

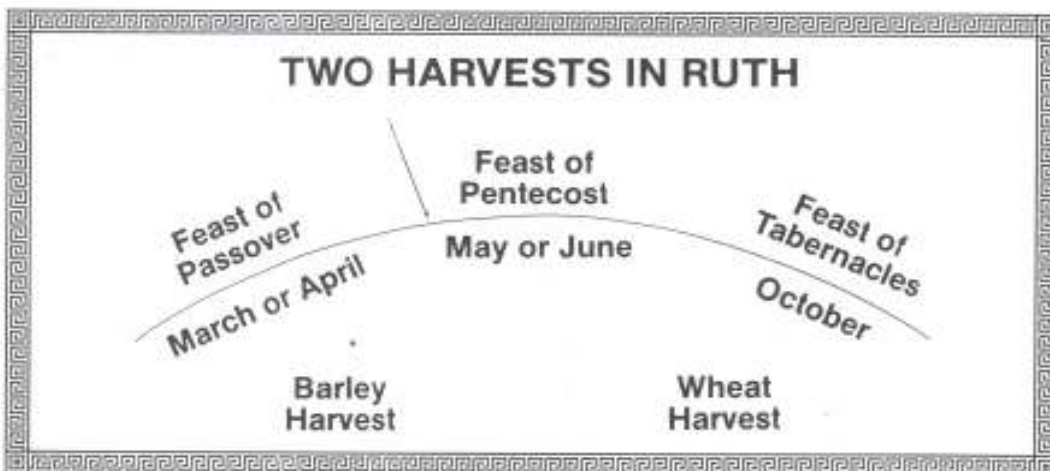
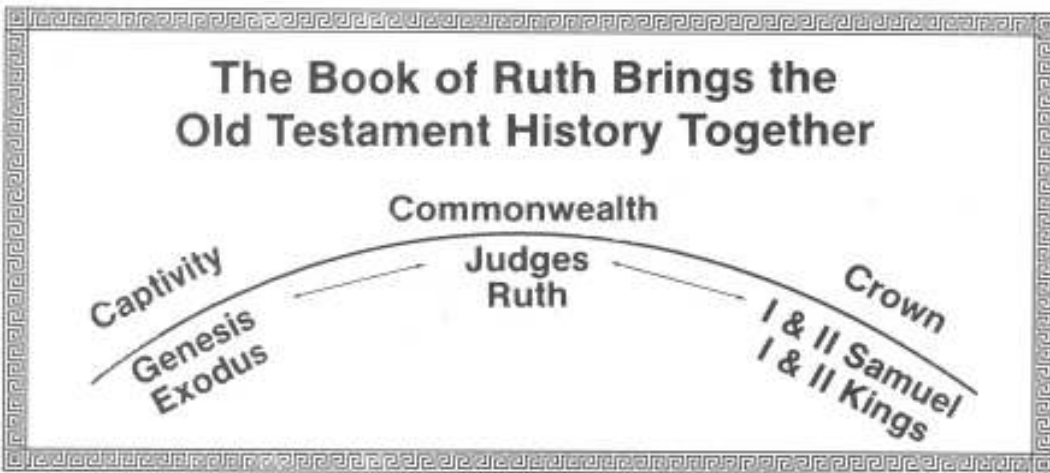
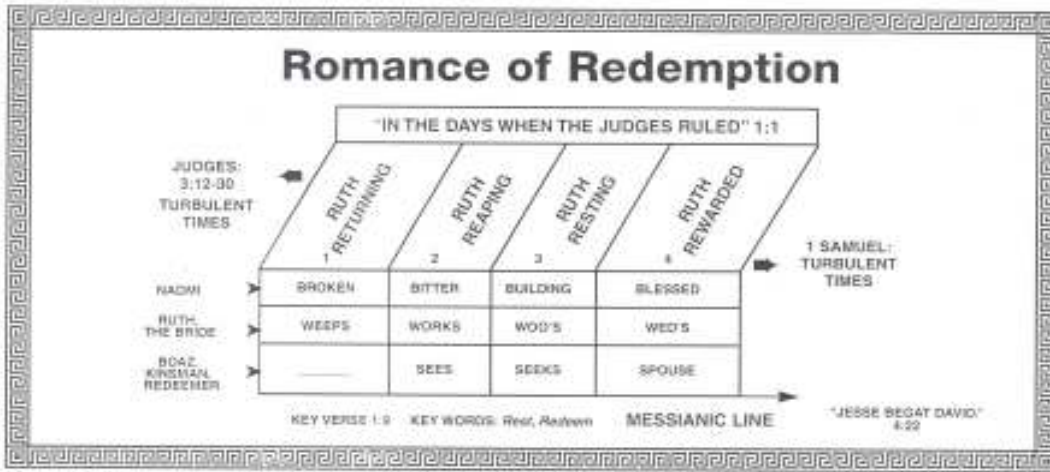
School of Ministry 



CHRIO School of Ministry
{chrio : anointed}

A ministry division of Church 4:18, Muskogee, OK

www.somonline.org



CALENDAR IN RUTH

Chapter 1
Ten to Fifteen Years

Chapter 2
Three to Four Months

Chapter 3
One Afternoon and Night

Chapter 4
One Morning

LOCATION OF EVENTS

Chapter 1
Moab

Chapter 2
Bethlehem's Fields

Chapter 3
The Threshing Floor

Chapter 4
Gate of Bethlehem

| | | |
|---|---|----------------------|
| ELIMELECH (Old Covenant) | } | Ends in Death |
| NAOMI (Natural Israel) | | |
| BASED ON THE WORKS OF THE LAW | | |
| BOAZ (Jesus Christ) | } | Ends in Life |
| RUTH (Church) | | |
| BASED ON THE GRACE OF GOD'S LOVE | | |

Chapter 1

ROMANCE OF REDEMPTION

Romance is at the heart of the universe. It is the _____ of the Bible. We read in John 3:16 that *“God so loved the world . . .”* The Bible tells us the very nature of *“God is love.”* I John 4:8

The Bible begins by telling the story of the wedding of the first man Adam and his wife, Eve, in Genesis 2:22 and ends with the wedding of the last Adam (Jesus Christ) and His bride (the Church) in Revelation 19:7. In the middle of the Bible is a love song called “The Song of Solomon” about a king and his favorite wife. All of these facts show us that the central theme of the Bible is redeeming love.

The history of Israel could be divided between the Captivity in Egypt and the Crown in Jerusalem. In the middle of Israelite history comes a beautiful story of _____. It is not the usual story of romantic love between a man and a woman, but the amazing story of a daughter-in-law (who is a Moabite) loving her mother-in-law (who is Jewish). She loves her mother-in-law so much she willingly forsakes her own faith, family and friends to follow her to a strange country and take care of her.

In these four short chapters of Ruth, we find the heart and message of the whole Bible. It is the story of _____ love. Only God is able to give us such a wonderful story illustrating His plan of redemption for all mankind.

THE STORY OF THE BOOK OF RUTH

RUTH RETURNING: In Chapter 1, the Jewish mother-in-law, Naomi, began to rebuild her broken life by making her way back home to Bethlehem from the country of Moab accompanied by her daughter-in-law, Ruth.

