By heroic deeds of faith, they executed God's judgment and overthrew their oppressors, thereby restoring a measure of peace and freedom to the people. Some are given extensive coverage in the book while others are mentioned in only one or two verses. They came from nine different tribes and delivered their people from the Mesopotamians, Moabites, Philistines, Canaanites, Midianites, and Ammonites. No judge ruled over the entire nation until Samuel.

Historically, Judges provides the main record of Israel's history in the promised land from Joshua's death to the time of Samuel. Theologically, it reveals the spiritual and moral decline of the tribes after settling in the promised land, showing clearly the adverse consequences that always occurred when Israel forgot its covenant with the Lord and went instead in the direction of idolatry and immorality.

God bringing strength out of human weakness is uniquely chronicled in this fascinating book. In fact, in a sense, the Book of Judges is a commentary on the three verses, "But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence." (1 Corinthians 1:27-29).

The book of Judges reveals an enduring divine principle: when God uses a person in His service, the Spirit of the Lord comes upon him. God's way of overthrowing the enemy and advancing His kingdom is by the energy, strength and power of the Holy Spirit working through yielded and obedient human vessels.

*Gary Amick*

# Lesson 1: Entering Canaan

**Scripture Text:** Joshua 1:1-5:12

**Memory Verse:** *“And they said to Joshua, ‘Truly the LORD has delivered all the land into our hands, for indeed all the inhabitants of the country are fainthearted because of us.’”* Joshua 2:24

## **Introduction:**

Before the Israelites could enter the land of Canaan, the Lord first delivered a solemn charge to Joshua concerning the task ahead. The land had been promised to Israel, but they must possess it. Three times Joshua is told by the Lord to be strong and very courageous. The size and duration of the task ahead, the pressures of leading such an obstinate people, and the absence of his spiritual mentor, Moses, were perhaps heavy on Joshua’s mind. But the Lord was not calling him without enabling him.

In preparation for the invasion, Joshua sent out two spies to Jericho. This was not an indication of lack of faith on his part; rather, it was a matter of military strategy. The spies found shelter in the house of a harlot named Rahab. Rahab had heard of the marvelous victories which the Lord had given to Israel and concluded that their God must be the true God, and so she trusted in Him, becoming a true convert. The spies promised to spare Rahab and her family. She risked her life to save the lives of the spies because she believed in the power and sovereignty of their God.

The time had come to cross the Jordan river, which was now in flood stage. The priests were instructed to go forth, carrying the ark of the covenant. When the priests’ feet touched the water of the Jordan, the river was stopped and the waters piled up. God, represented by the ark, led the people into the Jordan. The priests walked to middle of the riverbed and stayed there while all Israel crossed over on dry ground. God was demonstrating that His presence was their hope of triumph, and not anything in themselves.

The Lord directed twelve men, one man from every tribe, to carry one stone apiece out of the Jordan and erect a memorial marker. Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of the Jordan, where the priests were standing.

## ***Studying the Word***

### **Lesson Study**

1. Compare Joshua’s commission to take the Israelites into the land of promise to the ministry and work of Jesus Christ. (Joshua 1:1-9; Numbers 27:18-23; Deuteronomy 34:9; Hebrews 4:1, 6-8)
2. God told Joshua to be strong. Explain how this foundational promise to Joshua is likewise God’s commitment to all believers who struggle with their faith. (Joshua 1:10-18; Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 13:5-6; Matthew 1:23; Luke 24:49)
3. Rahab’s lie does not justify lying by believers in special circumstances. God in no way needed to rely on deception to fulfill His covenant promises or to protect the spies. Why is Rahab commended by God? (Joshua 2:4-6; James 2:25; Hebrews 11:31).
4. Why was it important to be consecrated before crossing the Jordan River? (Joshua 3:5; Exodus 19:10, 14-15; Acts 2:38)

## ***Applying the Word***

Explain the significance of the monument on the west side of the Jordan River and the twelve stones in the middle of the riverbed? (Joshua 4:1-24) How can a New Testament believer identify the work of Christ with these stones, both on the west side of the Jordan River and in the middle of the riverbed? (Romans 6:4; Colossians 3:1)

# *Reading the Word*

## *Daily Devotional - Lesson 1*

### **Sunday: God Commissions Joshua: Joshua 1:1-9**

As one filled with the Holy Spirit, Joshua had been commissioned as Moses' successor. God was now calling him to lead His people into the land of promise. Joshua is a type of Jesus Christ in that he led God's people into the promised land and to victory over their enemies. (Numbers 27:18-23; Deuteronomy 34:9; Hebrews 4:1, 6-8)

### **Monday: God Says Be Strong: Joshua 1:10-18**

"Be strong!" is much more than an admonition, for God's commandments are God's enablements. God's foundational promise to Joshua is likewise God's commitment to all believers in the struggles of their faith. God's abiding presence with us is now a reality through His Son and the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 13:5-6; Matthew 1:23; Luke 24:49)

### **Tuesday: Rahab and the Spies: Joshua 2:1-24**

Rahab was a sinful woman from a pagan background who recognized the God of Israel as the true God of heaven and earth. She abandoned Canaan's gods, in faith joined with Israel and its God, and eventually became an ancestor of the Messiah. Rahab's salvation illustrates that even while God is in the process of judgment, He accepts men from every nation who fear Him and do what is right. (Hebrews 11:31; James 2:25; Matthew 1:5-6; Acts 10:35)

### **Wednesday: Preparing to Cross the Jordan: Joshua 3:1-8**

Before crossing the Jordan river, the people must be consecrated. God will not act powerfully on behalf of His people if they are not inwardly clean and aligned with His will. Before we ask God to perform signs and wonders in our midst, we must first make sure our hearts are pure and our desires guided by His Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38; Exodus 19:10, 14-15)

### **Thursday: Crossing the Jordan: Joshua 3:9-18**

The waters of the Jordan were parted to experientially demonstrate God's power. The priests had to get their feet wet before the nation could cross over, and that took faith. Your faith can encourage others in their walk with God. (Matthew 14:23-33; 2 Corinthians 5:7)

### **Friday: Monument of Stones: Joshua 4:1-24**

The monument of stones on the bank of the Jordan, as well as the stones in the middle of the river, were to remind the people that the old life was buried, and they should walk in newness of life. (Romans 6:4; Colossians 3:1)

### **Saturday: Encounter at Gilgal: Joshua 5:1-12**

The new generation had not received the mark of the covenant. Circumcision symbolizes putting off what belongs to the sinful flesh and devoting the heart wholly to the Lord. The nation had experienced this collectively in crossing the Jordan, but it had to be made personal. (Romans 8:13; Colossians 2:11)

## Lesson 2: Conquests in Central Canaan

**Scripture Text:** Joshua 5:13-8:35

**Memory Verse:** *“So the people shouted when the priests blew the trumpets. And it happened when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat. Then the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.”* Joshua 6:20

### **Introduction:**

The conquest of Canaan was accomplished by three military campaigns—central, southern, and northern. The central campaign, designed to divide and conquer, consisted of two major engagements, one at Jericho and the other at Ai. Jericho was a fortified city with high walls and gates located over 800 feet below sea level. The city was not only low topographically but was low morally. It was doomed because it stood on God’s land and its rightful tenants had come to claim it.

Fear of the Israelites had caused Jericho to be barricaded before the invaders arrived. For six days the Israelites marched around the city, once each day, returning at night to Gilgal. On the seventh day they marched around it seven times. When the priests blew the rams’ horns, the Israelites let out a great shout. The walls fell down flat, and the people of God were able to enter the city. Everything in the city was doomed by the Lord to destruction as the firstfruits of Canaan. The inhabitants and the livestock were to be destroyed, but the silver, gold, bronze, and iron were to be put into the treasury of the Lord.

Even though the people had crossed the Jordan, they were still prone to sin. When Joshua sent spies to Ai, they returned with the confident report that the city was poorly defended and that it would not be necessary to send more than two or three thousand soldiers against it. But when an army of about three thousand men marched on Ai, they met defeat rather than victory. Joshua learned that the defeat was caused by Achan’s looting. As punishment for his crime, Achan and his household were stoned to death and then burned. On the second attempt, Joshua and his army captured Ai by the strategy of ambush. Israel lost thirty-six men in the first battle; this time they lost none.

### ***Studying the Word***

#### **Lesson Study**

1. When we are faced with the struggles of life, what does Joshua’s experience teach us about God’s help in time of need? (Joshua 5:14-6:2; Acts 12:5-11; 18:9-10; 23:11; John 14:16-23)
2. Why did God want all living things in Jericho destroyed? (Joshua 6:21; Deuteronomy 13:16; Jeremiah 18:6-7; 45:4; Matthew 10:28; Luke 13:3)
3. What happens when there is serious sin or the toleration of serious sin among God’s people? (Joshua 7:1-26; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Psalms 119:162; Genesis 3:6)
4. What lessons can we learn from the people’s failures in the book of Joshua and their future to encourage us today? (Joshua 8:1-29; Psalms 37:23-24; 1 John 1:8-10)

### ***Applying the Word***

The episode of building an altar and reading the law reveals four principles for understanding the book of Joshua.

