

Ruth -- Chapter 2 Review & Chapter 3 (Handout #2)

Naomi and Ruth arrived in Judah at the beginning of the barley harvest. Ruth asked Naomi's permission to go gleaning (gathering leftover grain behind those harvesting). Ruth unknowingly began working in a field belonging to a wealthy kinsman (relative) of Naomi's deceased husband Elimelech - - named Boaz. Boaz arrived at his field and instantly noticed Ruth. He went to his foreman inquiring about Ruth and Boaz learned that she returned with Naomi from Moab. She had asked if she could glean in the field and worked diligently from the start. Boaz approached Ruth and insisted that she work his field only along side the other maidens. Boaz assured her of protection (male harvesters would not bother her) and when she needed refreshing, she could drink water to her satisfaction. Overwhelmed at receiving such favor, she fell at his feet, thanked him, and asked him why. Boaz enlightened her to his awareness of her faithfulness, dedication, and sacrifice displayed towards her widowed mother-in-law, and then decreed blessings upon her from the God "under whose wings thou art come to trust." With humility she acknowledged receiving Boaz's favor and kindness unworthily. Boaz continued showing favor by serving Ruth lunch (more that she could eat) and instructing his harvesters to drop heads of barley purposely for her to glean. Ruth returned home with the bundles of grain and leftovers from lunch to Naomi's amazement. Ruth informed Naomi that she worked with a man named Boaz - - Naomi illuminates Ruth to the fact that Boaz is a kinsman-redeemer. Naomi is excited to learn Boaz wants Ruth to work his field until harvest is completed.

Chapter 3

Verses 1-3: Naomi, the mother-in-law of Ruth, lovingly and unselfishly seeks rest or security for her daughter-in-law. This was her original desire for both of her daughters-in-law (1:9), in seeking rest or the security of having husbands for both of them. What depth of love and selflessness Naomi displays towards Ruth, for Naomi prepares to relinquish her claims (rights) to marriage and property. Instead of Naomi preparing herself to "propose" to Boaz and position herself to become his wife, she prepares Ruth by instructing her regarding this act of "proposal." She instructs her to wash-up, dress-up, make-up, perfume-up, and go to where Boaz is (threshing floor) and be inconspicuous until he has finished eating and drinking. Naomi would of course be familiar with this Jewish custom because she was Jewish - - Ruth was a Moabite and needed instruction on how to make the customary appeal to her kinsman-redeemer (Hebrew - Go`el) for protection and a levirate marriage.

Verses 4-6: Naomi further instructs Ruth that when Boaz lies down, uncover or remove his outer garment from his feet, and lie down at his uncovered feet. By Ruth performing this act of submission, Ruth is requesting Boaz to make a decision to be her protector, her husband - - her kinsman-redeemer. Once again Ruth's character of obedience, loyalty, faithfulness, and respect is displayed. Not only did she articulate to her mother-in-law that she would perform everything she has instructed her to do, but she did perform everything Naomi commanded. She displayed faith in the instructions of her mother-in-law.

Verses 7-9: Boaz had finished his work, finished his meal and drink, and now was feeling very good. He went to lie down next to the heap of corn and slept. Ruth then came softly or inconspicuously and she laid down at Boaz's feet. Midnight came and Boaz was startled that there was a woman was lying at his feet. Ruth identified herself to Boaz and then "proposed" by requesting Boaz to "spread his skirt" (the corner of his covering or robe) over her - - for he was a near kinsman. Ruth was seeking Boaz's refuge as her protector and husband under the provision of kinsman-redeemer. (Custom / Meaning of Kinsman Redeemer: Since Ruth's husband had died without giving her a child, it was the responsibility of a close relative to marry her to provide an heir for the deceased husband according to the Law --- Deut. 25: 5-10. This would perpetuate the family name and keep land/property in the family).

