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The
BIBLE

Book by Book

Genesis - Ruth

G. Michael
Cocoris

THE BIBLE

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G. Michael Cocoris

"THE BIBLE: BOOK BY BOOK
GENESIS - RUTH"

G. Michael Cocoris

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Scripture References: Authorized Version

INTRODUCTION

In the Sunday evening services at the Church of the Open Door, I preached through the Bible one book per evening. In each message I covered the same 5 points: Author, Recipients, Subject, Structure and Purpose. These messages were later edited for release on our daily broadcast called THE OPEN DOOR. This booklet was prepared to help radio listeners study with us on that program.

This volume, Volume 1, contains the notes on Genesis through Ruth. Volumes 2-7 contain the rest of the Bible.

The messages, as originally preached at the Church of the Open Door, are available on cassette in convenient albums. Or, you may order individual tapes if you desire. There is an Order Form at the back of this booklet for your convenience which will give you complete information on how to order.

It is my desire that these messages will give you an introduction to the basics of each book of the Bible, and you will then be able to read, study and apply your Bible more intelligently.

— Dr. G. Michael Cocoris

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GENESIS

The first book of the Bible contains the seed plot of the Bible. Therefore, it is imperative that we understand this book in order to understand the Book.

I. Author.

Bible-believing Christians affirm that Moses wrote the book of Genesis. The reasons for that are as follows:

- A. The Pentateuch is a unit (cf. "and" in Ex. 17:14; 24:4,7; 34:27; Num. 33:1,2; Deut. 31:29), and the Bible declares Moses wrote the law (cf. B and C below).
- B. Other Old Testament books testify to the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch (Josh. 1:7,8; 8:32,34; 22:5; I Kings 2:3; II Kings 14:6; 21:8; Ezra 6:18; Dan. 9:11-13; Mal. 4:4).
- C. The New Testament confirms the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch (Matt. 19:8; Mark 12:26; John 5:46,47; 7:19; Rom. 10:15).
- D. The New Testament specifically refers to Genesis as the work of Moses (cf. Gen. 17:12 with John 7:23 where circumcision is said to be in the law of Moses).
- E. Jewish and Christian tradition claim Moses wrote it.

The modern critical theory is that Genesis, and for that matter, the entire Pentateuch, was composed from a number of documents dating centuries after the time of Moses, but containing Mosaic traditions. A man named Wellhausen popularized this view. He speculated that some of the material in Genesis was written by an unknown author who called God, Jehovah. He designated that author as "J." The other material came from the pen of another unknown author who knew God only as Elohim. That author was given the code "E." Wellhausen went on to say that the basic content of Deuteronomy came from still another ghost writer whom he called "D." Finally, the material that deals with the priesthood was originally the work of still another author whom Wellhausen called "P." Thus, the "J-E-D-P theory" was formulated.

The whole assumption of the critical theory is that Genesis was not written in the second millenium B.C., but as late as the 4th century before Christ. Archeological discoveries since World War I have demonstrated the historical accuracy of the Pentateuch. Archeologists have brought to light customs practiced in the second millennium B.C. which were not practiced in the first millennium B.C. How, then, would an author have known of these customs (e.g., the double portion going to the oldest son, the sale of a birthright, the validity of an oral will, cf. Gen. 48:17-20), unless he had lived during the earlier period?

II. Recipients.

A. Their date.

If Moses was the author of Genesis, then it obviously had to have been written during his lifetime. It is unlikely that he wrote it before the Exodus. Perhaps he wrote it sometime during their wanderings in the wilderness, or maybe even in the Plain of Moab. But I personally feel that Moses wrote it between Egypt and Sinai. (Leupold suggests that the bulk, if not nearly all of Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers, was written after the fashion of a journal, especially the parts embodying specific words and directions given by God.) If so, the date is about 1440 B.C.

B. Their description.

The Exodus Generation, no doubt, had many questions. They probably wanted to know, "Where did we come from?" and "How did we get to Egypt?" "Why is Moses leading us out of Egypt?" and "Where is he taking us?" They were perhaps also asking, "Why is he taking us there?"

III. Subject.

The subject of Genesis is election. Moses is telling the Exodus Generation that God chose the patriarchs to give them the land of Canaan.

Boa says, "The theme of Genesis is God's choice of a nation through whom He could bless all nations."

IV. Structure.

The structure of the book is a series

of histories. Eleven times the phrase, "These are the generations of..." occurs (cf. 2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10,27; 25:12, 19; 36:1,9; 37:2).