How can we apply these principles to our Christian walk with God? (Joshua 8:30-35)

- 1) The right to possess the promised land was dependent on the loyalty to God’s covenant. (Deuteronomy 30:15-18)
- 2) Israel’s access to God was always by faith through sacrifice and blood atonement. (Joshua 8:30-31)
- 3) The continuance of God’s blessings was dependent on their holding firmly to Him with heart-felt faith and love. Faith in God’s promises as embodied in the altar, blood atonement and the commandments was essential in maintaining a covenant relationship with God. (Deuteronomy 29:18-21)
- 4) The written Word of God was the ultimate authority for His people and the basis upon which they experienced either His blessing or curse. (Joshua 8:31-32; Matthew 7:24-27)

# *Reading the Word*

## *Daily Devotional - Lesson 2*

### **Sunday: The Battle of Jericho: Joshua 5:13-6:19**

Joshua is made aware of God's unseen presence and His heavenly army, prepared to do battle alongside his faithful people. Joshua's experience teaches us that we are not alone in our struggles on this earth. There are spiritual forces fighting on our behalf as well as against us. We have the Holy Spirit who remains constantly at our side as our helper and defender. (Acts 12:5-11, 18:9-10, 23:11, John 14:16-23)

### **Monday: Destruction of Jericho: Joshua 6:20-27**

All the people of Jericho were sentenced to total destruction. The destruction of Jericho teaches that our Creator God may justly destroy those who are given over to evil and unrighteousness. Jericho was the firstfruits of the conquest; other cities were not treated the same way as Jericho. (Deuteronomy 13:16; Jeremiah 18:6-7; 45:4; Matthew 10:28; Luke 13:3)

### **Tuesday: Defeat at Ai: Joshua 7:1-18**

Joshua learned that the defeat at Ai was caused by sin in the camp. Someone had disobeyed the Lord in the conquest of Jericho by looting. Many times, defeat comes after victory: that's when we least expect it. That's when we feel strongest in ourselves. Consequently, they learned painfully that all was not well; something had changed. The Canaanites were not any stronger, but Israel was weaker because of one man's sin. Although only one man was at fault, the whole nation was guilty, and thirty-six men died. (1 Corinthians 12:12-27)

### **Wednesday: Achan's Sin: Joshua 7:19-26**

Achan should have been attending to his military duties, but his eyes wandered, and he walked into the sin of covetousness. He valued the spoils more than he valued obedience to God. (Genesis 3:6; Psalm 119:162; James 1:14-15)

### **Thursday: Victory at Ai: Joshua 8:1-29**

Never permit one failure to rob you of future victory. When God sees that we have obeyed His Word and sincerely dealt with sin, He comes with encouragement and guidance for the next step. The victorious Christian life is a series of new beginnings. (Psalms 37:23-24)

### **Friday: Joshua Built an Altar: Joshua 8:30-33**

The building of an altar reveals the principles for understanding the book of Joshua. The right to possess the promised land was dependent on Israel's loyalty to God's covenant. The continuance of God's blessings was dependent on heart-felt faith. (Deuteronomy 30:15-18)

### **Saturday: Joshua Read the Law: Joshua 8:34-35**

The written Word of God was the ultimate authority for His people and the basis upon which they experienced either His blessing or curse. Joshua obeyed what Moses had commanded, for obedience to the Word is the secret of success. (Deuteronomy 27; Matthew 7:24-27)

## Lesson 3: Conquests in Southern & Northern Canaan

**Scripture Text:** Joshua 9:1-13:7

**Memory Verse:** “*And the LORD said to Joshua, ‘Do not fear them, for I have delivered them into your hand; not a man of them shall stand before you.’*” Joshua 10:8

### **Introduction:**

News of the military victories of Israel caused all the kings in Canaan to unite against Joshua and Israel. But the inhabitants of the city of Gibeon disguised themselves in tattered old garments and patched sandals and told Joshua they had come from a very far country. Based on this, the Israelites made a covenant with the Gibeonites. Three days later the scheme was exposed. Rather than killing the Gibeonites, Israel decided to honor the treaty, but made them woodcutters and water carriers in connection with the service of the altar of the Lord.

When the kings of five Canaanite southern cities heard that the Gibeonites had defected to the Israelites, they realized that this made the central hilly district vulnerable, and so they decided to attack Gibeon. Assured of victory by the Lord, Joshua engaged the enemy’s forces at Gibeon, causing them to flee. Two miracles occurred in the destruction of the enemy. First there was a tremendous hailstorm, which killed more men than the Israelites had slain. Then, at the request of Joshua, the sun and moon “stood still,” prolonging the hours that the Israelites could continue to pursue and destroy the enemy.

News of Israel’s mounting triumphs caused the kings of the north to confederate. They gathered together at the waters of Merom, north of the Sea of Galilee. Joshua and his army attacked and defeated them.

Joshua was now an old man, and the entire land promised to the Israelites had not as yet been occupied by them. Portions in the southwest and in the northeast were still inhabited by the heathen. The land eastward to the Euphrates had been promised to Israel, but it has never yet been occupied by them.

### ***Studying the Word***

#### **Lesson Study**

1. The Gibeonites used deception when dealing with Israel. Explain how the Devil uses deception and how we can recognize it and overcome it. (Joshua 9:1-27; 1 Peter 5:8-9; 2 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 6:10-18)
2. Israel made a mistake in entering into a covenant with the Gibeonites. What happens when we miss the perfect will of God? (Joshua 10:1-11; Deuteronomy 7:24; Romans 5:8)
3. How and why was God able to prolong the daylight to give Joshua time to finish the battle? (Matthew 17:20; Proverbs 15:8, 29; Mark 11:24; Joshua 10:12-28; Psalms 19:1-6; 136:8) Did this lengthened day affect the Sabbath day by changing the weekly cycle?
4. Compare Joshua’s conquest of the whole land and providing each Israelite with his inheritance with the work of Jesus Christ. (Joshua 11:16-12:24; Ephesians 1:15-23; Colossians 2:9-15; Romans 5:17)

### ***Applying the Word***

God promised to drive out the Canaanites before Israel and give them all of the promised land. Why did God allow some to remain among His people? (Joshua 13:6-7; 14:12; 17:12-18; 23:5) Does God ever fall short in His promises? (Luke 12:31-32)

# *Reading the Word*

## *Daily Devotional - Lesson 3*

### **Sunday: The Gibeonites Deception: Joshua 9:1-27**

The Gibeonites knew that their neighbors were fighting a losing battle, for God was fighting for Israel, and no army could resist Him. So, they decided to use deception instead of muscle. If Satan does not defeat you by coming as the devouring lion, he will try again as the deceiving serpent. He never gives up. (1 Peter 5:8-9; 2 Corinthians 11:3 Deuteronomy 7)

### **Monday: Israel Defeats Amorite Coalition: Joshua 10:1-11**

Even though Israel had made a mistake in entering into a covenant with the Gibeonites, God helped His people by defending them. Often failures that cause us to miss God's perfect will are used by Him as occasions to demonstrate His faithfulness and love to us. (Deuteronomy 7:24; Romans 5:8)

### **Tuesday: The Sun Stands Still: Joshua 10:12-28**

The precise method God used in prolonging the daylight is not given. Whatever God chose to do, the extending of the day was an extraordinary answer to prayer. The God who created the world and the heavenly bodies with their functions can also suspend their natural movements for His own purposes. (Psalms 19:1-6; 136:8)

### **Wednesday: Southern Cities Conquered: Joshua 10:29-43**

Victory over the five kings opened the way for Joshua to attack southern Canaan until he had subdued the whole region. What began as a humiliating defense maneuver ended up a glorious series of victories. (Romans 8:31)

### **Thursday: Conquests in Northern Canaan: Joshua 11:1-15**

The enemy in the north of Canaan united to resist Israel's advance, and their forces were formidable. God assures us before the battle, fights for us during the battle, and commands us after the battle. How we follow orders after the victory is as important as what we do before it.

### **Friday: Conquered Territories: Joshua 11:16-12:24**

Joshua conquered the whole land and did it to provide each Israelite with his inheritance from the Lord. Jesus, the Son of God, has defeated every spiritual enemy and now reigns in heaven and through Him we can claim the victory. (Ephesians 1:15-23; Colossians 2:9-15; Romans 5:17)

### **Saturday: Unconquered Territories: Joshua 13:1-7**

Unlike some elderly people, Joshua lived in the future and not in the past. He had a job to do, and he wanted to complete it before he died. No matter how much God has enabled you to accomplish in life, there is always much more "land" to possess. In the Christian life, we never stand still; we must forever go forward. (Hebrews 6:1)



## Lesson 4: Dividing the Inheritance

**Scripture Text:** Joshua 13:8-19:51

**Memory Verse:** “So Moses swore on that day, saying, ‘Surely the land where your foot has trodden shall be your inheritance and your children’s forever, because you have wholly followed the LORD my God.’” Joshua 14:9

### **Introduction:**

Two and a half tribes, Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh had already been assigned land east of the Jordan. Levi did not receive a tribal inheritance, since that was the priestly tribe, and the Lord had a special inheritance for them. Dropping Levi from the tribes leaves only eleven tribes. But Joseph’s two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, are included in Joseph’s place, and that raises the number to twelve again. The reason Joseph’s sons are included is that they were adopted by Jacob as his own sons before his death.