**** NOTE: In a matter regarding a sold family estate (property), if a situation were to materialize where a kinsman-redeemer did not come forth to redeem the land, the property would be returned to the possession of the original owners in the Year of Jubilee (Lev. 25:24-28). Because of this statute in the Law, the original family would automatically redeem the land.**

Verses 10-11: Boaz fully understood that Ruth was making a "marriage proposal" and fully appreciated her integrity and maturity by seeking to perform what was written in God's Law instead of just pursuing a man for a husband because of his youth. Her intentions and initiative were clearly not superficial, but admirable and praiseworthy in the fact that her priority was to have a "Law of Moses" declared heir for her husband. Ruth may have been a Moabite by flesh, but she was an Israelite in her heart and spirit! Boaz blessed her, praised her for being a virtuous (honorable, noble, excellent, worthy, strong) woman, and assured Ruth that he is accepting her proposal and intends to take full responsibility and perform what is required to be Ruth's kinsman-redeemer!

Verses 12-13:

Clearly Boaz is ready to fulfill the responsibility of kinsman-redeemer, however there is a legal “obstacle” present --- unknown to Ruth there is another kinsman who precedes Boaz or is more closely related than he. This kinsman has the legal right and opportunity, according to the Law, to take responsibility and become Ruth’s kinsman-redeemer. Nevertheless, Boaz took responsibility of Ruth by allowing her to stay overnight at the threshing floor - - she would avoid being placed in danger by traveling home late at night. Boaz assured Ruth that in the morning, he would meet with the kinsman to determine if he wanted to marry Ruth and become her kinsman-redeemer. Boaz reaffirmed (as the Lord liveth) that if this kinsman did not accept the responsibility, then he would surely marry her and become her kinsman-redeemer.

Verses 14-15:

Ruth laid at Boaz’s feet until morning (nothing inappropriate transpired) and then departed inconspicuously. Both Boaz and Ruth had honorable character and respectable reputations. Had she been seen leaving, people would have probably come to false, twisted, unjust, and corrupt conclusions about them both. They both were “abstaining from the appearance of evil” (1 Thes. 5:22). However, before Ruth departed, Boaz demonstrated his love, loyalty, and faithfulness to Ruth by filling her shawl with a generous supply of barley (parallel to a promise ring?). Boaz lovingly did not send her away “empty-handed.”

Verses 16-18:

Ruth arrived at home and Naomi with great anticipation asked Ruth how did things go. Ruth gave Naomi a full report of everything Boaz did and displayed the generous amount of barley Boaz provided for them both, since Boaz would not allow Ruth to return to Naomi “empty-handed.” This was another sincere demonstration of Boaz’s upright character - - he showed compassion and a determination to make provision for both Ruth and Naomi. Therefore, based upon Boaz’s actions towards Ruth, Naomi was confident that Boaz would perform everything in his power to redeem Naomi’s parcel of land and marry Ruth to become her kinsman-redeemer. With this confidence, she encouraged Ruth to wait calmly, patiently and have faith (God orchestrates all according to His Divine Will and His Purpose will be accomplished).

Ruth - - Notes And Lessons To Consider & Apply

Ruth was a story of Provision, Providence (the protective care of God & His Preparation for future events), and Redemption (Salvation). God's Love, Faithfulness, Compassion, Purpose, Orchestration, etc. is truly magnified in this story in bringing together a mature widow (Naomi), a young widow (Ruth), and a kinsman-redeemer (Boaz) to produce an heir who became a great king (David) and an Heir who is The Great King (The Lord Jesus Christ) and our Kinsman-Redeemer - - for we have Redemption through Him by His Precious Blood!

