

Ruth 2

v1

“a kinsman of her husband's, a man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz”

- Naomi had a kinsman, Boaz (a name which means strength). The right and the privilege given to family or neighbours to redeem the land of someone's inheritance beyond their debt. For a better understanding of redemption in this story we can start with Leviticus 25. It's notable though that there are multiple examples in scripture of Redemption in other forms than described in this chapter. In principle it is the buying back of a debt until a set time (Jubilee) when all inheritance is restored to each family.

- Praise The Lord for our Kinsman Redeemer who is Christ. We have a kinsman who has restored our inheritance in the promise by purchasing our debt! Until the year of jubilee when it will be fully renewed! We have been set free from servitude and bondage and are now free to work the land and be fruitful in it.

- *Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ Who empowers me.*

- *2 Timothy 4:16-17 ...no man stood with me, but all men forsook me... Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me.*

- *J.Ritchie: Why did Elimelech not go to Boaz instead of running from the famine? You know, as Christians, we will go anywhere and to anyone except to our Kinsman Redeemer. Psalm 91 is worthy of note at this stage.*

- On this note from Jackie Ritchie it is worth noting that there were people still living in Bethlehem. When Naomi returned they all knew who she was... These were all her old friends and neighbours. So however bad this famine may have been it seems that to desert the land was not necessary. It is never necessary to turn from The Lord's provision. It is never a good idea to go into the world. The Lord may lead us into famine or difficulty at times, but His ways are ALWAYS for HIS glory and OUR GOOD!! In everything that The Lord does He is longing to draw us closer to Himself! Closer to joy, closer to peace, closer to blessing, closer to the very source of life! Better to be in famine with The Lord than in plenty with the world! ... This realisation would heighten Naomi's shame.

- *GILL: Boaz which signifies, "in him is strength", strength of riches, power, virtue, and grace; it is the name of one of the pillars in Solomon's temple, so called from its strength. This man is commonly said by the Jews to be the same with Ibzan, a judge of Israel, Judges 12:8, he was the grandson of Nahshon, prince of the tribe of Judah, who first offered at the dedication of the altar, Numbers 7:12, his father's name was Salmon, and his mother was Rahab, the harlot of Jericho, Matthew 1:5*

- Boaz would possibly have a predisposition to care for the gentile considering who his mother was. How wonderful it is to see this in the old testament!! I knew that both Rahab and Ruth were in the lineage of David and Jesus but never knew they were so closely tied together. God is so good! ((The bloodline carried the seed, the gentile carried the child/fruit))

v2

“And Ruth the Moabitess”

- This phrase is used over and over again. The author is making a clear, distinctive, unforgettable point that Ruth is indeed a Moabite, a gentile.

- I love this. For so long in my Christian life I believed that gentiles were only granted Salvation in the New Testament. But upon reading and studying the Bible in recent years it is plain to see that The Lord's heart has always welcomed the gentile, every race and peoples. Hallelujah!! Israel was never solely a bloodline people! Since Egypt they were a “mixed multitude”. This story is just one example of many we can reference. What a precious Lord and God we have. Consistent and faithful in His heart and desire towards His people. What a wonderful provision and hope!

“Let me go to the field and glean among the ears of grain after him in whose sight I shall find favor.”

- Ruth was going to be lazy. She wasn't going to sit and wait to be catered to. There was a need in the house for grain and she was going to get to work.
- Let's not overlook how much of a sacrifice this was for Ruth to make. She was willing to go out as a gleaner, she was willing to go and work for very low returns. Gleaning was picking up the individual grains that were left behind. It was the dregs of the harvest! Ruth didn't go and work for the fortune or fame. She went out for the need in the house. She went out to provide.

- Consider too that Ruth risked her life. A stranger and a Moabite at that. She may well have been looked down upon, sneered at, despised! She may have been taken advantage of... But this did not stop her. She was determined and unafraid.

- She had faith! She believed in the goodness of God that Naomi had shared with her. That is why she was there! She trusted that this was truly the land of promise and blessing, and she had faith to believe that her faithfulness would be rewarded, not by man but by The Lord.

- Ruth came to Bethlehem after abandoning all that she knew for Naomi's God to be her God and Naomi's people, her people! This action shows that she not only abandoned her home, her land, her people and customs but she also abandoned herself to the Lord! She gave herself into His hands, His mercy and His provision.

- So consider the Spiritual example of Ruth as a new believer/convert. A heart that is truly repentant, truly turned around and wholly given to The Lord and His service. No serving for reward but for the needs of others. Gleaning Spiritual grain so that others in her house may eat. Willing to serve and glean in the lowest of positions but serving in faith, completely dependant upon The Lord for His provision and favour.

