

## “The Book of Ruth” (Route 66)

*Pastor Kevin Fitzgerald*

All right... We are studying the Book of **RUTH**, this morning... So, let’s turn in our Bibles **TO**... The Book of **JUDGES**... The VERY **LAST** CHAPTER, Chapter 21...

Idolatry... Oppression... Conspiracy... Treachery... Apostasy... Mutilation...

That’s not the **BY-LINE** for the latest NETFLIX SERIES... I’m simply recounting some of the contents of the Book of Judges where we were **LAST** week...

This is a 400-year PERIOD of history... that takes place BETWEEN the death of Joshua... and the RISE of the **KINGS**... And it’s SUMMED-UP BEST in the VERY LAST VERSE OF the book...

Chapter 21, Verse 25 reads: *“In those days, there was no king in Israel... Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”* – it was a BRUTAL, CORRUPT, PERVERSE, DARK, CHAOTIC time... BUT...

I START here is because... The VERY **NEXT** VERSE of the Bible—Ruth Chapter 1—**OPENS** with: *“it came to pass, in the days when the judges ruled...”*

So, where we are this morning—the BOOK OF RUTH—can **TRULY** be thought of as a type of APPENDIX to the Book of Judges...

It’s a STORY **SET within** a BLEAK, DARK TIME... but—as we said LAST week—it’s the BLACK BACKGROUND of JUDGES... that CAUSES the events of RUTH to shine like A **DIAMOND**...

Dr. Graham Scroggie wrote: *“After the Book of Judges, Ruth is like a lovely lily floating calmly in a stagnant pool. Instead of **un**-faithfulness, is loyalty, instead of immorality, is purity. Instead of battlefields; are harvest fields, and instead of the warrior’s shout is the harvester’s song.”*

This is considered a MASTERPIECE of literature... Johann Wolfgang Goethe, the German writer and poet called Ruth: *“the loveliest complete work on a small scale.”*

Another author wrote: *“This poignant, fascinating, emotionally gripping, and historically significant narrative might be called **the Crown Jewel of the Old Testament.**”*

It’s **UN-LIKE** any of the OTHER BOOKS we have studied so far... IN THAT, the Book of Ruth is NOT necessarily tracing the OVER-ARCHING HISTORY of ISRAEL... Now... it has HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (which, we’ll talk about later)...

But—GENERALLY SPEAKING—this Book PUSHES-IN... It swaps the WIDE-ANGLE LENS for a ZOOM LENS, and focuses-in to tell **ONE PARTICULAR ACCOUNT**...

The books we have looked at **BEFORE** this have **CONTAINED** PERSONAL STORIES... But none of them were **devoted** to TELLING a story as PERSONAL as the Book of Ruth...

When we **LEFT** the Pentateuch – the first FIVE books of the Bible – Joshua brought us into the next **OVERALL** section of scripture, known as “*The Historical Books.*”

And THIS SECTION is broken-into TWO CATEGORIES... The books of Joshua... Judges... 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel... and 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Kings... belong to “*The FORMER PROPHETS.*”

But the books of 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles... Ezra... Nehemiah... Esther... Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Lamentations, Daniel **AND RUTH** ... belong to a group known as the “*Ketuvim,*” or “*The Writings.*”

Ruth is **ALSO** one of the “*Festal Scrolls.*” – These are 5 SCROLLS that are **PUBLICLY READ** in conjunction with five Jewish festivals....

Ans since the PRIMARY SETTING OF Ruth (as we’ll see) is the Harvest, this scroll is read at the Feast of Pentecost, when the **firstfruits of the harvest** were presented...(sometime between May and June... So, our timing is pretty good here)...

Ruth is **ALSO** one of only TWO books in the entire Bible to bear the name of a woman, the other being **ESTHER**...

What’s INTERESTING is – when you compare the two books... ESTHER is the story of a JEWISH woman who is taken to live among the Gentiles... But RUTH is the story of a GENTILE – a Moabite – who comes to live among the Jews...

Now, with regard to the authorship... We aren’t 100% sure who wrote the Book of Ruth... LIKE Judges, the Talmud ascribes it was Samuel... (which is certainly possible)...

As for a DATE—it mentions DAVID in Chapter 4... so it could **NOT** have been written **MUCH EARLIER** than 1000 B.C.