The distribution of the land on the west side of Jordan to the nine tribes and the half-tribe was to be made by lot. The general location of the tribal portion was determined by lot, but the size of the territory was according to the population of the tribe. Before giving the territorial boundaries, Caleb requested the city of Hebron. Though he was then eighty-five years old, he knew that God would not have kept him alive, without giving him a reward for his faith.

The boundaries of Judah’s territory included cities that provided a rich heritage for Judah and a powerful stimulus to strengthen their faith. The tribe of Joseph is taken up next. To Joseph had been given the birthright which Reuben had forfeited. Joseph’s territory was divided between Ephraim and half of the tribe of Manasseh which settled west of the Jordan.

Judah and Joseph had received their inheritance by casting of lots, but there were still seven tribes west of the Jordan which had not been assigned their inheritance. Therefore, Joshua sent a group of men, three from each tribe, to survey the remaining seven tribes by lot.

### ***Studying the Word***

#### **Lesson Study**

1. The dividing of the land among the twelve tribes was the fulfillment of God’s promise and inspired hope for a greater and lasting peace. What has God promised the faithful believer about His kingdom? (Joshua 13:6-7; Psalms 16:6; Matthew 5:3-10; Ephesians 5:5; John 14:1-4)
2. What characteristics in Caleb’s life illustrate the kind of lives God expects in believers? (Joshua 14:1-15; Numbers 14:24; 1 Peter 1:3; Hebrews 6:12)
3. Had the people chosen their inheritance, there no doubt would have been competition and conflict. What does the Bible say about envying another’s achievements or abilities? (Psalms 47:4; Psalms 16:5; 1 Corinthians 4:7; John 3:27)
4. Why did Joseph through Ephraim and Manasseh receive two inheritances? (Joshua 16:4; Genesis 48; James 4:2)

### ***Applying the Word***

Israel failed to possess the land fully and to completely drive out the Canaanites for at least two reasons. What were they? (Joshua 17:13; Judges 1:21, 27-29; 2:11-13) (Joshua 17:16-18; Judges 1:19; Psalms 20:6-8)

# *Reading the Word*

## *Daily Devotional - Lesson 4*

### **Sunday: Tribes East of the Jordan: Joshua 13:8-33**

The dividing of the land among the twelve tribes was a deep spiritual experience for the Israelites. It fulfilled God's promise concerning the land and inspired hope for a greater fulfillment of the peace they now enjoyed. God has promised every faithful believer the everlasting kingdom of God. (Psalms 16:6; Matthew 5:3-10; Ephesians 5:5)

### **Monday: Caleb's Inheritance: Joshua 14:1-15**

Caleb remained faithful to God and received fully His promised inheritance. Caleb had a living hope because of his faith. His life illustrates the believer's faithfulness and acceptance of the Father's promise under the new covenant. (Numbers 14:24; 1 Peter 1:3; Hebrews 6:12).

### **Tuesday: Allotment for Judah: Joshua 15:1-63**

Had the people chosen their inheritance, there no doubt would have been competition and conflict: but the Lord assigned the territory, and the tribes submitted to His will. Whenever you envy another's achievements or abilities, you are forgetting that everything belongs to God. We should not complain to God because of what we are not but praise Him for what we are. We must accept whatever inheritance He grants us. (Psalms 47:4; Psalms 16:5; 1 Corinthians 4:7; John 3:27)

### **Wednesday: Allotment for Joseph: Joshua 16:1-17:18**

Joseph had kept the family alive during seven years of famine, and his descendants reaped the benefits. They were wealthy because of Joseph's faith and love and Jacob's special blessing. We must not live only on what our ancestors have provided. We must also claim an inheritance for ourselves and our children. (Genesis 48; James 4:2)

### **Thursday: Allotment for Benjamin: Joshua 18:1-28**

Since it was centrally located, Shiloh was the ideal place for the tabernacle. During the years of Israel's wanderings, the tabernacle was in the center of the camp. Now it was at the center of the land, accessible to all and a reminder that the fear of God must be at the heart of the nation. (Exodus 25:8; 27:21; 34:26)

### **Friday: Simeon, Zebulun & Issachar: Joshua 19:1-23**

Simeon's inheritance was in the midst of the inheritance of the tribe of Judah. It seems that Judah's land was so large that the tribe could not occupy its portion, so some was assigned to Simeon. This is a fulfillment of Jacob's prophetic word concerning Simeon. (Genesis 49:7)

### **Saturday: Asher, Naphtali, Dan & Joshua: Joshua 19:24-51**

Joshua saw to it that the distribution to the tribes was completed before he received his own inheritance. Joshua put others first and let them take the best. (1 Corinthians 10:24; Philippians 2:1-4)

## Lesson 5: Special Allotments

**Scripture Text:** Joshua 20:1-24:33

**Memory Verse:** *“But take careful heed to do the commandment and the law which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, to keep His commandments, to hold fast to Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul.”* Joshua 22:5

### **Introduction:**

The next step in the allocation of land was to set apart six cities of refuge, three on each side of the Jordan River, where a manslayer might flee from the avenger of blood. A manslayer was someone who accidentally killed another person. If the manslayer could flee to a city of refuge, he found sanctuary there until the death of the high priest. Then he could return to his native city in safety.

Forty-eight cities with their common-lands for pasture, including the cities of refuge, were assigned to the Levites as the Lord had commanded. Every tribe gave four cities except Judah and Simeon, which gave nine cities between them, and Naphtali, which gave three cities. The Lord had fulfilled every promise. Not one word failed. If there were still undefeated foes and pockets of resistance, it was because Israel did not claim God’s promise.

When the west of the Jordan had been divided, Joshua permitted the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh to return to their territory east of the Jordan, as originally agreed. He also told them to take with them their share of the spoil from the battles they had fought.

Joshua has two farewell addresses, one to the leaders of Israel and one to the people of Israel. Joshua commanded the leaders to be courageous and scripturally echo the words of the Lord given to him years earlier. He reminded them of the faithfulness of God in fulfilling His promises concerning the land and concerning its heathen inhabitants. The second farewell message was to the people. Joshua reviewed the history of the people of God, beginning with Terah and continuing on through the life of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He reminded the people of the mighty deliverance from Egypt, the wilderness wandering, the victory over the Moabites on the east side of Jordan and finally recounted their triumphant entry into the Promised Land.

### ***Studying the Word***

#### **Lesson Study**

1. The cities of refuge are interesting and of theological importance. Explain the parallels between the temporal salvation offered the manslayer in the cities of refuge and the eternal salvation offered the sinner in Christ. (1 John 2:1-2; Joshua 20:1-9; Hebrews 6:18-20; Matthew 11:28-30; Luke 19:10)
2. God kept His promise to Israel and gave them rest so they could enjoy their inheritance. What is God’s plan for believers today concerning rest? (Joshua 21:44; Deuteronomy 12:10; 25:19; Hebrews 3-4)
3. What farewell message did Joshua give to his faithful leaders and how can we apply this to the Christian leaders today? (Joshua 23:1-16; 1 John 2:17; 4:19; John 14:15; Mark 12:30)
4. What farewell message did Joshua give to the people of Israel and how can we apply this to believers today? (Joshua 24:1-13; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18)

### ***Applying the Word***

Joshua challenged the Israelites to choose which gods they would serve. Joshua’s noble decision for himself and his household has inspired succeeding generations of believers. Do believers today have the same choice to make? Explain. (Joshua 24:15; John 7:17; Matthew 6:24)

# *Reading the Word*

## *Daily Devotional - Lesson 5*

### **Sunday: Cities of Refuge: Joshua 20:1-9**

The cities of refuge are a type of salvation through Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is our “city of refuge”, but the salvation He gives is in contrast to the refuge given to the manslayer. It true that the believer must come to Christ, but it is also true that Christ first comes to us. (Hebrews 6:18-20; Matthew 11:28-30; Luke 19:10)

### **Monday: Towns for the Levites: Joshua 21:1-45**

God kept His promise and gave them rest from war, enabling them to conquer all their enemies and enjoy their inheritance. We have spiritual rest today through Christ and will one day enter into eternal rest. (Deuteronomy 12:10; 25:19; Joshua 1:13; Hebrews 3-4)

### **Tuesday: Eastern Tribes Return Home: Joshua 22:1-34**

Not only had the Lord kept His promises to Israel, but Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh had kept their promise as well. Joshua commended them for their faithful service, something that all of us should do for those who have ministered. (Numbers 32:25-32; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13)

