



CAPITOL COMMISSION

Never, Never, Never Give In.

APRIL 23, 2009

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This is the twelfth in our series¹ of the “Scandalous Ancestry of Jesus Christ,” as recorded in Matthew chapter one.

As we near the end of the legislative session, we come to a character in Scripture that exemplifies perseverance, determination, and endurance. The next couple of studies in this series will be in the book of Ruth. Ruth is a wonderful example of the grace of God influencing a life. She freely gave of the grace imparted to her.

At the same time, we are nearing the time for academic graduations. While researching for a speech for commencement addresses, I discovered this quote from Sir Winston Churchill that is appropriate for both circumstances. "This is the lesson: never give in, never give in, never, never, never, never - in nothing, great or small, large or petty - never give in except to convictions of honour and good sense. Never yield to force; never yield to the apparently overwhelming might of the enemy."²

Matthew 1:4-5 “Naasson begat Salmon; And Salmon begat Booz [Boaz] of Rachab [Rahab]; and Booz [Boaz] begat Obed of Ruth;”

Ruth 1:8,9,14 “And Naomi said unto her two daughters in law, Go, return each to her mother's house: the LORD deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me. The LORD grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice, and wept... and Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth clave unto her.”

Romans 12:10-18 “Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

DEARTH AND DEATH

The book of Ruth occurs during the time the judges ruled the nation of Israel. Although Scripture is not clear as to who was the judge at this time, there is a good case to be made that it was

Gideon.³ Other commentators site Boaz as the judge, and still others Ehud.⁴ The setting is the tribal area of Judah, in the town of Bethlehem. This is the same Bethlehem that King David was from. Jesus, the future Messiah, was born there as well.

“PROVIDENCE TAKES PARTICULAR COGNIZANCE OF BETHLEHEM, AND HAS AN EYE TO A KING, TO MESSIAH HIMSELF, WHO SHOULD DESCEND FROM TWO GENTILE MOTHERS, RAHAB AND RUTH.”
MATTHEW HENRY

Elimelech is the patriarch of the family mentioned in the opening chapter of Ruth. He made an ill-advised decision to move his wife, Naomi, and two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, to the country of Moab to escape a famine. The country of Moab had an unseemly origin. (Abram’s nephew Lot was the father of Moab - by his daughter) The Israelites were enemies with the Moabites.⁵ Yet Elimelech chose to go there.

This decision had devastating consequences for Elimelech’s family. He died not long after they had arrived. Mahlon and Chilion eventually married Moabite women, but both men died after about ten years, leaving no heirs. At this point Naomi chose to return home to Bethlehem. Her husband had made poor decisions and she was the one to suffer for it. She became a bitter and hardened individual, even changing her name from Naomi (pleasant, amiable) to Mara, (bitter, sorrowful). Her two daughter-in-laws followed her to Moab’s border where Naomi encouraged them to go back home. Orpah, Chilion’s wife, wept and kissed her mother-in-law good-bye.

DETERMINATION AND DEDICATION

Mahlon’s wife Ruth, however, determined to stay with her distraught mother-in-law. She declared, “Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me.” (Ruth 1:16-17) Orpah had returned to her people and her gods,⁶ but Ruth made it quite clear that she believed in the one true God and vowed to faithfully serve Naomi.

BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS: THURSDAY @ 7:30 A.M., GOVERNOR’S OFFICE

STAFF/LOBBYISTS: FRIDAY @ NOON, CHAPEL ROOM

CHAPEL SERVICES: THURSDAY @ 12:10-12:35 P.M.

Indiana

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APPLICATION

Renunciation - In Ruth we see the principle that Christ exemplified: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13) Think of what the Savior did for everyone who was steeped in bitterness and selfishness. Jesus Christ renounced the joys of heaven⁷ to condescend to men of low degree, even His enemies.⁸ Ruth abandoned all the familiar comforts of her home and family to go with a sad and bitter mother-in-law. Furthermore, Ruth rejected the false gods that her family believed in for the knowledge of the true God.

JESUS CHRIST RENOUNCED THE JOYS OF HEAVEN TO CONDESCEND TO MEN OF LOW DEGREE.