So, what I want to do this morning is provide a quick **SUMMARY** of the Book of Ruth... And, we’re gonna have to MOVE FAST... But then, we’ll make some APPLICATION...

Ruth opens with a man named Elimelech—with his wife Naomi and their two sons—LEAVING the land of Israel – specifically Bethlehem – and going to Moab... Which—incidentally—was **BACK** ON the **OTHER SIDE** of the Jordan River... David Guzik writes:

*“This was a definite departure from the Promised Land, and a return to the wilderness from which God had delivered Israel... [Elimelech] clearly [took] steps in the wrong direction.”*

By the way, his two sons are named **Mahlon and Chilion**... Mahlon means “**SICK**”... Chilion means “**TIRED.**” – So here’s Elimelech... travelling OUTSIDE of God’s ESTABLISHED BORDERS... and he’s got SICK and TIRED with him!

That's always how it FEELS when we're outside of God's will!

Now—not long after their arrival—**Elimelech dies**... his sons marry two Moabite women – Orpah and RUTH. And then, **HIS SONS DIE**... leaving Naomi—his wife—and her two daughters-in-law on their own...

Now, to be a CHILDLESS WIDOW in this time was NOT GOOD... You would be amongst the lowest, and most socially disadvantaged classes in the world...

So, they're in a DESPERATE SITUATION... And Naomi decides to return to Israel... Orpah stays in Moab. But RUTH decides to GO **BACK** WITH Naomi BACK to Israel...

In Chapter 1, Verse 16—a very FAMOUS passage of scripture—Ruth SAYS to Naomi:  
*“Entreat me not to leave you, [Or to] turn back from following after you; For wherever you go, I will go; And wherever you lodge, I will lodge; Your people [shall be] my people, And your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, and there will I be buried. The LORD do so to me, and more also, If [anything but] death parts you and me.”*

Now... we often hear these words TODAY spoken in the context of a WEDDING... when a man and a woman pledge their VOWS...

But—ORIGINALLY—these words were between a MOTHER-in-LAW and a DAUGHTER-in-LAW... So you KNOW God must be involved in this! (I'm kidding)...

Dr. Graham Scroggie writes about this passage: *“Ruth's declaration of love for Naomi is as eloquent a passage as can be found [anywhere] in the whole range of world literature.”*

So, once they're **BACK** IN BETHLEHEM... Ruth starts to gather bundles of wheat that have been dropped in the fields... of a man named Boaz...

This was essentially a “social assistance program” that was commanded in Leviticus 19... Farmers were NOT to completely harvest their fields.... They were to LEAVE SOME BEHIND... And—if they DROPPED any bundles of grain—they were NOT to pick it up...

Boaz was a **PROMINENT JEWISH MAN**, with a LOT OF WEALTH... and SUDDENLY the entire story SHIFTS from one of grief, sadness, and loss... to HOPE and REDEMPTION...

Jon Courson writes: *“The themes of the Book of Ruth are REDEMPTION, REVIVAL, and RESTORATION... This little love story shows how the Lord CLEARLY BREATHEs LIFE into a situation that [is] lifeless... [it] ministers the message of HOPE to [any] who feel HOPE-less.”*

Now—throughout the text—Boaz will be referred to as a “close relative” – or a “kinsman” – to Ruth... From the first time he's introduced, we read: **“There was a RELATIVE of Naomi's husband, a man of great wealth, of the family of Elimelech. His name was Boaz.”**

Leon Morris points-out that “*The exact expression ‘a mighty man of wealth’ is elsewhere translated ‘a mighty man of valour’ (e.g., Judges 11:1). We... get the [idea] of it by thinking of our word ‘knight.’*” – So, BOAZ is *truly* like Ruth’s KNIGHT in shining armour!

But, the word for “**relative**” in this passage is the Hebrew word “*goel*.” – We’ve talked about this **BEFORE** when we studied the Book of Job...

In ancient Israel, if a man DIED without having A **SON** to carry-on his name—it was the responsibility of his **NEAREST BROTHER** to take the deceased brother’s widow as wife, and give her a **SON**...

This was the “*practice of the levirate marriage*”... ESTABLISHED in Deuteronomy 25...

