

## ***Holiday Harvest - Ruth 2*** **Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading**

### **Notes from the Sermon**

You can't help but love a good love story, and the book of Ruth in the Old Testament is a great one. No doubt, we are supposed to draw in to the plight of Naomi and her daughter in law Ruth, feeling deeply for their brokenness. And then we should get swept in to the beauty of how love and eventually marriage changes their lives and the posture of their heart. Yet, God did not inspire this story merely to give us a cute Hallmark worthy story in the Old Testament. To understand Ruth, or any of the narratives in the Bible we need to know that every story has a connection to the grand story of redemption being told in the Bible. This story is no different. To find this connection, we need to look deeply into these stories to find the beauty of God's rescue story to find these amazing connections. This little love story is full of them.

Chapter 1 ended with the Moabite Ruth returning to Bethlehem with Naomi, but when the Naomi's old friends saw her two key things happened. First, Naomi has taken on a name change, she wants to be called "Mara" which means bitter. Her life is so broken that her identity is wrapped up in the failures and pain she has experienced. Second, the people of Bethlehem completely ignore the woman standing next to Naomi, never greeting or even mentioning Ruth. She is an outsider, and furthermore a hated Moabite. The first chapter had a high point, the conversion and loyalty of Ruth. But the story immediately sank back into hopelessness. More important, any Hebrew reading the story would know that there was a more significant issue for these two. Unless they could find a way to gain access to their family land the two would spend their lives in desperation, begging for every piece of bread they would eat. The land was given by God to every family in the story of Joshua, and Elimelech had rights to his family land. But he and both of his sons are dead, and without a heir the land would be passed on to another person, a different person in their clan. But this would leave Naomi and Ruth outside of the blessings and benefits of God's gifts. This is the situation they find themselves at the end of chapter one. But then everything changes!

Enter Boaz. This chapter is all about this man. And before we get too far downhill on this, Boaz is just a man. But in his time he is markedly different from anyone else, and the text wants us to see this. The whole theme of the book of Judges is the absolute failure for this rescued and blessed nation to live in faithfulness to God's covenant. "There was no king in Israel, and everyone did what was right in his own eyes," is the final line of the book of Judges, a reminder of the awful trajectory of the entire story. As generations came and went they fell further away from the God who redeemed them, and in the last pages of the story we cannot find a single faithful Israelite. In fact, the last several judges were moral degenerates (just read the Samson story). So Boaz is a light in a dark world specifically because he is a picture of a faithful Israelite. We recently studied the book of Micah, and in Micah 6:8 the prophet tells us what the Lord requires, to "do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God." Read this story through this lense, and you will notice that this is exactly the type of man Boaz represents. He walks with God, shown through his greetings and care for his workers and his response to Ruth. He loves kindness, treating his workers, servants, and Ruth with unbelievable grace and mercy. He is a good boss, and cares for the people around them. So much so that as the boss he provides the noon meal for all the people working in the field. Imagine working in a place where the boss provides Macaroni Grill catered in for lunch every day, and there is always enough for a take home box. And the text shows us that he generously obeys God's laws about leaving the ends of fields unharvested so the poor can come get food for themselves. This is God's care for the poor and plan for His people to do justice. Furthermore, as a faithful Israelite we find that Boaz is a close relative of Elimelech, which means he fits the requirements for a kinsman-redeemer for Naomi and Ruth. The idea of a kinsman redeemer is found in a few passages from the Torah, putting the responsibility for rescuing family members in the hands of brothers (or close male relatives). Kinsman redeemers were responsible for rescuing their family from slavery, paying off debts to regain fields, and avenging blood. In some cases this would also mean a family member would marry the widow of a childless wife of a brother so the family line could continue and the woman would be included in the blessings of God's gifts. But

for this to happen for a Moabite... But I get ahead of myself. This chapter is showing us Boaz, a faithful Israelite who is a close relative and therefore able to be the Kinsman Redeemer for Naomi and Ruth.

You can't miss the connection here. Naomi and Ruth are in a place where it seems impossible for God to keep His promises to them and be faithful. And in steps Boaz, who will be the means of redemption for these women. Yet, Boaz is a sinner in need of grace too, but his life is a little picture of how God saves and redeems His people. He is a forerunner of a true and better Kinsman-Redeemer who will be born in Bethlehem, our brother in humanity who is the ultimate faithful Israelite. His perfect life was necessary for Jesus to fulfill the requirements to be our Redeemer. His birth, life, and death is the way for us to go from helpless bitterness to joy and blessing.

**Bible Reading for the Week**

Daily Bible Readings

| Sun       | Mon       | Tues      | Weds      | Thurs     | Fri       | Sat       |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Judges 21 | Judges 22 | Judges 23 | Judges 24 | Judges 25 | Judges 26 | Judges 27 |

Reading from this past week: Ruth 2

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: Ruth 3

**Family Worship**

Song - *Come Adore the Humble King*

<https://youtu.be/mCQ4uqg34Yw?si=u84LQlhqvVPYImm->

Gospel Project

Unit: Jesus is alive

Story: Jesus appeared to Thomas

Big Picture Question: How do we know that God wants us to know Him?

Answer: We can know

that God wants us to know Him because He has revealed Himself through His Word.

Scripture: John 20

New City Catechism

Question #50: What does Christ's resurrection mean for us?

Answer: Christ triumphed over sin and death so that all who trust in him are raised to new life in this world and to everlasting life in the world to come

Verse: I Thessalonians 3:13-14

Scripture

Ruth 2

- Look back at the last few verses of chapter 1. How does the situation Naomi and Ruth find themselves picture all of human existence apart from Christ and God's redemption?
- What are some of the ways the text shows us Boaz as a faithful Israelite? How does he personify doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God?
- All that actually happens in the story for Naomi is that Ruth comes home with a bag of barley and has met a farmer. How does the story show us a change in the heart posture of Naomi and what should this communicate to us?
- How is Jesus the true and better Boaz?

Prayer

\*Ask God to help you grow in your theology and that true theology would lead to worship.

\*Pray for our partners Nick & Lorriane Mosca in Papua New Guinea. Some of our funds from the Advent Conspiracy Offering go to support this family on mission.

\*The third candle of the Advent wreath is called the Candle of the Shepherds and Joy. It reminds that the angels pronounced good news of great joy for all people in the birth of Jesus.