- *GILL: She did not choose to go any where, nor do anything, without her (Naomi's) advice and consent; so dutiful and obedient was she to her, and so high an opinion had she of her wisdom and goodness.*

- *J.Ritchie: She gleaned after the reapers and gathered up that which was left by them. The four Gospels record the story of feeding the five thousand - Matthew 14:17-20, Mark 6:41-43, Luke 9:16-17, and John 6:13. In each incident we read GATHER UP THE FRAGMENTS. Nothing had to be lost. Oh folks, what about the outcasts? There are those who are lost and their lives show it outwardly but there are others who are lost and maybe their lives don't show it. There is a place for you and me and it will never be filled until you fill it. WIN THE LOST AT ANY COST*

v3

“and she happened to stop at the part of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech.”

- It is hard to put into words the wonderful dealings of The Lord but I think “and she happened” is such a beautiful example of so many of The Lord's ways and promises. This phrase indicates everything that was unknown to her but all that is known to The Lord (and now known by us).

- Ruth had no idea where she was going or who owned which fields. She was simply walking by faith and trusting in her God. She had committed her ways to Him. She trusted in His testimonies and His promises.

- *Psalm 37:3-7 Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. [4] Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. [5] Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. [6] And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday. (Did David think of His Grandmother in these verses?)*

- *Proverbs 16:3 Roll your works upon the Lord [commit and trust them wholly to Him; He will cause your thoughts to become agreeable to His will, and] so shall your plans be established and succeed.*

- There is a great and mighty principle hidden here in that... Ruth was not looking for anything others that to return with grain. She wasn't serving for reputation or reward. She was faithful to the need and she hoped only to find the favour to glean. As she was being faithful The Lord directed her steps. As she served. As she gleaned. As she was about her business. In the faithfulness to the small things...

- Luke 16:10 He who is faithful in a very little [thing] is faithful also in much,

v4

"And behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem and said to the reapers, The Lord be with you! And they answered him, The Lord bless you!"

- GILL: *though these salutations were of a civil kind, yet they breathe the true spirit of sincere and undissembled piety, and show the sense that both master and servants had of the providence of God attending the civil affairs of life, without whose help, assistance, and blessing, nothing succeeds well.*

v5

"Then Boaz said to his servant who was set over the reapers, Whose maiden is this?"

- He noticed her. Maybe it was her attire. Maybe her Moabitish clothes were different. Maybe it was the way she carried herself. Perhaps her mannerisms were not traditional, maybe she carried the grain differently... Maybe he just knew everyone else and didn't recognise this new face.

- But it is that he noticed her. We are noticed by The Lord. He sees. Beer-Lahai-Roi (Genesis 16:14).

v6-7

"She is the Moabitish girl"

- This is not necessarily said in disgust or disregard but we see that she is characterised by her roots. She is still the outsider, the girl who is not from here.

- She is always the outsider. She is always the foreigner/stranger. It is clear that she is not of Israel.

"And she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves."

- Ruth was careful to ask permission. This shows humility, wisdom and respect on her part.

- She had a right to glean by law but she gained favour in her humility and respect. She did not demand her right but requested permission.

"So she came and has continued from early morning until now, except when she rested a little in the house."

- She had worked all day. She had been about her business early. She was diligent, focused, applied to the task.

- Are we early to be about our Father's business? Are we working in the fields that we happen to find ourselves in? Do we "labour for The Master from the dawn til setting sun?" If we give no thought to reaping the harvest where are our hearts before God! If we give no thought to the saving of lost souls can we really be Born Again? God's life in a man will give him a desire to preach the gospel and bring Christ to the lost.

- In truth Ruth would be some Israelites to shame. She came dutifully and decisively to work and she was diligent in it. This foreigner, this stranger had a desire to serve. This is often true spiritually too in the church. The new converts, untainted by religion and tradition have a keenness and desire to work and serve The Lord.

v8-9

"do not go to glean in another field or leave this one, but stay here close by my maidens."

"Watch which field they reap, and follow them."

- Boaz extends to Ruth precious favour and welcome. He instates her as one of the locals. He instructs her to join with them and not to distance herself from them. She is to become one of them.

- It is possible Ruth may have moved on to other fields in order to not be a burden or hindrance but Boaz makes sure she understands that she has permission and liberty to glean in His fields.

- GILL: *But these maidens were such, who either gathered the handfuls, cut and laid down by the reapers, and bound them up in sheaves, or else they also reaped, as it seems from the following verse;*

- It would seem from this verse that Ruth had carefully and respectfully distanced herself from the other women only gleaned after they had also gleaned. It was customary for the poorer women to glean and it was also customary for the reapers to leave handfuls of grain for these poorer maidens. Ruth had not assumed a position beside these ladies but after them. The Lord has instated the gentile "as one born in the land" Exodus 12:48

"Have I not charged the young men not to molest you? And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink what the young men have drawn."

- Not only has Boaz instructed Ruth to stay close by His womenfolk but he has also granted her the same protections and security from the menfolk.

- So long as she abides in the fields of Boaz she will have position, provision and protection. She will have fellowship and freedom. As long as she abides in his fields she is under his legal protection and care.

- Boaz has offered Ruth tender mercies and loving kindnesses. She has not earned these gifts, she is not "worthy" of them but Boaz is a generous and caring man.

v10

"she fell on her face, bowing to the ground, and said to him, Why have I found favour in your eyes that you should notice me, when I am a foreigner?"

