

Life Group Lesson

Hope-God Makes Sense out of Nonsense • Week of May 3

Throughout Scripture, we see examples of how God Makes Sense out of Nonsense. God can take the skeletons in our closet (and we all have them) and cause them to dance – our past failures, embarrassments, mistakes and regrets can be redeemed. This is Good News! God alone can turn around for good what the enemy meant for evil. He alone deserves our praise.

This week, the ONE YEAR BIBLE takes us to the story of Ruth. The book of Ruth is found between Judges and First Samuel. The life of this young (widowed) Moabite woman segues a pivotal juncture in Israel's history. Remember, that after Joshua's death "...another generation grew up who did not acknowledge the LORD or remember the mighty things He had done for Israel" (Judges 2:10). The new generation became disinterested in the God who brought them out of slavery into the Promised Land. Instead, they bought into the wild culture (pagan practices) of the people in the land who they had failed to drive out. God raised up 'judges' to deliver them during seasons of repentance. The story of Ruth takes place toward the end of the period of Judges and points to God's redemption through David.

Read Ruth 4:1-17

"Praise the LORD, who has now provided a redeemer for your family!" the women in the town said to Naomi (v14). God's love is for all people, even a young Moabite women.

1. God provided Boaz to redeem his relative Elimelech's family name and land, including taking care of survivors. Who was Boaz' mother, according to Matthew 1:3-6?

Matthew 1:3-6 mentions Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba – all in the lineage of Jesus the Messiah. You are not the only person with 'skeletons in your closet'. Our Lord Jesus knows all about human frailty, failures, and foul-ups. Have you allowed your past to keep you from being all-in for Jesus Christ? If so, give it to Him now. God makes sense out of nonsense. The model-Christian image that religion has presented through the years is false. It does not exist. The perfection Jesus speaks of in the Beatitudes is about choosing to love and forgive our enemies.

2. Read **Matthew 4:23-24 and 5:43-48**. Forgiving someone who offends you does not make sense, and yet, that is exactly what Jesus calls us to do. Who do you need to forgive and work things out? What skeleton in your closet needs God's breath of life?

Read Ezekiel 37:1-14

Sometimes like the exiled people of Judah, we may think "all hope is gone. Our nation is finished" (v11). But we must remember, God has the first word and God will have the last word. In faith read together (aloud) the prophets words in Ezekiel 37:14 –

"I will put my Spirit in you, and you will live again and return home to your own land. Then you will know that I, the LORD, have spoken, and I have done what I said. Yes, the LORD has spoken!"

God calls Ezekiel to speak a prophetic word to dry bones. The true essence of prophecy is to give a clear witness of Jesus. Do you know Jesus? Do you know what the Lord has said in His Word? As we read and study Scripture, it is not merely for the sake of knowledge, certainly not for pride. Internalizing God's Word is for *life*. The psalmist wrote: "Your Word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path" (Psalm 119:105).

3. Speak God's truth over your home now. Many Scriptures will speak to your situation. God's Word is alive. Ask the Lord to reveal His truth as you read His Word. The ONE YEAR BIBLE is a great place to begin! Perhaps pray Ezekiel 37:11-14, personalizing the text for your circumstance. Pray Psalm 91 over your family. Or recall Ephesians 6:10-18 as you armor-up, and remember we don't wrestle flesh-and-blood enemies. God wants to hear from you, and His Word will actually direct (and correct) your prayers.

Close by reading Psalm 78:65-72

4. David had a warrior's spirit. Are you willing to fight evil within your home? Fight with an Ephesians 6:10-17 mindset, and don't stop until the job is complete. The Lord will help you, just like He did when David stood before Goliath. What enemy do you need to take down in your home?

David had a shepherd's heart. Most of the psalms are attributed to David because he knew how to quiet himself before God and bow with an honest heart. Who within your flock needs tender care right now? Are you taking good care of the sheep? For whom does the Lord need to tenderize your heart?

One Year Bible Reading

May 3: Judges 17:1-18:31, John 3:1-21, Psalm 104:1-23, Proverbs 14:20-21
May 4: Judges 19:1-20:48, John 3:22-4:3, Psalm 104:24-35, Proverbs 14:22-24
May 5: Judges 21:1-Ruth 1:22, John 4:4-42, Psalm 105:1-15, Proverbs 14:25
May 6: Ruth 2:1-4:22, John 4:43-54, Psalm 105:16-36, Proverbs 14:26-27
May 7: 1 Samuel 1:1-2:21, John 5:1-23, Psalm 105:37-45, Proverbs 14:28-29
May 8: 1 Samuel 2:22-4:22, John 5:24-47, Psalm 106:1-12, Proverbs 14:30-31
May 9: 1 Samuel 5:1-7:17, John 6:1-21, Psalm 106:13-31, Proverbs 14:32-33

Hope

God Makes Sense out of Nonsense

Text: Ruth 4:13-17, Ezekiel 37:4-14

Plain Truth

Jesus _____ skeletons and
makes the _____ bones _____.

May 2 & 3, 2020