- I. God's election in the primeval history of humanity. 1-11
 - A. Creation. 1-2
 - B. Fall. 3-4
 - C. Flood. 6-9
 - D. Babel. 11
- II. God's election in the patriarchal history of Israel. 12-50
 - A. Abraham. 12-25
 - B. Isaac. 25-27
 - C. Jacob. 28-36
 - D. Joseph. 37-50

V. Purpose.

The purpose of Genesis is to inform the Israelites in the wilderness about God's promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (i.e., that they would get the land of Canaan), and to explain how they got to Egypt.

Leupold puts it this way: "The book aims to relate how Israel was selected from among the nations of the world and became God's chosen people."

Conclusion:

Moses wrote to the Exodus Generation to tell them that the sovereign Creator promised Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and their seed the land of Palestine, but they ended up in Egypt.

EXODUS

The book of Exodus is important because, among other things, it records the giving of the Ten Commandments and the Tabernacle.

I. Author.

The conservative view is that Moses wrote the book of Exodus. There are several reasons for holding such a position.

- A. The book itself indicates that Moses wrote it (cf. Ex. 17:14; 24:4-7; 34:27).
- B. It has been attributed to Moses since the time of Joshua (cf. Ex. 20:25; Josh. 8:30-32).
- C. Jesus said Moses wrote it (Mark 7:10).

II. Recipients.

A. Their date.

The date of Exodus (i.e., the event, not just the book), has been a proverbial football among scholars. It has been kicked all over the historical landscape. But there are two principle views.

The first places the events around 1440 B.C. The second view places the events around 1290 B.C. Any view of the date is plagued with problems, but the correct view seems to be the early one.

I Kings 6:1 says that Solomon began building the Temple in the 4th year of his reign which is said to be 480 years after the exodus from Egypt. Solomon reigned 40 years (I Kings 11:42). The 4th year was about 960 B.C. (Albright = 958, Thiele = 967, Begrich = 962 B.C.). Adding 480 to 960 gives 1440 as the approximate date of the exodus (the event).

The book of Exodus was probably written shortly thereafter, about 1438 B.C.

B. Their description.

In many, if not most of the books of the Bible, the conditions of the recipients called forth the need for the book itself. There are cases where this is not true. Exodus seems to be one of them. It was not written to answer any particular question or meet any particular need that they felt at the moment. They had all experienced the events in Egypt, the exodus from Egypt, and the extraordinary care God gave them in the wilderness. This book, then, does not seem to be answering any question or problem that they had.

Exodus was not so much written for the people who received it first, as much as it was written for the generations who came after them.

III. Subject.

Many say the subject of Exodus is redemption. Granted, the first part of the

book records the "redemption" of Israel, but the key to the subject of Exodus is the end of the book. The last 15 chapters deal with the Tabernacle. After it is completed God descends to personally inhabit it. Thus, the subject of Exodus is not just redemption, but the purpose of redemption; that purpose being the presence of God.

IV. Structure.

If there is a literary structure in Exodus, it is geographical. Roughly, the book can be divided into three parts (cf. 12:1,37; 14:11,12; 19:1).

- I. God redeemed Israel from Egypt. 1-18
 - A. God prepared a leader. 1-6
 - B. God challenged the Egyptians. 7-12
 - C. God redeemed Israel from Egypt. 13-18
- II. God gave the law to Israel. 19-24
 - A. Moral Law. 19:1-22:17
 - B. Civil law. 22:18-24:18
- III. God gave His house (presence) to Israel. 25-40
 - A. The plan for the Tabernacle. 25-31
 - B. The breaking of the covenant. 32-34
 - C. The Tabernacle made and set up. 35-48

V. Purpose.

The purpose of Exodus is to remind the Exodus Generation of God's redemption from Egypt so that He could give them His law and presence.

Redemption is clearly a major theme in Exodus. In chapters 1-12, they were in Egypt--in sin, and worse yet, in slavery. God, by blood and power, redeemed them and delivered them from bondage.

But there is more to the story. He then gave them His law (19-24), and instructions for the Tabernacle, so that He could dwell among them (25-40).

Thus, God's purpose in redeeming Israel was not just negative--i.e., to escape from Egyptian slavery, but was positive, so that Israel could know God's will and have God's presence dwelling in their midst.

Conclusion:

Moses wrote to the Exodus Generation to remind them that God redeemed them, gave them His law and dwelt among them.

