

Old Testament Core Seminar

10

RUTH & SAMUEL

Introduction

Good morning; welcome back again. We come this week to a crucial turning point in the history of redemption. This week we'll see the famous story of the rise (and sadly fall) of the great King David. If there is any Old Testament figure who can rival Abraham in the importance in which God used him, it is King David. So these are very exciting books we'll be studying today. Just as God's promises to Abraham really set the context for everything we've read so far, God's promises to David will set the context for the rest of the Old Testament. As always though, the struggle between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent (from Genesis 3:15) still under-girds all of it. Well, since we have a lot of material to cover today, Ruth & 1st and 2nd Samuel, let's not delay any longer.

[PRAY]

RUTH

Context

We don't know who wrote Ruth. Jewish tradition credits Samuel, Israel's last judge and prophet who we will be introduced to in a moment. It was probably written sometime during the reign of King David, one of Israel's first kings. When the actual events in the book occurred we are more certain about. Look at **Ruth 1:1**. [READ] The setting for Ruth is during that time when, as we saw last week, Israel had no king; thus turmoil and disorder were rampant in the land, not to mention sinfulness. Now the judges ruled for over 350 years. This story takes place close to the end of their rule, somewhere in the early part of the 11th century BC. The people don't know it at the time, but that the reign of the judges is almost over, as we'll see in a moment.

Redemptive-historically speaking, the sort of things that happened during the time of the judges just can't continue for ever. The people really had no leaders. The judges, who served as their leaders, were really scrambled for only when there was a national disaster. The people needed more stability than that, especially if they are ever going to enjoy that "rest" for any length of time. Thus Ruth serves as a transition between the time of the judges, and the coming of the kingship in Israel.

Theme

We can summarize Ruth like this:

Yahweh is raising up His king to keep the covenant and redeem His people, despite the apparent circumstances which suggest that Yahweh has forgotten His people.

Many of the events in the book of Ruth make it appear as though Yahweh is far off and not involved in the life of the nation of Israel anymore. However, the writer makes it clear that it

only *looks* like Yahweh has forgotten His people. In reality Yahweh is behind the scenes everywhere, preparing His people for the next step forward in His plan of redemption: to give them a king. All this is couched in a story about redemption and rescue, foreshadowing what this future king will do as a redeemer and savior.

[This outline does not need to be gone over. The class only needs to be told that it is printed in their handouts so that they could have a little guide for their own study.]

Outline w/ Pivotal Texts

- I. Ruth 1 – Yahweh brings affliction.
 - II. Ruth 2 – Yahweh arranges circumstances.
 - III. Ruth 3 – Yahweh builds suspense.
 - IV. Ruth 4 – Yahweh provides a redeemer (and soon a kingly redeemer!).
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Theme texts

4:13-22

Sometimes the best way to understand a story is to first see how it ends. Turn to **chapter 4**, and look at **verses 18-22**. [READ] Ooh! A genealogy! See, isn't it all clear? Does anyone know why this genealogy is really quite a climax to the book? [WAIT FOR SOMEONE TO ANSWER]

The book is much about this guy **Boaz**, you see there in verse 21. The book gets its name from the woman who Boaz rescues out of dire straits. In the first chapter Ruth and her mother-in-law, Naomi, find themselves without husbands nor resources during a time of famine. So everything looks very bleak for them. And add to that all the trouble that we read about last week in the book of Judges. Then in chapter 2 we discover that Ruth has what is called a **kinsman-redeemer**. In short, what that means is this: in ancient Israel when a man died, that man's closest male relative was responsible to take care of his widow by marrying her and raising up children on his behalf. These were called Israel's leveret laws. You can read about them in Deuteronomy 25. They were intended to preserve the man's family name, and also to protect the widow from destitution.

At any rate, Boaz is Ruth's kinsman-redeemer (2:20; 3:9; 4:4-6, 12-14). In chapters 3 and 4, Boaz steps up and takes this responsibility, and gladly marries Ruth. And in it all, Ruth and Naomi are provided for in the famine, and the family line is established. But what's intriguing about this family? [WAIT FOR SOMEONE TO ANSWER] From this line comes the man who will eventually be Israel's greatest king, David. So not only are the woman "redeemed" from poverty and despondency, but Israel's future is looking brighter, as this calamity really marks the end of the time of the judges, and becomes a transition to the kingship in Israel. Truly, God works in mysterious ways. (Notice the strong affirmations of God's sovereignty in 1:6, 8f, 13, 20f; 2:2f, 20; 4:14.)

