

## CHAPTER 4

# Joshua, Judges, Ruth

## Joshua — Entering and Possessing the Land

Many of the Old Testament books are called by the name of their leading character. Joshua is the main character in the book which bears his name—the book of Joshua. Can you think of other Old Testament books which are called by the name of the leading character?

\_\_\_\_\_

Joshua was a great man of faith who believed that God could bring the nation Israel into the promised land and give them victory. Moses knew that he would die and that Joshua was the man that God wanted to lead the children of Israel into the promised land (Deuteronomy 31:7). As we read the book of Joshua we learn about Joshua leading the nation of Israel into the land and conquering Israel's enemies on the fields of battle. Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible and Joshua wrote the sixth book of the Bible, the book of Joshua.

The name Joshua means "**The LORD is salvation**" and it reminds us that God is our great Deliverer and Saviour. In the days of Joshua God delivered Israel from all her enemies and brought the nation safely to the promised land. In the New Testament the word "Joshua" (Hebrew) is the same word as "Jesus" (Greek). In the New Testament the name "Jesus" usually refers to Jesus Christ, but in Hebrews 4:8 the name "Jesus" refers to the Jesus or Joshua that we read about in the book of Joshua. What does Jesus Christ deliver us and save us from (Matthew 1:21)? \_\_\_\_\_

### Bringing Them Out to Bring Them In

In the book of Exodus we learned that God **brought them out** of Egypt. But God had an important reason for bringing His people out of Egypt! Why did God **bring them out**? Did God bring them out so that they could die in the wilderness? \_\_\_\_\_ In Deuteronomy 6:23 God tells us why He brought out His people:

"And He BROUGHT US \_\_\_\_\_ from thence (from Egypt), that He might \_\_\_\_\_, to GIVE US THE LAND which He swore (promised) unto our fathers."

God **BROUGHT THEM OUT** so that He might **BRING THEM IN**. There was something terrible that God wanted to get them away from (slavery); there was something wonderful that God wanted to give them (the promised land)! In Exodus we learn about *God bringing them out*. In Joshua we learn part two of the story: *God bringing them in*.

The children of Israel should have gone right into the land which God promised to give them. But instead they spent approximately forty years wandering in the desert because of their unbelief (as we learn from the book of Numbers). The people we read about in the book of

Numbers did not want to go in and possess the great land which God had for them, and so they died in the wilderness.

### Saved From and Saved Unto

The nation Israel was saved *from* slavery but they were also saved *unto* the promised land filled with God's blessings. This is what God had for them. We need to learn a lesson from this. When God saves a person, that person is **SAVED FROM** certain things, but he is also **SAVED UNTO** certain things. God has saved us **FROM** sin and death and hell, but what has God saved us **UNTO**? Look up the following verses and write down what a believer is SAVED FROM and what he or she is SAVED UNTO.

- 1 Thessalonians 1:9

SAVED FROM? \_\_\_\_\_  
SAVED UNTO? \_\_\_\_\_

- Colossians 1:13

SAVED FROM? \_\_\_\_\_  
SAVED UNTO? \_\_\_\_\_

- Titus 2:14

SAVED FROM? \_\_\_\_\_  
SAVED UNTO? \_\_\_\_\_

- John 5:24

SAVED FROM? \_\_\_\_\_  
SAVED UNTO? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a person who has been SAVED FROM and SAVED UNTO?

### Possessing Your Possessions

One of the **key verses** in the book of Joshua is found in Joshua 1:3 (read it). Did God give the land to the children of Israel? \_\_\_\_\_ God gave them the land, but they had to go in and possess it (get it for themselves)! They had to go in and put their foot down on the ground and it would be theirs!

You might buy a ticket to a baseball game five weeks before the game is played. On the day of the game there is a reserved seat at the ballpark just for you! But what good is that seat if you

decide not to go to the ballpark? It was yours, but you never took advantage of it. You missed out on what you should have had! The children of Israel had a reserved place in the land that was promised to them. God wanted them to go in and possess it!