- 1) Be teachable - - learn how to listen & follow instructions for we may benefit richly by abandoning our thinking and consider another's wisdom (Ruth) 3:3-9**

- 2) Resist arrogance & pride...it's ugly & truly unattractive. Embrace & practice humility, sincerity, & integrity...it's beautiful & sweet-smelling. The Lord will notice & cause someone else to notice and bless you richly!**

- 3) Be diligent in being selfless instead of selfish! God bless those who are givers of themselves or selfless - - Naomi was selfless in giving her right to marry to Ruth. Ruth was selfless in abandoning her homeland, family, friends, deity, etc. to be faithful to her impoverished mother-in-law. Boaz was selfless in being a provider & kinsman-redeemer for both Ruth & Naomi.**

- 4) Seek God for "illumination" in learning to quickly recognize OPPORTUNITIES that He provides. How often have we detoured from blessings because we did not recognize the opportunity? Naomi saw the opportunity the Lord was providing for her and Ruth in Ruth finding great favor with Boaz (it was an opportunity for a marriage proposal).**

- 5) We are in no position to determine the value of someone's life, nor their "usability" in in the Purpose of God. What Jew during this time would have envisioned The Lord God of Israel using a Moabitess in the lineage of king of David and the Messiah Jesus Christ?**

- 6) A. What relationship with God did Naomi display to her daughter-in-law for her to be passionately committed in embracing her God as her very own?
B. What depth of faithfulness did Naomi show towards God in continuing to honor Him in her life in a foreign land (Moab) where idol gods where worshipped?
Truly Naomi's walk with The God of Israel left an indelible imprint upon Ruth's heart to choose her land, people, and God! We must be faithful to God wherever we are and reveal ourselves, just as Naomi, as the "salt of the earth" (Matt. 5:13) & "light of the world" (Matt. 5:14)**

- 7) **1 Samuel 15:22, "...to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams..." - - - There is GREAT reward in hearkening (listening) to and obeying God. We position ourselves to become "Divine Instruments of God" to be used by God to fulfill His Will, accomplish His Purpose, and bring Transformation into the lives of others. Naomi, Ruth, & Boaz impacted the course of history!**
- 8) **Faithful leads to Fruitfulness - - God gives Provision and manifests Providence for those who sacrifice for Him and display sincere love, trust, and faith in Him...those who are Believers. God took Naomi and Ruth from a place of poverty to a place of prosperity! "For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect (sincere) towards Him" (2 Chron. 16:9). The Lord looks to manifest Provision, Providence, and Redemption (Salvation) in the lives of His people!**
- 9) **How many people would have made the choice Ruth made? She came to "divergence" in her "road of life" and decided to abandon her homeland, family, friends, deity, past, customs, etc. to embrace Naomi's homeland, people, God, etc. Orpah made the choice**
- that most would have made - - it was the easiest. The Lord Jesus teaches us about choices in Matthew 7:13-14...He says the broad way leading to the wide gate will be a heavily travelled path (very popular & crowded). The Narrow way leading to Strait gate**
- will not be a well travelled, popular road at all, yet THIS is the road that leads to LIFE! Ruth chose the Narrow Way and received the Blessings & Salvation of God!**

Jesus was crucified with two other criminals (Luke 23:39-43) and as they were expiring

one of them railed Jesus, irreverencing and challenging Him to save Himself and them also - - the Lord didn't even respond to him. However, the other criminal recognized Jesus as the King, and humbly implored Jesus to remember him in His Kingdom... the Lord promised him he would be in paradise (eternal life) with Him. This one chose the Narrow Way which led to eternal life.

We learn from Ruth, just as Jesus said, in order to have true intimacy with Him, we must be willing to abandon anything or anyone that would obstruct us. We must leave all to follow Jesus (Mark 8:34)... "Whoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." Matthew the tax collector left all and followed Jesus (Matt. 9:9); Peter and Andrew left all (nets) and followed Jesus - - James and his brother John left their father Zebedee to follow Jesus (Matt. 4:18-22). Jesus promises that whosoever saves his life shall lose it, but those who lose their lives for His sake shall find life (Mark 8:35). Those who don't understand this faithfulness to God will claim you're crazy - - this was said about Jesus along with Him being called a devil (Mark 3:21-22). The Lord assures us that whatever we abandon for His sake that we would receive "an hundred fold now in this time...and in the world to come eternal life" (Mark 8:29-30). We must be steadfast, unmovable in our faith in God and our Covenant, Blood-Sealed relationship with Him. Continue on the Narrow Way - - the Road less traveled.