

The Ripple Effect of a Forgotten Follower: Boaz Ruth

To appreciate the character of a man like Boaz, we need only place him in the context of history. Boaz lived during the time of the Judges, a time of social and spiritual unrest. It was a culture in which the children of Israel “did what was right in their own eyes” and forgot their God. Because of their disobedience, God allowed their enemies to overtake them. When they cried out to God in their repentance, God would then raise up a deliverer, a judge, to save them from their enemies. Some theologians believe that Boaz may have been one of these judges though the Bible never addresses him that way. Regardless, Boaz’ character is an astounding witness of godly integrity in the midst of an ungodly culture.

The role of kinsman-redeemer is crucial in understanding the full ramifications of Boaz’s behavior and character, for in his obedience, he is a type of Christ, our Kinsman Redeemer.

Christ came as a man (relationship) who was also fully God (ability), and voluntarily accepted the cost of redeeming His people (willingness). Boaz’s name means “in it is strength”. (Solomon named the left pillar in the temple of the Lord “Boaz” and the right “Jachin” meaning “He will establish”.) “Boaz was true to his name and comes before us strong in grace, integrity and purpose. As the lord of the harvest, master of servants, redeemer, bridegroom and life-giver, he is a fitting type of Christ.

“Boaz was a descendant of Salmon who married Rahab the harlot of Jericho (Joshua 2:1-12; Matthew 1:5). Since the purpose of Hebrew genealogies was to show lineage rather than to list each particular descendant, it is possible that some generations are missing in both Ruth 4:18-22 or Matthew 1:4-6.” But “assuming that the generations from Ruth to David are complete, Ruth and Boaz were King David’s great-grandparents.” Though a genealogy is an odd ending for a book like Ruth, considering Boaz’s example, it is a fitting one, for in it we discover that through the lineage of this kinsman redeemer, came our Kinsman Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

Recommended Resources

- Spiros Zodhiates. *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*
- Daniel Block, *New American Commentary: Judges – Ruth*

NOTES

Growth Questions for 9/20 – 9/27

1. What insight, principle, or observation from this weekend’s message did you find most helpful, eye-opening, troubling?
2. Being able to recognize the fact that needs exists outside of ourselves is key. How do you become aware of the needs that exist around you in your home, community, and place of work or leisure?
3. Boaz saw a need and addressed it without an opinion poll of those around him or great concern for the thoughts of others. How has the perceived perception of others influenced your willingness to serve, give, and invest?
4. What potential encumbrances were in Boaz’s life that could have hindered him from taking the steps God had for him? Prestige? Power? Position? Humiliation? Pride? Finance? What are the most common encumbrances that slow or halt God’s work and direction in your life? How could you take those potential encumbrances and transition them into opportunities to initiate a *ripple effect*?
5. Compare the work and life of Boaz with the work and life of Jesus. How does the life of Boaz and his love story with Ruth illuminate our understanding of the redemption that Jesus brings through his life and work on the cross?

Proclaim...Reach...Connect...Go

Living on Mission

1. Think through your personal circumstances that are before you in the coming week. Allow room for personal risk and sacrifice for the work of the Gospel. What steps can you take to be observant and prepared for the work God has for you?
2. How can your actions this week potentially start a ripple effect in your place of work, community, and home? How could a word of encouragement, act of kindness, or act of service change a relationship or give hope this week? Develop a plan to start a ripple effect and share.

...to proclaim the Gospel and reach those far from God.