LEVITICUS

Leviticus has been called "the greatest book in the Bible" (Dr. S.H. Kellogg); "the most important book in the Bible" (Dr. Albert C. Dudley). Dr. Parker says, "Considered it is embracing the history of one month only, this may claim to be the most remarkable book in the Old Testament."

I. Author.

Leviticus 1:1 claims that Moses is the author of this book. 56 times in 27 chapters, the book says that God imparted these laws to Moses.

The Lord alludes to Leviticus and attributes it to Moses (cf. Lev. 14:1-4; Matt. 8:2-4). Furthermore, there is a uniform, ancient testimony to the Mosaic authorship of Leviticus.

II. Recipients.

A. Their date.

Exodus 12:2 - The new calendar of Israel began with the first Passover.

Exodus 40:17 - The Tabernacle was completed exactly one year later.

Leviticus 1:1 - Leviticus picks up the story at this point and takes place in the first month of the second year (cf. 25:1; 26:46; 27:34).

Numbers 1:1 - Numbers opens at the beginning of the second month.

Conclusion: Leviticus takes place in one month.

The book had to have been written after the children of Israel camped at Sinai. In that the Exodus occurred in 1440, this book had to have been written several years after that, probably about 1438 B.C.

B. Their description.

At this point, the Exodus generation had been delivered from Egypt, taken to Sinai, given the Law and the instructions for the Tabernacle. As they looked at the Tabernacle, they no doubt wondered what they were to do with it. One of the major questions Leviticus is designed to answer is just that. It gives the instructions for the sacrifices and ceremonies surrounding the Tabernacle.

III. Subject.

The subject of Leviticus is holiness (cf. Lev. 11:44-45). The Hebrew word "holy" means to separate or set apart. Thus, this book is telling Israel how she is to be set apart unto the Lord.

IV. Structure.

Leviticus is a manual of Levitical ritual. There is no neat organizational literary structure. The closest thing to it

is the repetition of the phrase, "And the Lord said unto...." That phrase occurs 33 times (cf. 1:1; 8:1; 11:1; 12:1; 13:1; 14:1; 15:1; 16:1; 17:1; 18:1; 19:1; 20:1; etc.).

I. Ceremonial laws for Israel's holiness. 1-16

- A. The sacrifices. 1-7
- B. The priesthood. 8-10
- C. Clean and unclean. 11-15
- D. Day of Atonement. 16

II. Moral laws for Israel's holiness. 17-27

- A. Concerning the people. 17-20
- B. Concerning the priest. 21-22
- C. Concerning the feast. 23-24
- D. Concerning the land. 25-27

V. Purpose.

An obvious and immediate purpose of the book of Leviticus is to instruct the Exodus Generation on how to perform the rituals connected with the Tabernacle. But at the same time, it must be remembered that the Tabernacle was the dwelling place of the presence of God. So the issue in this book is not just the function of the Tabernacle, it is the very presence of God. The purpose of Leviticus, then, is to instruct Israel on how to live as a holy nation in fellowship with God.

Conclusion:

Moses wrote to the Exodus Generation to inform them that God gave ceremonial and moral laws to Israel so that they might be set apart unto Him for fellowship.

NUMBERS

The Hebrew title for the fourth book of the Old Testament comes from the Hebrew word in the first verse which means "in the wilderness." The English title, "Numbers," was given to the book by the Greek translation (LXX) because on two separate occasions in the book a census was taken (cf. chaps. 1, 26).

I. Author.

The book of Numbers was written by Moses (cf. Num. 33:1,2). The book says, "The Lord spoke to Moses" more than 80 times. Other parts of the Old Testament attribute the book to Moses (cf. Ez. 6:10 with Num. 3:6; 8:9). There are also a number of New Testament passages that cite events from Numbers and associate them with Moses (cf. John 3:14; Acts 7:13; 1 Cor. 10:1-11; Heb. 3-4 and Jude 11). Furthermore, there is a universal ancient tradition to the Mosaic authorship of Numbers, including the Jews, the Samaritans and the early church.

II. Recipients.

A. Their date.

The new Jewish calendar began with the first Passover (Ex. 12:2). The Tabernacle was completed exactly one year later (Ex. 40:17). Leviticus, then covers a period of one month (cf. Ex. 40:17 with Num. 1:1). The children of

Israel camped at Sinai that whole month (cf. Lev. 25:1; 26:46; 27:34).

