

Blessings for the Bitter

Ruth 2

Ruth: See God's Hand > Not Miracles, Behind Scenes, Guiding Events

Ordinary people in Ordinary Circumstances > Our Extraordinary God

chapter 1 > Israelite family HIT by Famine, Death, Sorrow, Pain!

man of Bethlehem with his wife and two sons went to country of Moab

Sons married > 10 yrs, man & both sons died > Widow Naomi home!

Told daughters-in-law stay > Families, gods, Better Future!

One went back her people and her gods, but Ruth clung to Naomi

Naomi's people would be her people, Naomi's God her God,
and not even death would separate them for she'd be buried where Naomi buried

2 women Returned to Bethlehem > people shocked by Odd Couple

Old Naomi > So Bitter changed Name to Marah > Young Moabite!

Ruth filled w Faith, Loyalty / Naomi: Fears and Not Sure about Ruth?

Ch 2 Situation not Hopeless > Man Naomi forgotten about...

1. Despair of Bitterness

a. Devastating Blow Naomi = "Pleasant" > Kind, Gentle, LOYAL

1.5 "the woman was left without her two sons and her husband"

THE WOMAN – No Husband, Sons, Food, Hope, Future OR NAME

She FEELS the FULL Weight of God's HAND of DISCIPLINE...

Profound Understanding > Events are Direct Result of God's Intervention

Naomi knows God is Sovereign – Creator, Controls ALL of our Lives

1.13 "it is exceedingly bitter to me... the hand of the LORD has gone out against me."

1.20-21 "Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. I went away full, and the LORD has brought me back empty... the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?"

Naomi Real Hurts & Sorrows > NO Family, Kids, Fortune, Future

HONEST Hurts – Life has been MORE than I can BEAR

Back with NOTHING! God has brought ONLY CALAMITY

b. Delayed Bounce REAL Believer//Naomi – Eventually Bounce Back
 Naomi NOT Kid – Gone thru A lot > Delayed Bounce – Still BITTER
 NOT See Ruth SOURCE of Blessings RIGHT WITH HER!
 Wonderful Plan of God way Beyond her Wildest Imaginations

Ch 1 – Opens FAMINE – “House of Bread” / Bethlehem EMPTY!

1.22 And they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest.

Small Shaft Light Breaking thru DARK Sky – GOD About to WORK
 FAMINE to HARVEST – Physical & Spiritual, Food & FAITH

2.2 Ruth wants to FIND FOOD Naomi > 'Go, my daughter' >

N. Could DO Some Work, Connect, Protect / N. was THE LOCAL!

When DEPRESSED > Bed feels Good, Stay All Day! Get Up, Go Out!

Enjoy PITY PARTY only Guest Invited HERSELF – Gallon Ice Cream!

Worries making her LIFE Shorter > Cheerful Heart Good Medicine

Naomi needs Remember God’s CHESED / wd +250 OT / 3 X’s Ruth

LOVE > Never stops, never breaks, never gives up > Jesus on CROSS

Needs PUSH Prayer – P.U.S.H. Pray UNTIL Something HAPPENS!

“He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?” Romans 8.32

1. Despair of Bitterness >> 2. Determination of Believer

Ruth lived Hopeless Situation ch 1 – Lost Elim & Husb > Left HOME

End ch 1 Hope for Ruth > Turns to Living God, Born Again by Faith

ACTIVE Hope >> OT Equiv of DUMPSTER Diving > Gleaning

“When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field right up to its edge, neither shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. And you shall not strip your vineyard bare, neither shall you gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard. You shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner: I am the Lord your God” Leviticus 19.9-10

Farmer drops grain, shouldn't turn and pick it up > leave it for Needy

Meets NEEDS for Food but retains DIGNITY of Person > Work for It

Ruth TOOK God at His Word > Trust HIM to meet All her Needs Ruth NOT Hopeless >
 Given Life to Yahweh, True God, Maker of All
 Transferred from Dead gods of Moab >> Kingdom of LIVING God
 "Your God will be my God" > Doer of the word > Act out her Promise

v. 2 And Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, "Let me go to the field and glean among the ears of grain after him in whose sight I shall find favor."

Ruth followed God's Word, she put God first > Daughter of the KING
 Ruth's not waiting for God to write in the sky > perform a miracle
 She was Young and Strong, Clever and Creative > Work Hard for Food
 God's Word clear & Direct > God's will unfolds slowly in our lives

v 3 "So she set out and went and gleaned in the field" > she does it

"In you, O Lord, do I take refuge; let me never be put to shame; in your righteousness deliver me!...Be a rock of refuge for me, a strong fortress to save me!...Be gracious to me, O Lord, for I am in distress...My times are in your hand... Oh, how abundant is your goodness, which you have stored up for those who fear you" Psalm 31.1-19

2.2 'Let me go Glean...in whose sight I shall find favor

Ruth & Naomi don't know about Boaz yet: SET UP by God / Matchmaker

v 3 "the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the clan of Elimelech"

Random? Lucky? Accident? Coinky Dink? > God's Good Providence!