RUTH REAPING: Chapter 2 shows Naomi and Ruth living in Bethlehem during the time of harvest and Ruth wasted no time in going to the fields as a gleaner to take care of their personal needs.

RUTH RESTING: In Chapter 3, Ruth had found a home in Bethlehem but was still a widow and Naomi was determined to change that situation. Naomi taught Ruth the proper procedure for seeking a Jewish husband.

RUTH REWARDED: The story concludes in Chapter 4 with Ruth having found happiness and fulfillment in a new marriage that left the whole city of Bethlehem rejoicing.

THE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK OF RUTH

THE FAMILY OF ELIMELECH: The story begins in Chapter 1 with an Israelite named Elimelech; his wife, Naomi; and their two sons, Mahlon and Chilion. While living in Moab, the boys marry Moabite girls named Ruth and Orpah.

RUTH, NAOMI AND BOAZ: In Chapter 2, Naomi and Ruth are all that remained of the family of Elimelech. Ruth met Boaz in her impoverished condition as a Moabite widow and was very kind to her.

NAOMI, RUTH AND BOAZ: Chapter 3 shares how Naomi understood the Hebrew culture and was determined to help Ruth find a Jewish husband in order to remove her _____ of being a Moabite widow.

BOAZ, RUTH, OBED AND NAOMI: Chapter 4 tells about the marriage of Ruth to Boaz. The story ends with Naomi celebrating the birth of their son, Obed, who grows up to become the grandfather of King David.

THE PLACES OF THE BOOK OF RUTH

BETHLEHEM AND MOAB: Chapter 1 begins with a famine in Bethlehem which caused Elimelech to seek better fortunes in the country of Moab.

THE FIELDS OF BETHLEHEM: It is harvest time in Chapter 2 and Ruth seeks food for herself and Naomi in the fields of Bethlehem.

THE THRESHING FLOOR OF BOAZ: The harvest is over in Chapter 3 and Naomi sends Ruth off at midnight to search for Boaz at his threshing floor.

BETHLEHEM'S GATE AND BOAZ'S HOME: Chapter 4 ends with a wedding contract at Bethlehem's gate and a baby boy being born in Boaz's home.

THE PURPOSE OF THE BOOK OF RUTH

The book of Ruth ends with a brief genealogy of King David. This genealogy is the obvious reason the story of Ruth was so important to Israelite history. Israel's greatest king was the great-grandson of a Moabite woman. Because of the time and details of the story and also the style of writing, it is believed that the prophet Samuel wrote the book. The book of Ruth ties together the Old Testament history of Israel.

The Bible is the story of a _____ God Who is not willing for people to die and is determined to redeem them!

Chapter 2

THE CHRISTIAN HUMANIST

The book of Ruth opens with the words, “*Now it came to pass . . .*” in Ruth 1:1. But sometimes it seems as though our _____ will never end. We need to remind ourselves that God is still in charge of this world and will always have the last word.

THE ESCAPE OF ELIMELECH

“*In the days when the judges ruled,*” describes not only the time of the story, but gives the real reason that there was a “*famine in the land*”. The book of Judges ends in Judges 21:25 with the statement that because “*there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.*” Bad _____ was destroying the people and the nation. Anarchy breeds an atmosphere of rebellion and lawlessness. But though the people thought they were doing the right thing in their own eyes, seven times the book of Judges says it was “evil in the sight of the LORD.” See Judges 2:11; 3:7 and 12; 4:1; 6:1; 10:6; and 13:1.

God is a God of good government. God never intended for the Israelites to be a self-governing people. Moses had acted as the first King of Israel, even though he never called himself that by title (Deuteronomy 33:5). Moses was the first man in the Bible who was prophet, priest and king. As a result, he became a type of Jesus Christ. Moses told Israel in Deuteronomy 18:15, “*The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me.*”

God had promised to bless His people in the land of promise, but now there was a “*famine in the land.*” In natural terms, a famine simply meant there was no rain. But in spiritual terms, it meant they had lost the blessings of God and were living under a curse. The words used to illustrate this message are full of meaning.

- “Bethlehem” = The house of bread
- “Ephrah” = The place of fruitfulness
- “Elimelech” = My God is King
- “Moab” = The place of ease

The author is painting a word picture. There was no bread in the house of bread and the place of fruitfulness was barren. Instead of Elimelech, whose name meant “my God is King”, he tried to run away to the place of _____.

THE ENTICEMENT OF MOAB

Moab represented a land that was without trouble. It was presented as an easy place without hardships of the world. But Moab’s promises proved to be lies. If Elimelech could only have seen the end result of his bad decision, he never would have left Bethlehem. In the end, all that Moab offered was a cemetery containing three tombstones with the names of Elimelech and his sons upon them. Jeremiah 48:11.

The Psalmist spoke about his soul being “*cast down*” in Psalm 42:5. This was a shepherd’s term that was used for sheep that could not rise up on their feet. The sheep were looking for little soft curvatures on the ground in which to make themselves a bed. But when they lay down in their soft beds, they found it difficult to rise up again. When the morning came, if the shepherd did not quickly find them, the hot sun would kill them in their helpless condition.

THE EVIL OF HUMANISM

Elimelech was acting like a Christian humanist.

| The Christian Humanist | The Bible |
|--|---|
| ... sees a difference in the spiritual and the secular | ... teaches that the Christian must not divide his world into spiritual and secular. The Christian lives his Christianity every day |
| ... believes mankind through science and knowledge can solve all his problems | ... says only God can solve mankind’s great problems |
| ... looks for human authority in order to the Bible is true | ... does not need human support; it stands alone without needing our help |
| ... trusts in collective security, believing that if you have enough people supporting you, anything is possible | ... teaches that we should trust in God rather than big government and strong unions |

The media of this world is constantly trying to control our thinking. Do not allow this to happen to you. You will find many of your problems as a Christian are within your own thought patterns rather than with the devil or the world.

THE ETERNAL TRUTH

Instead of running away to Moab, trying to find a place of ease, Elimelech should have lived up to his name and believed GOD to help him with his problems in Bethlehem. As Christians we also should live up to our name and trust Christ to help us rather than turning to the world for help. The world does not have the answers to most of life’s problems and it is a mistake to think we can _____ away from our troubles. Learn to build your life upon the principles of the Word of God. It is only through God’s Word that you will find the answers to life’s most difficult questions.

Reject the lies of the world and live by God’s truth!

Chapter 3

A LOVING LEADER

The one word that makes the difference between a “*dictator*” and a “*director*” is the word _____ . One of the greatest cries in our world today is the cry for good leadership. In the story of Ruth, God placed the responsibility of making the bad decision to leave Bethlehem and go to Moab squarely upon the shoulders of Elimelech. This story of the failure in leadership is similar to the story of the Garden of Eden in Genesis 3:9 where God also laid the blame upon the first man, Adam.

LEADING THE WRONG WAY

STOP LIVING FOR THE TEMPORAL AND LEARN TO LIVE FOR ETERNITY!