Now, the son would **NOT** be considered the son of the surviving brother... he would be counted as the son of the **deceased** brother. – And this was a way of PERPETUATING the DECEASED MAN’S FAMILY NAME...

But, the “*goel*”—the “*kinsman-redeemer*”—had OTHER specific roles, too...

- He could “buy back” a fellow Israelite out of slavery...
- He served as the “avenger of blood,” to make sure that the murderer of a family member was brought to justice...
- He could also buy back any family land that had been forfeited...

David Guzik writes: “*The ‘goel,’ the “kinsman-redeemer,” was responsible to safeguard the persons, property, and the posterity of a family.*”

So, in saying that Boaz was a “*goel*”... was **MORE** than saying he was an **OBSCURE RELATIVE**... he was a SPECIAL FAMILY REPRESENTATIVE—a **CHIEFTAIN** of the family.

This is why—in Chapter 2, at the end of Verse 19—when Ruth TELLS Naomi that she met BOAZ... Naomi **BLURTS-OUT**: “**This man [is] a relation of ours, one of our close relatives,**” or LITERALLY ‘*one of the goels!*’

She’s excited!!! – Because – unlike Ruth (who was **not** Jewish) – Naomi understood this “*law of the levirate marriage*,” and the role of the ‘*goel*.’

And so—as we come into Chapter 3—Naomi SUDDENLY starts WORKING to bring Boaz and Ruth together... BUT the “plot thickens”...

In Chapter 3, Verse 12, Boaz tells Ruth: “***It is true that I am a close relative***”—a GOEL—“***however... there IS [another] relative closer than I.***”

So, Boaz could not exercise his right as kinsman-redeemer unless the **CLOSER** kinsman-redeemer relinquishes **his** rights towards Ruth! – In Chapter 3, Verse 13, Boaz says to Ruth...

***“Stay this night, and in the morning it shall be [that] if he will perform the duty of a close relative for you--good; let him do it. But if he does not want to perform the duty for you, then I will perform the duty for you, [as] the LORD lives!”***

So, it’s really cool to see Boaz just TRUSTING THE LORD in all of this... And—eventually—Boaz **DOES**, indeed, fulfill the role of the GOEL in Ruth’s life, they get married and have a SON together... And that’s, really, the Book of Ruth “in a nutshell.”

One author writes: *“The Book of Ruth presents several grand themes, each of which merit exploration and elaboration.”* – But, in the interest of **TIME**, this morning...

There’s **3 MAIN THINGS** that I want to draw-out... One is **lessons that we can APPLY TO RELATIONSHIPS**... A SECOND is **the HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE of this Book**... And the third is **a PICTURE of JESUS that we see in Boaz**

Now, when it comes to **RELATIONSHIPS**—AGAIN, I’m gonna move FAST... But, there’s LOTS of little “nuggets” in here...

It’s been said: *“The Book of Ruth ennobles the beauty of commitment and friendship and underscores the [whole] values of family commitment.”*

In Chapter 1, both Ruth **AND** Orpah tell Naomi that: ***“we will return with you to [Israel].”*** – But then, Orpah BACKS-OUT of this promise... And, I think, **FROM** this...

We’re REMINDED not to make commitments lightly... One author writes: *“Don’t back out of a commitment you make to a friend, even if it means personal sacrifice. Practice loyalty!”*

RUTH, by comparison: *“is a supreme example one who prioritized personal relationships. She exemplifies loyalty, servanthood, diligence, and moral righteousness. Much grief [will] be avoided when we learn to relate to one another in [genuine, Biblical] love & understanding.”*

Now, when it comes to those who are **SINGLE**, David Guzik writes: *“We can’t say that Ruth and Boaz “dated”... They were not paired off as a couple... rather, they spent time together in the context of a group – the men & women who worked for Boaz.”* – He writes:

*“From God’s perspective, there is much about the “dating game” that works AGAINST forming healthy, lasting relationships. For many people, dating means the continual making & breaking of romantic relationships - patterns that teach us more about how to **end** a relationship than make them last. Additionally, “dating” is usually a superficial way to get to know someone. Each person in a dating relationship tends to put on a mask... Many women have been deceived into thinking a man is a good, nice man because he is nice on a date. But, often, he is nice because he wants something! A better gauge... is to see how [someone] acts... in a group setting - because sooner or later, that is how they are going to treat you. Over a period of harvests, Ruth and Boaz got to know each other pretty well - by seeing what kind of people the other was around a large group, not by dating in the way it is thought of today.”*

