

Finer Grounds

Judges and Ruth

Lesson 13: The Kinsman Redeemer (Ruth 3-4)

The second chapter of Ruth left us with a cliff-hanger. So many questions were yet to be answered. What will happen to Ruth and Naomi when Barley season is over? Will Boaz act on his affection for Ruth? Will Ruth ever find the security of a loving husband again? Thankfully, we get to see the answers to these questions played out in beautiful detail. Let's read together and discover how this great love story ends.

Read Ruth 3:1-5

Naomi now gives Ruth some very specific and odd advice in regards to Boaz. She clearly loves Ruth so deeply she wants the absolute best for her. Naomi wants Ruth to find a life of security.

List the actions Naomi instructed Ruth to take.

Read 2 Samuel 12:20 and list David's actions.

Which of these actions are similar to those of Ruth?

David had been mourning the loss of his baby. In this verse, David ends his official mourning period and returns to his duties. In

Ruth 3, Naomi is essentially telling Ruth to advertise that her mourning period has ended and she would be available for marriage.

Read Ruth 3:6-18

Ruth's character continues to be painted in a favorable light. Here we see her doing exactly as her mother-in-law has commanded. She waited until Boaz had eaten and was happily contented with his day's work and then she presented herself to Boaz. Upon waking to find a woman he asked "Who are you?"

How did Ruth respond to Boaz's inquiry?

The phrase rendered in the NASB as "spread your covering over your maid" was a common idiom of the day that represented marriage. She wanted to be sure he had no questions as to the reason she was on the threshing floor that night.

Boaz was honored by Ruth's request. She could have chosen a husband that was young and wealthy, but she chose Boaz, an honorable Israelite. She considered herself an Israelite and wanted to conform to their law and customs by seeking out her kinsman redeemer.

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According to Ruth 3:12, what is the one thing preventing Boaz from taking Ruth as a wife right away?

Boaz's joy about this proposition is evident in that he promises to deal with the situation the next morning. The emphasis on redemption is prevalent through this section, in Ruth 3:13 alone the word is used four times.

In the previous lesson, I mentioned that the book of Ruth showed many shadows of the coming Messiah.

How does Christ act as our kinsman redeemer?

We are the lowly servant and there is only one who can redeem us from a life of spiritual poverty. If we are willing to humble ourselves and petition Him, we can become the bride of Christ, redeemed from our former life. What a beautiful image!

The next morning Boaz sent Ruth away with a cloak full of food as a gift for her and Naomi. The number 6 may have represented the six days of the week, now it was time for a day of rest. Naomi assures her anxious daughter-in-law by telling her that Boaz will not rest until he has settled this matter.

Read Ruth 4:1-12

Immediately the next morning, Boaz adhered to his promise and sought a resolution to the

problem at hand. He called ten of the elders of the city and Ruth's closest relative to a legal meeting.

What issue did Boaz first discuss with Ruth's closest relative and how did he respond?

What was the secondary issue that Boaz introduced into this scenario and how did the closest kinsman respond?

We are not sure why the nearest kinsman would not claim Ruth. Perhaps it was because he knew he was too old to father children and further Elimelech's line, or maybe he had a prejudice against Moabites. Whatever the case, when a clear and honorable way out of the scenario was offered, he took it. In front of the witnesses, the rights of the kinsman redeemer were transferred to Boaz.

What names are mentioned when the elders blessed Boaz and Ruth's marriage (Ruth 4:11-12)?

According to Ruth 4:11, what blessing did they wish for Ruth that mirrored the lives of Rachel and Leah?

Read Genesis 38. Why would the elders compare the marriage of Boaz and Ruth to that of Judah and Tamar?

Read Ruth 4:13-22

In the ultimate happy ending, Boaz marries Ruth and the story that began with famine and bareness ends with the blessing of new life through the birth of a son. Because of Ruth's faithful obedience, a line is preserved and an entire family is blessed. Through the bleakest of tragedies, God was able to shine. Neither Naomi nor Ruth could have possibly imagined the blessings that awaited them upon their return to Bethlehem, but they still trusted in the mighty hand of Yahweh. Scripture continually demonstrates that faith in God's will yields favorable results, especially through trying circumstances. We must take this to heart!

List some other scriptural examples of God blessing His people through trials?

What are some instances you have seen God's faithfulness to you in the most difficult times of your life?

How can reminding yourself of these instances help you in your daily walk?

List the names in the lineage of Obed.

Such simple words to end this book: "and to Obed was born Jesse, and to Jesse, David." These names would set up the greatest royal lineage of all time, that of the coming Messiah. Jesus would be a direct descendant of Boaz and Ruth.

Look back through your notes from Judges and Ruth. What qualities characterized the tribe of Benjamin?

How is Bethlehem represented?

Remember that Saul was from the tribe of Benjamin and David, the grandson of our most recent heroine is from Bethlehem. If these books were written during the reign of Saul, they might have had a secondary purpose. It is possible that Samuel (or whoever the author was) intended on preparing the Israelites mind for David becoming king.

This journey through Judges and Ruth has been fraught with peril and devastation, but that is not the primary message of these books. If you look back, you will see the active hand of God blessing those who actively seek to obey His will contrasted with the ruin of those who follow their own path. As we close our study, I will challenge you to constantly be seeking God's will for your life, in doing so you will be blessed beyond anything you can imagine.