

Title: **Truth and Consequences (Part 3)**

Passage: **Ruth 4:9-12**

Theme: **Trusting God in doing right regardless of the consequences**

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{Read Passage}

IV. Act Four: The Royal Line with Hope Restored (4:1-17)

1 of t/things we've been emphasizing is that this book is structured along t/lines of a 4 act drama.

For t/benefit of our mind's eye you could even picture it as a play – a play of which chapt. 4 is t/final Act.

Mindful of course that that this isn't just any story – it's a true historic story that is t/very WOG – part of t/OT canon.

W/that in mind I want to borrow a line from t/scene of a diff. story – 1 that isn't part of Sacred Scripture – but is part of our modern western heritage (I'm sure it's familiar to all):

'Tis but thy name that is my enemy;
Thou art thyself though, not a Montague.
What's Montague? it is nor hand, nor foot,
Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part
Belonging to a man. O! be some other name:
What's in a name? that which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet;
[Shakespeare]

What's in a name? that which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet;

What's in a name? A name can mean a lot – if you're a Hatfield or a

McCoy, for example (or – if you're name is Montague or Capulet for that matter).

If you lived in late 17th c. Colonial America and your last name was Arnold no one would think twice. But if you carried that name 100 yrs later & your first name happened to be “Benedict” you might want to see a lawyer to have it changed (or move to England as t/real B.A. did in 1791).

Today there are some 300 million people in t/US.
At least 6 have t/name B.A.

I've never met one – but there are also a few dozen men walking around t/United States named Adolf Hitler.

There are many who carry t/name Charles Manson (in addition to t/real one who resides at 900 Quebec Ave. Corcoran, CA 93212 – t/address of a California State Prison).

Speaking of names, Mr. Manson's middle name is Luther (can't quite get my mind around that one).

According to 1 public records search there are 3 men in t/US named John Wilkes Booth (all in the south)

Believe it or not, there are a couple dozen Genghis Khan's.

There are more Al Capone's than Tony Bartolucci's.

May wonder what why would parents give their children such names? (not Tony Bartolucci – you'll have to ask my mom&dad about that – but John Wilkes Booth or Genghis Khan).

T/1 I've always wondered about = mother who named t/Calebite of 1 Sam. 25 – Nabol – fool.

May wonder 'What does all this talk about names have to do w/BOR?'

In this passage alone (vv. 1-12) 10 diff. names are mentioned: Boaz/ Naomi/Elimelech/Ruth/Chilion/Mahlon/Rachel/Leah/Perez/Tamar.

In v. 10 ==> “I have acquired Ruth . . . to be my wife in order to raise up the name of the deceased (Mahlon) on his inheritance, so that the name of the deceased will not be cut off . . .”

v. 11 ==> Part of t/blessing pronounced upon Boaz is that his name be remembered. Name of Boaz has been remembered as one of integrity.

Word association game (names)

Judas; Demas; Jezebel; Esau; Pilate
Caligula; Nero; Eichmann; Himmler; Vlad

Moses; Sarah; Rachel; Job; Mary; John; Paul; Timothy; Peter
John Wesley; George Whitfield; Mary Slessor; Charles Spurgeon;
George Mueller; Elisabeth Elliot.

Martin Luther; John Calvin;

Speaking of Luther and Calvin – 2 names that are both respected and vilified. I read recently that many of t/irreligious in t/city of Geneva where JC lived named their dogs “Calvin” out of disdain for him.

Name can stand for good or bad. Integrity or dishonesty.

Think of different people you know. Think about those you like, admire? Names (how do you feel). Think about those you don't respect, don't admire (how do you feel).

How do others feel when they think of your name? What do you represent?

There's one name in our story that isn't given: nearer redeemer. In

t/Hebrew text he's referred to as "so and so" in v. 1 ("friend").

פְּלֹנִי אֶלְמֹנִי = "so and so" - an example of a Heb. word play known as "farrago" (a confused mixture; jumble). In this case I would take it as somewhat derogatory ("friend" may be overstating the case).

Similar to our "no name". In that sense t/"so and so" of this passage stands opposite of t/name Boaz.

What we see in this chart.

IV. Act Four: The Royal Line with Hope Restored (4:1-17)

A. Scene One: Resolving Legal Matters (vv. 1-12)

As far as how all this unfolds we note the integrity of t/man named "Boaz." As we've said, he's t/kind of man that will do what's right and trust God with the conseq.

