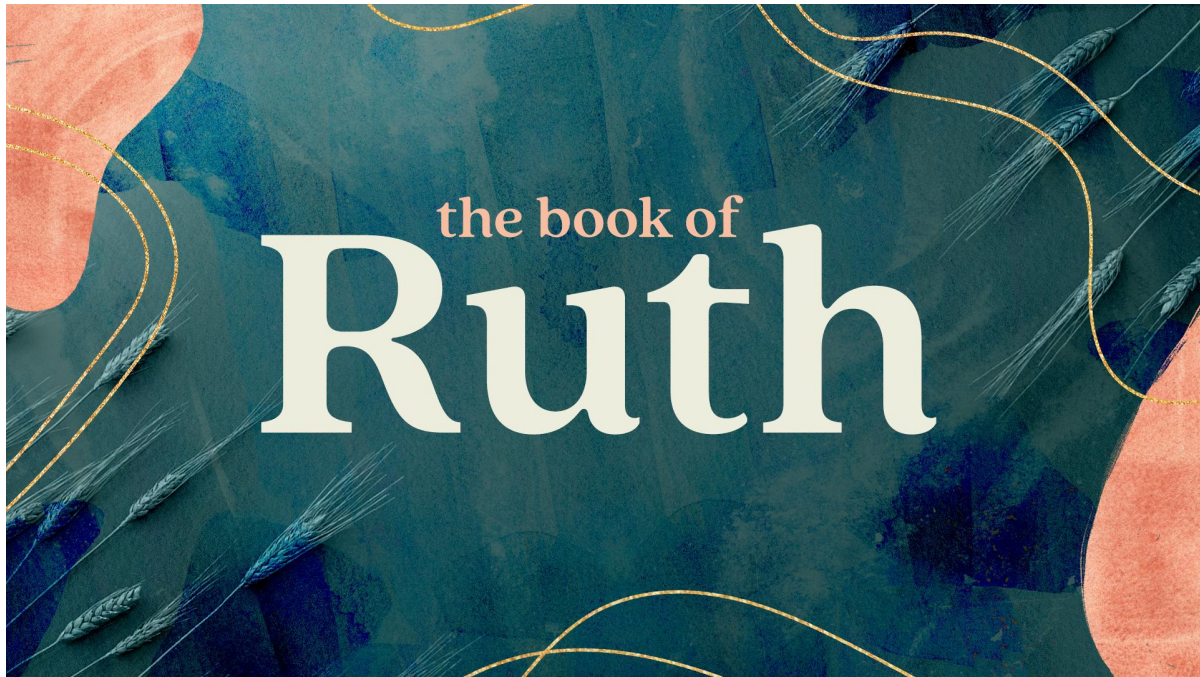




Introduction to Ruth

The book of Ruth is a short historical narrative set during the chaotic period of the judges, when Israel repeatedly turned from the Lord and experienced the consequences of covenant unfaithfulness. Yet against this dark backdrop, Ruth tells a remarkably hopeful story of God's quiet providence. Though the author is unknown, the book was likely written after the establishment of Israel's monarchy, looking back on events that ultimately lead to the birth of King David.

Ruth highlights God's covenant faithfulness as He works through ordinary people and seemingly ordinary events to accomplish His redemptive purposes. Through the loyalty of Ruth, the kindness and integrity of Boaz, and the restoration of Naomi, the Lord demonstrates His sovereign care for His people. The book also underscores the inclusion of the nations in God's redemptive plan, as Ruth, a Moabite woman, is graciously brought into the covenant community and becomes an ancestor of David and, ultimately, of Jesus Christ.

Far more than a beautiful love story, Ruth is a testimony to God's providence, redemption, and steadfast love. It reminds believers that even when God appears to be working quietly behind the scenes, He is faithfully directing every circumstance to accomplish His perfect purposes. As we study Ruth, we are invited to trust the God who provides, redeems, and remains faithful to His promises through every season of life.¹

¹ Adapted from Tremper Longman III and Raymond B. Dillard, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), 145–151.

