

13019-E The Book of Ruth

March 6, 2013

- I. **Intro: Philippians 2:5-11.** Note four things Paul says Christ did in service of others.
 - a. **He willingly gave up His status. (v. 6-7a)** Paul says that Christ who had all the privileges and rights as the King of the Universe gave them up to become an ordinary Jewish boy bound for the Cross.
 - b. **He left His home and immigrated to another land. (v. 7-8a)** Jesus left all the divine glory and became an immigrant and entered into a land that was very dangerous for Him.
 - c. **He willingly absorbed our debt and gave us His spiritual wealth. (v.8)** At the Cross, Jesus absorbed the complete wrath of God for all of the sin and rebellion perpetrated by sinful man against God...and He gives to those who trust Him what He's earned by being completely obedient to God the Father—He gives you His perfect righteousness that He alone earned.
 - d. **He got His life back—but not just back, but better! (v. 9-11)** Paul says God 'super-exalted' Him and gave Him the name that is above all names...meaning upon His ascension Jesus received a status and authority that had not been His until He gave His life away in service of others.
 - e. What does that have to do with the tiny book of Ruth? Only everything.
- II. **Background: Setting the Stage for Ruth**
 - a. The Cast of Characters:
 - i. *Naomi*: Naomi is the wife of Elimelech, the mother of Mahlon and Kilion, and the Mother-in-Law of Ruth and Orpah. Elimelech dies and ten years later

Mahlon and Kilion die. Naomi is the female equivalent of Job. She's lost absolutely everything that gave her life meaning and purpose.

ii. *Ruth*: Ruth is a Moabitess who married one of Naomi's sons and when he dies, Ruth becomes an immigrant, an alien in a Land that was not her home and actually posed great risk to her. Why did living in Judah pose a great risk to Ruth? The Jews and Moabites were bitter enemies.

1. Numbers 24:17

2. Deuteronomy 23:3-6.

iii. *Boaz*: Boaz was a man of standing; meaning he was a man of character, wealth and position. He was a wealthy farmer living in Bethlehem, who was closely related to Naomi's husband.

- b. *The Setting*: "In the days when the judges ruled." It was in "those days" that Naomi, Ruth and Boaz lived. Those days were the darkest days in the history of Israel. The days of judges were filled with violence, religious decay, moral deterioration, unchecked lawlessness and the worst perversion—the sin had reached the levels of Sodom and Gomorrah! It was a complete mess at every level.
- c. *The Three Stories in the Book of Ruth*: Ruth tells one Story which tells of another Story which tells of the Ultimate Story! Soon to come is King David and the Kingdom of Israel. But David was an imperfect King and so was his kingdom. So God promised to provide another King—a perfect King—King Jesus, David's Greater Son who would establish salvation and His Kingdom forever. The story of Ruth tells us how all of this comes about. Ruth's story tells us about the line of David---and how Israel transitioned to a monarchy under David, but it also tells us the larger story of God's redemptive plan

through Jesus and it does all this through entering into the simple, messy, hurting lives of Naomi, Ruth and Boaz.

III. The Book of Ruth

a. Act 1: Naomi Broken-Hearted & Bereft (1:1-5).

- i. A famine forces Elimelech and Naomi to immigrate to Moab of all places—a shameful and dangerous place for a Jewish family.
- ii. Naomi loses her land, her husband and her two sons--She's lost absolutely everything that gave her life meaning and purpose.

b. Act 2: Naomi Returns to Bethlehem with Ruth, the immigrant (1:6-22).

- i. Ruth leaves status, stability and security behind in order to be with Naomi.
- ii. Ruth takes Yahweh as her personal, covenant God, leaving behind the counterfeit gods of Moab. What brought this about? Simple friendship with someone who has suffered tremendous loss yet still trusts the Lord...and the truth is the only way we're ever changed or grow is by being in a relationship with other Believers who have suffered tremendous loss yet still trusting the Lord.

c. Act 3: Ruth Gleans in Boaz's Field (2:1-23)

- i. Boaz is identified as a Kinsman-Redeemer.
- ii. Leviticus 25:23-28: A gracious law which states land that's been lost due to debt can be ransomed, it can be redeemed out of debt, but only by a member of the family who lost it. Your own flesh and blood can pay off your debt and give you back your land, which in that culture was life.

d. Act 4: Ruth Asks Boaz to Marry Her, to Redeem Her (3:1-18)

- i. When Ruth says, “Cover me with your garment” she’s saying, “Marry me—cover me with your garment, make me your wife, redeem my family, give me an inheritance, give me heirs—be my redeemer!
 - ii. Boaz responds by saying, “I will do for you all you ask!”
- e. **Act 5: Boaz Redeems Ruth (4:1-12)**
 - i. The Lord makes a way for Boaz to redeem Ruth.
- f. **Act 6: Naomi’s Restored and Rejoices over God’s Grace to Her (4:13-17)**
 - i. Naomi, the widow who’s bereft of son’s became the grandmother of Obed, who was the grandfather of David who became the King of Israel, and from whose line the Promised Messiah would come.
- g. **Act 7: The Continuing Story of Redemption (4:18-22)**

IV. The Three Redeemers of the Book of Ruth

- a. ***The Legal Redeemer, Boaz:*** He takes on the debt of the family, but not only that Boaz marries Ruth and everything that he’s worked for and earned becomes hers! Her debts aren’t just paid for, she’s given a whole new life!
- b. ***The Surprise Redeemer, Ruth:*** Ruth by immigrating to Bethlehem, in essence, throws her life away in order for Naomi to get her life back! If Naomi is going to have a name, and land, and family, Ruth has to give up the security of her own name, her own father, her own wealth, her own family....and so she does. She sacrifices her life on behalf of Naomi!
- c. ***The Real Redeemer, the Child of Promise, Christ Jesus:*** The book of Ruth points us directly to Jesus, who left His homeland, His father, His wealth and went to the Cross to pay your debt---but not just that, but to united Himself to you, so that all that He has

earned (complete righteousness) is given to you, legally, immediately and automatically. Jesus is the Real Redeemer who left His homeland, not just at the risk of His life, but at the cost of His life and gives His life away in order for you to get your life back...not just back, but better.