

A STUDY OF JUDGES & RUTH

REDEMPTION

Last Week ended with Ruth and Boaz in the middle of the night on the threshing floor. The scandal was evaded as Boaz sent Ruth away with grain—no one the wiser. The next morning, Boaz had some business to handle. He went to the city gate, because that's where men did such business, and Boaz caught the attention of the one relative of Elimelech closer than he.

Boaz asked the nearer relative if he would redeem it. In a bit of a maneuver, he reminded this relative that Ruth was part of the deal. The relative didn't want to "impair" his own inheritance, and passed the right of redemption to Boaz. To make it official, they exchanged sandals. Yep, sandals were the tradition.

With the agreement settled, Boaz shouted from the figurative rooftop. "You are witnesses," he said to the elders and men at the gate. He promised to take Ruth as a wife and perpetuate the family name. The dead would be honored according to God's Law, and they were the witnesses.

RUTH 4:11-17

¹¹ Then all the people who were at the gate and the elders said, "We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman, who is coming into your house, like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel. May you act worthily in Ephrathah and be renowned in Bethlehem, ¹² and may your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, because of the offspring that the LORD will give you by this young woman."

¹³ So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. And he went in to her, and the LORD gave her conception, and she bore a son. ¹⁴ Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without a redeemer, and may his name be renowned in Israel! ¹⁵ He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age, for your daughter-in-law who loves you, who is more to you than seven sons, has given birth to him."

¹⁶ Then Naomi took the child and laid him on her lap and became his nurse. ¹⁷ And the women of the neighborhood gave him a name, saying, "A son has been born to Naomi." They named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The Bible is one story pointing to Jesus Christ. Hopefully, studying *Judges* and *Ruth* have illustrated that truth. We've seen the overwhelming need of a True King and Savior. Likewise, we've seen God's remnant in such a terrible time—people who lived God's heart and by doing so made their way into Christ's genealogy.

Let's close this study in the worship of our *Gracious Redeemer*. The only One who can rescue. Scan the QR code to worship.



DISCUSSION

As we finish out the semester, what's something you've learned that you didn't know before?

ICEBREAKER

1. What did the people want Bethlehem to be known for? (11)

OBSERVATION

2. What did God do for Boaz and Ruth (13)?

3. What name did the women give to the child and who became the child's famous descendent? (17)

4. How did these events honor the loyalty and faithfulness of those involved?

INTERPRETATION

5. What's one thing you'd love to have as your legacy?

APPLICATION

6. What intentional steps do you need to focus on to set yourself up for such a legacy?

Here's your last chance. Leave it all on the field. If there's anything God's been doing in your heart, or that you haven't shared yet, don't wait. Talk to your Coach today.

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STUDY NOTES RESCUERS

Way back in Zero Week, we opened the study with the story of the soccer team trapped in a flooded cave in Thailand. The boys walked in with no fear and didn't realize their predicament until it was way too late.

For 18 days they were trapped on a rock shelf. They sat and slept for hours at a time in absolute darkness. The terrifying echos of water in the rocks made them question if the flood would start rising again soon. Imagine the stench as their body waste had nowhere to go. They were trapped in some of the worst circumstances a person could find themselves.

Working through *Judges* we saw the downhill spiral of sin. Sin is like the boys walk into the cave—you just don't know you're trapped until it's too late. God sent rescuers, but the descent of Israel into sin meant that their flaws were increasingly evident as they conformed to the culture. By the end of *Judges*, we saw the repeated phrase, "*In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.*" And, we know how that ended.

Through that repeated phrase, the author of *Judges* declared the answer to Israel's problem was a king—one ruler to unite the tribes, clear the Promised Land of evil influence, destroy the idols, and return Israel to the worship of Yahweh.

In *Ruth*, we've met some amazing, faithful, counter-cultural people. They lived the heart of God in a time when no one else did. As we previously discussed, although Bethlehem had been associated with tragedy, their relationship gave it a legacy of hope. Because, it was through them that *the Rescuer* came.

We can imagine the well-spring of hope as the soccer team saw a glimmer of light under the water as divers approached their position. The divers expected to find 13 dead bodies, not 13 living souls. They expected to recover, not rescue. Initially, saving the boys seemed impossible, but the most unlikely solution allowed them to bring all 13 safely out of darkness and into the light.

What the author of *Judges* wanted was a king to save them. They needed a King, just not in the way they expected. As we conclude the book of *Ruth*, we see hope, but the impossibility of overcoming death through sin still loomed. God had a most unlikely solution.

GOD'S LEADERS ENJOY RICH BLESSINGS

Life is not a storybook where everything that was wrong is made right in the end. In the story

of Naomi, thankfully, it worked out that way. As Boaz shouted to the elders, they responded, "***We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman, who is coming into your house, like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel.***" Rachel and Leah were the wives of Jacob, later renamed "Israel" by God, the father of the 12-tribes of Israel.

Ruth and Boaz ***bore a son. Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without a redeemer, and may his name be renowned in Israel!"*** The woman who returned to Israel broken and bitter, now glorified the Lord through his gracious gift.

They named their son ***Obed***. Then, we get a glimpse into the generations that followed, Obed ***was the father of Jesse, the father of David***. Yes, *that* David—as in David and Goliath, King David, Davidic Covenant David. David, the shepherd boy who became the greatest king Israel ever had. The man known for loving God so deeply. He is the composer of many Psalms in the Bible's most worshipful book. Where do you think he learned such things? Perhaps his great-grandparents, Ruth and Boaz, had that effect on the generations that followed.

GOD MAY BLESS US WITH ENDURING LEGACY

Matthew 1 records the genealogy of Jesus Christ. Verse 5 says, "*Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse.*" Both Rahab and Ruth were non-Israelite women who, through their faith in the Lord, were incorporated into the genealogy of Christ. Note also, the Israelites recorded genealogies *only by the men!* Right or wrong, their records said who fathered who. Both women were so special their names were incorporated into God's eternal Word to make sure every person of every generation would know their name. Now that's what I call a legacy!

God's solution for sin was the person and work of Jesus Christ. When we were hopeless and helpless, unable to rescue ourselves from the death spiral of sin, Christ came. He came through a special family of faithful men and women. People who remained faithful in the most difficult circumstances.

Do you want a legacy? Do you want a life that matters? Surrender is the process and faithfulness is the price. I'm sure when Ruth was beating out grain trying to keep her promise by not letting Naomi starve to death, she didn't think much about it. God did. And her faith was rewarded.