The book of Numbers picks up where Leviticus leaves off. It records the last 19 days at Mt. Sinai (Num. 1:1; 10:11). It then reveals Israel's journey from Sinai to Kadesh-Barnea and traces Israel's trip through the various places in the wilderness and finally to the Plan of Moab across the Jordan River from Jericho. The book covers a period of 38 years and nine months.

The date is approximately 40 years after the Exodus, somewhere around 1400 B.C.

B. Their description.

Genesis, Exodus and Leviticus were all originally received by the Exodus Generation. This is the first book in the Bible of which that is not true, for that generation all died in the wilderness.

Numbers was received by the "new" generation who lived through the experiences described in it. If there was any need among them for this book, it was as a reminder of what unbelief will do.

III. Subject.

The subject of the book of Numbers is the faithfulness of God. In the book of Genesis, God promised the land to Abraham and his seed. In Exodus, He redeemed Israel and instructed them. Leviticus con-

tinues the instruction. Now, in Numbers, God, who is faithful to His promise, prepares to take Israel into the land. Yet, they refuse to go. So God, faithful to His nature and Word, disciplined the disobedient. Then, faithful to His covenant, He raised up a new generation to take into the land.

IV. Structure.

I. Preparation for departure. 1:1-10:10

- A. Numbering of the people. 1:1-4:9
- B. Spiritual organization of the people. 5:1-6:27
- C. Closing events at Sinai. 7:1-9:14
- D. Signal for march. 9:15-10:10

II. Purge of the nation. 10:11-25:18

- A. Sinai to Kadesh-Barnea — unbelief. 10:11-14:45
- B. Kadesh-Barnea to Moab — wandering. 15:1-25:18

III. Preparation of the New Generation. 26:1-36:13

- A. Numbering of the people. 26:1-65
- B. Laws. 27:1-30:16
- C. Allotment of the land. 31:1-32:42
- D. Recapitulation. 33:1-56
- E. More laws. 34:1-36:13

V. Purpose.

A. To trace Israel's history.

There is a sense in which Numbers was written to trace the history of Israel's wanderings from Sinai to Moab, but there is obviously more to this

book than that. The fact that there is almost no record of the 38 years of wandering, and the presence of so many laws and regulations shows that Numbers is a very thematic history.

B. To teach God's faithfulness.

God was faithful to prepare the Exodus Generation to enter the land. They failed. God was faithful to discipline the disobedient and raise up another generation to fulfill the promise.

C. To warn against unbelief.

The writer to the Hebrews explains this very well (cf. Heb. 3:7-4:11).

Conclusion:

Moses wrote to the new generation to teach them that God faithfully prepared the Jews for entrance into the land, but they, because of unbelief, disobeyed. So God disciplined them and prepared a new generation to inherit the land.

DEUTERONOMY

The book of Deuteronomy has been called the greatest book in the Old Testament.

I. Author.

The book itself indicates that Moses wrote it (Deut. 31:9). There are various first-hand references to Moses' experiences (Deut. 5:6; 9:22; 25:17). The rest of the Old Testament attributes the book to Moses. Jesus indicated that Moses was the author (cf. Matt. 19:8). Tradition confirms that Moses wrote it.

The fact that Deuteronomy 34 records Moses' death is not a problem. Some claim the Lord revealed Moses' death to him so he could incorporate it into the book. The traditional view is that it was probably written by Joshua shortly after Moses died (as were various other editorial comments in the book).

II. Recipients.

A. Their date.

The book of Deuteronomy takes place entirely on the Plain of Moab, due east of Jericho, on the Jordan River (1:1; 29:1). The entire book covers a period of only about one month (cf. 1:3; 34:8 with Josh. 5:6-12). It was written at the end of the 40 year period in the wilderness, i.e., about 1405 B.C.

B. Their description.

The book was written to the "second" generation. The Exodus Generation had received the law, but they had all died in the wilderness. This new generation needed to be taught, or at least reminded about God's law before entering the land.

Craigie says that the approaching death of Moses provided the initial basis for the renewal of the covenant. Moses' role had been so significant that for many of the people Moses and the covenant must have seemed inseparable. But the time of his death was approaching, not simply as a result of old age, but as precipitated in part by his own disobedience. Because he had struck the rock twice, he had been forbidden to enter the land. Moses addresses his people as one who would be with them no longer. The force of the exhortation to obedience throughout the book is to be understood against this background.