So—FIRST of all—the way God brought Ruth and Boaz together was **SOVEREIGN**... Neither of them was out there “looking” for someone... Chapter 2, Verse 3 says: “[Ruth] **gleaned in the field... AND SHE HAPPENED to come to the part of the field [belonging] to Boaz...**”

Now, I’m SURE that’s how it seemed to her! – But Ruth came to that field because God **GUIDED** her...

SECOND... Boaz **TOOK NOTICE OF** Ruth... Verse 5 says: “**Boaz said to his servant who was in charge of the reapers, ‘Whose young woman is this?’**”

Boaz **ALSO LOOKED OUT FOR RUTH’S BEST INTERESTS**... In Verse 8, he tells her: “**Do not go... glean in another field... stay close by my young women. [Let] your eyes [be] on the field which they reap, and go after them. I [have] commanded the young men not to touch you... When you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink from what the young men have drawn.**”

He also **ENCOURAGED** Ruth... In Verse 11: “**Boaz said to [Ruth], ‘It has been... reported to me, all that you have done for your mother-in-law... and [how] you have left your father and... mother and the land of your birth, and have come to a people whom you did not know before. The LORD repay your work, and a full reward be given you by the LORD.’**”

And Ruth **SAYS**, “**Let me find favor in your sight, my lord; for you have comforted me, and have spoken kindly**”—LITERALLY “*to the heart of.*” – “**You have spoken to the heart of your maidservant...**”

Boaz also **INCLUDED** Ruth... In Verse 14: “**Boaz said to her at mealtime, ‘Come... and eat of the bread, and dip your piece of bread in the vinegar.’ So she sat beside the reapers, and he passed parched [grain] to her; and she ate...**”

Boaz also **BLESSED RUTH WITHOUT RUTH KNOWING ABOUT IT**... Verse 15 says: “**When [Ruth] rose-up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, ‘Let her glean... and do not reproach her. [And] let [grain] from the bundles fall purposely for her; leave [it] that she may glean, and do not rebuke her.’**”

Also... in Verse 10 of Chapter 3, Boaz says to Ruth: “**Blessed are you of the Lord, my daughter! For you did not go after young men...**” – This SEEMS to imply that there MIGHT have been some sort of an AGE—GAP between Ruth and Boaz.

But, it **DOES** show something wonderful about Boaz. Boaz had the right to “force” himself on Ruth as her goel, but he didn’t. Boaz DIDN’T just say: “*There’s a woman I want, and I can have her by right.*” – Boaz was kind enough to not act as *goel* towards Ruth unless she desired it.

I think this **ALSO** shows something **great** about Ruth: Ruth based her attraction to Boaz MORE on respect... than IMAGE or APPEARANCE...

And—on that note (hopefully, without OFFENDING ANYONE)—listen to how Naomi ADVISES Ruth in going to meet Boaz... In Chapter 3, Verse 3, she says: **“Wash yourself and anoint yourself, put on your best garment... but do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking.”**

I’ll read this from a commentary, just so maybe you’re not offended at me: *“Naomi, in her advice to Ruth, showed a keen knowledge of male behavior. She instructed Ruth to make herself pretty and smelling good, and to leave Boaz alone while he ate.”* – No comment!

But I WILL say this... SINGLE PEOPLE... **THESE** are the KINDS OF TRAITS you WANT to **PRAY** FOR—and **FIND**—in a potential partner...

Now... not to leave all the **MARRIED COUPLES** out... Chapter 1, Verse 9... Naomi describes marriage as a place of rest... She says, ***“The Lord grant that you may find rest, EACH in the house of her husband.”***

In Chapter 3, Naomi encourages Ruth in the marriage of Boaz, and asks: ***“Shall I not seek security for you?”*** And the Hebrew word used for ‘security’ ... is the same word use for ‘rest.’

So, on THESE TWO occasions, Naomi uses THIS word to describe what a home should be – a place of **rest and security**... God intends that marriage be a place—and source—of rest, peace, refreshment, and security in our lives...