We'll see how all this relates to Christ here in a minute when we take a look at the kingship in 1st and 2nd Samuel. But it's also interesting to notice that this idea of redemption, here seen on a micro-scale, will be brought to fruition in the ministry of Jesus Christ.

One of the greatest lessons from the book of Ruth is that God is sovereign and in control not only of the good events in our lives, but also the painful ones. He sends enjoyable times, and He sends trials too. And the application here is that trusting in God at those times of trial will really bring peace amidst the storm. Knowing that the universe is not out of control and that nothing can ever happen to you outside of God's knowledge and active care for you is a great solace indeed. Everything that comes your way is an appointed season of your life. God doesn't do things in vain or without purpose. Thus everything God gives is hand crafted for you by a loving and wise Father. Now, we don't always know *why* things are happening as they do. But we do know that God knows why. And that knowledge should be enough. Just think of Naomi and Ruth. In chapter 1 there was no way that they could have known that the outcome of their trials and tribulations would be the beginning of the royal family of David, and that would eventually produce the Savior of the world! Trust God in your trials. He is doing thousands of things in and through those trials for your good and the good of others. Trust Him even when you can't possibly imagine what that good might be.

[TAKE QUESTIONS]

1st and 2nd SAMUEL

Context

Well, all that in Ruth is really a prelude to the rise of the king of Israel, which we read about when we turn the page to the next book. The books of 1st and 2nd Samuel were originally written as one book, called Samuel. The book opens with the story of Israel's last judge, Samuel himself. Samuel was also Israel's first great prophet since Moses. It is believed that Samuel wrote much of the first half of the book, and someone else completed the second half shortly after David's reign was complete. The events of these books occur roughly between 1100 and 970 BC. (There is a list of dates for major Old Testament events included on the back of your handout this week.)

As far as the redemptive-historical picture goes, 1st Samuel opens really at the same place that Ruth does. The land is occupied, but the people can't really enjoy that "rest." A king is needed, and Yahweh is about to supply one.

Theme

To get a handle on what's going on in 1st and 2nd Samuel, let's summarize these books like this:

Yahweh will rule over His people through the king whom He chooses. This king must keep the covenant and obey the word of Yahweh in order to be a good shepherd to the people.

This is the next step forward in redemptive-history. Now that they have the land, they need a king to shepherd and lead and care for the people. The king, in turn, will represent the people before Yahweh. Yahweh will from here forward deal with the people according to the obedience, or disobedience, of the king. So the king has a great task of carrying the people on his shoulders, and their fate is bound up in his actions. Therefore, it is imperative that the king keep the terms of the covenant and obey the word of God.

As a consequence of this, we will see a shift in focus from this point forward in the Old Testament. So far much of the focus of the Old Testament has been on Yahweh's relationship with Israel and what He is doing with them: Israel's forefathers, Israel's history, Israel's land, Israel's destiny. Now, a great deal of the focus of the rest of the Old Testament will be on Yahweh's relationship with the *king* of Israel: the promises made to the first kings, the kings' obedience or lack thereof, the kingship's future, and the goal of the kingship. And, interestingly enough, we will also see Satan focus his attacks on the king as well, as the Seed of the Serpent continues to attack the Seed of the Woman in the attempt from stopping the *one* Seed from coming into the world.

If it sounds confusing, don't worry. We'll try to clarify these ideas today, and revisit them many times before we are done with the Old Testament. Suffice it for now, the king on the throne of Israel is the focal (earthly) character for the rest of the Old Testament. Even the prophets, who say and do a lot more than the kings, are messengers to the kings. Again, don't be overwhelmed. We're just getting started.