About ==>

1. Trusting in a Sovereign Loving God

Think about that a moment . . .

Trust (another word for "faith"). We are to **walk by faith, not by sight.** (2 Cor. 5:7).

Hebrews 11:6 **And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.**

This is about faith, or trust. Biblical faith always has an object & that object is t/Triune God of t/B. That's what makes faith objectively true.

"Sovereign Loving God"

He's sovereign. He controls all things.

He's loving. He has my best in mind acc. to his will and purpose.
He's God. What more needs to be said than that?

As a sov. loving God he controls His creation which includes ==>
The hearts of men.

That is a truth that is woven into t/very fabric of Boaz' being.
He's going to serve & glorify God by doing what's right . . . regardless.

“Truth and Consequences.” “Give me truth – I serve a God of truth.
He can and will take care of t/circum.”

No doubt that Boaz wants to marry Ruth.

No doubt she wants to marry him.

No doubt that Naomi wants to see this all work out.

As far as they were all concerned, this seemed like t/best thing, t/most
honorable thing.

There's a detour in t/road. A sign that says, “Go this way.” I could go
around t/detour sign so that I make what I want happen. For B. that
would be taking R. as his wife w/o bothering to check w/the nearer
kinsman. But that sign is there for a reason. God put it there. Do I trust
Him and follow t/sign, or use my own wisdom by ignoring it?

That's a matter of trust.

The past few weeks we've been looking at principles that relate to this
mandate that we trust God and do right.

vv. 1-2 ==>

a. God is Glorified When We Follow Thru and Follow the Rules

(1-2) T/idea: Follow Thru and Follow t/Rules

(1) Boaz said he'd take care of things and he does

He follows thru on his words in 3:13 where he tells Ruth ==>

“Remain this night, and when morning comes, if he will redeem you, good; let him redeem you. But if he does not wish to redeem you, then I will redeem you, as the LORD lives.

Now Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there,

Boaz didn't delay. First thing in the morning Ruth went home and he went to t/town gate.

He did what God would have him do – search out t/closer relative to offer him what was rightly His – by t/rules – Ruth.

b. God is Glorified When We Are People of Integrity (3-4)

(1) Everything is open and above-board

No “behind the scenes” deals going on. Boaz is up front. He has witnesses. He's not doing an end-around t/Law. T/elders are there. They are all at t/town gate. Others are watching. He has t/other party in t/legal matter right there in t/flesh! This is a court-room setting.

(a) This is all about integrity

Integrity is another word for “honesty” – “consistency” – “X likeness.”

(2) Boaz makes his announcement before them all:

Then he said to the closest relative, “Naomi, who has come back

from the land of Moab, has to sell the piece of land which belonged to our brother Elimelech.

“So I thought to inform you, saying, ‘Buy it before those who are sitting here, and before the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it; but if not, tell me that I may know; for there is no one but you to redeem it, and I am after you.’”

(b) The field / land is a new development in the story

“Naomi, who has come back from the land of Moab, has to sell the piece of land which belonged to our brother Elimelech.

i. How is it that Naomi has the rights to her husband's land?

T/Law codes of t/OT don't seem to indicate that a widow could inherit her husband's property after his death.

(i) True generally

2 OT passages (other than this one) that address t/issue: Dt. 21/Nu. 27.

The normal practice was that when a man died, his sons would inherit his estate so that it would remain within the family (Deut 21:15-17).

If t/man had no sons, then his daughters would inherit (Num 27:7-8).

But – in order to keep t/inheritance w/i t/family they had to marry w/i the tribe of their father (Num 36:6).

(ii) How did Naomi come to possess land?

After her husband died lawful possession would have gone to her 2 sons. Neither M. or Chi. had children, so after they died Naomi gained control.

This land wasn't in M. it was in Beth. For 10 years it lie dormant.

Legally it would have reverted to t/nearest relative of Elimelech. IOW – he had right of redemption. But he had no way of knowing about it.

It may be that a widow was permitted to retain t/land so long as she was living. IOW – N. had t/rights to it as long as she lived. She could use it, farm it, perhaps even lease it to another – But she could not sell it to anyone outside of t/family if E.

(c) Why does Boaz bring up the land at this point but not Ruth?