So, as I say... there’s **LOTS** that we can learn about RELATIONSHIPS in the Book of Ruth... But Ruth ALSO has tremendous **HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE**:

If you look in Chapter 4... By the end of this Book, Ruth **DOES** marry Boaz, and—together—they have a son who—about half-way through Verse 17, of Chapter 4—is named **“Obed.”**

Then, we read: ***“He is the father of Jesse...”*** – WATCH THIS – ***“the father of David.”***

The book then **CLOSES** with a genealogy... Verse 18 says: ***“This [is] the genealogy of Perez,”*** – According to Genesis 46, Perez was one of the sons of Judah...

***“Perez begot Hezron; Hezron begot Ram, and Ram begot Amminadab; Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon; Salmon begot Boaz, and Boaz begot Obed; Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David.”***

Ruth and Boaz are the **great** grand-parents of David, who becomes KING over Israel...

One author writes: *“[This] concluding genealogy would’ve secured a link with the patriarchs—thus giving an answer to all in Israel who desired their king’s family background.”* – But, it’s even MORE important than that...

Because **FROM** David comes Jesus... which means Jesus DESCENDS from JUDAH... Thus FULFILLING THE PROPHECY that Jesus is the *“Lion of the tribe of Judah.”*

So, that same author writes: *“Here is... a record of the genealogy of David, the king of Israel appointed by God to sire the line leading to the **Messiah’s** royal and endless rule.”*

**AND... AND** Remember where the Book of Ruth takes place... Back in Chapter 1, Verse 22, it says: *“They came to **BETHLEHEM**... at the beginning of barley harvest.”*

If you’ve ever wondered HOW GOD ORCHESTRATED EVENTS for Jesus to **SPECIFICALLY** be born in Bethlehem... It’s because of what we read in Ruth!

King David’s roots are in Bethlehem... His great-grandparents lived there... So, when we CONNECT this with the genealogies of Jesus in the Gospels...

This is why Joseph and Mary had to go to **BETHLEHEM** to be registered in the census under Augustus... Ruth and Boaz are **WHY** Jesus was born in Bethlehem!

One historian writes: *“God’s hand is **ALL OVER** history. He works out His purpose, generation after generation. Limited as we are to a lifetime, each of us sees so little of what happens. A genealogy is a striking way of bringing before us the continuity of God’s purpose through the ages. The process of history is **NOT** arbitrary. There is a purpose. And the purpose... is the purpose of God. **From eternity, God planned to bring Ruth and Boaz together, and thus make Bethlehem His entry-point for the coming of Jesus as our Savior.**”*

**AND...** just about **EVERY COMMENTARY** mentions how the Book of Ruth introduces what we call the ‘UNIVERSAL SCOPE’ of the Gospel...

I realize—for US—that Ruth being a MOABITE is NOT that big of a deal... But—to a JEW—the GENTILES were a people ORIGINALLY OUTSIDE of His covenant with Israel...

And yet, through Ruth – a Gentile – God is going to bring the Messiah... Ruth is even MENTIONED BY NAME in Jesus’ genealogy in Matthew Chapter 1... This demonstrates that—even in His genealogy – Jesus **“identified”** with the Gentiles, as much as Jews...

In fact—in some ways—this **ANTICIPATES** what is talked about in Ephesians Chapter 2... That Jesus **“is our peace, who has made both one, and... broken down the middle wall of separation, [and] abolished in His flesh the enmity... so as to create in Himself one new man from the two...”**

The **“two”** that Paul is TALKING about there is JEWS and GENTILES... And by bringing a JEW and a GENTILE together (in the Book of Ruth), God **did**—INDEED—bring forth “one New Man”—JESUS—from the TWO...

Graham Scroggie writes: *“One of the designs of [the Book of Ruth] is to trace the descent of David...and to show that the Gentiles are not outside the scope of God’s redeeming love.”*

Another author adds: *“The inclusion of... Ruth, as a Gentile... in Israel’s kingly line, demonstrates God’s love as it reaches out to **ALL** the nations of the world. He not only*



***incorporates*** *Gentiles in His salvation, but employs non-Jewish people as instruments in His redemptive program. The message of Ruth does away with any tendencies towards ‘exclusivism,’ whether in Israel at THAT time, or found in any group’s traditions today.”*

Something ELSE that we see in Ruth is **ANOTHER, FASCINATING OLD TESTAMENT PICTURE OF JESUS...** in Boaz...