Did the children of Israel go into the land and possess it for themselves (Joshua 21:43)? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Did God give them victory over all their enemies (Joshua 21:44)? \_\_\_\_\_ Did God keep His promise (Joshua 21:45)? \_\_\_\_\_

The story is told of an aged silver miner who had spent all of his life searching for silver in the mountains of the Old West. He had become so obsessed with his search that his wife and children had left him. When he died, the handful of people who came to bury him found in his possessions a note instructing them to bury him under his cabin. As the spades full of earth were turned over, a lustrous gray material began to appear. It turned out to be a huge vein of silver. That miner had been a millionaire all his life, but he had never known about his wealth and he had never claimed his wealth. He had never possessed his possession! It was his but it wasn't his! He never took advantage of what he had!

God wants His people to take advantage of what He has given them! God gave the children of Israel a wonderful land and He wanted them to enjoy the land and take full advantage of it! Even though the children of Israel won many victories under Joshua, they failed to possess the land completely. The children of Israel *failed* to drive out some of the enemies and these enemies possessed some of the land that Israel should have possessed (see Joshua 17:12-13). They missed out on all that they could have had and should have had!

### God's People Today

Think about believers living today. God has not told us to go into the land of Israel and conquer it and possess it for ourselves! What does God want us to possess today? What has God given to believers today? Here are some of the things God has given to His believers:

- 1) John 14:27; 16:33  
 God has given us P \_\_\_\_\_ in the middle of a troubled world.
- 2) John 15:11  
 God has given us J \_\_\_\_\_ in a world filled with sorrow.
- 3) John 8:12  
 God has given us L \_\_\_\_\_ in a world of darkness.
- 4) John 10:28  
 God has given us eternal L \_\_\_\_\_ in a world of death.

These are some of the possessions we need to possess! Are you taking these four things and making them your very own? Do you have peace right now? Do you have joy right now? Are you shining with God's light right now? Are you enjoying God's life right now? How can you *possess* these things?

Remember our *key verse* found in Joshua 1:3? God gave the children of Israel a wonderful promise: "Every place that the sole of your \_\_\_\_\_ shall tread upon, that have I \_\_\_\_\_ unto you." What were they to do with this promise? They were to **believe God**

and go into the land and put their foot down on the land and claim it as their own because God gave it to them. Today believers must "walk by F \_\_\_\_\_" also (2 Cor. 5:7). The children of Israel went into the land foot by foot and God gave them victory foot by foot. God has victory for believers today: "...and this is the \_\_\_\_\_ that overcometh the world, even our \_\_\_\_\_" (1 John 5:4). We are to walk with the foot of faith taking the God-given territory *foot by foot*, possessing all that God wants us to have!

### Joshua and Ephesians

There is a book in the New Testament which is very similar to the book of Joshua. It is the book of Ephesians. The book of Joshua says "**Be strong**" (Joshua 1:6,9,18)! Does the book of Ephesians say the same thing (Ephesians 6:10)? \_\_\_\_ The book of Joshua is about soldiers who had to win battles. Is the book of Ephesians about soldiers (Ephesians 6:11-18)? \_\_\_\_ The book of Joshua is about Israel possessing the land. The book of Ephesians is about Christians possessing the riches and the blessings which they have in Christ (Ephesians 1:3)! Every Christian is a spiritual billionaire! But not every Christian realizes how rich he really is, and very few really possess and enjoy these riches.

God's **victory** on the cross gives us who believe His **promised possessions**. But the **promised possessions** require *my desire* for them, *my determination* to possess the promises, and *my dependence* upon God in the necessary conflict and conquest. Only then can I experience and enjoy my **God-given possessions**.

### Judges — A Sad Chapter of History

After Joshua died we have the next period of history which is called the period of the Judges. It was during this time that the children of Israel turned away from the Lord and sinned against Him:

<i>The Book of Joshua</i>	<i>The Book of Judges</i>
Victory	Defeat
Freedom	Slavery
Faith	Unbelief
Faithfulness to the Lord	Apostasy from the Lord
Joy	Sorrow
Strength	Weakness

When people turn away from the Lord there is nothing but trouble and confusion and sorrow!