Strategic reason.

a. God is Glorified When We Follow Through and Follow the Rules (1-2) Boaz follows through and follows the laws and customs of Israel

b. God is Glorified When We Are People of Integrity (3-4)
Boaz is upfront in his dealings. Everything's out in the open.

c. God is Glorified When We Are People of Wisdom (5)

That God is in control, that He will work out His will, that we need to be truthful and upfront doesn't mean we aren't to prayerfully strategize

There is something to be said for being “shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves.”

(1) You don't negotiate a deal without using wisdom

(a) The Fact is, Boaz has a trump card

And it wasn't the land. In shrewd fashion, Boaz the businessman is using the land as bait. Ruth is trump.

This is all above-board and honest. But it is a strategy.

(2) Let's go back to our scene

It's morning. We're at t/town gate, a busy place. People are streaming past, most of them on their way to work. Boaz has called t/nearer relative aside. He's also called together 10 of t/town elders. They are all sitting down. Other people, seeing that something significant is going to take place, have gathered to watch.

In front of them all, Boaz turns to the nearest relative and says ==>
**“Naomi, who has come back from the land of Moab, has to sell the piece of land which belonged to our brother Elimelech.
“So I thought to inform you (lit. in the Heb. “I thought I would uncover your ear”), saying, ‘Buy it before those who are sitting here, and before the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it; but if not, tell me that I may know; for there is no one but you to redeem it, and I am after you.’”**

And he said, “I will redeem it.”

Boaz is doing the right thing and it looks like it's going to backfire.

But he's trusting in a sov. God who controls all things even t/decisions of men.

Boaz knows that ==>

a. God is Glorified When We Follow Through and Follow the Rules

b. God is Glorified When We Are People of Integrity (3-4)

Also ==>

c. God is Glorified When We Are People of Wisdom (5)

Just as we are about to say, *"No! Don't let this other guy take Ruth!"*

Boaz drops t/trump card in v. 5 ==>

Then Boaz said, “On the day you buy the field from the hand of

Naomi, you must also acquire Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of the deceased,

Boaz is being shrewd (in this case it's an application of wisdom). But he's not acting unethically – he's still operating with honesty & integ.

You can picture t/nearer relative thinking to himself,
“Gee I knew there was a catch.”

Boaz gives t/reason in t/second half of v. 5 ==>

“in order to raise up the name of the deceased on his inheritance.”

(3) Boaz is following the Law as outlined in Deut. 25

Purpose: that the deceased has a name that is not blotted out of Israel
We see this in Deut. 25:5-10 {summarize}

25:5–10 5 “When brothers live together and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the deceased shall not be married outside the family to a strange man. Her husband’s brother shall go in to her and take her to himself as wife and perform the duty of a husband’s brother to her. 6 “It shall be that the firstborn whom she bears shall assume the name of his dead brother, so that his name will not be blotted out from Israel.

Verse 7 . . . (Verses 7-10 - The Ceremony of Refusal)

7 “But if the man does not desire to take his brother’s wife, then his brother’s wife shall go up to the gate to the elders and say, ‘My husband’s brother refuses to establish a name for his brother in Israel; he is not willing to perform the duty of a husband’s brother to me.’ 8 “Then the elders of his city shall summon him and speak to him. And if he persists and says, ‘I do not desire to take her,’ 9 then his brother’s

wife shall come to him in the sight of the elders, and pull his sandal off his foot and spit in his face; and she shall declare, 'Thus it is done to the man who does not build up his brother's house.' 10 "In Israel his name shall be called, 'The house of him whose sandal is removed.'

If the brother refuses, his scorn indicates that he has no further claim on his dead brother's estate.

This is the guideline that Boaz is following in this first scene of Act 4. But there are some differences which would indicate that the Law in Dt. was a general guideline & that there may be circumstances (like those of N. & R.) that are handled a little differently.

Ruth is a Moabite. She's not present at the gate with Boaz and the other man. We also have a woman, the daughter-in-law of Elimelech & property belonging to Elimelech. Person and property.

This suggests that the dead man's name (Eli.) is to be revived in both redeeming his property & raising a male heir. N. has the property, R. is the widow who could give birth to a male heir. {summarize}

d. God is Glorified When We Trust Him Regardless of the Consequences (6-8)

What we've been looking at all along. Trust. Do the right thing. Concern yourself with that & trust God to take care of the rest His way.