One author writes: *“Boaz presents one of the most dramatic figures anywhere in the Old Testament to foreshadow the... work of Jesus... He is a magnificent silhouette of the Master... centuries in advance.”*

Boaz’ name means “Strength.” – And—throughout the Book—Boaz is also pictured as: **The Lord of the Harvest** (2:3)... **A Giver of Bread** (3:15)... **A Giver of Rest** (3:1)... **A Man of Wealth** (2:1)... and **the Kinsman-Redeemer** (2:20)...

**AND THINK BACK** again to **THESE THINGS** related to the **KINSMAN-REDEEMER** and **COMPARE THEM to JESUS...** (I’m gonna BORROW these from David Guzik)...

The kinsman-redeemer had to be a family member; Jesus added humanity to His deity so that He could be “related” to us... our “brother,” our “kinsman”...

The kinsman-redeemer had the duty of buying family members out of slavery; Jesus redeemed us from slavery to sin and death...

The kinsman-redeemer had the duty of buying back land that had been forfeited; Jesus will redeem the earth that mankind “forfeited” to Satan...

Boaz was not motivated by self-interest, but out of love... Jesus is motivated in His redemption of us out of love...

Boaz took Ruth to be his bride... the CHURCH is called the “bride” of Christ (Ephesians 5:31-32; Revelation 21:9).

Boaz’s actions result in Ruth’s being “brought into” the blessings of Israel and the family of the Messiah... Through Jesus – WE, who were **once strangers and foreigners—have been made fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God...**

ALSO... Like Boaz, the Lord will not **FORCE HIMSELF** onto us as a Redeemer... But He **WANTS** to have a relationship, if WE do...

One author adds: *“Also, **Ruth’s** inability to do anything to change her situation typifies the human condition, and Boaz’s willingness to pay the complete price foreshadows Jesus’ payment for our salvation.”*

David Guzik concludes: *“This is why [Jesus] became a man. God could have sent an angel to save us, but the angel would not have been our kinsman. Jesus—WITHOUT the addition of humanity—would have saved us, but not been our kinsman. A great prophet or priest could be our kinsman, but SIN would disqualify him as our redeemer. Only Jesus, the eternal God who **BECAME LIKE US...** can be both the kinsman and the redeemer for mankind!”*

Spurgeon said: *“It was... the duty of the goel—the kinsman-redeemer—not only to redeem by price, but... to redeem by power... and [only Jesus] has wrought [both of these] for us...”*  
 You may remember—in Job 19:25—Job declared: ***“I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth...”***

This is considered... one of **THE** GREATEST OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETIC AFFIRMATIONS of a coming Redeemer... And, it’s the SAME HEBREW WORD: ‘Goel.’

Isaiah 54 **BEAUTIFULLY** describes the Lord as our “goel.” – It says: ***“Do not fear, for you will not be disgraced... you will not be put to shame . . . your [Kinsman] Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel . . . For the Lord has called you like a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit . . . with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on you, says the Lord, your [Kinsman] Redeemer.”***

And, this is EXACTLY what we see “played out” in the Book of Ruth... It’s a **GREAT BOOK OF THE BIBLE!**

*“The story is told... that—when Benjamin Franklin was Ambassador to France—he spoke to a group of an intellectuals who scoffed at his belief in the Bible. Unconvinced that these men were even familiar with the [Bible], Franklin said, ‘By the way, gentlemen... I have come across an intriguing love story that I would like to read for you tonight. I think you’ll find it interesting.’” – Franklin then proceeded to read a handwritten copy of the Book of Ruth. After he finished, his audience was ecstatic. ‘That is the greatest love story we’ve ever heard! You must publish it!’ Franklin said, ‘It is already published. It’s in the Bible.’ And the scoffers were silenced.”*

NEXT WEEK, we see ANOTHER important transition in the history of Israel... As we reach 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel, we LEAVE the period of the JUDGES... and come INTO the period of the KINGS, the MONARCHY...

So, READ AHEAD, and join us NEXT WEEK for 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel... That is our NEXT STOP along Route 66!