### **Wednesday: Joshua’s Farewell to Leaders: Joshua 23:1-16**

No matter how great leaders may be, they cannot last forever, although their work is never lost. Like his predecessor Moses, Joshua gave a farewell address to his leaders. He reminded them that God’s Word never fails and must be obeyed completely if God is to continue His blessing on the land. (1 John 2:17; 4:19; John 14:15; Mark 12:30)

### **Thursday: Joshua’s Farewell to the People: Joshua 24:1-13**

Joshua did not focus on himself as their leader, but he drew attention to God’s past goodness to and care of Israel and repeatedly urged them to remain loyal to the Lord. Genuine leaders of God’s people must share Joshua’s concern for God’s honor. They must exhort the people to love the Lord, serve him only and remain separated from the world. (2 Corinthians 6:14-18)

### **Friday: Israelites Renew Covenant: Joshua 24:14-27**

Inherent in the salvation provided by God is the issue of personal choice. Each believer must continually choose whom he or she will serve. As with Joshua and the Israelites, serving the Lord is not merely a one-time choice. We must choose time after time to persevere in the faith and to obey God. (John 7:17)

### **Saturday: Death of Joshua: Joshua 24:28-33**

Like the books of Genesis and Deuteronomy, Joshua closes with the toll of the death bell over great and Godly men. God buries His workmen but continues His work.

## Lesson 6: Israel's Apostasy

**Scripture Text:** Judges 1:1-3:31

**Memory Verse:** *“Then the Angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said: ‘I led you up from Egypt and brought you to the land of which I swore to your fathers; and I said, ‘I will never break My covenant with you.’”* Judges 2:1

### **Introduction:**

After the death of Joshua, the tribe of Judah took the leadership in warring against the Canaanites in the south. In spite of God's promise of victory, Judah sought the assistance of the tribe of Simeon, showing that their faith lacked complete dependence on God's Word.

The Angel of the Lord rebuked the people at Bochim for their disobedience. He came up from Gilgal to Bochim. Israel had gone from the place of victory to the place of mourning. They had failed to drive out the Canaanites and to destroy their idolatrous altars. Therefore, the Lord would refuse to drive out the inhabitants of the land but would instead allow them to harass the Israelites. The previous generation had not taught their children to fear the Lord and to keep His commandments. The neglect of the fathers led to the apostasy of their sons.

Because Israel persisted in disobedience, God decided to allow the nations to remain in the land as chastisement upon His people. Punishment for disobedience was not the only reason the Lord did not drive out all the Canaanites. He left them to test Israel.

The people did evil in the sight of the Lord by marrying the heathen and then worshiping their idols. God punished Israel by delivering the nation into the hand of Cushan for eight years. In response to the penitent cry of His people, the Lord then raised up Othniel, a nephew of Caleb, to deliver them from their enemy and to usher in forty years of peace.

In the second cycle, Israel was subjugated by the Moabites for eighteen years. God raised up a military leader by the name of Ehud, from the tribe of Benjamin to defeat the Moabites. Israel then enjoyed rest from war for eighty years.

### ***Studying the Word***

#### **Lesson Study**

1. After the death of Joshua, what changed concerning the unity of the nation of Israel? (Judges 1:1-26; Ephesians 4:3, 13; Psalms 133:1)
2. Why is it so important to avoid compromise with the enemy and to defeat the enemy completely? (Joshua 1:27-36; Deuteronomy 7; Joshua 23; Revelation 18:4-5)
3. When we fail to be a separate and holy people, what are the results? (Judges 2:1-15; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1)
4. How and what did God use to test Israel? (Judges 3:1-4; Hebrews 12:1-11; Proverbs 3:11-12)
5. Why was it necessary for God to raise up judges? (Judges 2:16-21; 1 Chronicles 7:14; Isaiah 57:15; Matthew 5:6; Jude 1:20)

### ***Applying the Word***

The book of Judges records that Israel went through six major cycles of behavior. The pattern of behavior was apostasy (rebellion), bondage (servitude), crying out to the Lord (repentance) and then God's deliverance (Salvation). (Judges 2:11-19) Compare this cycle of behavior with that of the cycle of becoming a born-again believer.

# *Reading the Word*

## *Daily Devotional - Lesson 6*

### **Sunday: Israel Fights the Canaanites: Judges 1:1-26**

After the death of Joshua, the nation did not function as one great army. Individual tribes fought to claim their inheritance, and often the tribes worked together; but something was definitely lost in the transition. God's people must endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. (Ephesians 4:3)

### **Monday: Driving Out the Canaanites: Judges 1:27-36**

What began with conquest soon became compromise as the defeated tribes gave in to the enemy. If we do not defeat the enemy completely, the enemy will eventually defeat us. Israel soon learned their ways and worshiped their gods, and the Lord had to chasten His people to bring them back. They forgot the warnings of Moses and Joshua. (Deuteronomy 7; Joshua 23)

### **Tuesday: Angel Rebukes Israel: Judges 2:1-15**

The angel of the Lord rebuked the Israelites for making covenants with the people in the land and for not breaking down their altars. Our failure to seek God earnestly and to follow His righteous ways will cause Him to withdraw His help, power, and protection from our lives. (Deuteronomy 12:3; 30:16; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1)

### **Wednesday: The Lord Raises Up Judges: Judges 2:16-21**

The judges served as military and tribal leaders in a time when Israel was undergoing spiritual, social and moral decline. This history illustrates that the natural direction of human nature since the fall is downward. The spiritual vitality of an individual or group of believers will diminish unless spiritual renewal occurs through repentance, prayer, and recommitment. (1 Chronicles 7:14; Isaiah 57:15; Matthew 5:6; Jude 1:20)

### **Thursday: Israel Tested: Judges 2:22-3:6**

Israel was tested by their co-existence with the Canaanite people. Israel's syncretism of Canaanite culture through intermarriage nearly destroyed their identity as a distinct people of God. The book of Judges demonstrates the disastrous effects of Israel's compromise. (Exodus 34:15-16; Deuteronomy 7:3-4; Joshua 23:12-13)

### **Friday: Othniel's Deliverance: Judges 3:7-11**

The judges of Israel were supernaturally empowered by God's Spirit. Through this spiritual enabling, they received the power and wisdom needed to perform extraordinary acts of deliverance for God and Israel.

### **Saturday: Ehud's Deliverance: Judges 3:12-31**

Ehud was from Benjamin, the smallest tribe. God can use the great or the small to gain the victory, since the power is from Him anyway. Men are simply the agents of deliverance. (Luke 14:11; Philippians 4:13)

## Lesson 7: Deliverance by the Judges

**Scripture Text:** Judges 4:1-6:40

**Memory Verse:** *“When leaders lead in Israel, When the people willingly offer themselves, Bless the LORD! Hear, O kings! Give ear, O princes! I, even I, will sing to the LORD; I will sing praise to the LORD God of Israel.”* Judges 5:2-3

### **Introduction:**

The next oppressor was Jabin, king of the Canaanite stronghold of Hazor. With his boasted nine hundred chariots of war, he held the Israelites under his domination for twenty years. God raised up a prophetess named Deborah. Deborah commissioned Barak to go north and attack, but he refused to go unless she accompanied him. Because of his reluctance to lead he was told that the victory would be given to a woman rather than to him.

The song of Deborah and Barak is a classic of inspired literature. After opening with praise to the Lord, Deborah recalled the Lord’s triumphant march from Edom to the Promised Land. All opposition melted before the majesty of the Lord God of Israel. Because the people had turned to idols, the land was given over to war and bloodshed, and Israel did not have weapons with which to fight. But when God raised up Deborah and Barak, some of the rulers of Israel and some of the people stepped forward gallantly to help. Under the leadership of Deborah and Barak, the land had rest for forty years.

In the next cycle, the Israelites were oppressed by the Midianites. These marauding bandits conducted raids on Israel’s crops, stripping the land like locusts and stealing the livestock. The angel of the Lord told Gideon that he would use him to deliver Israel from Midian. Before Gideon went into battle, he desired a pledge of victory from God. The first pledge came when dew fell on his fleece of wool but not on the ground around it. The second came the following night, when the dew fell on the ground but not on the fleece. Gideon was not looking to the Lord for guidance but for confirmation. God had already told him what he was to do. Gideon was just seeking assurance of success.