III. Subject.

The subject of Deuteronomy is not "the second law" as some suppose. Rather, it is a series of sermons exhorting the people to obedience. Erdman says, "Indeed, the sum and substance of Deuteronomy seems to be an arresting appeal for obedience to God" (underlining his).

IV. Structure.

There is a sense in which the literary structure of Deuteronomy is simple. It records what Moses said to the people in the Plain of Moab (cf. 1:1; 5:1; 27:1; 29:1; 31:1; 31:30; 33:1; (34:1)).

Yet the organization of that structure has been arranged differently. A common way to view Deuteronomy is to see it as a series of sermons.

- I. First sermon (historical). 1-4
 - A. Wilderness journey. 1-3
 - B. Exhortation to obedience. 4
- II. Second sermon (Legal). 5-26
 - A. The basic commandment. 5-11
 - B. Specific legislation. 12-26
- III. Third sermon (Prophetical). 27-30
 - A. Covenant renewal commanded. 27
 - B. Blessing and cursing. 28
 - C. A concluding charge. 29-30
- IV. Transitional details. 31-34
 - A. Joshua and law. 31
 - B. Song of Moses. 32
 - C. Blessing of Moses. 33
 - D. Death of Moses. 34

V. Purpose.

- A. The primary purpose is for Moses to address the children of Israel in the Plain of Moab before he died and they entered the land (1:1; 3:5).

Moses urges the people to obey the Lord (26:16-19). If they did so, they

would be blessed. If they didn't, they would be cursed (cf. 27-30, esp. 30:11-18).

In Exodus and Leviticus, God speaks to Moses; in Deuteronomy, Moses speaks to the people.

- B. Transitional details had to be settled before Moses died and the people entered the land.
 1. Joshua was appointed as Moses' successor, both in public ceremony (31:7,8; 34:9) and privately in the tent of meeting (31:14-23).

The successor of human leadership was neither a power struggle nor a democratic process; it was a matter of divine appointment.
 2. Instructions were given regarding the deposition of the text of the covenant in the ark (31:9,26).
 3. General instructions were given for the normative covenant renewal procedure in the more distant future (31:10-13).

Conclusion:

Moses wrote Deuteronomy to remind Israel of what God had done and said, and exhorts them to obey God. Then he turns over the leadership to Joshua.

JOSHUA

All the books in the Bible up to Joshua were written by the same man, Moses. When we come to Joshua, we encounter for the first time a book written by someone other than Moses.

I. Author.

Technically, the book is anonymous, yet there are reasons to believe that Joshua wrote it.

1. It was written by an eye-witness (Josh. 5:1,6).

Such events as the sending out of the spies (ch. 2), the crossing of the Jordan (ch. 3), the capture of Jericho and Ai (chaps. 6,8), etc., are described with great vividness of detail.

2. Rahab was still alive (cf. 6:25).
3. At least parts of the book were written by Joshua (24:26; 18:9. Cf. also "we," "us" sections in 5:1,6).
4. Tradition assigns the book to Joshua.

II. Recipients.

A. Their date.

The Exodus took place about 1440 B.C., give or take a few years. The conquest then happened roughly around 1400 B.C. According to Caleb, the con-

quest was completed in seven years (Josh. 14:7,10). Thus, Joshua was written around 1390 B.C.

B. Their description.

The "new" generation, who were still in the land, received the book.

III. Subject.

The subject of Joshua is "possessing your possessions" (cf. 1:11). The word "possession" occurs no less than 22 times.

There is a difference between ownership and possession. Israel's ownership over the land was completely unconditional (cf. Gen. 15:7-21; etc.), but her possession of the land was conditional (Deut. 29:9; 30:20). God told Joshua, "You've got it (Josh. 1:2,3), now go get it" (Josh. 1:5,6).

IV. Structure.

Like Exodus and Deuteronomy, there is a great deal of geographical material in the book of Joshua. Yet there is also narrative, and beyond that, the details of the division of the land, as well as a farewell address. The geography is one of the unifying factors throughout the book.