Week of Monday, July 13, 2025

Ruth 1:1-5

1 During the time of the judges, there was a famine in the land. A man left Bethlehem in Judah with his wife and two sons to stay in the territory of Moab for a while. **2** The man's name was Elimelech, and his wife's name was Naomi. The names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They entered the fields of Moab and settled there. **3** Naomi's husband, Elimelech, died, and she was left with her two sons. **4** Her sons took Moabite women as their wives: one was named Orpah and the second was named Ruth. After they lived in Moab about ten years, **5** both Mahlon and Chilion also died, and the woman was left without her two children and without her husband.

HOPE Journaling

H – Highlight what stands out to you

O – Observe what it teaches

P – Practice this in your life

E – Express this in your prayers

Weekly Devotional

Life has a way of changing in a hurry. A phone call. A doctor's appointment. The loss of a job. The death of someone you love. In a moment, life can look very different than you expected, and you may find yourself wondering, "God, what are you doing?" If you've ever asked that question, you're not alone.

That's where the book of Ruth begins.

The story takes place during the time of the judges, one of the darkest seasons in Israel's history. People had largely turned away from God and, as Judges 21:25 says, "everyone did whatever seemed right to him." It was a difficult time, and then a famine came to Bethlehem. Ironically, Bethlehem means "House of Bread," yet there was no bread.

To survive, Elimelech moved his family to Moab with his wife, Naomi, and their two sons. It probably seemed like the best decision at the time. But instead of things getting better, they got worse. Elimelech died. The two sons married Moabite women, Ruth and Orpah, but after about ten years they died as well. By the end of verse five, Naomi has lost her home, her husband, and both of her sons. Ruth and Orpah are widows too. In that culture, this didn't just mean heartbreak. It also meant uncertainty about how they would survive.

If you stopped reading at verse five, you might wonder where God is in all of this. He doesn't speak. He doesn't perform a miracle. There isn't even a hint that He is doing anything at all.

But that's one of the beautiful truths of Ruth. Just because God seems silent doesn't mean He is absent.

As the story unfolds, we'll discover that God has been at work the entire time, arranging events that no one could see. What looked like the end of Naomi's story was actually the beginning of something far greater than she could have imagined.

Maybe that's where you are today. Maybe you're in a chapter of life that doesn't make sense. Maybe you're carrying grief, disappointment, or questions that seem to have no answers. Ruth reminds us that we don't have to understand everything God is doing in order to trust Him. He is always working, even when we can't see it.

Chapter one isn't the end of Ruth's story, and if you belong to Christ, your difficult chapter isn't the end of yours either.

-Devotional written by Eric Foster

Read Also:

Ruth 1

Judges 2:11–19 — Understand Israel's spiritual condition during the time of the judges.

Judges 21:25 — See the moral and spiritual backdrop of Ruth's story.

Deuteronomy 28:15–24 — Learn why famine carried covenant significance for Israel.

Deuteronomy 10:17–18 — See God's heart for widows, orphans, and sojourners.

Psalms 68:5–6 — Reflect on God as the defender and provider of the vulnerable.

Genesis 50:20 — Discover how God works through suffering to accomplish His purposes.

Romans 8:28 — Be encouraged by God's sovereign providence in every circumstance.

Matthew 1:5–6 — See Ruth's place in God's redemptive plan leading to Christ.

Group Discussion Questions

What details in Ruth 1:1–5 stand out to you, and what do they reveal about Naomi's circumstances?

Why do you think the author begins by telling us this happened “During the time of the judges”? How does that shape the way we read the story?

How would the deaths of Elimelech and Naomi's two sons have affected Naomi, Ruth, and Orpah both emotionally and practically?

One of the striking features of these verses is that God never speaks or performs a miracle. What does this teach us about God's providence, and have you ever experienced a season when He seemed silent?

Looking back on your own life, can you identify a difficult season that God later used for your good or for His glory? What did you learn through it?

Why is it often difficult to trust God's purposes in the middle of suffering? How does Ruth 1:1–5 encourage us to keep trusting Him even when we cannot see what He is doing?

Week of Monday, July 20, 2025

Ruth 1:6-17

6 She and her daughters-in-law set out to return from the territory of Moab, because she had heard in Moab that the LORD had paid attention to his people's need by providing them food. **7** She left the place where she had been living, accompanied by her two daughters-in-law, and traveled along the road leading back to the land of Judah.