- Note the heart of Ruth. She is not merely exchanging pleasantries. This is not just a display of good manners. Ruth has an understanding of her position and she is truly honoured and truly grateful for this undeserved and unmerited favour. Boaz does not owe her anything. She had only asked for permission to glean and now she was recognised as one of the local maidens.

- It is a display of great understanding and humility to acknowledge that you have no rights as a foreigner/stranger. To understand that you are a foreign object in a cultural bubble...

v11-12

"I have been made fully aware of all you have done"

"a full reward be given you by the Lord, the God of Israel, under Whose wings you have come to take refuge!"

- Ruth's testimony had gone before her. This is a reminder that people notice things and people talk. They notice more than we realise and talk more than we know. This should not be something to fear but a strong reminder/conviction that our lives are watched, and our testimony is so much more than just the times we are aware of.

- Boaz has heard of Ruth's repentance and Her faith in the God of Israel. He has seen her humility and willingness to serve.

- Note that Boaz declares Ruth is under God's wings, not his. It is The Lord God who is blessing Ruth and may He bless her even more abundantly.

v13

"For you have comforted me and have spoken to the heart of your maidservant, though I am not as one of your maidservants."

- Ruth again noting her low, foreign, unworthy status.
- Luke 7:47 *Therefore I tell you, her sins, many [as they are], are forgiven her because she has loved much. But he who is forgiven little loves little.*
- Luke 18:13 *But the tax collector, [merely] standing at a distance, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but kept striking his breast, saying, O God, be favorable (be gracious, be merciful) to me, the especially wicked sinner that I am!*

v14-17

"And at mealtime Boaz said to her, Come... and she ate until she was satisfied and she had some left [for Naomi]."

- Ruth has so much more than merely the permission to glean. She had come with only the intention to humbly and faithfully glean the fields behind everyone else.
- Ruth had not been asking for blessing. She had no thought of such a blessing. Her intention, desire and joy was to work. She was joyful to be with Naomi. She was joyful to be in the land of Jehovah! She was joyful just at the opportunity to be of use.
- John 10:10 *"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly"*
- When the blessing came she didn't take it easy and leave off working. She stayed until evening and carried on with the gleaning. She continued until late. I know that we have a tendency to take things easy when the blessing comes. We feel good, we feel rewarded. We are foolishly tempted to feel we earned something. Oh may we learn this precious lesson from Ruth to keep our heads down to the work that we have been called to. Rejoice in the abundant blessings but do not neglect to continue humbly serving.

v19

"Blessed be the man who noticed you."

- There was clear evidence of blessing in Ruth. She came back abundantly blessed. Her shawl full and running over!! She had provision of food for Naomi and an incredible amount of grain. Clearly she had not been only gleaning in her own strength.
- It is so lovely that Naomi recognised the favour! Shouldn't it be so clear in our lives? Does the world see our abundance of grain, our hearts full and running over with joy, peace and satisfaction? Do family, friends and close ones see that we've been with Jesus? Can they see the fragrance and the blessing of The Lord?

v20-21

"And Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, Blessed be he of the Lord who has not ceased his kindness to the living and to the dead."

- GILL: *he had been kind to Elimelech and to his sons, who were now dead, and he continued his kindness to the reliefs of them, Naomi and Ruth, who were living, and was kind to them for the sake of the dead; and showing kindness to them expressed his respect to the memory of the dead:*

"He said to me also, Stay close to my young men until they have harvested my entire crop."

- I suggest that this command can be considered spiritually of fellowship. Let us stay fast by the body of Christ where we can find those who can provide for us and be a covering for us by The Spirit and love of Jesus. Let us be careful to find fellowship and not to neglect the gathering together unto Him.
- Hebrews 10:25 *Not forsaking or neglecting to assemble together [as believers], as is the habit of some people, but admonishing (warning, urging, and encouraging) one another, and all the more faithfully as you see the day approaching.*
- Stay fast by those who are working. Stay close to those who are actively doing The Lord's work. Let their company be a provision and a protection to the testimony of The Lord in your life. She wasn't merely to abide in Bethlehem but to stay close to the maidens and close to the young men. Make them your fellowship and your friends. Stay by those who are truly Born Again, truly The Lord's workers, not merely self-labelled "Christians" but true disciples of Jesus who are walking in His Spirit.

v22

"And Naomi said to Ruth, It is good, my daughter, for you to go out with his maidens, lest in any other field you be molested."

- On the first reading this sounds a little dramatic and perhaps sounds simply like Naomi is encouraging/manipulating Ruth towards Boaz...
- But this is a precious and loving warning. Naomi recognised the precious and abundant blessing and encouraged Ruth not to take it lightly, not to squander it, not to neglect so great Salvation. Naomi was telling Ruth to abide in Boaz's presence and to walk in his ways/fields.
- It's easy to see the spiritual application here where Boaz is a type of Christ. Let us not be found anywhere else but busy in His fields. Let us be wary to wander from His provision and protection. Let us have our minds and hearts fixed to abide in Him and to stay close to those who love Him.