



Cover to Cover: Judges/Ruth

May 6

Catch-up: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kOYy8iCfIJ4>

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0h1eoBeR4Jk>

Context: Judges is known as the “dark ages” of Israel’s history (actually, they had a number of dark ages!). The stories at the end of Judges demonstrate how low belief and behaviour had sunk. Not only had the Judges gone from good to bad to worse, it really was a downward spiral of sin into the gutter, vividly portrayed in the long conclusion of Judges. Israelite society generally had become dark and decayed, all because there was no king and everyone did what was right in his own eyes (Judges 17:6, 18:1, 19:1, 21:25). The Book of Ruth begins to address how an earthly king after God’s own heart, David, would change all of that. Through his line God would raise up the King of kings to lead people’s hearts back to Himself.

Think about Pastor’s sermon on the first part of the long conclusion of Judges from this past Lord’s Day (Micah, the Levite and the Danites):

- What stands out to you from the story?
- What is “household” religion? Is it a problem today?
- How does wrong belief lead to wrong behaviour (or how does belief influence behaviour)?

Read: Judges 21:25 and Ruth 1:1 (& 2:11, 3:11)

Questions

1. *Doug Reider will be completing the study of Ruth that he began in the fall of 2019 on May 10th (a.m./p.m.).*
2. Judges is a period of great and deep darkness (Judg 21:25), yet when is Ruth set? (Ruth 1:1)?
3. What is the general tenor or Ruth?
4. In a nutshell, what is the story of Ruth about?
5. Given its historic context does this surprise you?
6. At Israel’s darkest moment, still there was light. How does Ruth show us that there was a faithful remnant amidst God’s visible people?

7. *We’re going to focus on two themes that arise from this transition:*
 - a) *faithlessness and faithfulness amongst the visible people of God*
 - b) *how we can be lights in our present darkness.*

A

8. All throughout the storyline of the Bible God preserves His witnesses here on earth. Speaking of the New Covenant people of God, what did Jesus say in Mt 16:18? What should we then expect to find in every age?
9. *Throughout the Old Testament, especially the prophets, we find the phrase “faithful remnant,” or an invisible/spiritual group of faith within the wider visible community to which the promises of God have come to (e.g. Isa 1:9, 10:20, 28:5; Mic 2:12; Joel 2:32; Ro 11:1–5).* How can we see that in Judges/the Old Testament? How can we see this amongst the visible Church today?
10. How do you actually need the false Church to bear witness to the true Church? (Mt 7:21)
11. *Certainly we must be careful of not slipping into judgementalism (and examine our own lives, Lk 6:41) for Jesus warns us of this attitude and maintains He knows who are His (2 Ti 2:19), for the Lord sees perfectly and not as we see (1 Sam 16:7); however, He has not left us clueless as to judging who is our brother and sister, He said, you shall know them by their fruits (Mt 7:20).*
12. What beliefs, practices, spirituality, behaviour, etc, ought to characterize someone who is maturing as a Christian?

B

13. During the time of Judges “everyone did what was right in his own eyes.” What does this mean? (see also Hos 4:1b–2). How is the comparable to Canada today? What about the state of some churches?
14. How does Jesus call His faithful ones, His saints, to be examples of faith and faithfulness? Consider and discuss some key verses:
 - a. John 8:12; 1 Jn 1:7
 - b. Mt 5:14–16
 - c. Eph 5:8
 - d. Phil 2:15
 - e. 1 Pet 2:9
 - f. *Pray to this end...*