8 Naomi said to them, "Each of you go back to your mother's home. May the LORD show kindness to you as you have shown to the dead and to me. **9** May the LORD grant each of you rest in the house of a new husband." She kissed them, and they wept loudly.

10 They said to her, "We insist on returning with you to your people."

11 But Naomi replied, "Return home, my daughters. Why do you want to go with me? Am I able to have any more sons who could become your husbands? **12** Return home, my daughters. Go on, for I am too old to have another husband. Even if I thought there was still hope for me to have a husband tonight and to bear sons, **13** would you be willing to wait for them to grow up? Would you restrain yourselves from remarrying? No, my daughters, my life is much too bitter for you to share, because the LORD's hand has turned against me." **14** Again they wept loudly, and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her. **15** Naomi said, "Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods. Follow your sister-in-law."

16 But Ruth replied:

Don't plead with me to abandon you
or to return and not follow you.
For wherever you go, I will go,
and wherever you live, I will live;
your people will be my people,
and your God will be my God.

17 Where you die, I will die,
and there I will be buried.
May the LORD punish me,
and do so severely,
if anything but death separates you and me.

HOPE Journaling

H – Highlight what stands out to you

O – Observe what it teaches

P – Practice this in your life

E – Express this in your prayers

Weekly Devotional

Have you ever made a commitment because of a conviction that others simply didn't understand? Maybe friends questioned your decision. Family tried to talk you out of it. From their perspective, your choice didn't make sense, but you knew you couldn't ignore what you believed was right.

That's exactly the kind of moment we find in our passage this week.

After losing her husband, Ruth stands at a crossroads. Naomi is returning to Bethlehem after hearing that the Lord has provided food for His people once again. Along the way, Naomi urges both of her daughters-in-law to return home. She genuinely wants what's best for them. In her mind, they would have a better future in Moab than following a grieving widow back to a foreign land with no guarantees.

Orpah eventually returns home, but Ruth doesn't.

Instead, Ruth makes it clear that her decision is no longer simply about staying with Naomi, it is about identifying herself with Naomi's God:

"Don't plead with me to abandon you or to return and not follow you. For wherever you go, I will go, and wherever you live, I will live; your people will be my people, and your God will be my God." (Ruth 1:16)

Ruth wasn't simply choosing Naomi. She was choosing Naomi's God.

From a human perspective, her decision didn't make much sense. She was leaving behind her homeland, her family, and everything familiar to travel to a place where she had no promise of comfort or security. Yet something had changed in Ruth's heart. Through Naomi and her family, she had come to know the God of Israel, and that conviction was stronger than the uncertainty that lay ahead.

Following the Lord often requires that same kind of faith. There will be times when obedience doesn't make sense to those around us. Some may question why we prioritize Christ, gather with His people, give generously, forgive freely, or choose holiness over what seems easier. But our decisions are not ultimately driven by what others think. They are driven by our confidence that the Lord is worthy of our trust.

Ruth had no idea how God would work through her faithfulness. She simply took the next step of obedience. In time, God would graciously provide for her, redeem her circumstances, and even include her in the family line of Jesus Christ.

We rarely know what God is accomplishing through our faithful obedience in the moment. Our responsibility isn't to see the whole picture. It's simply to trust Him enough to take the next faithful step.

-Devotional written by Eric Foster

Read Also:

Ruth 1

Genesis 12:1–4 Like Abraham, Ruth leaves her homeland, trusting God with the unknown.

Joshua 24:14–24 Ruth's words, "Your God will be my God," express wholehearted devotion.

Psalms 37:3–7 Ruth models trusting the Lord even when the future is uncertain.

Matthew 10:37–39 Following Christ requires loving Him above every earthly relationship.

Luke 9:57–62 Ruth demonstrates the cost and commitment of true discipleship.

John 6:66–69 Like Peter, Ruth chooses to remain with the Lord despite the cost.

Hebrews 11:8–16 Ruth, like Abraham, steps forward in faith without knowing what lies ahead.

Philippians 3:7–11 Ruth leaves everything behind, valuing the Lord above earthly security.