### Who Were the Judges?

The judges were various men (such as Gideon and Samson) and one woman (Deborah) whom

God raised up at different times to deliver and save the children of Israel from their enemies. At this time the nation of Israel did not have any kings, but these judges would lead the people.

### The Continual Cycle

In the book of Judges we learn about a cycle which is made up of four parts (think of the four "R's"):

1. **REBELLION**—the children of Israel would sin and turn away from the Lord and do that which was very wicked in God's sight.
2. **RETRIBUTION**—God would punish his people and allow the enemy to rule over them and make them slaves.
3. **REPENTANCE**—Finally the people would cry out to God for help, but only when things got very bad.
4. **RELIEF**—God would graciously hear this cry of help and would raise up a judge to save Israel from the enemy.

Believers today need to learn to cry out to God **sooner**, before they get into deep trouble! It is good to call upon the Lord even when things are going well!

This cycle is seen again and again in the book of Judges. You can read about this cycle in Judges 2:11–19. To help you understand this cycle, look at the circle below:



In the book of Judges this cycle is *repeated* again and again! What about you? Where are you on this cycle (on this circle)? Are you serving God or sin? Are you turning to God or away from God? What about your nation? Where is your country on this chart? Where is your country headed in the future?

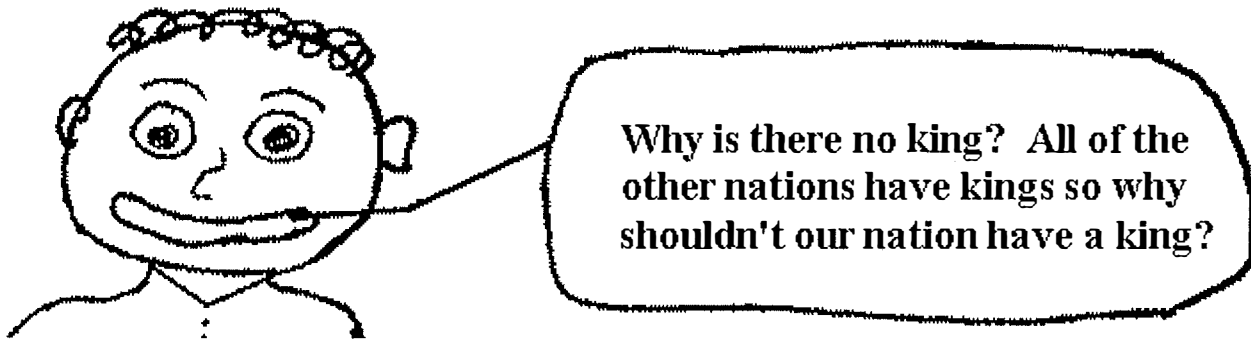
### The Key Verse in Judges

The key verse in the book of Judges is found in two places: Judges 17:6 and 21:25. Are these verses the same? \_\_\_\_\_ Probably Judges 21:25 is the easier verse to remember and to find

because it is the last verse in the book.

### No King

These verses tell us that in the time of the judges there was no king in Israel. If you were living back in those days what would you think? Here's what a person may have thought back then:

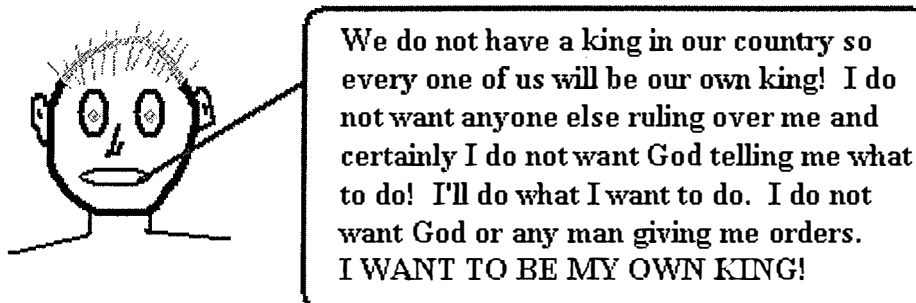


But this person should have thought some more! He should have said something like this: "Wait a minute! We do have a King! The LORD is our King! We have a great God who rules over us and watches over us and protects us! None of the other nations have God (the LORD JEHOVAH) as their King!"