The temporary has a way of becoming the permanent. Elimelech’s family left Israel in Ruth 1:1 “*to sojourn in the country of Moab.*” They only intended to stay a few days in Moab, but Ruth 1:2 says they “*continued there*”. There is no record that they ever prayed about the matter. Elimelech died in Moab and soon the boys married Moabite girls and “they dwelled there about ten years” according to Ruth 1:4. Moab had become their home and now they never planned to leave. But the promises of the world are _____ ! They had gone to Moab to escape the hard times in Bethlehem, but soon Elimelech and his two sons were dead in Moab. They had only intended to stay a few days, but they never returned home. The easy place to which they thought they were escaping ended in their deaths.

GET RID OF THE BITTERNESS IN YOUR HEART

We know Elimelech must have been a bitter man by the names he gave his two sons. He called his oldest son “*Mahlon*” which means “*sickly*”. He named his second son “*Chilion*” which means “*wasting away*”. The babies could not have been very sick because they grew to become men who married and lived ten years in Moab. Something is _____ with a man who would name his newborn sons such names. Elimelech had already backslidden in his heart before he left Bethlehem and now his feet have simply followed the decision his heart had made long ago.

STOP TURNING TO THE WORLD FOR HELP

When Elimelech died, his boys did not seek after God. They were following their dad’s example of looking to the world for easy answers. It was not God’s will for Mahlon and Chilion to marry Moabite girls. God had commanded the Israelites in Deuteronomy 23:3-4 to never allow a Moabite to “*enter the congregation of the Lord*”. The reason behind this prohibition was the time when the Moabites had hired a prophet named “*Balaam . . . to curse them*” and the Moabite women began to seduce the Israelite men to “*commit whoredom*” with them and “*they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods*” in Numbers 25:1-2. God had turned their curse back upon them and the Moabites reaped the curse they had sown.

Living the wrong way resulted in the early deaths of Mahlon and Chilion in Moab and only Naomi was left of her family. She was backslidden, bankrupt and bitter, too. Her name “*Naomi*” means “*pleasant*”, but in Ruth 1:20 she renamed herself “*Mara*” which means “*bitterness*”. She was bitter because she believed the “*Almighty has dealt very bitterly*” with her family. But remember, God had never sent them to Moab. She was _____ God for the result of bad decisions made by her and her family.

LEADING THE RIGHT WAY

YOU MUST EARN RESPECT

Respect must be “*commanded*” by the way we live rather than “*demanded*” just because of our positions. We earn the respect of those following us by our integrity, our honesty and our love for them. Bad decisions will divide a family and, according to Matthew 12:25, a “*house divided against itself shall not stand.*”

MIGHT IS NOT NECESSARILY RIGHT

We must learn to be a “*director*” and not a “*dictator*”. Just because we happen to be the oldest, the biggest or the richest does not automatically give us the right to be the leader.

SUBMIT TO PROPER SPIRITUAL AUTHORITIES

In Isaiah 14:12 we learn that rebellion is a spiritual problem that began in Heaven with the devil. If we choose to live in rebellion, we will pass the same spirit of rebellion on to our children or anyone else who is following us. The only way to conquer rebellion is by proper submission to the authorities God has placed in our lives.

LEARN TO BECOME A LOVING LEADER

Elimelech was not thinking of his family when he went to Moab. He was thinking of himself. As leaders, we must learn to become sacrificial in our leadership. The test of love is, “*How much are you willing to give of yourself?*” We must be willing to spend more on those following us than upon ourselves. This is the same way that we know God loves us. John 3:16 says, “*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.*” A loving leader _____ the right to lead.

Leadership is an awesome responsibility as the future happiness of those who follow you depends on your good judgment!

Chapter 4

REST FOR THE WEARY

Naomi realized she had made the most tragic _____ of her life. She had gone to the country of Moab in order to escape the famine in Bethlehem, but both her husband and her sons died after living in Moab for a little over ten years. She was widowed and alone with no family members to help her survive in a strange country. What looked like a good opportunity to escape their troubles had brought her the greatest problem of her life.

NAOMI HAD NO PURPOSE IN MOAB

It had never been the will of God for Naomi to leave Bethlehem. She realized this and decided it was time to return home. Ruth 1:6 says, ***“Then she arose . . . that she might return from the country of Moab.”*** This was the same decision made in Luke 15:18 by the prodigal son when he said, ***“I will arise and go to my father.”*** When you realize you have made a mistake and have fallen, don’t just lie where you are. Get up! Turn around! Learn from your mistake and start over again.

NAOMI HAD NO PLAN IN MOAB

Naomi decided to return to Bethlehem because she had heard that ***“the LORD had visited His people in giving them bread.”*** We do not know who it was that told her the good news, but someone was faithful to witness to this backslidden woman. She made plans to go back home again.

As Christians, we have a better promise than just a visit from God. The word ***“visit”*** is a word meaning to stay temporarily. It is the opposite of the word ***“abide”*** which means to settle down and feel at home. The Apostle John loved to use the word ***“abide”*** in his writings.

- ***“He that says he abides in Him . . .”*** I John 2:6
- ***“He that loves his brother abides in the light.”*** I John 2:10
- ***“Let that . . . abide in you, which you have heard.”*** I John 2:24
- ***“The anointing . . . abides in you.”*** I John 2:27

This same Greek word is also translated as *“continue”*, *“remain”* and *“dwell”* and is used a total of 23 times in the book of 1st John. It is always a mark of _____ when a person learns to abide, to keep on keeping on instead of trying to run away from problems.

NAOMI HAD MADE NO PROGRESS IN MOAB

Naomi recognized that her mistake had not only affected her own personal life but the lives of her daughters-in-law as well. They shared in the grief of her bitterness. But though she was grieving, she wisely began to pray for them in Ruth 1:9 stating, ***“The LORD grant you that you may find _____.”*** The word **“rest”** that Naomi prayed God would give to them is found many different places throughout the Old Testament.

- ***“The ark of the covenant . . . went before them . . . to search out a resting place for them.”*** Numbers 10:33
- ***“For you are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance which the LORD your God gives you.”*** Deuteronomy 12:9
- ***“He leads me beside the still waters (waters of rest).”*** Psalm 23:2
- ***“Unto whom I swore in My wrath that they should not enter into My rest.”*** Psalm 95:11
Because of their _____, the children of Israel were not permitted to enter into the rest found in the Promised Land.” Hebrews 3:18-19.
- ***“Come unto me all you who are weary and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.”*** Matthew 11:28

As New Testament believers we are promised the rest which comes from the Holy Spirit.

- ***“For with stammering lips and another tongue will He speak unto this people. To whom He said, ‘This is the rest wherewith you may cause the weary to rest.’”*** Isaiah 28:11-12; 1st Corinthians 14:21

This promise of spiritual rest to our spirits by the Holy Spirit is available to the believer today. Our society and world has become a very restless place, but God has provided rest for the people who will put their trust in Jesus Christ according to Hebrews 4:9-11.

- ***“The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest . . .”*** but God has provided spiritual rest for us in His House of Bread (the Church). Isaiah 57:20

NAOMI IS A PATTERN FOR BACKSLIDERS TO FOLLOW

Just because we have made a terrible mistake with our lives is no reason for us to quit trying to do what is right. Like Naomi, we should get up out of our misery and start over again. God has not failed us; we have failed God. But if we will get up and start toward God, we will be amazed at the _____ of God upon our lives. If Naomi could only have seen how God was going to bless her life, she would have already been rejoicing. Because she made the wise decision to return back home to Bethlehem, her family is found in the lineage of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Failure is not final unless we fail to try again!