Group Discussion Questions

What stands out most to you about Ruth's response to Naomi in verses 16–17? What does it reveal about her faith?

Why do you think Ruth was willing to leave her homeland, family, and future behind to follow the Lord?

Have you ever faced a situation where following Christ meant choosing obedience over comfort or security? What happened?

Naomi tried to persuade Ruth to turn back. What are some ways believers today can be tempted to turn away from faithfully following Christ?

How does Ruth's commitment challenge the way we think about following Jesus today?

What does this passage teach us about trusting God when we cannot see what lies ahead?

Is there an area of your life where God is calling you to trust Him more fully or take a step of obedient faith?

Week of Monday, July 27, 2025

Ruth 1:18-22

18 When Naomi saw that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped talking to her.

19 The two of them traveled until they came to Bethlehem. When they entered Bethlehem, the whole town was excited about their arrival and the local women exclaimed, “Can this be Naomi?”

20 “Don’t call me Naomi. Call me Mara,” she answered, “for the Almighty has made me very bitter. **21** I went away full, but the LORD has brought me back empty. Why do you call me Naomi, since the LORD has opposed me, and the Almighty has afflicted me?”

22 So Naomi came back from the territory of Moab with her daughter-in-law Ruth the Moabitess. They arrived in Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

HOPE Journaling

H – Highlight what stands out to you

O – Observe what it teaches

P – Practice this in your life

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Weekly Devotional

People say that hindsight is 20/20. That may be true when you look back at things you should have done differently, but it is not necessarily true when you look back on things that have happened to us. And that is especially true of the things that have caused us suffering. We often lack perspective and understanding, and it leaves us feeling bitter, angry, depressed, and (perhaps worst of all) blaming God for everything.

That is what Naomi is experiencing here. She is looking back on the death of her husband and her sons, as well as the lack of any grandchildren born to her, and bitterness and resentment well up in her heart. When

the people of her hometown were excited to see her return from Moab, she shut the welcoming party down. She doesn't want to be known by Naomi, which means "pleasant," but by Mara, which means "Bitter."

And why is she bitter? She shifts all the blame on God. "The Almighty made me bitter. The Lord has brought me back empty. The Lord has opposed me, and the Almighty has afflicted me." Naomi makes it quite clear who is responsible for the death of her husband and sons and the bitterness of her soul.

When we suffer, we often call into question God's goodness. We put the blame on him as if he wronged us. Some of the most spiritual people in the Bible have done the same. King David, the man after God's own heart, cried out, "How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?" (Ps. 13:1). Job had a beautiful, faithful, and worshipful response to losing his wealth and his children (Job 1:20-22), yet when he lost his health, he called God's justice into question. Paul tells the Corinthians "[A] thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan, to torment me.... Concerning this, I pleaded with the Lord three times that it would leave me" (2 Cor. 12:7). The Books of Psalms, Jeremiah, and Lamentations are full of examples of faithful people suffering so intensely that they question the goodness of God, and Naomi fits right in.

Yet while Naomi is in good company, is she really in a good frame of mind? While it may be "normal" to experience this, does that mean that we can stew in our bitterness directed towards God, disregarding the fact that he has revealed himself as "a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger and abounding in faithful love and truth, maintaining faithful love to a thousand generations, forgiving iniquity, rebellion, and sin"? (Ex. 34:6).

So how do we combat this? We need to trust in what we know about God rather than what we feel at any given moment. If God says who he says he is, if Christ really has died and was raised from the grave for our sins, and if we really have eternal life with him, then we must interpret every aspect of our lives through that grid accordingly, rather than letting our circumstances dominate our minds.

Because Naomi is letting her circumstances dominate her to the point of saying that the Lord has made her bitter, she can't see the glimpses of God's goodness. She feels like "the Lord has brought [her] back empty," but it is by God's grace that she is still alive, it is by God's grace that her Bethlehemite neighbors and family survived the famine, and it is by God's grace that she has a faithful daughter-in-law who just committed herself to Naomi and to Yahweh. Yes, her suffering is still quite real, but has the Lord failed or refused to show her his mercy and grace? Would she still want to be called Mara if she, like Job, worshiped and said, "The Lord gives and the Lord takes away. Blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1:21)?