Sadly the people did not think this way. Instead they all decided to be **their own kings!**

"I'm My Own King!"

The last verse in Judges says, "...every man did that which was \_\_\_\_\_ in his \_\_\_\_\_ eyes." Did they do what was right in God's eyes? \_\_\_\_\_ Who decided what was right? Who decided what they should do? \_\_\_\_\_ They said something like this:



What about you? Who is your king going to be? **You or God?** Are you going to do what is right in God's eyes or your own eyes? Are you a better king than God is? *Those who try to rule their own lives without God are headed for disaster and for ruin!* This is what the book of Judges is all about!

God is faithful in giving. Mankind is consistent in failing. Man's failure does not affect God's faithfulness in seeking and saving!

## Ruth — The Romance of Redemption

Ruth is just a short little book. How many chapters are in it? \_\_\_\_\_ When did the events in the book of Ruth take place (Ruth 1:1)? \_\_\_\_\_ The time of the judges was a time of sin and wickedness, but the book of Ruth shows us that there was a bright side of things as well! The story found in Ruth is like a shining light in a very dark period--the period of the judges!

The book of Ruth, just like the book of Joshua, is named for its main character. There are actually three main characters in this book:

1. RUTH, a woman of Moab
2. NAOMI, Ruth's mother-in-law
3. BOAZ, the Jewish man who became Ruth's husband

### The Line of the Messiah

We have already talked about the line of the Saviour in Chapter 2. Ruth and Boaz are an important part of this line. According to Ruth 4:17 we learn that Ruth's first son was named Obed. According to this verse (Ruth 4:17), what was Ruth's relationship to King David?

\_\_\_\_\_ Ruth became a part of the great line of the Saviour. In a sense she was the mother of the Messiah, because out of her would eventually come the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Can you find the names of Ruth and Boaz in the great genealogy of the King found in Matthew chapter 1? What verse? \_\_\_\_\_ [Note: Boaz is spelled "Booz" in the King James Version.]

### Two Important Verses

There are two wonderful verses found in the book of Ruth which tell us about Ruth's relationship to the God of Israel:

#### 1) Ruth 1:16

In this verse we read about Ruth's wonderful decision to make the God of Israel her God: "thy people shall be my people and thy \_\_\_\_\_ my \_\_\_\_\_." She wanted God to be her God! Have you made this decision? Is the living God **your God**?

#### 2) Ruth 2:12

In this verse we see Ruth's wonderful decision to put her full trust in the God of Israel: "...the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to \_\_\_\_\_." Have you put yourself under God's wings? There is no safer place to be!

### The Relative Redeemer

The main idea in the book of Ruth is that of **redemption**. Boaz was the **kinsman-redeemer**.

This means he was the **relative-redeemer**. He was a close relative of the man who was Ruth's first husband. Because he was a close relative he was able to marry Ruth.

As we read the book of Ruth we are reminded of our great **Redeemer**, the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was our **Relative-Redeemer**. What did Christ partake of in order to redeem sinful men (Hebrews 2:14)? \_\_\_\_\_ He became our blood relative! Christ became a man and was made "like His B \_\_\_\_\_" (Hebrews 2:17). He became our near relative! Christ had to become a man just like us in order to save us and redeem us! Every believer is married to the One who is our **Relative-Redeemer** (see Romans 7:4)! We have a wonderful love relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ!

Has Christ redeemed you and saved you? Are you enjoying your love-relationship with Him?