Psa. 37:3 **Trust in the LORD and do good;**

19th c. pastor and evangelist D.L. Moody once said ==>

Trust in yourself, and you are doomed to disappointment; trust in your friends, and they will die and leave you; trust in money, and you may

have it taken from you; trust in reputation, and some slanderous tongue may blast it; but trust in God, and you are never to be confounded in time or eternity.

Moment of decision - ==>

And the closest relative said, “I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I jeopardize my own inheritance.

(1) Why does he change his mind at this point?

Some think that he's being selfish. Sure he was willing to redeem the property with the assumption that it would be his to keep since Naomi had no heirs and was past child-bearing years.

W/Ruth came t/possibility that she would give birth to a son who would then become t/eventual heir to t/land in t/year of Jubilee.

Every 50th yr in Israel = A YOJ – time of freedom and joy.

Land and people were to be set apart:

- (1) The land and t/people were to rest.
- (2) Israelite slaves were freed.
- (3) All land that had changed hands reverted back to the orig. owner.

An heir born through Ruth would inherit t/land & likely part of t/man's existing estate which is why he says ==>

“I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I jeopardize my own inheritance.”

He repeats ==>

Redeem it for yourself; you may have my right of redemption, for I cannot redeem it.”

So the closest relative said to Boaz, “Buy it for yourself.” And he removed his sandal.

The deal is sealed. What follows is an announcement and a blessing.

5th / last point ==>

e. God is Glorified When Others See and Praise Him (9-12)

That follows, doesn't it? Summation of all living for the bel. in JC. Not about us // our way // desires // our name. God being glorified. He's not glorified thru manipulation; dishonest; self-centeredness.

If Boaz had an evil twin you might imagine how he would have behaved.

He may have taken advantage of Ruth when she presented herself to him in t/night (chapter 3). He wouldn't have cared for her reputation or spiritual state before God. He wouldn't have followed through on his promise to take care of business first thing – or if he did it would be only for selfish gain. He wouldn't have been upfront about things. He may have done what he could to gain Ruth by ignoring what was right and proper before God or by trying to gain t/upper hand through misrepresenting t/facts.

CH is filled w/professed Xns who are like that. Many call them “carnal Xns” – truth is they're not carnal they're unconverted.

It is to t/detriment of X that those who profess Him are so unlike Him. Woodrow Wilson once told a story of being in a barbershop one time. He says, "I was sitting in a barber chair when I became aware that a powerful personality had entered the room. A man had come quietly in upon the same errand as myself to have his hair cut and sat in the chair

next to me. Every word the man uttered, though it was not in the least didactic, showed a personal interest in the man who was serving him. And before I got through with what was being done to me I was aware I had attended an evangelistic service, because Mr. D.L. Moody was in that chair. I purposely lingered in the room after he had left and noted the singular affect that his visit had brought upon the barber shop. They talked in undertones. They did not know his name, but they knew something had elevated their thoughts, and I felt that I left that place as I should have left a place of worship." [cited in MacArthur, Matthew 1-7, 236]

e. God is Glorified When Others See and Praise Him (9-12)

(1) Boaz Makes His Announcement

Then Boaz said to the elders and all the people, “You are witnesses today that I have bought from the hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and Mahlon.

Most translations give t/impression that Boaz purchased t/estate of Elimelech. Prob. not t/case. A transfer of redemption rights apart from a purchase as we would understand it. More like our laws of inheritance. If t/last parent dies leaving an estate behind, the siblings don't purchase t/estate they legally transfer rights to it.

Same w/Ruth. Boaz isn't buying Ruth ==>

“Moreover, I have acquired Ruth the Moabite, (full name requisite for this legal setting) the widow of Mahlon, to be my wife in order to raise up the name of the deceased on his inheritance, Naomi – Elimelech - Chilion – Mahlon – Ruth. Who's missing? (Orpah) ==> “So and So”

so that the name of the deceased may not be cut off from his brothers or from the court of his birth place;

“from his brothers” = His family line. As I've said before, my family line will end w/me. (my dad had no brothers, I'm an only child, and my only child is a girl). Not a big deal to us. Was a big deal then.

“from the court of his birthplace” (Beth.) “court” – Boaz intends that t/family of Elimelech/Mahlon will cont. to have representation in the gathering of the town council.

In the end Mr. So-and-So will disappear without a name, but the security of Mahlon's and Elimelech's names is hereby guarded. [Daniel Block, *Judges, Ruth*. The New American Commentary (721). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers]

Bookends ==>

you are witnesses today.”