Chapter 5

MOABITES ARE NOT WELCOME

Neither Naomi nor the prodigal son returned home because of their love for home. It was because they were _____ that they came back. In the same way, we too come to God; not because we love Him, but because of our personal needs.

When Naomi made the decision to return home, both of her daughters-in-law said to her in Ruth 1:10, **“Surely we will return with you to your people.”** The word **“surely”** was the word of an oath. It showed that these girls were determined to go with her. This spoke well of Naomi. There must have been something special about this Israelite lady that these girls were ready to leave their families and country to follow her to an unknown place. But now Naomi was faced with a new dilemma. She knew that Moabites were not welcome in Israel and she had nothing to offer them. She realized that the Law of Moses contained no promises for a Moabite.

THE GRIEVING WIDOW

Naomi was overcome with her sense of loss. She had not only lost her husband and sons, but also all of her natural possessions. She had become very _____ about her problems and said in Ruth 1:21 that the **“Almighty has afflicted me.”** It is easy for us to blame God for bad decisions we have made. Faced with such mammoth problems, it is hard not to fall into a cycle of depression. Naomi could easily have begun to complain:

“If only the famine had not come to Bethlehem . . .”

“If only we had not left Bethlehem to go to Moab . . .”

“If only the boys had not married Moabite girls . . .”

“If only the boys had not died so young in Moab . . .”

“If only the famine had not come to Bethlehem . . .”

A cycle of grief like this accomplishes nothing of value. We must pick up the pieces from where we are and start over again. We must learn to cope with life’s problems.

THE LEAVING WIDOW

Orpah was the name of one of Naomi’s daughters-in-law. Her name means *“the back of the neck”* and that was exactly what she showed to Naomi and the land of Israel. She turned her back to return to Moab. In Ruth 1:14, Orpah had shown great _____ by weeping and had **“kissed her mother-in-law”**. But in Ruth 1:15 we see that it was the kiss of goodbye as she turned back. In spite of her tears and kisses, the fact remained that she had **“gone back unto her people, and unto her gods.”** The last thing we hear about Orpah is she had returned to the idol gods of the Moabites. It is not enough for us to show great emotion for God. We must make a commitment.

THE CLEAVING WIDOW

Ruth refused to listen to the discouragement of Naomi or to follow the example of Orpah. She became the cleaving widow. **“Entreat me not to leave you, or to return from following you,”** she says in Ruth 1:16. The word “entreat” means “*please, don’t become my enemy*”. Ruth begged her mother-in-law to allow her to return with her to Bethlehem.

The name **“Ruth”** means “*beauty*” and she was beautiful in the way she responded to Naomi. The words she used are spoken by lovers in weddings to this day, but remember she was talking to her mother-in-law. She said to Naomi in Ruth 1:16-17,

- **“Where you go, I will go.”**
- **“Where you lodge, I will lodge.”**
- **“Where you die, I will die, and there will I be buried.”**
- **“Your people shall be my people, and your God shall be my God.”**

What POWERFUL words! Ruth’s decision was based on _____ instead of emotions. Our decision to follow Christ must be made in the same manner. Emotions are always changing and never stable. We cannot build our lives upon them. It is imperative that we make a commitment with our will in answering the call to be a Christian. Ruth was determined that nothing was going to turn her back. Naomi saw that **“she was steadfastly minded to go with her”** as Ruth 1:18 says. In essence, Ruth was saying, “I will choose your PATH; I will go to your PLACE; I will choose your PEOPLE and I PURPOSE to serve your God.”

THE BELIEVING WIDOWS

There is such a startling contrast between these two widows.

NAOMI
Broken
Bitter
Old

RUTH
Determined
Innocent
Young

But though they were so different, this was still a new beginning for both of them. They had stopped trying to _____ the past and were making a new start for themselves. Notice Ruth 1:22 says, **“They came to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest.”** Barley was called the “*Bread of Pentecost*” because it was harvested during the time of the Feast of Pentecost. In these “last days”, God said in Act 2:17, **“I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh.”** We should expect God to bless our lives with the bread of Pentecost during this end time harvest.

**We should expect to eat of the Bread of Pentecost as we live in this
 outpouring of the Holy Spirit today!**

Chapter 6

MR. BOAZ

In Ruth chapter 2, we are introduced to a relative of Elimelech's that we have not met before. Boaz had been quietly living in Bethlehem all this time. If you are going to find Boaz, you must go to Bethlehem, "*The House of Bread*". Of course, the House of Bread represents the Church and that is exactly where you will find Christ today. The name "**Boaz**" means "*mighty man of wealth*" and he was certainly living up to his name (see Ruth 2:11). He had been prospering in Bethlehem while Elimelech was fleeing to Moab. His _____ of Boaz might have been one of the reasons Elimelech decided to go to Moab in the first place. Obviously, Boaz could have helped Elimelech. Why didn't Elimelech go to Boaz instead of running away to Moab? We cannot prove why he didn't, but it was probably due to pride. At the very least, Elimelech had avoided Boaz and worse yet he probably had ignored him. The answer to Elimelech's problems was there in Bethlehem all the time!

The Gospels of the New Testament give us the same description of Jesus Christ that the book of Ruth gives of Boaz.

JESUS

Matthew describes Jesus as the Mighty One
Mark describes Jesus as the Servant
Luke describes Jesus as the Son of Man.
John describes Jesus as the Savior.

BOAZ

Ruth 2:1 describes Boaz as having great wealth.
Ruth 3:11 describes Boaz as serving Ruth.
Ruth 3:9 describes Boaz as a near kinsman.
Ruth 4:10 says Boaz redeems Ruth.

Boaz is a beautiful picture of a kinsman redeemer. If a man died without a son to inherit his possessions, then his closest living male relative was to marry his widow as a kinsman redeemer and their firstborn son became the heir of the deceased man.

A REDEEMER MUST HAVE THE RIGHT TO REDEEM

The Hebrew word "**goel**" is a very important word meaning "**redeemer**". For a person to be able to redeem someone, he must be _____. This is why Jesus, though He is God, had to become a man and live among us in order to be our Savior. It was only by taking upon Himself a body of flesh and blood that He earned the right to redeem us. There must be a natural kinship for Him to have the right to redeem. This is the reason that angels cannot redeem us. It is a false doctrine to say that Jesus is the Angel Michael. If Jesus is an angel, then He is not a man. If He is not a man, He does not have the right to redeem!

When Jesus became a man, he became a part of the human family and He will not neglect His responsibilities according to Galatians 4:4-6. The Apostle Paul said in 1st Timothy 5:8 that, "***If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he has denied the faith.***" Jesus made provision to redeem any person of the human race who will put their trust in Him.

A REDEEMER MUST HAVE THE ABILITY TO REDEEM

Not only must a kinsman redeemer be a member of the family in trouble, but he must also have the means to pay the _____ of redemption. Most of the time those who were in need of redemption were poor people who had lost everything they possessed. They could not redeem themselves, but needed the help of a redeemer who possessed enough resources to pay their debt. Boaz was a “*mighty man of wealth*” with the ability to redeem everything that had been lost. If Boaz had been bankrupt, he would not have been able to help Naomi and Ruth.