And, even beyond seeing the glimpses of God's grace in the midst of our suffering, we need to remember that God has a plan for us and our suffering: he plans to make all things new. "He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more, grief, crying, and pain will be no more, because the previous things have passed away" (Rev. 21:4). When we suffer, it is hard to look past ourselves, and it is hard to see what God is doing in the midst of it, how "all things work together for the good of those who love God" (Rom. 8:28). How could Naomi know what God was doing? How can we? Yet when we interpret our present suffering in light of the future glory that God promises us in Christ, our bitterness, our anger, and our confusion that our suffering causes will turn into a worshipful trust in our Redeemer and our Savior.

-Devotional written by Rick Leeman

Read Also:

Ruth 1

Job 1

Psalm 13

Psalm 42-43

Psalm 73

Jeremiah 20:14-18

Lamentations 3

Romans 8

2 Corinthians 4:7-18

Group Discussion Questions

Why does Naomi blame God for the loss of her family and her bitterness? Is there any truth to her reasoning?

What in your life has made you feel bitter, angry, or resentful against God? How did you come to resolve it in your heart?

Read Psalm 73, noticing how the author draws near to God in v. 17 to come to a proper understanding of his situation. What would have happened if Naomi did the same? What would her response have been?

What other people in the Bible experienced suffering like Naomi? What happened to them and how did they respond to it?

What does the Bible say about suffering? Why do we suffer? How does God intend to deal with suffering? How are Christians instructed to suffer well?

In his book *Spiritual Depression*, Martyn Lloyd-Jones, a 20th century Welsh preacher, asks this: “Have you realized that most of your unhappiness in life is due to the fact that you are listening to yourself instead of talking to yourself?” What does he mean by this? How was Naomi “listening to herself”? How should she have been “talking to herself”?

Week of Monday, August 3, 2025

Ruth 2:1-13

1 Now Naomi had a relative on her husband's side. He was a prominent man of noble character from Elimelech's family. His name was Boaz.

2 Ruth the Moabite asked Naomi, "Will you let me go into the fields and gather fallen grain behind someone with whom I find favor?"

Naomi answered her, "Go ahead, my daughter." **3** So Ruth left and entered the field to gather grain behind the harvesters. She happened to be in the portion of the field belonging to Boaz, who was from Elimelech's family.

4 Later, when Boaz arrived from Bethlehem, he said to the harvesters, "The LORD be with you." "The LORD bless you," they replied.

5 Boaz asked his servant who was in charge of the harvesters, "Whose young woman is this?"

6 The servant answered, "She is the young Moabite woman who returned with Naomi from the territory of Moab. **7** She asked, 'Will you let me gather fallen grain among the bundles behind the harvesters?' She came and has been on her feet since early morning, except that she rested a little in the shelter."

8 Then Boaz said to Ruth, "Listen, my daughter. Don't go and gather grain in another field, and don't leave this one, but stay here close to my female servants. **9** See which field they are harvesting, and follow them. Haven't I ordered the young men not to touch you? When you are thirsty, go and drink from the jars the young men have filled."

10 She fell facedown, bowed to the ground, and said to him, "Why have I found favor with you, so that you notice me, although I am a foreigner?"

11 Boaz answered her, "Everything you have done for your mother-in-law since your husband's death has been fully reported to me: how you left your father and mother and your native land, and how you came to a people you didn't previously know. **12** May the LORD reward you for what you have done, and may you receive a full reward from the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge."

13 "My lord," she said, "I have found favor with you, for you have comforted and encouraged your servant, although I am not like one of your female servants."

HOPE Journaling

H – Highlight what stands out to you

O – Observe what it teaches

P – Practice this in your life

E – Express this in your prayers

Weekly Devotional

Have you ever looked back and realized that one ordinary day ended up changing your life?

Maybe it was a conversation you almost didn't have, a job you weren't planning to take, a church you decided to visit, or someone you just happened to meet. At the time, it didn't seem all that significant. But looking back, you can see how God was using that ordinary moment in ways you never could have imagined.

That's exactly what we find in Ruth 2.