(2) Threefold blessing

e. God is Glorified When Others See and Praise Him (9-12)

And all the people who were in the court, and the elders, said, “We are witnesses.

(1) First Part of the Blessing (v. 11a)

May the LORD make the woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah, both of whom built the house of Israel;

(2) Second Part (11b)

and may you achieve wealth in Ephrathah and become famous in Bethlehem.

(3) Third Aspect of this three-fold blessing (v. 12)

“Moreover, may your house be like the house of Perez whom Tamar bore to Judah, through the offspring which the LORD will give you by this young woman.”

(1) First Part of the Blessing (v. 11a)

May the LORD make the woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah, both of whom built the house of Israel;

(a) Rachel

R. daughter of Laban whom t/OT Patriarch Jacob served for 14 years in order to take her as his wife.

She was the mother of Joseph who died in giving birth to Benjamin

(b) Leah

Rachel's sister and t/eldest daughter of Laban. She became t/wife of Jacob thru Laban's deception (Gen. 29). Leah gave birth to 6 sons and a daughter.

i. Taken together

Rachel and Leah (along with their surrogate handmaids, Zilpah & Bilhah) formed t/genealogical foundation for the 12 tribes of Israel.

May the LORD make the woman who is coming into your home (as in a Jewish marriage ceremony) like Rachel and Leah, both of whom built the house of Israel;

ii. Significance beyond this fact alone

Remember, from all we can see to this point, Ruth is barren.

Back in chap. 1, we were told that she had been married 10 yrs & yet there were no children. So even now the suspense is not over. But the cloud over the head of Ruth and Boaz is big with mercy and, in keeping w/this prayer of t/elders, will break w/great blessing upon their heads.

(i) This blessing of worship is a prayer & a prophetic pronouncement

Rachel was also barren for many years, as was Leah. Sov. God who opened and shut their wombs.

"[God] opened [Leah's] womb, but Rachel was barren" (Genesis 29:31). Then "Leah saw that she had ceased bearing children" (Genesis 30:9). "God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her and opened her womb" (Genesis 30:22)."

Therefore, the prayer that Ruth be like Rachel and Leah was a plea not only that God would open Ruth's womb, but also that Ruth would take her place in the great line of Israel leading to the Messiah. This was the ultimate significance of their prayer that Boaz, through his marriage to Ruth, would be "renowned in Bethlehem." That is in fact where the greatest of all Ruth's sons would be born. [Piper, 103-04]

Prophetic ==>

(3) Third Aspect of this three-fold blessing (v. 12)

"Moreover, may your house be like the house of Perez whom Tamar bore to Judah, through the offspring which the LORD will give you by this young woman." Faith here; a recog. that God works w/a purpose.

(2) Second Part (11b)

and may you achieve wealth in Ephrathah and become famous in Bethlehem.

Boaz certainly did become famous in Bethlehem. BOR and his place in t/genealogical line of X are testimony to that fact.

What is puzzling is the first part ==>

may you achieve wealth in Ephrathah

Note t/way different versions translate this word:

ESV: “act worthily”

NASB: “achieve wealth”

NIV: “have standing”

“Wealth” prob. isn't the meaning here. Boaz was relatively 'wealthy' as far as that goes.

“Ephrathah” = “Bethlehem” so why the double use?

May be that this 2nd part of t/three-fold blessing is saying t/same thing as t/first and third parts.

One of these things is not like the others,
One of these things just doesn't belong,
Can you tell which thing is not like the others
By the time I finish my song?

EPHRATAH — fruitful.

Word translated “wealth” might also carry that same idea.

{summarize}

(3) Third Aspect of this three-fold blessing (v. 12)

“Moreover, may your house be like the house of Perez whom Tamar bore to Judah ...”

The mother of Perez was Tamar / father Judah.