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Outline w/ Pivotal Texts

- I. 1 Samuel 1-7* – Samuel is a prophet from God's grace.¹
(Ministry of Samuel as the last judge)
- II. 1 Samuel 8-14 – Saul is a king in God's place.
(Saul as the people's evil choice)
- III. 1 Samuel 15-2 Samuel 8 – David is a man after God's heart.
(David as a type of a righteous Christ)
- IV. 2 Samuel 9-20 – David is a servant under God's rod.
(David's sin and God's chastisement)
- V. 2 Samuel 21-24 – Israel is a kingdom in God's hands.
(Anachronistic; summary notes about David's reign)

*The first four sections end with concluding summaries of the central figure's work.
(1 Samuel 7:15-17; 1 Samuel 14:47-52; 2 Samuel 8:15-18; 2 Samuel 20:23-26)

Theme texts

1 Samuel 1-7

The books of 1st and 2nd Samuel are all about the rise of the king of Israel. However, its first 7 chapters are not about a king at all. They are about **a prophet**, Samuel. This is interesting because prophets were charged with guarding the covenant and bringing the word of God to the people. By starting the story of the king with a story about a prophet we are reminded that even though the king rules and reigns in Israel, he does *not* reign above the word of God. Yahweh governs His people by His word, and that includes the king. He too is subject to the Scriptures, just like everyone else. Thus, throughout the many stories to come of the many different kings

¹ Outline from Dale Ralph Davis' *1 Samuel* and *2 Samuel*.

we'll encounter, there will always be prophets there calling the king to covenant-faithfulness and trying to keep the king accountable. The buck does not stop with the king in Israel. It stops with the word of God. In fact, in Deuteronomy 17 it is commanded that the first thing the king is to do once he takes his throne is to copy the entire books of Moses by hand, and then read it everyday! That should make the message clear to him!

1 Samuel 8-14

In chapter 8 the story of the king gets started in earnest. There is just one problem: Israel is actually sinning by asking for a king! Even though a king was promised to the people as far back as Genesis 49 and Deuteronomy 17, and it was clear that the people needed a king, it was still sinful for Israel to ask for one because of their motive for asking for one. Turn to **chapter 8**, and look at **verse 7**. [READ] Yahweh has looked into their hearts, and seen that they don't want a king because they want someone to lead them to be a covenantly-faithful nation, but because they are a stubborn people who want to be autonomous, without Yahweh. It's really quite sad, but Yahweh says in the next verse that Israel has actually always behaved like this since the day they left Egypt.

In **verses 10 through 18** Samuel tells them that through a king they will not achieve this autonomy. Instead, a king *of their choosing* (emphasis on *their choosing*) will only lord himself over them and oppress them. Look at **verse 18**. [READ] The kind of king that the people want will only spell disaster.

Nonetheless, the people's hearts are set. Look at **verse 19**. [READ THROUGH VERSE 20]. Ah! Now we see the true motive of their hearts. They don't want to be a distinct nation. They want to be like all the nations around them. They want to be like everyone else. The whole idea of Leviticus, "You shall be holy, because I, Yahweh your God, am holy," is no longer desirable to them. Here we see why Yahweh said in verse 7 that they are rejecting Him in their request.

So the people choose Saul, because he's tall and handsome (9:2). Look at **9:16**. [READ] It almost sounds like Saul is really another judge. Well, at any rate, this is a merciful act in light of Israel's contempt for Yahweh. Despite their sin, He is still gracious and kind to them.²

And Yahweh is most gracious and kind to Israel when He finally removes Saul from being king over them. Saul disobeys Yahweh in chapters 13 and 15, and so Yahweh puts an end to this strange kind of democracy, and continues with His original plan to choose His own king for the nation. Look at **13:13-14**. [READ] Yahweh has sought out a man after His own heart. Saul was disobedient to Yahweh pretty much right from the beginning. And now the people will have to endure the bitter fruit of their choice as civil war ensues, since Saul will not so easily give up the kingdom to whoever this "man after God's heart" will be.

² The teacher may, at this point, want to point out that word "anoint" in verse 16. It will become a common word in the Old Testament, especially in the books of Samuel. It simply means to pour water or oil over something. What it means to be "anointed" like this is to be set apart by Yahweh for as special purpose. It's where the word "messiah" actually comes from. To be the "messiah" literally means to be "the anointed one." And the Greek equivalent to the Hebrew word "messiah" is "chistos," or "Christ." This will become more important when we see David "anointed."

It's worth making a few comments by way of application at this point. It is very easy for us to become enamored with the fuel and the timber that earthly kingdoms run on: power, might, cunning, prestige, etc. But in God's kingdom, Yahweh is insistent on doing things by *His* wisdom. And He often does things exactly counterintuitive to the way we would think He'd do things. The reason for this is that God wants to do things in a specific way that brings about a particular result: giving glory to God and not man. The LORD intentionally governs his kingdom in a way that makes it clear to everyone that He is great and worthy of all glory. More on this in a moment.