After arriving in Bethlehem with Naomi, Ruth simply goes out looking for a field where she can gather leftover grain. She's not looking for a husband. She's not trying to fulfill some grand purpose. She's just trying to put food on the table.

Then we read this simple statement:

"She happened to be in the portion of the field belonging to Boaz." (Ruth 2:3)

From Ruth's point of view, that's exactly what happened. She needed a field, and this was the one she chose. But as readers, we know there was much more going on.

This wasn't luck. It wasn't fate. It was God's quiet providence.

Without Ruth realizing it, God was leading her to the very man who would become her kinsman-redeemer. Boaz would marry Ruth, they would have a son named Obed, Obed would become the grandfather of King David, and generations later Jesus Christ would be born through that same family line.

Ruth couldn't see any of that. She was thinking about today's meal. God was carrying out a plan that stretched for generations. That's often how God works in our lives too.

Most of the time, He isn't working through dramatic miracles or life-changing moments that we recognize right away. More often, He is working quietly through everyday life, through conversations, opportunities, disappointments, and even the interruptions we never would have chosen.

That doesn't mean every event has some hidden message we need to figure out. Ruth wasn't trying to decode God's plan. She was simply living faithfully, and all the while God was faithfully working behind the scenes.

Maybe you've had moments where you can now look back and see God's hand at work. At the time, you didn't understand why something happened or where it was leading. But years later, you realized God had been guiding your steps all along.

The truth is, we won't always see what God is doing while we're walking through it. But Ruth reminds us that even when God's hand is hidden, it is never absent. The God who quietly guided Ruth into Boaz's field is the same God who is faithfully at work in the ordinary moments of our lives today.

-Devotional written by Eric Foster

Read Also:

Ruth 2

Leviticus 19:9–10 – The law behind gleaning.

Deuteronomy 24:17–22 – God's heart for widows and foreigners.

Psalms 91:1–4 – Refuge under God's wings.

Psalms 37:3–7 – Trusting God's providence.

Matthew 6:25–34 – God's faithful provision.

Ephesians 2:11–22 – From outsider to member of God's family.

Group Discussion Questions

Verse 3 says Ruth "happened" to come to Boaz's field. Why do you think the author tells the story that way? What does this teach us about God's providence?

Ruth was simply looking for food, yet God was accomplishing something far greater than she could see. What does this passage teach us about the relationship between our ordinary responsibilities and God's greater purposes?

Boaz shows extraordinary kindness to Ruth because she is seeking refuge in the Lord. In what ways does Boaz point us forward to the greater Redeemer, Jesus Christ?

Can you think of a time when something that seemed ordinary, or even disappointing, became a significant turning point in your life? Looking back, how can you see God's hand at work?

Ruth didn't know what God was doing; she simply got up and faithfully did what was in front of her. What ordinary responsibilities has God given you today that require faithfulness?

When life feels uncertain, are you more likely to focus on what you can see or to trust what you know about God's character? Why?

Week of Monday, August 10, 2025

Ruth 2:14-23

14 At mealtime Boaz told her, “Come over here and have some bread and dip it in the vinegar sauce.” So she sat beside the harvesters, and he offered her roasted grain. She ate and was satisfied and had some left over.

15 When she got up to gather grain, Boaz ordered his young men, “Let her even gather grain among the bundles, and don’t humiliate her. **16** Pull out some stalks from the bundles for her and leave them for her to gather. Don’t rebuke her.” **17** So Ruth gathered grain in the field until evening. She beat out what she had gathered, and it was about twenty-six quarts of barley. **18** She picked up the grain and went into the town, where her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. She brought out what she had left over from her meal and gave it to her.

19 Her mother-in-law said to her, “Where did you gather barley today, and where did you work? May the LORD bless the man who noticed you.”

Ruth told her mother-in-law whom she had worked with and said, “The name of the man I worked with today is Boaz.”

20 Then Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, “May the LORD bless him because he has not abandoned his kindness to the living or the dead.” Naomi continued, “The man is a close relative. He is one of our family redeemers.”