### ***Studying the Word***

#### **Lesson Study**

1. God used Deborah in a mighty way as a prophetess to lead Israel back to Him. Name other instances where God used a woman as a prophetess and how He used them. (Judges 4:1-13; Exodus 15:20; 2 Kings 22:14; Nehemiah 6:14; Luke 2:36)
2. What is the significance of God going before Barak and how can we apply it to our lives today? (Judges 4:14-24; Exodus 33:15; Joshua 3:6; Psalms 119:105; John 14:1-3, 6)
3. The song of Deborah and Barak is a song of praise to God for His deliverance. What should the attitude of the New Testament believer be? (Judges 5:1-3; Hebrews 2:12; 13:15; James 5:13; Revelation 11:15-16; 15:3; 19:1-8)
4. Israel turned to God as a last resort, and only because of their oppression. As believers, do we follow the Lord because we truly love and appreciate Him for who He is and what He has done? (Judges 6:1-10; John 21:15-17; Acts 8:37; 1 Peter 1:8)

### ***Applying the Word***

God called Gideon to lead the nation of Israel as a judge and equipped him with the power of His Spirit. God has called the Christian to do His work. How does God equip the Christian to do His work? (Judges 6:33-40; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10; Acts 2:4; Romans 12:6-8; Ephesians 4:11)

# *Reading the Word*

## *Daily Devotional - Lesson 7*

### **Sunday: Deborah-Barak's Deliverance: Judges 4:1-13**

Deborah was a prophetess; she had prophetic gifts, which enabled her to hear messages from God and to communicate His will to the people. Deborah's close relationship with God gave her great influence among her people.

### **Monday: God Went Before Barak: Judges 4:14-24**

It is essential that God goes before us to prepare the way; unless He guides us along the way, our endeavors will fail. Consequently, we must earnestly seek to be open to God's continual leading in our lives. (Exodus 33:15; Psalms 119:105)

### **Tuesday: The Song of Deborah: Judges 5:1-31**

The song of Deborah and Barak is a song of praise to God for His mercy and righteous acts on behalf of Israel. Believers are to give God praise for His love toward them. Praise, considered by God as a holy sacrifice to Him, often takes the form of song. Spiritual songs of praise can be sung with the mind or with the spirit. (Hebrews 13:15; Hebrews 2:12; James 5:13; Revelation 15:3)

### **Wednesday: Midianite Oppression Judges 6:1-10**

Israel turned to God as a last resort, and only because of their oppression. As believers, do we follow the Lord because we truly love and appreciate Him for who He is and what He has done? If our faith and our devotion to God are genuine, we will follow the Lord even if it means trouble, suffering, persecution, and loss. (John 21:15-17; Act 8:37; 1 Peter 1:8)

### **Thursday: God Calls Gideon Judges 6:11-24**

All those who, like Gideon, earnestly seek to serve God can depend on God's active presence with them. This promise is made to New Testament believers by Jesus Christ Himself. (Matthew 28:19-20)

### **Friday: Gideon's Victory over Idolatry: Judges 6:25-32**

Some people might fault Gideon for tearing down the altar at night because of fear. But we must not lose sight of the fact that he did obey the Lord. His fear did not stop him from being obedient. All of us have fear, and fear in and of itself is not necessarily wrong. (Hebrews 13:6; 2 Timothy 1:7)

### **Saturday: God Equips Gideon: Judges 6:33-40**

Gideon was clothed with God's Spirit in order to be equipped to serve God's people, and Gideon went out in the power of the Spirit. The experience of having the spirit come upon and live in a person is promised to all who believe in Jesus Christ. (1 Chronicles 12:18; 2 Chronicles 24:20; Luke 24:49; Acts 2:4)



## Lesson 8: Gideon's Deliverance

**Scripture Text:** Judges 7:1-9:57

**Memory Verse:** *“And the LORD said to Gideon, ‘The people who are with you are too many for Me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel claim glory for itself against Me, saying, ‘My own hand has saved me.’”*”  
Judges 7:2

### **Introduction:**

In order that victory against Midian might be clearly divine, the Lord first reduced Gideon's army from 32,000 to ten thousand by sending the fearful and fainthearted home, as the law commanded. The army was still reduced further by testing the soldiers at the river. Those who lapped water like a dog and quickly moved on were kept in the army. These numbered three hundred men. The thought of his diminished army rekindled Gideon's fears. God was asking him to face an army of 135,000 with a force of 300. After dividing into three companies of one hundred each, they marched to the fringe of the camp of the Midianites, and then at the appointed signal they all blew the trumpets, broke the earthenware pitchers so that the light of lamps would be visible, and cried. “The sword of the LORD and of Gideon!” In confusion and panic, the Midianites began attacking one another, then fled. After the conquest of the Midianites, Israel enjoyed quietness for forty years.

No sooner had Gideon died than Israel turned aside to worship of the Baals. Abimelech, a son of Gideon, was not a judge of Israel but a usurper—one who sought to rule Israel without proper authority. To eliminate any threats to his rule, he murdered all his brothers except Jotham, the youngest. He persuaded the people of the that area to recognize him as king, since he was the son of Gideon and all the other sons had been killed with the exception of Jotham. Jotham from the top of Mount Gerizim announced that the men of Shechem and Abimelech would become embroiled in civil war and destroy each other. This is exactly what happened. Three years later God sent a spirit of ill will between Abimelech and the men of Shechem. Abimelech met his downfall.

### ***Studying the Word***

#### **Lesson Study**

1. God is able to work mightily through a small number of dedicated people who are empowered by His Spirit. What is the reason for this? (Judges 7:1-8; Zechariah 4:6; 1 Corinthians 1:27-29; Philippians 4:13; Proverbs 8:13; Revelations 3:4-5)
2. What help does God have for believers who are committed to His will when they become fearful and discouraged? (Judges 7:9-25; 2 Corinthians 1:4-11; Philippians 4:6- 7)
3. When one decides not to support God's work, what in fact are they choosing? (Judges 8:6; Matthew 12:30)
4. How does God look at us when we exalt and glorify churches, institutions, or human achievement? (Judges 8:22-27; Exodus 28:6; Luke 14:11; Isaiah 14:12-15; Matthew 23:12; James 4:6-10; 1 Peter 5:5-6)

### ***Applying the Word***

Discuss the failure of Israel to remember their blessings from the time of leaving Egypt through the time of the judges. Are we much better at remembering the blessings we have received from the Lord? (Psalms 78:7; Isaiah 65:11)

# *Reading the Word*

## *Daily Devotional - Lesson 8*

### **Sunday: God Selects Gideon's Army: Judges 7:1-8**

God is able to work mightily through a small number of dedicated people. Spiritual alertness and dedication, not great numbers, are of primary importance to God. Our ultimate resource and strength to meet all of life's challenges can be found in God alone. Pride in "our" accomplishment inevitably becomes a hindrance to receiving fully God's power and help. (Zechariah 4:6; Revelations 3:4-5; Philippians 4:13; Proverbs 8:13)

### **Monday: Gideon Defeats the Midianites: Judges 7:9-25**

God encouraged Gideon in order to alleviate his fear and strengthen his faith. Believers, committed to God's will and faithfully serving him, will at times need God's encouragement. When those times come, we should pray that God will inspire us through His Spirit with faith, hope and courage. (2 Corinthians 1:4-11; Philippians 4:6-7)

### **Tuesday: Zebah & Zalmunna: Judges 8:1-21**

By refusing to help Gideon's army, the Israelites of Succoth and Peniel were allying themselves with Israel's enemy, a decision for which they were punished. Likewise, New Testament believers are required to take a definite stand for Christ and righteousness; otherwise, they are viewed in reality as being against Him. (Judges 8:6; Matthew 12:30)

### **Wednesday: Gideon's Ephod: Judges 8:22-27**

Gideon probably made the ephod with good intentions, as a memorial to Israel's success in the work of God. The ephod was unauthorized by God and became an object of veneration, glorifying Gideon and Israel's achievement. To exalt and glorify churches, institutions or human leaders who possess special charisma will result in spiritual corruption and death. (Exodus 28:6)

### **Thursday: Gideon's Death: Judges 8:28-35**

No sooner had Gideon died than Israel turned aside to worship of idols. How quickly the Israelites forgot Gideon's heroic national exploits, even to the point of mistreating his descendants and forgetting God's deliverance! But are we much better at remembering the blessings we have received from the Lord? (Psalms 78:7; Isaiah 65:11)

### **Friday: Abimelech's Rise to Power: Judges 9:1-21**

Gideon's concubine in Shechem gave birth to Abimelech, who later killed seventy of his brothers. God commands that no one be appointed as an overseer of God's people who cannot manage himself or his family well. (1 Timothy 3:1-5)

### **Saturday: Abimelech's Demise: Judges 9:22-57**

God used demonic spirits to punish Abimelech and the citizens of Shechem for the murder of Gideon's sons. The evil spirit caused strife and distrust. (1 Samuel 16:14, 23)

## Lesson 9: Jephthah's Deliverance

**Scripture Text:** Judges 10:1-Judges 12:15

**Memory Verse:** *“And the children of Israel said to the LORD, ‘We have sinned! Do to us whatever seems best to You; only deliver us this day, we pray.’ So they put away the foreign gods from among them and served the LORD. And His soul could no longer endure the misery of Israel.”* Judges 10:15-16

### **Introduction:**

Tola, who lived in the mountains of Ephraim of the tribe of Issachar, judged Israel for twenty-three years. The next judge was Jair, a Gileadite, who ruled for twenty-two years over Israel.