[TAKE QUESTIONS]

1 Samuel 15-2 Samuel 8

David's story begins in earnest in 1 Samuel 15. Now that Yahweh has rejected Saul as Israel's king, He will now select a king who fits His bill, and portrays the characteristics He is looking for. Look at **16:1**. [READ] The difference here is that Yahweh, not the people, will select the king. Look at what Yahweh tells Samuel in **verse 7**. [READ] Yahweh wants a king who is already obeying that major theme of Deuteronomy. Does anyone remember what that was? [WAIT FOR SOMEONE TO ANSWER] To love Yahweh with all your heart and soul and strength. Yahweh is looking *inside* the man. Only one who loves Yahweh like that will be suited to rule His people.

A number of other things could be pointed out here as we are introduced to David. Notice in verse 4 that he is from Bethlehem. The point is made over and over again in this chapter and the next that David is a shepherd by trade (16:11, 19; 17:15, 20, 34, 40). When David is anointed king in verse 13, The Spirit of Yahweh rests upon him. If we put our New Testament glasses on and look back at these attributes of David, it's not hard to see that David is a type of Christ. He is meant to foreshadow the life and ministry of a much greater King born in Bethlehem, who is known to His people as a shepherd with the Spirit upon Him: the Lord Jesus Christ. We'll see over and over again the many ways that **David prefigures Jesus**. In fact, a case could be made that David prefigures Christ more than anyone else in the Old Testament. And that is the lens through which we should look at the life of David: What is this or that about David teaching us about who Christ is?³

³ And the typological events of David's life begin right away. What famous story do we read of in 1 Samuel 17? [WAIT FOR SOMEONE TO ANSWER] The story of David and Goliath. Now, this story is often applied to people like this: You have big GOLIATH sized problems in your life like economic stress, loneliness, you're feeling a bit overweight, etc. And what you need to do is take the stone of faith, and the stone of prayer, and the stone of Bible memorization and conquer that GIANT in your life! Well, that's just complete garbage. Yes, stress and loneliness and being overweight are real problems. And yes, faith, prayer, and the Bible are mighty tools to overcome them. However, that's not what's going on in 1 Samuel 17. Something much greater, something redemptive-historical, is going on. David has just been anointed king, and now he goes out and conquers the enemy of God's people, whereas prior they were afraid to fight. Now, Israel routes the Philistines quite easily because they've already been defeated by David's charge. The same thing will happen when Christ defeats sin and death for His people. If Goliath is a seed of the serpent, defeated by David, the serpent himself is defeated by Christ. **Hebrews 2:9-15** - ⁹ But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. ¹⁰ In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering. ¹¹ Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers. ¹² He says, "I will declare your name to my brothers; in

Well, at any rate, you can read of David defeating God's enemies in chapter 17, his sufferings in chapter 19, his welcoming those in distress in chapter 22, his saving the people of God in chapter 23, his fear of the LORD in chapters 24-26, his befriending gentiles in chapter 27, and then his suffering at the hands of the gentiles in chapters 29-30. All these things are meant to highlight that David is indeed a man after God's own heart, and a king who foreshadows the eschatological king, Jesus Christ.

And speaking of the great eschatological king Jesus, let us hear what all of this means for us: submit to the King that David was meant to foreshadow. Repent of your sins and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. David had many friends, but he also had many enemies. The same is true today. Christ has many friends and many enemies. When He returns in power and glory, you don't want to be counted among His enemies. Instead, do as you are advised in Psalm 2: "...be wise; be warned...Serve Yahweh with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him."

[TAKE QUESTIONS]

Would that we had more time to look into all these stories, but we really need move on. Turn to **2 Samuel 5**. You'll remember that we said that the taking and possessing of the land in the book of Joshua was the high-point of redemptive-history so far. But as we come to 2 Samuel 5 we have an even greater climax to date. For in 2 Samuel 5, David finally takes his rightful rule over all of Israel, and establishes Jerusalem as the capital. Then **chapter 6** is an even greater climax! In chapter 6 the Ark of the Covenant is brought to Jerusalem. The Ark of the Covenant was a chest that was kept in the Most Holy Place of the tabernacle. It represented the throne of God on earth. So in chapter 6 we see the throne of God and David's throne occupying the same city, Jerusalem. And were that not enough, chapter 7 is still another greater climax yet. Chapters 5, 6, and 7 are like a great crescendo at the end of a symphony, each one more dramatic than the previous.