- I. Entering the land. 1-5
 - A. The charge to Joshua. 1
 - B. The commissioning of the spies. 2
 - C. The crossing of the Jordan. 3
 - D. The construction of the memorials. 4
 - E. The consecration of the Israelites. 5

- II. Conquering the land. 6-12
 - A. The central campaign. 6-8
 - B. The southern campaign. 9-10
 - C. The northern campaign. 11:1-5
 - D. The review of the victories. 11:6-12

- III. Division of the land. 13-21
 - A. The division of the land. 13-19
(Tribal victory)
 - B. The cities of refuge. 20
(Speical cities)
 - C. The cities of the Levites. 21

Appendix

Dismissal of the eastern tribes. 22

Farewell of Joshua. 23,24

V. Purpose.

A. Historical.

The historical purpose of Joshua is to document the conquest of Cannan by the Israelites. As such, Joshua carries on the geographical and chronological story of Israel from Abraham to Malachi. Without this book there would be gaping

ry of Israel. We would not know how they got into and settled the land!

B. Spiritual.

Spiritually, the book records the the truth that when God's people believe Him and obey Him they will possess their possessions.

Conclusion:

Joshua wrote to the "new generation" to remind them of how God had led them into the land, conquered it and divided it. He then said farewell.

JUDGES

In Joshua there is victory. In Judges there is defeat. In the former there is progress; in the latter there is decline. In the first there is faith; in the second there is unbelief. In one there is freedom, and in the other there is bondage.

Judges has been called one of the saddest books in the Bible.

I. Author.

The author of Judges is anonymous. Jewish tradition (the Talmud) attributes the book to Samuel. There is no doubt that Samuel was an author (I Sam. 10:25). Conservative scholars usually say that it was probably written by Samuel or one of his prophetic students.

II. Recipients.

A. Their date.

The book of Judges had to have been written after the death of Samson, for the book records his death. He died about 1050 B.C.

The book repeatedly says, "In those days there was no king in Israel" (cf. 17:6; 21:25; 18:21; 19:1). That phrase implies that there was, at the time of writing, a king. So, the book must have been written after the commencement of Saul's reign and before the division of the kingdom.

The most helpful clue to the dating of the book is Judges 1:21. It says that the Jebusites were dwelling in Jerusalem "to this day." That means it was written before 1004 B.C., which is when David disposed of the Jebusites (II Sam. 5:5-9).

Thus, Judges was written between 1243 B.C. (i.e., the beginning of Saul's reign) and 1004 B.C. (David's capture of Jerusalem), probably about 1040 B.C.

By the way, if you add up the chronological notices in the book, you get a total of 410 years. That is a problem. I Kings 6:1 says, "The fourth year of Solomon's reign" was 480 years after Exodus. Israel wandered in the wilderness 40 years (Num. 32:13). Allowing 25 years for Joshua's time, 40 years for Eli, around 60 years for Samuel and Saul, 40 years for David (II Sam. 5:4), and, of course, four years for Solomon, the total is 209 years. The problem is that when you subtract 209 from 480 you are left with 271 years for the events in Judges. But the years in the book total 410, not 271.

The solution is to realize that there were simultaneous rules of certain judges. For example, Judges 10:7 clearly implies that Jephthah and Samson ruled contemporaneously, since one delivered the oppressed Israel from the Ammonites and the other from the Philistines. In other words, the judges were more like regional governors than national presidents.

B. Their description.

The recipients of the book of Judges lived either just before or just after the first king was crowned in Israel. Prior to that time, there had been no king in Israel. Consequently, every man did that which was right in his own eyes. The recipients of this book needed to know that there was a need for a king to give order and stability in Israel.

III. Subject.

The subject of the book of Judges is apostasy, or departure from the Lord. There was no king in Israel and every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

The passage that explains the book is Judges 2:11-19. The pattern of the period is sin, servitude, supplication and salvation.

IV. Structure.

The literary structure seems to revolve around a repeated phrase, "The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord" (cf. 3:7; 3:12; 4:1; 6:1; 10:6; 13:1).

Chapters 17-21 precede chapters 3-16 in time. These chapters appear at the end of the book to illustrate the moral conditions that were prevailing during the period. The book reaches a climax in chapters 17-21 with the last verses as a fitting summary.

I. Introduction. 1:1-3:6

- A. Political background. 1:1-3:6
- B. Spiritual background. 2:1-3:6

II. Record of the Judges. 3:7-16:31

- A. First apostasy: conquered by Mesopotamia. 3:7-12
Delivered through Othniel.
- B. Second apostasy: conquered by Mesopotamia & the Philistines. 3:12-31
Delivered through Ehud and Shamgar.
- C. Third apostasy: conquered by Jabin. 4:1-5:31
Delivered through Deborah and Barak.
- D. Fourth apostasy: conquered by Midians. 6:1-10:5
Delivered through Gideon, Tola and Jair.
- E. Fifth apostasy: conquered by the Philistines and the Ammonites. 10:6-12:15
Delivered through Jephthah, Ibzan and Abdon.
- F. Sixth apostasy: conquered by the Philistines. 13:1-16:31
Delivered through Samson.