Hebrew = "the chance that chanced upon her" / just so happened

Ruth not following a big finger pointing & saying, "Go to this field"

She put God first > God put her in the best field possible

God is in control, God who governs, God who is on the throne

Ruth not thinking, "*I'm meant to be in this field*" > Just Works Hard

We can PANIC crying "Where are you, God?" Or Work in FAITH

He simply asks us to humbly trust in him in all that we do.

v 7 "She said, 'Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves after the reapers.' So she came, and she has continued from early morning until now, except for a short rest."

"Please let me glean." Today > My rights, I Deserve This, Rich are Evil

"she has continued from early morning until now" > Faith AND Works

Faith is a verb, it's a doing word. not waiting for Miraculous sign

Hard, Hot, Dangerous work of Dumpster Diving > GLEANING!

Hard Work, Humility, and Trust in God Go Together

3. Desire of Beloved

Gleaning > Gift of Mercy in Law of God for the Hungry & Needy

Kinsman Redeemer another Mercy in God's Law for Landless / Oppressed

v. 1 Now Naomi had a relative of her husband's, a worthy man of the clan of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz. / *READER told in Advance! Story!!*

v. 3 So she set out and went and gleaned in the field after the reapers, and she happened to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the clan of Elimelech.

Good PROVIDENCE of God > Unfolding his HESED – loving kindness

v. 17 "So she gleaned in the field until evening. Then she beat out what she had gleaned...about an ephah of barley" 30 to 50 pounds!

Avg Gleaner 1 or 2 pounds Day! Ruth: Half month's wages in one day

v 18 "she took it up and went into the city" Imagine reaction of peeps

Moabite woman dragging half a month's wages

Newly-wed – Shopped w Dayna – Real Love – Safeway Hilo 1982

Rice Aisle > points 50 lb Bag “put that in our cart” What!! Kidding!!?

Welcome to Hawaii Haole Boy – Rice 3 X's Day – Siblings, Cousins

I was SKINNY when we Got Married!

18 R. “brought out & gave her what food she had left over after being

satisfied 19 N: Where did you glean today? where have you worked?

"Blessed be the man who took notice of you" > from Bitter to Blessing

'The man's name with whom I worked today is Boaz.'

v. 20 Naomi: 'May he be blessed by the LORD, whose kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead!'...'The man is a close relative of ours, one of our redeemers.'" /

Living & Dead = Us, Elimelek, Mahlon, Chilion

Ruth didn't know that Boaz was family > kinsman redeemer

Kinsman Redeemer: Leviticus 25 > Close Relative, Financial Rescue

right to purchase land > use it for profit > hold it for family's future

a. Man Full of God > 1) Relationship with Workers for God

v 4 "Boaz came from Bethlehem" just happens to come / God works

BOAZ = "in him is strength" – Noble, Wealthy, Respected, Leader

v 4, "And he said to the reapers, 'The LORD be with you!' And they answered, 'The LORD bless you.'" // Blessing Elder in Synagogue

God in everyday life > Spiritual in the Natural / Natural in the Spiritual

Are you a Thermometer or a Thermostat?

Thermometer reflects Temperature > Goes Up/Down > Follows Temp.

YOU Thermom > Follow what's going on around you > reflect climate

Friends smoking Dope, Watching Porn, Crude Jokes > So are YOU!

Thermostat CONTROLS Temp: No Hotter/Colder - This is It!

Draw a Moral Line in Sand – Not Crossing > Friends learn Righteousness

Boaz THERMOSTAT > Set Spiritual Temp on Workplace > God is King

No Shame to talk about God at Work > Workers SHOUT His Blessing!

Not JUST how you live our faith on Sunday > it's ALSO Every day

"The LORD be with you!" > Good greeting for us Today in Kohala

Spiritual awakening in Israel > time of the harvest > time of hope

Bread and Bread of Life is in the House of Bread > Beth lehem

Man Full of God > 2) Relationship with a Woman for God

v 4 "Then Boaz said to his young man who was in charge of the reapers, Whose young woman is this?"

Boaz notices Ruth > not primarily a love story, but it is love story

She has caught his eye > wants to know more about her > asks Whose?

Not Worker to Exploit, Sex Object to Hit On: Belongs, Daughter, Wife

"And the servant who was in charge... 'She is the young Moabite woman, who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab.'"

Moabite 2 X's Stay away, Boss! She's Trouble! She's from Moab. We are Israelites

Humanity is made in Image of God > Beauty of Differences Men/Women

Beauty of Romance – Attraction – Discovery – Marriage – Sex – Family

All Made by God – Men and Women and Marriage > Made by GOD

b. Man Full of Gospel

Gospel = GOOD NEWS > Even for Ruth > Foreigner, No place, standing

GENTILE = Outside Israel of God > Moabite nation under CURSE

Boaz was Son of Abraham, God promised Abe: "I will bless those who bless you...and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." Genesis 12.3

Days of Judges: Evil 'everyone does what is right in own eyes/no king'

Very FEW Believers / Conversions > Perhaps NEVER converted Moabite

Why TOWN is Buzzing 1.9 And when they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them.

