

Welcome back to our journey through the Scriptures. So far, we've studied the first four books Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. Today, by God's grace, we continue with the next four: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, and Ruth.

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5) Deuteronomy

Deuteronomy, written by Moses, was given at the threshold of the Promised Land. Its purpose was to reaffirm the covenant for the new generation of Israelites. The Hebrew title "*Devarim*" (meaning "words") reflects Moses' final speeches to Israel, while the Greek title "*Deuteronomion*" means "second law."

Most of those who had left Egypt died in the wilderness due to unbelief (Numbers 14:22-23). Only Joshua and Caleb remained. Thus, Deuteronomy addresses their children, reminding them of God's commands.

One of its central texts is the *Shema*, a declaration of Israel's monotheistic faith and love for God:

*Deuteronomy 6:4-7 (ESV)*

*"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise." Deuteronomy emphasizes:*

- Covenant renewal: Israel is reminded of God's faithfulness and their responsibility to obey (Deut. 29:9-15).
- Blessings and curses: Obedience brings blessing, while disobedience brings curse (Deut. 28). This anticipates Israel's later history.
- The Great Commandment: Jesus Himself cites Deut. 6:5 as the greatest commandment (Matthew 22:37-38).

Thus, Deuteronomy is not simply historical it's covenantal, pressing God's people to remember His Word and live by it.

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6) Joshua

The book of Joshua, written by Joshua son of Nun, recounts the conquest and settlement of Canaan. Following Moses' death, God commissioned Joshua to lead the people:

*Joshua 1:5 (NIV)*

*"No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you."*

Joshua highlights God's faithfulness in fulfilling His promises. Centuries earlier, God promised Abraham that his descendants would inherit the land (Genesis 15:18-21). Joshua records the fulfillment:

*Joshua 21:43-45 (NIV)*

*“So the Lord gave Israel all the land he had sworn to give their ancestors... Not one of all the Lord’s good promises to Israel failed; every one was fulfilled.”*

### Key themes:

- Victory through obedience: At Jericho (Joshua 6), Israel's success came not from military strength but from trusting God's instructions. Conversely, at Ai (Joshua 7), disobedience led to defeat.
- God as Warrior King: The Lord Himself fights for Israel (Joshua 10:11-14).
- Covenant faithfulness: The land distribution reflects God's commitment to His covenant with Abraham.

For Christians, Joshua prefigures Christ (*Yeshua* = “the Lord saves”). Just as Joshua led Israel into their inheritance, so Jesus

leads believers into their eternal rest (Hebrews 4:8-10).

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7) Judges

Judges, written by the prophet Samuel, covers Israel's history between Joshua and the monarchy. It describes a recurring cycle: sin → oppression → repentance → deliverance.

The key verse summarizes the theological chaos:

*Judges 21:25 (ESV)*

*"In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes."*

Judges teaches:

- Human depravity: Israel repeatedly falls into idolatry despite God's faithfulness (Judges 2:11-13).

- God's mercy: Despite their rebellion, God raises judges deliverers empowered by His Spirit (Judges 2:16-18).
- Christological foreshadowing: The imperfect judges (Gideon, Samson, Deborah, Jephthah) point forward to the perfect Judge and Deliverer, Jesus Christ.

For example, Gideon's weakness highlights God's power (Judges 7:2). Samson, though flawed, points to a savior whose death delivers God's people (Judges 16:30; cf. Hebrews 11:32).

Thus, Judges is not just history it is theology in narrative, showing Israel's need for a righteous King, ultimately fulfilled in Christ (1 Timothy 6:15).

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8) Ruth

The book of Ruth, also written by Samuel, is set "in the days when the judges ruled" (Ruth 1:1). It provides a contrast to the chaos of Judges, highlighting God's providence and covenant love (*hesed*).

Ruth, a Moabite widow, demonstrates loyalty to Naomi and faith in Israel's God:

*Ruth 1:16-17 (NIV)*

*"Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried."*

Ruth illustrates:

- God's providence: Ordinary events (famine, gleaning, marriage) are woven into His redemptive plan.
- Kinsman redeemer (go'el): Boaz foreshadows Christ, our Redeemer, who buys us back from spiritual poverty (Ruth 4:9-10; cf. Galatians 3:13).
- Inclusion of the Gentiles: Ruth, a foreigner, is grafted into Israel

and becomes the great-grandmother of David, through whom the Messiah comes (Matthew 1:5-6).

Ruth assures us that God is sovereign even in the mundane and that His redemptive plan includes all nations through Christ.

These four books Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, and Ruth teach us that:

- God is faithful to His covenant.
- Obedience brings blessing; disobedience brings judgment.
- God raises imperfect leaders to point us to the perfect Redeemer, Jesus Christ.
- God's plan of salvation is both particular (for Israel) and universal (embracing the nations).

As Paul reminds us:

*Romans 15:4 (NIV)*

*“For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.”*

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