Again, we find the dreary account of how the children of Israel forsook the Lord and turned to idolatry. Israel was powerless before the Philistines and the Ammonites because they abandoned the worship of the one true God and served the gods of these heathen. When the Israelites cried out to the Lord, he at first refused their pleas. But when they continued to pray and after they put away their idols, God listened to their cry. Their misery called forth His mercy.

The man of the hour was Jephthah. He is a Gileadite, the son of a harlot, who had been rejected by his own countrymen. He had wandered off to the land of Tob, where he became the leader of a band of desperadoes or outlaws. The elders of Gilead asked Jephthah to lead the armies of Israel against the Ammonites. When the king of Ammon refused to withdraw his claim to the land, Jephthah prepared for war. Before going into battle, Jephthah made a rash vow that he would devote to the Lord whatever first came out of his doors to him if he returned home victorious. The Lord gave him victory over the Ammonites, and as he returned to his house his daughter came out to meet him. Jephthah therefore offered her to the Lord. Jephthah gave his daughter to be a perpetual virgin in the service of God. The idea of perpetual virginity is strongly supported by Judges 11:37-39.

Ibzan judged Israel for seven years. He was a native of Bethlehem who had thirty sons. Elon was of the tribe of Zebulun. His work as judge lasted for ten years. Abdon the son of Hillel came from the city of Pirathon in the mountains of the Amalekites, in the land of Ephraim. He judged Israel for eight years.

## ***Studying the Word***

### **Lesson Study**

1. Is anger a sin if it is directed toward evil and wickedness? (Judges 10:1-14; Matthew 21:12-13; Mark 3:5; Roman 1:18; Hebrews 1:9)
2. The Israelites justly deserved the suffering they were undergoing. Christians today deserve punishment for their sins as well. What was God's compassionate solution for all sinners. (Judges 10:15-18; Ezekiel 6:9; Hosea 11:7-9; Romans 3:23; 6:23; John 3:16)
3. God takes some of the most unlikely people and uses them in a mighty way. Explain this from the life of Jephthah. (Judges 11:1-11; Psalms 139:13-19)
4. Jephthah offered his daughter to the Lord. One view is that he killed her and offered her as a burnt offering to the Lord. The other common view is that Jephthah gave his daughter to be a perpetual virgin in the service of the Lord. What is your viewpoint? (Leviticus 18:21; 20:2-5; Deuteronomy 12:31; Exodus 38:8; 1 Samuel 2:22)

### ***Applying the Word***

The men of Ephraim were jealous of Jephthah's victory, complaining that they had not been allowed to share in it. Jephthah reminded them that he had appealed to them in vain for help. The Ephraimites mocked Jephthah's people. The tongue is a small part of the body but can affect the masses. Explain. (Judges 12:1-4; James 3:5; Proverbs 17:14)

# *Reading the Word*

## *Daily Devotional - Lesson 9*

### **Sunday: The Israelites do Evil: Judges 10:1-14**

Anger at sin and wickedness is an inherent attribute of God. When believers express anger against sin, cruelty, evil or injustice, it is not wrong. Such individuals share in the divine nature and participate in God's love of righteousness and hatred of evil. (Mark 3:5; Romans 1:18; Hebrews 1:9)

### **Monday: The Israelites Repent: Judges 10:15-18**

Although the Israelites justly deserved the suffering they were undergoing, God was still deeply moved by their repentance. God's tender mercies are available to all who have sinned, who are suffering grievous consequences, and who repent and seek forgiveness. God's compassion for a lost world moved Him to send His Son to reconcile sinners to Himself. (Ezekiel 6:9; Hosea 11:7-9; John 3:16)

### **Tuesday: Jephthah's Life: Judges 11:1-11**

Even though Jephthah was born to a harlot, no person should be blamed for the circumstances surrounding his birth. Why permit the things you cannot control to burden your life? Learn to accept them, and the Lord will work out His purposes in His own time. Opposition will one day give way to opportunity. (Psalms 139:13-19)

### **Wednesday: Jephthah's Deliverance: Judges 11:12-33**

There is every evidence that Jephthah was a sincere worshiper of the Lord. He negotiated with the elders in the hearing of the Lord, and he knew the scriptures. He was a man of faith and courage who depended on God's power for victory. This is why God could use him for the deliverance of His people. (Hebrews 11:32)

### **Thursday: Jephthah Sacrifices Daughter: Judges 11:34-40**

Jephthah did not physically sacrifice his daughter's life. God's law sternly forbids human sacrifice and would have been considered an intolerable abomination. The emphasis that she was a virgin implies that she was presented to God as a living sacrifice, to devote her entire life to chastity and to service at the sanctuary. (Leviticus 18:21; 20:2-5; Deuteronomy 12:31; Exodus 38:8; 1 Samuel 2:22)

### **Friday: Jephthah & Ephraim: Judges 12:1-7**

The men of Ephraim could never rejoice in another's victory as long as they were left out. Jephthah was not as patient and tactful as Gideon, and the result was a civil war that took 42,000 lives. (James 3:5; Proverbs 17:14)

### **Saturday: Ibzan, Elon & Abdon: Judges 12:8-15**

Some of the judges were barely mentioned in scripture. In a period of about 25 years, three judges lead the Israelites.

## Lesson 10: Samson

**Scripture Text:** Judges 13:1-16:31

**Memory Verse:** “Again the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD delivered them into the hand of the Philistines for forty years.” Judges 13:1

### Introduction:

For the seventh time in Judges the Israelites did evil in the sight of the Lord. The cycle begins again; this time the Philistines enslaved Israel for forty years, the longest oppression the nation had yet undergone. While the Israelites were being oppressed by the Philistines, the Angel of the Lord appeared to the wife of Manoah, of the tribe of Dan, and announced that, though she had been barren, she would become the mother of a son. The son was born and named Samson. It soon became obvious that the Spirit of the Lord was working powerfully in his life. God intended Samson to be a Nazarite and live according to God’s highest standards for His people.

Samson’s weaknesses became apparent in his determination to marry a Philistine woman—one of the enemies of Israel. When his father-in-law refused to let Samson have his wife, Samson took personal revenge by destroying their grain field, vineyards, and olive groves. The Philistines learned the cause of this cruel and wasteful act and retaliated by burning to death Samson’s wife and her father. Samson’s answer was to slay a great multitude of Philistines. But violence triggers more violence.

Next Samson fell in love with a Philistine woman named Delilah. When this became known, the lords of the Philistines offered her great reward if she would lure Samson into revealing the secret of his great strength. Samson broke down and revealed to Delilah the secret of his strength. If his hair were cut off, he would be powerless. While he was asleep one of the Philistines shaved his head and his strength left him. Samson’s eyes were put out and he was imprisoned in Gaza, where he was forced to grind grain. The Philistines held a sacrifice in celebration of their god, Dagon. When Samson was brought forth to entertain them, he pushed down the pillars and all the people were killed.

### *Studying the Word*

#### Lesson Study

1. Just because parents fear the Lord, pray for wisdom, and obeyed His will, does that guarantee the children will be godly? (Judges 13:1-25; Numbers 6; Proverbs 22:6)
2. What does the Bible say about mixed marriages between believers and unbelievers? (Judges 14:1-20; Exodus 34:16; Deuteronomy 7:2; Genesis 24:3-4; 26:34-35; 2 Corinthians 6:14)
3. What can happen to a believer when he persistently sins and has no regard or respect for God’s law? (Judges 16:17-22; 1 Corinthians 9:27; Hebrews 3:6-19; 2 Corinthians 7:10)
4. Samson had a problem with insatiable sexual lust. What does the Bible say about such desires? (Judges 16:1-16; 2 Timothy 3:2-5; Romans 1:26-27)

### *Applying the Word*

Looking at the whole story of Samson, what lessons can we learn that will help us in our walk with God?

**His defilement**—God had rescued Samson from so many tight places that he was sure he was invulnerable, so he continued to play with sin and defile his Nazirite vows.

**Deception**—The harlot in Gaza deceived him and so did Delilah. You would think that by then Samson would have been alert to danger, but his conscience was defiled, and his moral senses were destroyed. Samson even deceived himself by thinking he had everything under control, but he was wrong.

**Destruction**—Samson’s life resulted in the “blinding, binding, and grinding effects of sin.” Samson walked in the darkness and died in the darkness. God forgave him and restored his strength, but He did not restore his sight or his ministry. Samson may have died in victory, but he lived in moral and spiritual defeat. He destroyed God’s enemies, but he did not live like God’s friend.