21 Ruth the Moabitess said, “He also told me, ‘Stay with my young men until they have finished all of my harvest.’”

22 So Naomi said to her daughter-in-law Ruth, “My daughter, it is good for you to work with his female servants, so that nothing will happen to you in another field.” **23** Ruth stayed close to Boaz’s female servants and gathered grain until the barley and the wheat harvests were finished. And she lived with her mother-in-law.

HOPE Journaling

H – Highlight what stands out to you

O – Observe what it teaches

P – Practice this in your life

E – Express this in your prayers

Weekly Devotional

The New Testament makes much of our nearness to God. “But now in Christ Jesus, you who were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ” (Eph. 2:13). “Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you” (Jas 4:8). “Let us then draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in the time of need” (Heb. 4:16 ESV). Our sin separated us from God, yet because Christ has dealt with our sin, we have been brought near to God and we can draw near to him in prayer. This new relationship is an astonishing act of God’s goodness and grace when we realize how deep our sin goes and how the cross of Christ was the only means to achieve it.

In this interaction between Boaz and Ruth, Boaz is drawing Ruth near to him. No longer is he simply a man who owns the field that she is gleaning; we begin to see the true godliness of his character, as “a man of noble character” (2:1). We see more than Boaz eyeing his future wife. We don’t know if the thought has even passed through his head. But his actions towards Ruth give us a glimpse of God’s own heart towards his people.

First, Boaz lavishes Ruth with his harvest. Boaz invites Ruth—a poor, Gentile widow gleaning in his field—to draw near to him and eat until she can’t eat another bite (v. 14). Boaz sees to it that Ruth goes home with a hefty amount of barley. Boaz, knowing full well who Ruth is, lavishes his kindness upon her. And God, knowing full well who we are, “lavished” his “glorious grace” upon us thorough Jesus Christ. “In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he richly poured out on us with all wisdom and understanding” (Eph. 1:6-7).

Second, Boaz reflects God’s care for the oppressed. In v. 16, Boaz orders his servants to “Pull out some stalks from the bundles for [Ruth] and leave them for her to gather.” Why would Boaz tell them to take what they had already gathered and throw it on the ground for her? Deuteronomy 24:19 may give us a hint: “When you reap the harvest in your field, and you forget a sheaf in the field, do not go back to get it. It is to be left for the resident alien, the fatherless, and the widow, so that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.”

When those stalks hit the ground, the Law states that they no longer belong to Boaz, but they are to be left for the resident alien, the fatherless, and the widow—three vulnerable classes of people that the Lord cares for and will defend (Ps. 46:5; 146:9). Boaz apparently knows his Torah, and he reflects this aspect of God’s steadfast love when he relinquishes his right to his harvest to provide this sojourning, fatherless widow named Ruth.

These acts of steadfast love are remarkable. When Naomi sees Ruth’s barley haul and tastes the leftovers from her meal, she knows that the man who owned the field was a godly and generous man. But when she learns that this man is Boaz, a family redeemer, someone who can possibly help their situation by more than just providing barley, she bursts into worship (v. 20) and gives Ruth a very simple instruction: stay close. Stay on his property. Stay close to his people. You will be safe. You will be provided for. Stay close to your Redeemer!

Christians ought to do the same: stay close to your Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Stay close to him. Stay in his Word. Stay close to his people. Draw close to him in prayer. Come near to him to find mercy and grace in the time of need. And know for sure that all who come near to him he will never cast out (John 6:37).

-Devotional written by Rick Leeman

Read Also:

Ruth 2

Deuteronomy 24:17-22

Psalm 146

Ephesians 1:3-14

Ephesians 2:11-21

Hebrews 4:14-16

James 1:26-27

Group Discussion Questions

Why were resident aliens, those who are fatherless, and widows are particularly vulnerable in ancient Israel? Was this the case for Ruth and Naomi?

Read Deuteronomy 24:17-22 and discuss how it relates to Ruth 2:14-23.

Read Ephesians 2:11-22 and discuss how Boaz drawing Ruth near to him reflects this?

Why does Naomi say that Boaz “has not abandoned his kindness to the living or the dead”?

How should we “stay close to our Redeemer”? What happens if we neglect this?

James 4:8 says “Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.” How does God draw near to us? What would happen if God stayed at a distance?