III. Appendix. 17-21

- A. The idolatry of Dan. 17,18
- B. The crime of Benjamin. 19-21

V. Purpose.

A. Historic purpose.

Historically, the book of Judges records the history of Israel from the death of Joshua to Samuel, the last judge and first prophet. It bridges

the gap between Joshua and the rise of the monarchy.

B. Spiritual purpose.

The real issue in Judges is that there was no leader to take Joshua's place in the way that he had taken Moses' place. The key to understanding the purpose is the repeated phrase that there was no king and so everyone did that which was right in his own eyes (cf. 17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25).

The purpose of the book of Judges, then, was to show that because of the willful rebellion of the people, Israel needed a king.

Conclusion:

Samuel (?) wrote to the generation in Israel that first had a king to show that because of the willful rebellion of the people Israel needed a king.

RUTH

Ruth has been called the most essential book of the Old Testament (J. Vernon McGee).

I. Author.

Like Judges, the author of Ruth is anonymous. There is not the slightest hint or clue in the book as to who wrote it. The Talmud attributes it to Samuel.

II. Recipients.

A. Their date.

The story of Ruth took place during the period of the Judges (Ruth 1:1), but the people who lived during that period were not the recipients of the book.

The events of the book of Ruth probably took place between 1150 and 1120 B.C. (cf. Boa).

The book traces the lineage of Ruth to David (Ruth 4:17). That takes us to the period of the Kingdom and not the period of the Judges. The book ends with David (Ruth 4:22). If it was written after David's reign, it probably would have included Solomon. So it is more likely that it was written after David's coronation and before his death. David reigned from 1011 through 971 B.C. The book, then, was probably written around 1000 B.C. which means it was written approximately 120 years after the events took place. That is why the

author explains the shoe covenant (4:7-8). By the time the book was written that custom was no longer practiced in Israel.

B. Their description.

All that can be said about the recipients of this book is that they were the Jews who lived during David's day.

III. Subject.

There is a sense in which the subject of Ruth is Ruth. She is a Moabitess girl who ends up in Israel. Yet the issue is not just her story. She was a stranger who was redeemed by a near-kinsman. Thus, the subject of Ruth is redemption by a near-kinsman.

IV. Structure.

Ruth is almost a pure narrative; it is the story of Ruth. If there is a literary structure, it revolves around places.

- I. Ruth follows Naomi to Bethlehem. 1
- II. Ruth gleanes in Boaz' field. 2
- III. Ruth seeks to marry Boaz. 3
- IV. Ruth marries Boaz. 4

V. Purpose.

Many have connected Ruth with the book of Judges suggesting that it forms a contrast to that period. While there is clearly a striking contrast between Judges and Ruth,

the purpose of this book is not to be a supplement to Judges. It was not written until 120 years after the period!

A. To introduce the line of David.

The key to the purpose of Ruth is 4:17. 4:18-22 connects Perez, the sons of Judah, with David, who is connected with the tribe of Judah. The line, of course, passes through Boaz, the husband of Ruth. So the purpose of Ruth is to introduce the line of David.

Keil says, "...the book itself forms...an introduction to the book of Samuel which gives no account of the ancestry of David....The last words of verse 17 show the object which the author had in view in writing down these events or composing the book itself. This conjecture is raised into a certainty by the geneology which follows and with which the book closes."¹

J. Vernon McGee suggests that this makes Ruth one of the most important and essential books of the Old Testament. He says,

It connects David with the tribe of Judah. By so doing, it produces a homogeneous character to the Old Testament. Under these circumstances, the geneological purpose makes Ruth one of the most essential to the Old Testament canon....The geneology at the conclusion of the book is a valuable contribution to the Biblical narrative. In many respects, it is

the most important document
in the Old Testament."²

B. To identify the line of Christ.

To fully appreciate the importance of introducing the line of David, you must remember that Christ is in the Davidic line. So the object is not just the geneology of the "great David," but the geneology of "great David's great Son."