# *Reading the Word*

## *Daily Devotional - Lesson 10*

### **Sunday: The Birth of Samson: Judges 13:1-25**

Samson was born to godly parents who feared the Lord, prayed for wisdom, and obeyed His will. Samson was dedicated to the Lord as a lifelong Nazarite. A godly home is no guarantee of a godly life if the spiritual influence is rejected by the children. The parents were not at fault; Samson was. (Numbers 6; Proverbs 22:6)

### **Monday: Samson's Marriage: Judges 14:1-20**

When Samson went to the Philistines to get a wife, he showed a lack of concern and respect for God's commandments, specifically ignoring God's law concerning mixed marriages. He misused God's gifts and empowerment for personal gain and advantage. (Exodus 34:16; Deuteronomy 7:3; Genesis 24:3-4; 26:34-35)

### **Tuesday: Samson's Revenge: Judges 15:1-8**

Samson's fight with the Philistines was primarily motivated by personal anger and revenge rather than by concern for God's deliverance of the Hebrew people. This selfishness and lack of commitment to God eventually led to his ruin. (Ezekiel 25:15-17)

### **Wednesday: Samson's Exploits: Judges 15:9-20**

During the twenty years Samson was judge of Israel, he never succeeded in delivering the people from the oppression of the Philistines. His record consisted only of sporadic exploits against the pagan nation. What might God have accomplished through Samson if he had been faithful to his calling and genuinely dedicated to God's purpose for his life as the chosen deliverer of Israel?

### **Thursday: Samson and Delilah: Judges 16:1-16**

Samson's problem of insatiable lust eventually led to his downfall. He was more concerned with satisfying his sexual passion than with pleasing his holy God. A Spirit-filled God-called leader has no right doing what Samson did. His body belonged to God. (1 Corinthians 6:12-20)

### **Friday: Samson's Downfall 1: Judges 16:17-22**

Samson is an example of those believers who think that God will remain with them even as they continue in sinful and immoral conduct. The Lord left this judge because of his continued disobedience. It is possible for the Lord to depart from a persistently sinful person without him or her realizing it. (1 Corinthians 9:27; Hebrews 3:6-19)

### **Saturday: Samson's Restoration: Judges 16:23-31**

Samson, now with a repentant spirit and a renewed faith in God, called on the Lord, and his prayer was answered. The demonstration of Samson's faith resulted in his inclusion among the heroes of faith. (Hebrews 11:32)

## Lesson 11: Moral Standards Perverted

**Scripture Text:** Judges 17:1-21:25

**Memory Verse:** *“The man Micah had a shrine, and made an ephod and household idols; and he consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest. In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”* Judges 17:5-6

### **Introduction:**

This last section of Judges does not advance the narrative, but gives frightening glimpses of the low religious, moral and political state to which Israel had sunk during the period of the judges.

The first narrative is one of religious corruption. Micah, a man of Ephraim, put idols in a shrine with his household gods. He also decided to set up a priesthood for his family, so he made an ephod and consecrated one of his sons to be his priest. Sometime later a Levite who lived in Bethlehem went into Ephraim looking for a place to stay. Micah offered him a position as priest in his family. Micah offered him a salary, food, and clothing, and the Levite agreed to serve. Micah supposed the Lord would bless him in all of this, when in fact it was totally contrary to God’s order.

At about this same time, the people of the tribe of the Danites decided to look for additional territory in which to dwell. The unprotected northern town of Laish had no ties with anyone. Six hundred armed Danites seized the town and set up idols there.

We now come to a story of incredible moral corruption—the account of the Levite and his concubine. This particular Levite had a concubine that a band of sexual perverts abused her to her death. When the Levite told chosen warriors from the tribes of Israel, except Benjamin, they gave the Benjamites an opportunity to deliver up the guilty perverted men for punishment. When they refused, civil war broke out. The tribe of Benjamin was almost annihilated.

The book of Judges closes with the sad theme ringing in our ears: “In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”

### ***Studying the Word***

#### **Lesson Study**

1. What happens to people and nations when they disregard moral principles and have perverted religious practices? (Judges 17:1-13; Proverbs 14:34)
2. If the Danites had stayed true to God, how would their lives have been different? (Judges 18:1-17; Joshua 19:40- 48; Galatians 5:7-9)
3. What does the Bible say about sexual perversion like homosexuality and lesbianism? (Judges 19:1-31; Hosea 9:9; 10:9; Romans 1:28; 2 Timothy 3:2)
4. When one chooses to sympathize with evil individuals, what will be the ultimate results? (Judges 20:1-48; Matthew 12:30; 1 Corinthians 5:1; Joshua 24:15)

#### ***Applying the Word***

The book of Judges ends by emphasizing that during the time of the judges, the Israelites ignored God’s standards for them and did what was right in their own judgment. What determines what is right or wrong? Does moral relativism and situation ethics determine what is right or wrong? (Judges 21:25; Proverbs 14:12; 16:25; Nehemiah 9:26, 31; Romans 4:15; 1 John 3:4)

# *Reading the Word*

## *Daily Devotional - Lesson 11*

### **Sunday: Micah's Idols: Judges 17:1-13**

The episode of Micah illustrates the low moral standards, the perverted religious practices, and the chaotic social order of Israel during the period of the judges. If God's word and sound moral principles are disregarded, both individuals and society as a whole will be destroyed. Everyone did as he saw fit. (Proverbs 14:34)

### **Monday: Danites Settle in Laish: Judges 18:1-17**

Corruption in the home will eventually spread to society; in this case, it spread to a whole tribe. False doctrine is like yeast; it grows quietly in secret and affects everything it touches. The Danites had claimed their inheritance, but the enemy's invasion had forced them to relocate. Had the tribes stayed true to God, the enemy would not have dispossessed them, and they could have enjoyed their inheritance. (Joshua 19:40-48; Galatians 5:7-9)

### **Tuesday: Self-serving Priest: Judges 18:18-31**

The prominence given to the Levite priest emphasizes that not only the people but also the sacred ministry had become corrupt. This priest was willing to serve as priest of other gods solely for money and position.

### **Wednesday: A Levite & His Concubine: Judges 19:1-15**

This event reveals how depraved and immoral some in Israel had become after they turned from God. The Levite gave his wife over to rape and death in order to save himself. Some Israelites became homosexuals, rapists and murderers. (Hosea 9:9; 10:9)

### **Thursday: Sexual Perversion: Judges 19:16-31**

Scripture views homosexuality and lesbianism as one of the end results of God's rejection of a perverse person or people. If not repented of, homosexuality will lead to a depraved mind and may produce the kind of brutality described there. (Romans 1:28; 2 Timothy 3:2)

### **Friday: Israelites Fight the Benjamites: Judges 20:1-48**

The Benjamites sympathized more with the evil individuals, indicating the loss of moral sensitivity and loyalty to God and His Word. God's judgment on them was certain. (Matthew 12:30; 1 Corinthians 5:1)

### **Saturday: Everyone Did as He Saw Fit: Judges 21:1-25**

The book of Judges ends by emphasizing that during the time of the judges, the Israelites ignored God's standards for them and did what was right in their own judgment. Human thoughts and opinions are a poor judgment of what is right. To make our opinions rather than God's Word the guide for our lives is nothing less than rebellion against him. (Proverbs 14:12; 16:25; Nehemiah 9:26, 31)



## Lesson 12: The Book of Ruth Part 1

**Scripture Text:** Ruth 1:1-2:23

**Memory Verse:** “*But Ruth said: ‘Entreat me not to leave you, Or to turn back from following after you; For wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God, my God.’*” Ruth 1:16

### **Introduction:**

Historically, the book of Ruth describes events in the life of an Israelite family during the time of the judges. Geographically, the setting begins in the land of Moab east of the Dead Sea and moves to a location in or near Bethlehem of Judah. Because the book traces Ruth’s descendants no further than King David, it was most likely written during David’s reign. The book’s author is nowhere identified in scripture, though Jewish tradition attributes authorship to Samuel.

Ruth was written to describe how through self-giving love and the righteous fulfillment of God’s law a virtuous and devout young Moabite woman became the great-grandmother of Israel’s King David. The book was also written to preserve an admirable story from the time of the judges about a godly family whose faithfulness in hardship stood in sharp contrast to the general spiritual and moral decline in Israel at that time.

As the book opens, we meet a Jewish family which left Bethlehem of Judah because of famine, and settled in the land of Moab, southeast of the Dead Sea. Elimelech and Naomi had two sons, Mahlon and Chilion. After Elimelech died, his sons married Moabite wives, Mahlon married Ruth and Chilion married Orpah. After ten years, Mahlon and Chilion died, leaving

Naomi with two foreign daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth. Naomi decided to move back to Judah when she heard that there was plenty of food there. Ruth would not leave Naomi. She chose Naomi’s destination, her dwelling, her people, her God, and even her burial place.

When Boaz asked the identity of Ruth who was gleaning in his field, he learned that she was Naomi’s daughter-in-law and that she had become a convert to the Jewish faith. Boaz was a relative of Naomi’s dead husband, making him a kinsman-redeemer.

