

# Ordinary People, Extraordinary God

## A study of the book of Ruth

### Part 7: The Great Grandmother of the Messiah- Ruth 4:11-22

Last time, we finished the narrative story of Naomi, Ruth, & Boaz. We first looked at the meaning of redemption & we understood the reason why Ruth was part of this transaction.

Then, we looked at the mark of a redeemer & how Boaz reacted quickly & decisively to negotiate with another potential redeemer. Finally, we noted the means of redemption, as Boaz accomplished the official business of redeeming his bride. Today, we conclude this series by looking beyond the initial blessing to one that still speaks today.

#### 1. A *corporate* blessing

- Weddings should be a time of *blessing* & *celebration*. Families come together to celebrate the joining of the bride & groom.
- In ancient times, a wedding was a *community-wide* event.
- The whole community would join in a *multi-day* feast for the marriage.
- **Gen. 2:24**; *“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.”* God created marriage to be a blessing.
- **Ruth 4:11**; *“Then the elders and all those at the gate said, “We are witnesses. May the Lord make the woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel. May you have standing in Ephrathah and be famous in Bethlehem.”*
- The people prayed for Ruth to be *fruitful* in the area of *childbearing*.
- Childbirth was very important to the women of Israel. It was seen as a *sign* of God’s blessing & was important in *continuing* the family line.
- Of course, all women also knew of the promise that one day the Messiah would come from the nation of Israel, which meant one mother was going to be extremely blessed to carry & birth the Christ-child.
- Israel *honored* the birthing of children, while many of the cultures around them did not honor childbirth & even offered their children as *sacrifices* to their false gods.
- **Ruth 4:12**; *“Through the offspring the LORD gives you by this young woman, may your family be like that of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah.”*
- The people prayed for Ruth not only to be fruitful but to be *famously* so.

#### 2. An *eternal* blessing

- *Who is Perez & Tamar?* There are *four* women mentioned in the *lineage* of Jesus in **Matthew 1:1-17**, three of whom were *Gentile* women grafted into the vine of Israel.
- Those women are *Tamar* (Gentile-pretended to be a prostitute/incestuous), *Rahab* (Gentile-harlot), *Ruth* (Gentile-Moabitess widow), & *Bathsheba* (Jew-adulteress).

- God is in the **restoration** business. **Healing** old wounds, **forgiving** past sins.
- **Matt. 1:3**; *“Judah the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar, Perez the father of Hezron, Hezron the father of Ram.”*
- The family of Perez settled in **Bethlehem**. Boaz was a descendant of the tribe of Judah & from Perez, directly.
- Note the changes that have come to Ruth since she came to Israel with Naomi:
  - From **loneliness** to **love**.
  - From hard **work** to **rest**.
  - From **poverty** to **wealth**.
  - From **worry** to **surety & security**.
  - From **despair** to **hope**.
  - From Ruth the **Moabitess** to Ruth, the redeemed **wife** of Boaz.
- God was gracious to Ruth & Boaz as she gave birth to a son.
- **Ruth 4:13**; *“So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife. Then he went to her, and the Lord enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son.”*
- God had **not** forgotten Naomi while blessing Ruth.
- **Ruth 4:14-17**; *“The women said to Naomi: “Praise be to the LORD, who this day has not left you without a kinsman-redeemer. May he become famous throughout Israel! He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age. For your daughter-in-law, who loves you and who is better to you than seven sons, has given him birth.” Then Naomi took the child, laid him in her lap and cared for him. The women living there said, “Naomi has a son.” And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.”* Wow! The second king of Israel would be a descendant.
- The Hebrew name Obed means **servant**, as in one who worships & serves God.
- Naomi symbolically sees the child as her ‘son’ too. She lost two sons & a husband, but God has **continued & restored** their line through Obed.
- Other women now call Naomi blessed as she holds little Obed in her arms.
- She lost her sons but now has a grandson & a daughter-in-law who’s more of a daughter, & better than seven sons!
- *“There’s no better way to get a new lease on life than to start investing yourself in the younger generation.”*
- **Ruth 4:18-22**; *“This, then, is the family line of Perez: Perez was the father of Hezron, Hezron the father of Ram, Ram the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father of Salmon, Salmon the father of Boaz, Boaz the father of Obed, Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David.”*
- God redeemed Elimelech’s line from nearly being wiped out. God had the greatest blessing in mind, through the line of Naomi Ruth, & Boaz, through the line of David, through the tribe of Judah, God would bring the Messiah, the King of kings.

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