It is impossible for us to redeem ourselves because we are not able to pay the debt of sin. We have all sinned and are hopelessly indebted because of it. There is no way that we can pay our own debt for the things we have done wrong. We need a Savior! This is why our redeemer Jesus Christ had to be more than a man. As Colossians 1:15 states, He had to be God in the flesh or He would not have had the ability to redeem us. It is true that Jesus was a man, but He was more than just a man. Philippians 2:6-8 makes it clear that **Jesus is God in a body of flesh!** It is a false teaching to say that Jesus was the man Adam. If He was Adam, He could not save us because Adam was only a man like we ourselves and Adam couldn't save himself. Genesis 3:17-19

A REDEEMER MUST HAVE THE WILL TO REDEEM

A kinsman redeemer must have more than the right and the ability to redeem. He must also have the _____ to redeem. No one could force him to be a redeemer. There had to be something within himself that motivated him and made him desire to redeem. The greatest of all motivations is the power of love. It was the love that Boaz had for Ruth that caused him to redeem her.

Our Savior Jesus Christ said of Himself in John 15:13, “***Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down His life for His friends.***” As John 3:16 states, it was because “***God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.***” We read in Romans 5:8 that “***God commended His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.***” _____ was what motivated Jesus to redeem us.

The word “*incarnation*” found in 1st Timothy 3:16 means “*in the flesh*”. The incarnation was God's masterpiece of redemption. Because of His love for us, God became human like us and overcame all the problems of redemption by paying our debt of sin.

Jesus Christ is the only one qualified to be our Redeemer!

Chapter 7

RUTH THE REAPER

Ruth was a young Moabite widow who had just returned to Bethlehem with Naomi her mother-in-law. They arrived just as the barley harvest was beginning. Ruth asked permission from Naomi to go glean in the harvest fields. In Ruth 2:3 we see that as she went to glean, she *“happened”* to come to the field belonging to Boaz. This meant it was happen-chance to Ruth because she had never heard of Boaz, but there are no _____ with God. Many things that seem to just happen to us are actually the work of God in our lives. God is often involved even in the little daily things that happen to us. Proverbs 16:33

THE GLEANING WIDOW

Ruth began working in the harvest to *“glean heads of grain”*. A _____ was a poor person working behind the reapers, picking up the single heads of grain that had fallen to the ground. It was very difficult and tedious work. God had made special provision for the welfare of the poor in Deuteronomy 24:19-22. In His wisdom, God had designed a system where people in financial trouble could meet their personal needs without injuring their self esteem. The three groups of poor people specifically mentioned who were to receive help were widows, orphans and strangers (aliens).

In this section of the story of Ruth, several people and places are mentioned that have special meaning to Christians today.

- **Boaz is a type of our kinsman redeemer, Jesus Christ.**
- **The unnamed servant is a type of the Holy Spirit.**
- **Ruth is a type of a new Christian.**
- **Bethlehem is a type of the Church.**

Boaz knew and greeted all of his workers, but then he recognized a new face in his harvest field whom he had not seen before. The unnamed servant of Boaz was in charge of the reapers harvesting Boaz’s barley, so Boaz asks the servant about her. Ruth had asked the servant for permission to glean and the servant introduced Ruth to Boaz. In the same manner, it is the Holy Spirit who introduces us to Christ today.

THE REAPING WIDOW

After he had been introduced to Ruth, Boaz began immediately to elevate her position from being a lowly gleaner to becoming one of his _____. He spoke kindly to her calling her *“daughter”* in Ruth 2:8. As New Testament Christians, we are called *“children of God”* in 1st John 3:1 and Romans 8:16. Boaz began to show special consideration for Ruth.

- He respected her purity in Ruth 2:8 -- *“Abide close to my maidens . . . ”*
- He offered her protection in Ruth 2:9 -- *“They shall not touch you . . . ”*
- He offered her provision in Ruth 2:9 -- *“When you are thirsty . . . ”*

The primary difference between a “gleaner” and a “reaper” was that the gleaner worked to meet his own personal needs, whereas a reaper worked in the same harvest fields to help the master safely gather his harvest before it was lost.

THE HONORED WIDOW

In Ruth 2:10, we see that Ruth realized that she was undeserving of all of this attention and asked Boaz, “***Why have I found grace in your eyes?***” That was a big question! Ruth knew she was a poor Moabite widow who was being shown favor. But you cannot earn grace. _____ is a gift! Boaz told her that he had heard of her even before they had met, and that he knew of her “trust” in God. Ruth 2:11-12

Boaz began to give special honor to Ruth.

- He invited her to sit with him during the noon meal in Ruth 2:14.
- He served her of his own food.
- He invited her to glean among the reapers cutting the grain in Ruth 2:15.
- In Ruth 2:16, He ordered the reapers to drop handfuls of grain for her.

In the same manner Christ has also honored us. As Christians, we are invited to “***sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus,***” according to Ephesians 2:6. Jesus told us that when He returns again, “***He shall gird Himself, and make them sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them***” in Luke 12:37. Jesus promised He will do for us exactly what Boaz did for Ruth. This is the story of ***grace***.

Ruth ate of the provision of Boaz and Ruth 2:14 says that “***she did eat, and was satisfied***”. This is the first time in the Book of Ruth that Ruth was _____. In fact, she had more than she needed and carefully placed what she could not eat with her things so she could take the leftovers home to her mother-in-law.

God desires to meet the needs in your life so you too will be satisfied. God wants to give you more than you need so that your life can be a blessing to many other hungry souls around you.

Only God’s grace can satisfy the needs of your life!

Chapter 8 WHERE HAVE YOU GLEANED TODAY?

One of the important ingredients of a satisfied life is finding work that is fulfilling. So many people are working jobs that they hate. They find nothing satisfying about the work they do and, as a result, are very discontent with life.

When Ruth returned home in the evening, Naomi, her mother-in-law, took one look at her and realized something special had happened that day. Ruth was smiling as she presented to Naomi all the grain her arms could carry. Boaz had blessed Ruth with a special _____ in Ruth 2:12 when he said, ***“The LORD recompense your work, and a full reward be given you of the LORD God of Israel.”*** Boaz had asked that Ruth’s work be rewarded and it was already beginning to take place.

As New Testament Christians, God will also reward our work. Hebrews 6:10 says, ***“For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love.”***

RUTH’S BARLEY

Ruth had worked hard that day and had much to show for it. Before she could take the barley grain that she had gleaned home to eat, she first had to beat it. See Ruth 2:17. Beating the grain loosened it from the dry husk which was not good for food. But even after she had separated the grain from the husk, she still had almost a bushel of good grain. That is a lot of grain for a gleaner to gather in one day. As Christians, we have to learn to beat out the ***“grain”*** of the ***“Word of God”*** on our knees in prayer before we can eat and digest the truth of God’s Word.

The Bible speaks of several things that were beaten for useful ministry.

| | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| Numbers 11:8 | Manna |
| Exodus 25:36 | Lampstand |
| Exodus 25:18 | Cherubim |
| Exodus 27:20 | Olive Oil |
| Exodus 30:36 | Incense |
| John 19:1 | Jesus Christ |

Ruth was young, innocent, and excited. She was more excited about her bushel of barley than anything else. She had yet to learn that it was _____ and not the barley grain which was the greatest treasure in the harvest field. Christians also must learn that Christ is our great reward, not the wonderful things He does for us.