C. To illustrate redemption by a near-kinsman.

Ruth was under the condemnation of the law from her birth. The Mosaic law forbade a Moabitess from entering the congregation of the Lord (Deut. 23:3). The law provided, however, for a near-kinsman to redeem a brother and his inheritance (Lev. 25; Num. 35; Deut. 19,25).

Conclusion:

Samuel (?) wrote to the Jews of David's day to introduce the line of David (which identifies the line of the Messiah) and illustrate redemption by a near-kinsman.

¹ Keil & Delitsch, Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Eerdmans, 1970, pp. 466, 492.

² J. Vernon McGee, Ruth, The Romance of Redemption, Dunham, 1962, pp. 19-21.

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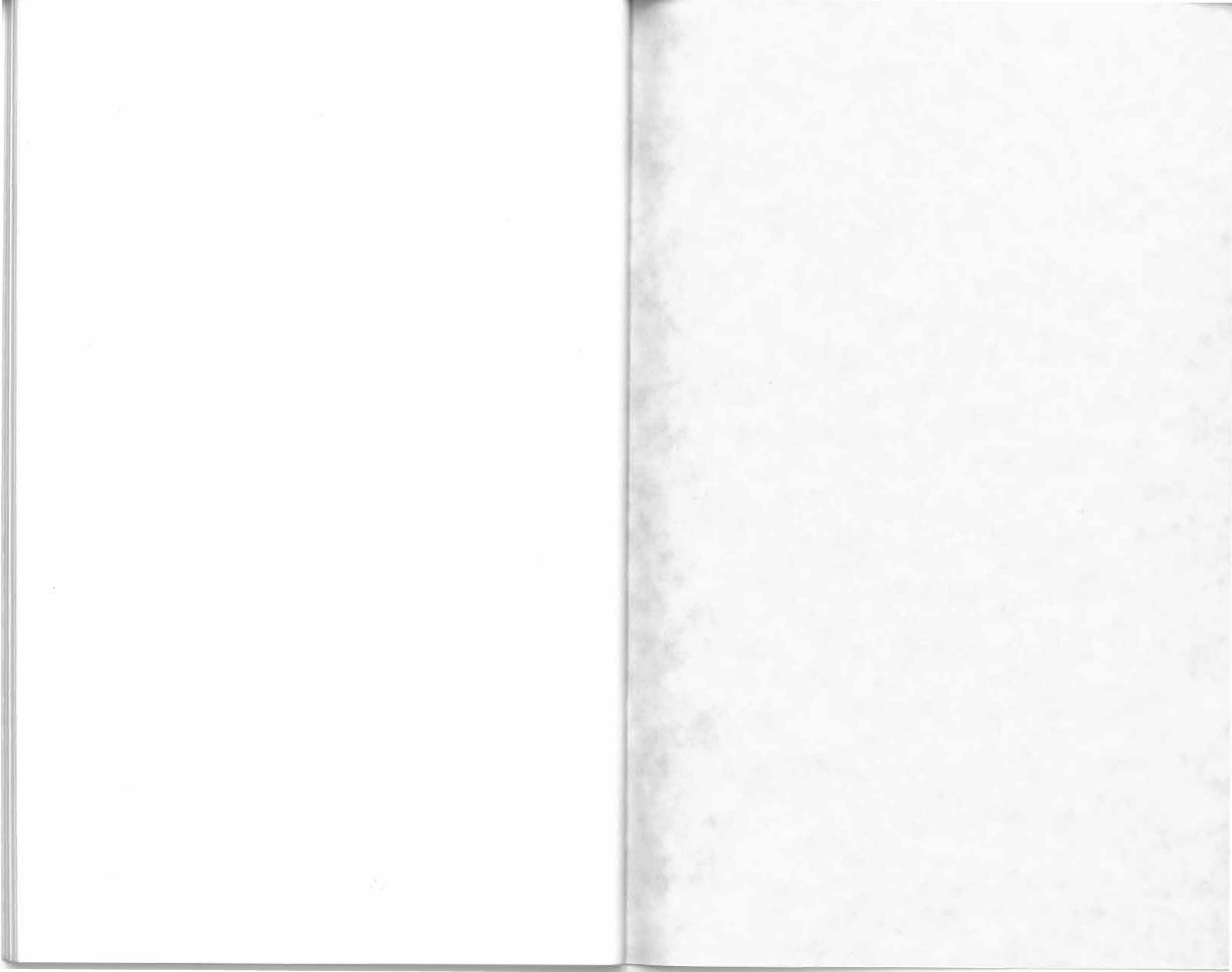
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