



Gateway to Life Sermon Notes

"And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified." (Acts 20:32)

April 8, 2018

The Book of Ruth – 1 **These Are the Days of the Judges**

Why?

- #1. Ruth is a female Job, so to speak, and her story addresses the sovereignty and providence of God in suffering.
- #2. It's also a book about a godly female that rises to the top in a culture of patriarchy. Ruth is also a story about a man of great standing, wealth and power who shows great respect to women.
- #3. Ruth is a story of God's people seeking refuge, seeking rest, seeking comfort and a future.
- #4. The context of the story of Ruth is nothing short of a backdrop of political and moral failure.

Text: *"In the days when the judges ruled . . ." (Ruth 1:1a, ESV).*

The Days of the Judges

- Ruth occurred about 1100 years before Christ.
- In Israel, at that time, there was no cohesive, unifying leadership in the nation.
- *"In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes." (Judges 21:25, ESV).*

The book of Judges is a story of Israel's ups and downs:

1. The people would abandon the Lord and compromise with false religions;
2. Then God would punish them by raising up a foreign power to oppress them;
3. The people would respond in distress and ask God for deliverance;
4. God would raise up a judge or leader to help them; and
5. Soon the cycle would just repeat.

An illustration (from Judges 6-8)

"As soon as Gideon died, the people of Israel turned again and whored after the Baals and made Baal-berith their god. And the people of Israel did not remember the LORD their God, who had delivered them from the hand of all their enemies on every side" (Judges 8:33–34, ESV).

Why is this history important to us today?

1. [Romans 15:4](#)
2. [2 Timothy 3:2-4](#)

There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death." (Proverbs 14:12; & 16:25, ESV).

The deliverers God sent to Israel were flawed and temporary. But the ultimate deliverer, Jesus Christ, has no flaws. His rescue of those who believe in him is complete and everlasting. By His death and resurrection, He delivers Christians from the penalty of sin.

How does Christ deliver His Church from the idolatrous influences of that tempt us?

1. He gives to His people a new heart. [Ezekiel 36:26-27](#)
2. He unites us with Christ's death and resurrection, thereby removing the mastery of sin. [Romans 6:6](#)
3. He chastens those whom He loves. [Hebrews 12:6](#); cf: [Psalm 119:67](#)
4. He gives us the indwelling reality and work of the Spirit. [Galatians 5:17](#); [Philippians 2:13](#)

Application

If you find yourself drawn away, doing what's right in your own eyes – placing the wrong value on people and things, today God is calling us to repent and believe the Gospel. How do we do that?

1. We must admit that when other people and things preoccupy our minds and our interests; and when these things become more important to us than our Savior, they become our idols. Idolatry is a lie that started in the Garden and says, "God is holding out on you. God isn't enough." Idolatry is unbelief.
2. We need to turn our eyes on Christ and acknowledge that He came to earth to show us that He is enough. He came to give us life, and life more abundantly. He came to die for our sin of idolatry. Every pain and every torment He went through on Calvary was to atone for our sin of idolatry.
3. In the Gospel, He has brought us into union with Himself. He has given us the Holy Spirit so that we would no longer be controlled by sin, that we would no longer live for self, but for Him. He calls us to surrender to that truth; to yield to His will.
4. He gives us many and precious promises for set us free from the deceit of idols. He tells us that in Christ we have abundant life; that in Christ no good thing will He withhold from us; and that in Christ, as we seek His Kingdom first, all our needs will be met.

Perhaps you can identify with the Apostle Paul today: [Romans 7:21-25a](#)

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