Resolve - Ruth resolved to love and serve Naomi regardless of the circumstances. There are many examples of this kind of resolute commitment in Scripture. Jonathan and David demonstrated this self-sacrificing love in their brotherly friendship.⁹ Jonathan risked his life for David.¹⁰ Another depiction of this type of resolve and commitment is marriage. God makes it clear that a man is to love his wife as Christ loved the church and "gave himself for it." (Ephesians 5:25) Yet how resolute are we to be Christ-like in our love? Are we willing to humble ourselves and forego our own desires for the sake of our spouse, or a good friend? How about an enemy?

Reward - Once Ruth and Naomi had returned to Bethlehem, Ruth decided to gather leftover grain in the fields for provision. Ruth was richly rewarded¹¹ for her kindness to Naomi when the master of the field, Boaz, commanded that his reapers drop handfuls of barley on purpose for her to pick up. She came home the first day with a bountiful return for her labor. Naomi was astonished at how much she had been able to glean. Ruth relayed how she had found grace in the eyes of the master of the field.¹² Naomi rejoiced at the blessing of God and had a renewed hope in His kindness.¹³

It should be the desire of every Christian to give to others (without hope of selfish reward) as we have been given - even to those who would view themselves as enemies. This may be the most difficult lesson to learn from this passage.

DO NOT WITHHOLD FROM ANY MAN THE OFFICES OF MERCY AND KINDNESS; YOU HAVE BEEN GOD'S ENEMY, AND YET GOD FED, CLOTHED, AND PRESERVED YOU ALIVE: DO TO YOUR ENEMY AS GOD HAS DONE TO YOU. IF YOUR ENEMY BE HUNGRY, FEED HIM; IF HE BE THIRSTY, GIVE HIM DRINK: SO HAS GOD DEALT WITH YOU. AND HAS NOT A SENSE OF HIS GOODNESS AND LONG-SUFFERING TOWARDS YOU BEEN A MEANS OF MELTING DOWN YOUR HEART INTO PENITENTIAL COMPUNCTION, GRATITUDE, AND LOVE TOWARDS HIM? A SIMILAR CONDUCT TOWARDS YOUR ENEMY [MAY] HAVE THE SAME GRACIOUS INFLUENCE ON HIM TOWARDS YOU. YOUR KINDNESS MAY BE THE MEANS OF [HIM BECOMING] YOUR REAL FRIEND!¹⁴

As Sir Winston Churchill so eloquently put it, we must never give in to the overwhelming might of the enemy. Let it be clearly stated that if you can pinch it, it is not the enemy! We have a common enemy and it is not an earthly one.¹⁵ There is a great deceiver who desires to destroy the lives of every individual on the earth. It is he who we contend with. Do not allow him to discourage, alienate, and keep you from a relationship with the One who died for you.

¹ For the previous study in this series please visit www.publicservantsprayer.org and click on the Bible Studies link.

² Sir Winston Churchill – Harrow School, 29 October 1941

³ Jarahi, says it was in the times of Ibzan, who says is the same with Boaz, but without proof - It is more probable that it was in the days of Gideon, as before observed, than in the days of Ibzan." *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*

⁴ "The conjectures of the learned are very uncertain. It must have been towards the beginning of the judges' time, for Boaz, who married Ruth, was born of Rahab, who received the spies in Joshua's time. Some think it was in the days of Ehud, others of Deborah; the learned bishop Patrick inclines to think it was in the days of Gideon, because in his days only we read of a famine by the Midianites' invasion." *Matthew Henry Commentary*

⁵ Judges 3:28 "And he [Judge Ehud] said unto them, Follow after me: for the LORD hath delivered your enemies the Moabites into your hand."

⁶ Ruth 1:14-15 "And Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth clave unto her. And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister in law."

⁷ John 6:38 "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."

⁸ Romans 5:10 "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

⁹ 1 Samuel 18:1, 3 "And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. "Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul."

¹⁰ 1 Samuel 20:33 "And Saul cast a javelin at him to smite him: whereby Jonathan knew that it was determined of his father to slay David."

¹¹ Ruth 2:12 "The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust."

¹² Ruth 2:10 "Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldst take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger? And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore."

¹³ Ruth 2:20 "And Naomi said unto her daughter in law, Blessed be he of the LORD, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead."

¹⁴ *Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible* Romans 12:20

¹⁵ Ephesians 6:12 "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."