BOAZ'S HARVEST

The name Boaz did not hold any special meaning to Ruth because she didn't know that he was a close (and very rich) relative to her dead husband. Being a Moabite, she did not understand the _____ God had made in the kinsman redeemer. Ruth didn't realize that Boaz was her great treasure. When Ruth arrived home that evening, Naomi recognized immediately that someone had shown Ruth special kindness. It would have been impossible for her to glean a bushel of grain in one day without some extra help. Naomi wanted to know where Ruth had been working and Ruth so innocently replied in Ruth 2:19, "***The man's name . . . is Boaz.***" Naomi realized God's hand was at work and began to praise the Lord. She then told Ruth in Ruth 2:20, "***The man is near kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen.***" Naomi meant well, but the truth is that Boaz was not "**one of**" the men, but he was the **only** man who had the right, the ability and the will to redeem them. This is what the Apostle Peter said of Jesus Christ in Acts 4:12, "***There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.***"

As Christians, Jesus Christ is our kinsman redeemer and our greatest treasure.

NAOMI'S ADVICE

Naomi understood the laws and the customs of the Israelites. When Ruth told her that Boaz had invited her to stay in his harvest field with his "**young men**", Naomi decided it was time to give her daughter-in-law some important advice. Ruth 2:21

STAY IN THE FIELDS OF BOAZ

Naomi told Ruth in 2:22 it was "**good**" that she stay with "**his maidens**", that the young men did not find her "**in any other field**". This was extremely important to Ruth's future happiness. Naomi knew they were living in dangerous days, "**when the judges ruled**" and that every man was doing "**what was right in his own eyes**" (Ruth 1:1 and Judges 21:25). If Ruth was to be redeemed from being a widow, she must guard her _____ during the harvest.

STAY UNTIL THE HARVEST ENDS

Harvest time was not a time when Boaz would be thinking of marriage. It was crucial to get the harvest safely out of the fields before it ruined. Boaz would not be able to marry Ruth until his harvest was protected by his barns. Ruth must learn to be faithful and labor diligently until the harvest was completed. Ruth 2:23

STAY WITH YOUR MOTHER-IN-LAW

Usually one of the most difficult of all natural relationships is the mother-in-law / daughter-in-law relationship. We laugh and tell jokes about it because it can be so serious. Learning to " **dwell**" with your mother-in-law is important to your own character development. As Christians, we should be learning how to _____ with one another in the Church as we faithfully labor in Christ's harvest field (the world). After the harvest, we will be married to Jesus Christ, our kinsman redeemer. As Christians, we too are headed for a wedding because the Son of God is going to marry the Church.

When the harvest is finished, we are going to a wedding!

Chapter 9

RUTH'S REST

Ruth had found provision, safety, a home, and work – but something very important was still missing from her life. She was a _____ with no husband or children. Boaz had the right and the ability to redeem her from her widowhood but had shown no interest in marriage other than his special kindness to her during the harvest. It was possible that Boaz didn't know that Ruth loved him and didn't think it proper as an older man to impose himself upon this beautiful young widow. Ruth 3:10

Some things that hindered the marriage were:

There was another man who was a nearer kinsman than Boaz. Ruth 3:12 says that before Boaz could redeem Ruth he first had to offer the right of redemption to this nearer kinsman.

There was another widow who had greater rights of redemption than Ruth. Naomi as the oldest living widow of the family of Elimelech had the first rights of redemption. It was not until she gave up her right to marry Boaz that Ruth could marry him. Ruth 3:17

There was the problem of indifference. As an older man, Boaz was not going to force himself into the life of this young woman. Only after Ruth made known her love for him was he motivated to begin the marriage process. Ruth 3:11

In chapter 2 we find where Boaz approached Ruth. Our salvation begins with Christ coming to us. But in chapter 3, it was Ruth seeking after Boaz. God has designed salvation where we are to continue seeking after Christ. The rest of this story could be called **Winnowing the Harvest, Wooing a Husband, and Wedding of Hearts**. Naomi gave Ruth some important advice on how to win a Jewish husband.

WASH YOURSELF

Ruth had been working hard in the harvest field. Harvesting is hot, dirty work. If Ruth was going to get married, she needed to _____ herself of all the defilement of working in the fields. See Ruth 3:13.

John 13:10 tells us that as Christians we, too, live in a dirty world that has its effect upon us. This does not mean there is sin in our hearts, but we do pick up things as we go through life, things that cling to us and we need to spend time in the presence of God to allow Him to cleanse us from any defilement. As we prepare ourselves for marriage to Jesus Christ, we need to ***“cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit”*** according to 2nd Corinthians 7:1.

ANOINT YOURSELF

The world is not only a dirty place; it also has some very bad odors. Ruth not only needed to be cleansed from any defilement, Naomi told her to put on some nice perfume as well. Naomi understood men. She knew that the smell of the perfume would be especially attractive to Boaz at the close of a long hard day of work. Christians need to be ***“anointed”*** by the sweetness of the Holy Spirit. This will not only empower us for service in doing the work of Christ, it will also be a heavenly perfume to Him as well. Christ will recognize and be attracted to the fragrance of His Spirit upon our lives.

CLOTHE YOURSELF

Naomi told Ruth in 3:3 to dress for the occasion by putting on ***“your best garment”***. As a widow, Ruth had been wearing her widow’s garments as mentioned in Genesis 38:14. These were the garments of her past mourning over a dead husband. If Ruth was planning to get married, she needed to put on the best dress she had and get ready for her wedding. We should likewise dress in a way that honors Christ’s coming because we are going to a wedding and not a funeral. Christianity is to be a celebration of Christ’s love for us. Revelation 19:7-9

HIDE YOURSELF

Ruth was counseled in 3:3-4, ***“Do not make yourself known.”*** Naomi was telling her not to reveal herself until the proper time. Timing is so important in relationships. In romantic relationships there comes a time when three becomes a crowd. You simply want to be _____ with your lover. We must learn to spend time alone with God. There is something wrong with the Christian who does not want to be in the presence of Christ. Just as Ruth approached Boaz, so Jesus waits for us to seek Him.

Moses and the Consecration of the Priests

This same pattern of cleaning, anointing, clothing and hiding was used for the “consecration” of new priests (Leviticus 8:6, 7, 10, 33). Moses told the new priests to wash themselves before they were anointed with oil. Then they were to be clothed with their new priestly garments and to spend a whole week alone in the presence of God in the tabernacle. While in the tabernacle, the priests were to feast upon the sacrificial offerings to God. These actions set them apart from the other people, or “sanctified” them and qualified them to become priests of God.

David and the Restoration of the Backslider

King David used these same steps in 2nd Samuel 12:20 after his great sin with Bathsheba. David knew how to come before God and to be restored in his broken relationship with Him. He was not _____ in approaching God, but deliberately walked through each of these steps in repenting and returning to God.

We should all learn the proper way of approaching Christ!