Why Boaz knew about HER 2.10-12 Then she fell on her face, bowing to the ground, and said to him, "Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?" 11 But Boaz answered her, "All that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband has been fully told to me, and how you left your father and mother and your native land and came to a people that you did not know before. 12 The LORD repay you for what you have done, and a full reward be given you by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge!"

"my daughter" = dignity, he takes responsibility for her >

God made Covenant w/ Abe: Sun worshipping, idol making Gentile

“Let not the foreigner who has joined himself to the Lord say, “The Lord will surely separate me from his people”; (to those) who choose the things that please me and hold fast my covenant...I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off.” Isaiah 56.3-5

God the EAGLE bearing us on His Wings > we eaglets carried by Him

BOAZ full of GOD > GOSPEL c. Man Full of Grace

Word ‘CHESED’ used 297 X’s in OT > just 3 X’s in Ruth – THEME

2.10 “Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?”

Grace > Unconditional Love, Outcasts Welcome, Adopted into Family

Tokens of Grace > Kind words, Water Breaks, Protection by Men,

Follow Women, ‘you toucha the girl, I smasha your face’ –

Eat LUNCH here > Boaz shares his picnic, delicacy of roasted grain –

Carry Doggie Bag from Lunch AND 50 pounds of BARLEY

2.10 Ruth "fell on her face, bowing to the ground...

Proper Response to grace and goodness of God > fall on our faces

Her trust in God, humility, LOYALTY, Kindness > Fruits of FAITH

v 12 Boaz says, "The LORD repay you for what you have done."

She's sheltered under the wings of God > receiving this blessing

not merit, not earned > trust and humility in God > valued God first

God himself our kinsman Redeemer > came into world as a man

Great Redeemer > purchase us, bring us to himself, pay for our sins

We can have eternal life with him simply because he has paid the price

God is the greater Boaz > provides us with his grace and favor

God protects us with his power > like Boaz protected Ruth

God pursues us with his love for his glory > like Boaz pursues Ruth

God is the greater Boaz > He does all this AND MORE for us / R U fully trust in God?

Humble before him? Value him above all? R U Sheltering under his wings?

Ruth 2 Now Naomi had a relative of her husband's, a worthy man of the clan of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz. ² And Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, "Let me go to the field and glean among the ears of grain after him in whose sight I shall find favor." And she said to her, "Go, my daughter." ³ So she set out and went and gleaned in the field after the reapers, and she happened to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the clan of Elimelech. ⁴ And behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem. And he said to the reapers, "The LORD be with you!" And they answered, "The LORD bless you." ⁵ Then Boaz said to his young man who was in charge of the reapers, "Whose young woman is this?" ⁶ And the servant who was in charge of the reapers answered, "She is the young Moabite woman, who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab." ⁷ She said, 'Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves after the reapers.' So she came, and she has continued from early morning until now, except for a short rest." ⁸ Then Boaz said to Ruth, "Now, listen, my daughter, do not go to glean in another field or leave this one, but keep close to my young women. ⁹ Let your eyes be on the field that they are reaping, and go after them. Have I not charged the young men not to touch you? And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink what the young men have drawn." ¹⁰ Then she fell on her face, bowing to the ground, and said to him, "Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?" ¹¹ But Boaz answered her, "All that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband has been fully told to me, and how you left your father and mother and your native land and came to a people that you did not know before. ¹² The LORD repay you for what you have done, and a full reward be given you by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge!" ¹³ Then she said, "I have found favor in your eyes, my lord, for you have comforted me and spoken kindly to your servant, though I am not one of your servants." ¹⁴ And at mealtime Boaz said to her, "Come here and eat some bread and dip your morsel in the wine." So she sat beside the reapers, and he passed to her roasted grain. And she ate until she was satisfied, and she had some left over. ¹⁵ When she rose to glean, Boaz instructed his young men, saying, "Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not reproach her. ¹⁶ And also pull out some from the bundles for her and leave it for her to glean, and do not rebuke her."

¹⁷ So she gleaned in the field until evening. Then she beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley. ¹⁸ And she took it up and went into the city. Her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. She also brought out and gave her what food she had left over after being satisfied. ¹⁹ And her mother-in-law said to her, "Where did you glean today? And where have you worked? Blessed be the man who took notice of you." So she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked and said, "The man's name with whom I worked today is Boaz." ²⁰ And Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, "May he be blessed by the LORD, whose kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead!" Naomi also said to her, "The man is a close relative of ours, one of our redeemers." ²¹ And Ruth the Moabite said, "Besides, he said to me, 'You shall keep close by my young men until they have finished all my harvest.'" ²² And Naomi said to Ruth, her daughter-in-law, "It is good, my daughter, that you go out with his young women, lest in another field you be assaulted." ²³ So she kept close to the young women of Boaz, gleaning until the end of the barley and wheat harvests. And she lived with her mother-in-law.