(a) Several points t/o the book of Ruth it seems that the author is thinking about Genesis 38 (turn there)

6 Now Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, and her name was Tamar. 7 But Er, Judah's firstborn, was evil in the sight of the LORD, so the LORD took his life. 8 Then Judah said to Onan, "Go in to your brother's wife, and perform your duty as a brother-in-law to her, and raise up offspring for your brother." 9 Onan knew that the offspring would not be his; so when he went in to his brother's wife, he wasted his seed on the ground in order not to give offspring to his brother. 10 But what he did was displeasing in the sight of the LORD; so He took his life also. 11 Then Judah said to his daughter-in-law Tamar, "Remain a widow in your father's house until my son Shelah grows up"; for he thought, "I am afraid that he too may die like his brothers." So Tamar went and lived in her father's house. 12 Now after a considerable time Shua's daughter, the wife of Judah, died; and when the time of mourning was ended, Judah went up to his sheepshearers at Timnah, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite. 13 It was told to Tamar, "Behold, your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep." 14 So she removed her widow's garments and covered herself with a veil, and wrapped herself, and sat in the gateway of Enaim, which is on the road to Timnah; for she saw that Shelah had grown up, and she had not been given to him as a wife. 15 When Judah saw her, he thought she was a harlot, for she had covered her face. 16 So he turned aside to her by the road, and said, "Here now, let me come in to you"; for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law. And she said, "What will you give me, that you may come in to me?" 17 He said, therefore, "I will send you a young goat from the flock." She said, moreover, "Will you give a pledge until you send it?" 18 He said, "What pledge shall I give you?" And she said, "Your seal and your cord, and your staff that is in your hand." So he gave them to her and went in to her, and she conceived by him. 19 Then she arose and

departed, and removed her veil and put on her widow's garments. 20 When Judah sent the young goat by his friend the Adullamite, to receive the pledge from the woman's hand, he did not find her. 21 He asked the men of her place, saying, "Where is the temple prostitute who was by the road at Enaim?" But they said, "There has been no temple prostitute here." 22 So he returned to Judah, and said, "I did not find her; and furthermore, the men of the place said, 'There has been no temple prostitute here.' " 23 Then Judah said, "Let her keep them, otherwise we will become a laughingstock. After all, I sent this young goat, but you did not find her." 24 Now it was about three months later that Judah was informed, "Your daughter-in-law Tamar has played the harlot, and behold, she is also with child by harlotry." Then Judah said, "Bring her out and let her be burned!" 25 It was while she was being brought out that she sent to her father-in-law, saying, "I am with child by the man to whom these things belong." And she said, "Please examine and see, whose signet ring and cords and staff are these?" 26 Judah recognized them, and said, "She is more righteous than I, inasmuch as I did not give her to my son Shelah." And he did not have relations with her again. 27 It came about at the time she was giving birth, that behold, there were twins in her womb. 28 Moreover, it took place while she was giving birth, one put out a hand, and the midwife took and tied a scarlet thread on his hand, saying, "This one came out first." 29 But it came about as he drew back his hand, that behold, his brother came out. Then she said, "What a breach you have made for yourself!" So he was named Perez. Perez is mentioned here because he was the ancestor of Boaz's clan living in Bethlehem. Perez – v. 18.

This prayer isn't about t/lack of integrity evid. by Tamar and Judah. It's about t/common levirate nature of their unions.

Listen to how one writer summarizes ==>

Through Tamar, whose husband had died childless, Judah had fathered Perez, who became the ancestor of a host of clans, including the clan of Boaz. Now the witnesses prayed that through this widow, Ruth, Boaz may father a son and live on through his numerous progeny, even as Judah lives on in his descendants. There is no mention of the men's characters either. However, considering the rabbinic hermeneutical principle of "from greater to lesser," the reader cannot help but think that if Yahweh had given immoral Judah a double blessing in the birth of twins and if Judah flourished through Perez, how much brighter are the prospects for Boaz and Ruth. These two have been presented from beginning to end as persons with the highest ethical standards; they embody covenant *hesed*. But the witnesses did not appeal to their characters. Recognizing Yahweh as the source of blessing and family, they assumed that Boaz's having offspring through Ruth depended on the divine gift.

Little did those who uttered these words realize how prophetic the words would be. Ten of them were witnesses to this event because they had been summoned; the rest had simply gathered out of curiosity over what was happening in the gate. Now, inspired by the Spirit of God, they joined in a spontaneous and unanimous pronouncement of blessing upon Boaz. They had come to witness, but they left prophesying. Had they been around long enough to see the fulfillment of their prayer, they would have observed the establishment of a name and a house far greater than Perez, the house of King David, a name commemorated to this day in the flag of the state of Israel. [Block, D. I. (1999).

Vol. 6: Judges, Ruth. The New American Commentary (723–724). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers]

We began by talking about "names" and how that connects . . . There is a name above all others: Acts 4:12 ==> "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."