Chapter 10

THE THRESHING FLOOR

Ruth was still a widow. Boaz had the right to marry her and to redeem her from being a widow, but he had made no move to do so. It was here at the **“threshing floor”** at the close of the harvest that Ruth approached Boaz in Ruth 3:1 and found the **“rest”** she had been seeking.

The Bible has much to say about threshing floors. The threshing floor was usually a large rock on an elevated location which could take advantage of wind currents. As the grain was tossed into the air, the wind would catch the light worthless chaff and blow it away, leaving the heavier good grain to fall free.

- Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice on a threshing floor.
- David gave an offering of repentance at a threshing floor.
- Solomon built the Temple at a threshing floor.
- Jesus Christ became our sacrifice at a threshing floor.

THE PLAN OF NAOMI

It was already dark when Ruth arrived at the threshing floor, but she hid herself and did not let anyone know she was there. Finally, around midnight, when the work was finished and the laborers had gone, she quietly approached Boaz. See Ruth 3:3-4. At first he did not know she was there, but 3:8 says that at **“midnight”** he turned over and was frightened because **“a woman lay at his feet”**. Boaz was startled and asked, **“Who are you?”** Ruth answered him in 3:9, **“I am Ruth, your servant.”** That was a statement of _____ because technically she was still the Moabite. Up to this point in the story, we are continually reminded that Ruth was **“the Moabitess”**. See Ruth 1:4, 22; 2:2, 6, 10 and 21. But at this point, Ruth said nothing of being a Moabitess, which showed she believed Boaz would redeem her from being a widow. As Christians, we should likewise believe that Christ has redeemed us from the curse of **“the law of sin and death”** mentioned in Romans 8:2. Christ has promised to marry us and to restore everything that was lost when Adam rebelled against God.

THE PROPOSAL OF RUTH

Ruth asked Boaz to **“spread your skirt over your servant, for you are a near kinsman.”** These are the same Hebrew words you read in Ruth 2:12 when Boaz blessed Ruth by saying, **“the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings you are come to trust.”** She was actually proposing _____ to Boaz by asking him to redeem her from being a widow. This is also what John did when he closed his letter in Revelation 22:20 by saying, **“Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”**

THE PROMISE OF BOAZ

- Ruth 3:11 -- **“I WILL DO TO YOU ALL THAT YOU REQUIRE.”**
Boaz told Ruth that he would do what she had requested; that there were some difficulties that he would have to overcome to marry her, but that he would _____. Ruth could not redeem herself. She had to put her confidence in someone trustworthy who could help her. In the same way, we cannot save ourselves. Only Jesus Christ is able to save us from our sins and to redeem us from the curse of death that sin has brought into our world. Jesus has made us many promises.

“I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28

“I will come to you.” John 14:18

“I will come again.” John 14:3

“I will love him.” John 14:21

This is just a small sample of the many promises that Christ has given to us. We must learn to believe and patiently wait for the fulfillment of His Word. The promise will surely come to pass just as He has said. Hebrews 10:36-37

- Ruth 3:13 – **“I WILL DO THE PART OF A KINSMAN TO YOU, AS THE LORD LIVETH.”**
Boaz placed himself under an _____. He was making his promise as sure as possible. He actually was saying, “If God doesn’t die, I will redeem you.” We know God isn’t going to die! God is from everlasting to everlasting. Acts 1:3 also says that Jesus has given us many ***“infallible proofs”*** of His resurrection. Revelation 1:18 says, ***“He is alive forevermore.”*** One of the greatest proofs Jesus gave us was the ***“promise of the Father”*** in Luke 24:49. This ***“promise”*** was fulfilled in Acts 2:1-4 on the day of Pentecost when ***“suddenly there came a sound from heaven . . . and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit.”*** God’s promise has been signed, sealed and certified.

Then Boaz gave Ruth a gift to take to her mother-in-law. He wanted Naomi to be assured that he would act in good faith today by marrying Ruth. He gave Ruth ***“six measures”*** of grain to carry to Naomi. In the Bible, the number six is an incomplete number. In other words, this was another assurance of Boaz, “I will complete the work today. He was promising that the best was yet to come. Ruth 3:17

- Ruth 3:18 -- **“SIT STILL, MY DAUGHTER . . . FOR THE MAN WILL NOT REST.”**
Naomi met Ruth at the door of the house and asked her what had happened. Again in 3:16 Ruth testified of her faith and ***“told her all that the man had done.”*** Ruth was already beginning to enter into her ***“rest”*** because she had done all that was necessary for her to do and now it was _____ for Boaz to go to work. Likewise, there remains a ***“rest to the people of God”*** according to Hebrews 4:9. We should learn to ***“sit still”*** and trust Christ to fulfill all His promises just as He said.

We should work today to enable us to enter God’s eternal rest!

Chapter 11

RUTH'S REDEMPTION

As the new day approached and the sun began to rise, Boaz left the threshing floor and headed toward the city gates of Bethlehem. He had a lot on his mind. The land Elimelech formerly owned was up for sale and Elimelech's widow, Naomi, had given up her rights to the property in preference to her daughter-in-law, Ruth. That meant that Ruth, the Moabitess, had become the heir of Elimelech's farm. But there was someone more closely related to Elimelech than Boaz. By being closer kin, this man had the first option to purchase the land by _____ the widow of the deceased owner. Before Boaz could do anything about purchasing Elimelech's farm, he had to first deal with this man who had greater rights of redemption than himself. Ruth 3:13

BOAZ AND THE NEARER KINSMAN

Boaz waited at the city gates where all official business was transacted until he saw this relative who was more closely related to Elimelech. Boaz called him to come sit down and discuss some business. In Ruth 4:1-2, Boaz called for ten elders of the city to join them as official witnesses of this important business transaction. This near kinsman realized that something of importance was happening and probably guessed that it had to do with Naomi. She had recently returned to Bethlehem and would want to regain _____ of her former husband's land. As Christians, all of this has special meaning to us.

- **The nearer kinsman represents the Law of Moses.**
- **The ten elders represent the Ten Commandments.**
- **Boaz represents our Lord Jesus Christ.**
- **Ruth represents the Gentile believer.**

Boaz was going public with his redemption plans. This is what Paul meant in Acts 26:26 when he said, *"This thing was not done in a corner."*

BOAZ AND THE LAW OF MOSES

Boaz knew that to be successful in his plan to marry Ruth and redeem Elimelech's farm he must first deal successfully with the nearer kinsman. The nearer kinsman represents the Law of Moses. Before Christ could redeem Gentiles who would believe in Him, He had to first fulfill all of the claims of the Law of Moses. Jesus said in Matthew 5:17, *"Do no think I am come to destroy the law . . . I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill."* There was nothing _____ with the Law of Moses, but there was something wrong with us. Just as Ruth was a Moabitess who had no promises under the Law of Moses, we as Gentiles were not a part of the covenant that Israel had with God in the Old Testament. *"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh,"* God did for us by *"sending His son in the likeness of sinful flesh"* and as a sacrifice for our sins. See Romans 8:3. Boaz realized in 4:16 that his opportunity to marry Ruth would come because this nearer kinsman already had a family that he would not be ready to jeopardize for a Gentile girl. Because Ruth was a Moabitess she could not enforce the Law of Moses which only contained promises for Israelites.