Well, what's going on there in chapter 7? **2 Samuel 7** is what is known as the inauguration of the Davidic covenant. Yahweh's promises to Abraham still stand, but now He's going to tack more promises on to that original covenant. Look at **verses 1-3**. [READ] Notice in verse 1 that David and the people have "rest," and now David wants to build a "house" for Yahweh. That is, he wants to build a temple for worship. But Yahweh sends his prophet back to David to deliver the message to him that it's not time to build a temple. Instead, look at **verse 11**. [READ] Here Yahweh puts a little spin on the word "house." Yahweh uses it to mean a "dynasty." Thus He is saying that He will build David and his descendants (literally "seed") into a line of kings to reign over the people of God. And so, that line of descendants that we've been following from Adam, through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, now passes through David, and will pass through his sons on the throne in Jerusalem. You can see why it's an exciting moment in redemptive-history. Let's read on in **verse 12**. [READ] Interesting, isn't it, that Yahweh was

the presence of the congregation I will sing your praises." ¹³ And again, "I will put my trust in him." And again he says, "Here am I, and the children God has given me." ¹⁴ Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death-- that is, the devil-- ¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

just talking about a dynasty, and now He uses a *singular* pronoun there at the end of verse 12? Did you notice that? I wonder who that singular king might be...

Well, look at **verse 13** now. [READ] Now Yahweh spins the meaning of “house” again. And He says that not David, but one of his sons, will build this “house,” and that son’s kingdom will endure forever. An eternal kingdom; that’s quiet a promise! But how are we to understand this house here?

Well, now may be a good time to talk about what we call “**near and far fulfillment**” of prophecy. Whenever a prophet would make a prediction about the distant future, there was often a near, typological, fulfillment of that prophecy on a smaller scale. The reason for this was so that the immediate hearers of the prophecy would have some form of verification that the long-term fulfillment of the prophecy will come to pass as well.

Don’t be overwhelmed! We have an example right here in our text to explain what I mean. This “Son of David” here (I hope you’ve anticipated) is the Lord Jesus Christ (cf. Matthew 1). He is the descendant of David whose throne and rule over the people of God will know no end. And this “house” here in verse 13 is the assembly of God’s people. Jesus will build up, create, the population of the kingdom of God.

Hebrews 3:6 says that, “Christ is faithful as a son over God's house. And we are his house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast.”

Now, there is a typological foreshadowing of this in Solomon, David’s first son to reign after him. No, his kingdom doesn’t last forever. But if we understand “house” to mean “temple” again, then we have a “near fulfillment.” Solomon will be the one to build a temple in Jerusalem, pointing forward to David’s final son who will build a people for God.

You can look for this kind of near and far fulfillment throughout the Old Testament, especially in the prophets.

[TAKE QUESTIONS]

One last thing in 2 Samuel 7. Look at **verses 14-15**. [READ] From this point forward, the kings in David’s line will have a special relationship with Yahweh, where they are called His “son.” Who else have we seen to have this title “God’s son?” [WAIT FOR SOMEONE TO ANSWER] The nation of Israel was called God’s son in Exodus. So there are multiple layers of sonship in the Old Testament, both pointing forward to the Son *par excellence*, Jesus Christ.

Notice though that now, “the son of God” will be punished if he disobeys, but will finally and ultimately not be thrown off. Yahweh intends to keep these promises, just like all his other promises.

2 Samuel 9-24

But the truth of the story is that David is not the final seed who is to come into the world. He is not the final Messiah. As great a king as he was, he was still a sinner, and thus only a type of the True King of Israel. The rest of 2 Samuel tells of his sin and demise. David was certainly *a* seed of the woman, gaining many victories over the seed of the serpent, but he still leaves us looking forward to the One Seed who will not be corrupted by sin, nor finally die like all sinners in the end.

Conclusion

Well, Ruth and 1st and 2nd Samuel truly comprise an exciting slice of the Old Testament. But, like everything else in the Old Testament they leave us longing for more. When will the head of the serpent be crushed? When will the One Seed of he woman, who will never sin nor die, be born? When will all of the world know the blessings of the LORD? Well, we'll just keep studying further, and we'll keep looking for the Savior.

[TAKE QUESTIONS]

[PRAY]