### ***Studying the Word***

#### **Lesson Study**

1. When we suffer great adversity in our lives, does that mean that God has forsaken us or is punishing us? (Ruth 1:1-5; Romans 8:28, 36)
2. What was the attitude Ruth had toward God and Naomi? (Ruth 1:14-18; Matthew 10:39; Ruth 4:13-17)
3. As a natural reaction, we often blamed God for our misfortune. Is God a God who is just waiting to punish us when we step out of line with His will? (Ruth 1:19-22; Ecclesiastes 7:14; Psalms 33; Isaiah 43; 1 Peter 5)
4. How does the story of Ruth show how God provides for our lives? (Ruth 2:4-16; Psalms 17:8; 36:7; 63:7; Philippians 4:13)

### ***Applying the Word***

Compare Ruth and the “virtuous woman” from Proverbs.

***Her family commitment noted by others.*** (Ruth 2:11-12; Proverbs 31:11-12)

***She provided sustenance for her household.*** (Ruth 2:14, 18; Proverbs 31:15)

***She gave attention to her appearance.*** (Ruth 3:3, 5; Proverbs 31:22)

***Her selfless lifestyle drew praise from others.*** (Ruth 2:11; 3:10; 4:15; Proverbs 31:28)

***She committed herself to Yahweh as God.*** (Ruth 1:16; Proverbs 31:30)

# *Reading the Word*

## *Daily Devotional - Lesson 12*

### **Sunday: Naomi Adversity: Ruth 1:1-5**

Although Naomi was a faithful follower of the Lord, she experienced great adversity. She and her family suffered the effects of famine and were displaced from their home. She lost her husband and her two sons. It appeared that the Lord had forsaken her and even turned against her. Like Naomi, believers may be faithful to Christ, yet experience great adversity in their lives; this does not mean that God has forsaken them or is punishing them. In times of trouble, God continues to work for our good. (Roman 8:28, 36)

### **Monday: Naomi Leaves Moab: Ruth 1:6-13**

Naomi urged her two daughters-in-law to stay in their own homeland. The selfless devotion and love that existed between Naomi and Ruth teaches us that true piety always includes loving care and personal sacrifice for members of our own families. (Ephesians 5:21-6:4)

### **Tuesday: Ruth's Steadfast Love: Ruth 1:14-18**

Naomi had evidently imparted to Ruth her faith in the Lord God by example and teaching. Ruth's faith in God caused her to remain faithful in her love for Naomi. Ruth illustrates the divine principle that whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. (Matthew 10:39; Ruth 4:13-17)

### **Wednesday: Naomi & Ruth Go to Bethlehem: Ruth 1:19-22**

As a natural reaction, Naomi blamed God for her misfortune. Naomi was conscious of her own wrong-doing and viewed her suffering as God's punishment for her own sins. On the other hand, God views affliction as a necessary part of His sovereign and loving purpose. A believer going through the fire can produce a beautiful and pleasant aroma to the Lord. (Ecclesiastes 7:14; Psalms 33; Isaiah 43; 1 Peter 5)

### **Thursday: God's Providence: Ruth 2:1-3**

In the law of Moses, God had commanded Israel to permit the poor and needy to gather the grain left in the fields after harvest. God wants those who have enough to share with those in need. (Leviticus 19:9; 23:22; 2 Corinthians 8:13-15)

### **Friday: God's Provision: Ruth 2:4-16**

Even in the midst of great apostasy during the period of the judges, God watched over those who sought him in sincere trust and committed faith. Ruth's story is the story of God's provision in the lives of all who trust in Him and follow His ways. (Psalms 17:8; 36:7; 63:7)

### **Saturday: Ruth Shares with Naomi: Ruth 2:17-23**

When Ruth shared with her, Naomi began to understand that God had not forsaken her and that His love and kindness toward her were indeed continuing. Her attitude changed from her earlier perception that God had turned against her.

## Lesson 13: The Book of Ruth Part 2

**Scripture Text:** Ruth 3:1-4:22

**Memory Verse:** *“Then he said, ‘Blessed are you of the LORD, my daughter! For you have shown more kindness at the end than at the beginning, in that you did not go after young men, whether poor or rich. And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you request, for all the people of my town know that you are a virtuous woman.’”* Ruth 3:10-11

### **Introduction:**

Naomi was anxious that Ruth should find security—that is, a husband and a home. She therefore relinquished her own prior claim to marriage and property, and instead advised Ruth to go down to the threshing floor one night when Boaz was winnowing barley. After Boaz had finished his work, and eaten his meal, he went to sleep. Awakened at midnight, Boaz found Ruth at his feet. He blessed her after she had asked him to act as her redeeming relative. Ruth had been left childless. Since Boaz was a relative of Elimelech, he was eligible to serve as redeeming relative by marrying her. However, there was a legal problem, there was a relative closer than he, and this man had prior claim.

In the morning Boaz went up to the gate of the city, where the elders sat and where legal matters were settled. By the providence of God, the close relative walked by at that very moment. The closer relative refused to marry Ruth, so it freed Boaz, who was next in line, to marry her. In those days, all transactions concerning redemption and exchange were confirmed by one of the parties taking the sandal of the refusing kinsman. The closer relative simply took off his sandal and gave it to Boaz. As soon as Boaz received the sandal, he announced that he would purchase Elimelech’s property and marry Ruth the Moabitess.

Boaz married Ruth, and she bore him a son named Obed. Naomi took the baby as her own and became a nurse to him. Obed later became the ancestor of Jesse, the father of David. Thus, the book closes with a short genealogy of David which was to become part of a greater genealogy—that of David’s great Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

### ***Studying the Word***

#### **Lesson Study**

1. What was the significance of Naomi’s instructions to Ruth about Boaz? (Ruth 3:1-5)
2. When Boaz spread the corners of his garment over Ruth, what did it symbolize? (Ruth 3:6-9; Ezekiel 16:8)
3. Naomi had experienced great sorrow and adversity in her life. What could be her testimony at the end of her life as to God’s faithfulness? (Ruth 4:14-17; James 5:11)
4. The book of Ruth ends with the genealogy from Perez to David. Why is this genealogy important to us as New Testament believers? (Ruth 4:16-22)

### ***Applying the Word***

Boaz became a redeemer in two ways.

- 1) He married Ruth and preserved the name of Elimelech, Naomi’s deceased husband. The firstborn son of Boaz and Ruth was considered a son of Elimelech’s line. (Ruth 4:5, 10)
- 2) Boaz redeemed the family land that Naomi had sold and restored it to Elimelech’s line. (Ruth 3:7-10)

Boaz is an Old Testament type of Jesus Christ, who likewise redeems the believer in two ways. Explain. (John 3:16; 1 Peter 1:18-19; Matthew 5:5; Revelation 21:1-7)

# *Reading the Word*

## *Daily Devotional - Lesson 13*

### **Sunday: Naomi's Instruction About Boaz: Ruth 3:1-5**

Love culminating in a desire for the highest good in the person loved, even to the point of self-sacrifice, is illustrated in Naomi. Naomi instructed Ruth to lie down at the feet of Boaz. It was done discreetly and without sexual connotations. Ruth went there and by her action conveyed to Boaz her desire for him to marry her as her deceased husband's next of kin.

### **Monday: Ruth's Kinsman-Redeemer: Ruth 3:6-9**

When Ruth asked Boaz to spread the corner of his garment over her, she was asking him to take her for his wife. The covering symbolized protection, care, and support. (Ezekiel 16:8)

### **Tuesday: Boaz's Response to Ruth: Ruth 3:10-18**

She was already under the Lord's wings, but she requested to be under the wing of Boaz. He was only too happy to comply! Up to that point, Ruth was doing all the work, but then Boaz went to work for Ruth. It was time for Ruth to rest and wait, trusting her kinsman-redeemer. Ruth is a good example for us to follow when we have needs to be met. She listened to instructions, obeyed, believed what her redeemer said, received his gifts, and waited in patience for him to do the rest. When you are at the feet of your redeemer, you have nothing to fear.

### **Wednesday: Kinsman-Redeemer Agreement: Ruth 4:1-12**

Boaz became a redeemer in two ways. First, he married Ruth and preserved the name of Elimelech, Naomi's deceased husband. Second, Boaz redeemed the family land that Naomi had sold and restored it to Elimelech's line. Boaz is an Old Testament type of Jesus Christ, who like wise redeems the believer. (John 3:16; 1 Peter 1:18-19)

### **Thursday: Marriage and a Son: Ruth 4:13**

God honored Naomi through the decision of a virtuous young woman, Ruth, who forsook her pagan homeland in order to remain loyal to the God of Israel. Through Ruth's son Obed, Naomi had regained her inheritance.

### **Friday: Naomi's Fulfillment: Ruth 4:14-17**

Although Naomi had experienced great sorrow and adversity in her life, she had maintained her faith in God. Because of her persevering faith, God so ordered events that her life ended in goodness and blessing. She could testify at the end of her life that the Lord is full of compassion and mercy. (James 5:11)

### **Saturday: New Genealogy: Perez to David: Ruth 4:18-22**

The book of Ruth ends with an outline of the genealogy of the Messiah as a reminder of redemption. The focus falls upon the vital link in which the Hebrew, Boaz, and the Gentile, Ruth, unite to share in the ancestry of David, through whom would come Jesus Christ. (Matthew 1:5)