Paul tells us in Romans 3:26 that in redemption God had to be **“just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”** This means that it is not lawful to break the law in order to fulfill the law. And you only have to break the law in **“one point”** according to James 2:10 in order to be **“guilty of all”**. The law held no promises for Gentiles. But remember, there was nothing wrong with the law, but with us.

- **“The commandment . . . was ordained to life.” Romans 7:10**
- **“The law is holy.” Romans 7:12**
- **“The commandment is holy, just and good.”**
- **“The law is spiritual.” Romans 7:14**

BOAZ AND LOVING GRACE

The nearer kinsman would have liked to have owned the property of Elimelech, but he did not love Ruth and was not willing to bring confusion into his own family by marrying a Moabite. This is the problem of the law redeeming us. **“The law is not of faith”** because **“faith . . . works by love”** according to Galatians 3:12 and 5:6. The Law of Moses and the Ten Commandments are good to live by, but they are no good to die by! When you die, the very commandments you tried and failed to obey will stand in judgment against you to condemn you before God. The 10th commandment, **“Thou shall not covet”** found in Exodus 20:17 is what we call a legal “catch all” phrase. It means you are not to even have the _____ to break any of the other commandments. Humans have not only the desire to sin but we are also guilty because all of us have **“sinned and come short of the glory of God”** according to Romans 2:23. The law is powerless to produce life.

When the nearer kinsman gave up his rights to Elimelech’s farm in Ruth 4:9, Boaz redeemed all rights to the farm and Ruth for his wife. In the same manner **“Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law”** and we have become His **“beloved”**. See Galatians 3:13 and Ephesians 1:6.

Boaz redeemed Ruth because of his love for her. John 15:13 confirms that love is also what motivated Christ to redeem us. The new law that Christ gave to us is to **“love one another”** and this new **“law of faith”** conquers **“the law of sin and death”**. (John 13:34-35; Romans 3:27 & 8:2)

In Judges 1:12-15, the Old Testament gives us a beautiful story of the wedding of Caleb’s daughter. Her name was Achsah which meant “grace”. Achsah married Othniel whose name meant the “power of God”. Othniel was able to drive out the giants, but it took Achsah to speak to her father. The power of God is necessary when dealing with enemies, but we need _____ to ask petitions of our Heavenly Father.

The way to spell God’s love is G-R-A-C-E.

Chapter 12

MRS. BOAZ

In most weddings, the bride is the centerpiece of attraction. But this was one wedding where the bridegroom stole the show. In this wedding, the name of Boaz was mentioned eight times but Ruth's was mentioned only three times. When an Israelite relative refused to redeem a family member, the rejected widow had the right to humiliate him according to Deuteronomy 25:9-10. There was no humiliation cast here because Boaz took up the redemptive rights and married Ruth in 4:10.

But look at the double _____ that was done to Christ. Even as He was redeeming us, the people still humiliated Him. Six times the Bible says they "*spit on Him*"! Matthew 26:67; 27:30; Mark 10:34; 14:65; 15:19; Luke 18:32.

ELIMELECH'S FARM

It was the custom in that day that when a man bought a piece of property the seller gave the buyer his shoes. The new owner would put on the shoes of the former land owner and then walk all around the borders of his new property. This testified that the property now belonged to a new owner and no one had the right to walk on the property without his permission. The man who had been closer kin to Elimelech than Boaz "*took off his sandal*" and gave it to Boaz. Boaz then took possession of Elimelech's farm. It was this same Jewish custom to which John the Baptist referred when he said he did not have the authority to "*loose*" the sandals of Jesus in Mark 1:7. But the Roman soldiers not only until His shoes, they stole them, along with the rest of Christ's clothing. We know they took His sandals away because they "*pierced*" His feet. See Psalm 22:16. It cost Christ His very _____ to redeem us.

BOAZ'S WIFE

Boaz not only purchased a farm, he also redeemed a wife for himself. Marriage is a three-fold commitment.

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. It is a commitment to each other. | <i>"I have acquired a wife."</i> | Ruth 4:10 |
| 2. It is a commitment to society. | <i>"We are witnesses."</i> | Ruth 4:11 |
| 3. It is a commitment to God. | <i>"The Lord make"</i> | |

One of the first things a couple should seek before getting married is the blessing of their parents. Boaz and Ruth not only had family approval, they had the blessing of the town. They pronounced a two-fold blessing on them in Ruth 4:11 when they said, "*Do thou worthily in Ephratah and be famous in Bethlehem.*" This story began with a famine in Bethlehem and Ephratah, but ended with a blessing in the same places. Redemption was not complete and for the first time in the story Ruth was no longer called a _____. Ruth 4:13

NAOMI'S BABY

Boaz took Ruth to be his wife and ***“the LORD gave her conception and she bare a son”*** in Ruth 4:13. The neighborhood ladies said, ***“A son is born to Naomi”*** in 4:17. They ***“called his name Obed”*** which meant ***“a servant-worshiper”***. It is impossible to have a right relationship with Jesus Christ without becoming a servant who is also a worshipper. But both willing work and worship must be birthed in our lives through our relationship with our heavenly bridegroom, Jesus Christ. According to Ruth 4:22, Obed grew up to become the grandfather of the great King David.

GOD'S ROMANCE

The story of the whole Bible is found in these four chapters of Ruth. Only God could write a story like this.

The story opens in death but ends with life.

The story begins with a backslider and ends with a great king.

This is the story of two _____. The first covenant was finished and a new covenant was established. In Romans 11:20, we read that the first covenant was broken ***“because of unbelief”***. In the same way, we too stand with God in the new covenant ***“by faith”*** and it is faith which operates ***“by love”***. (Galatians 5:6). Hebrews 8:13 says that the first covenant has ***“waxed old and is ready to vanish”*** away.

Just like the story of Ruth, the Bible is a book of two covenants (the Old and the New Testaments). We have several people in this story who have new meaning to us as Christians.

- **Elimelech and Naomi represent natural Israel and the old covenant of the Law of Moses.**
- **Boaz and Ruth represent Christ and His Church in the new covenant of Love.**

From the very beginning, God's plan in making a covenant with Israel was to produce a Savior who would redeem the world. The first covenant was destined to fail so a new covenant could be made to redeem all who would believe. John 3:16 reads, ***“For God so loved the world . . .”*** Just like Ruth, God has designed for the Gentiles to become the Bride of Christ. The believer has been clothed in wedding garments and we are headed for the marriage supper of the Lamb of God spoken of in Revelation 19:7-8. When Israel closed their door of opportunity by rejecting Christ, it opened another door to anyone who would _____ in Jesus. (Romans 11:15) But God has not forgotten Israel (Naomi). Israel's rejection of Christ became the ***“reconciling of the world”*** but Israel will repent when the ***“fullness of the Gentiles”*** comes and ***“Israel shall be saved”*** according to Romans 11:25-26. That will be resurrection day – ***“life from the dead”***.

The Bible is the story of the romance of redemption.

Recommended Reading

You may be interested in the following books to enhance and re-emphasize the training being received.

Redemption and Restoration: A Study of Ruth & Esther, Spirit-Filled Life Bible Discovery Study Guide

By: Jack Hayford
Thomas Nelson

3:16 The Numbers of Hope

By: Max Lucado
Thomas Nelson