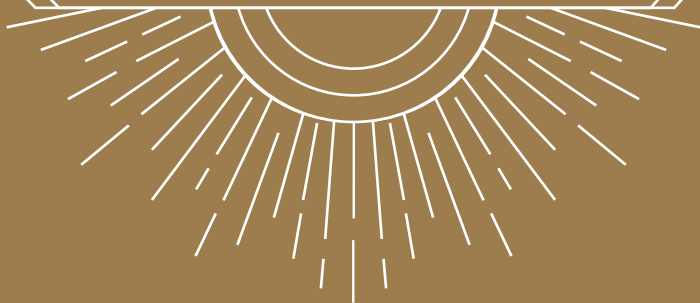




RUTH

A STORY OF REDEMPTION



A 20-DAY DEVOTIONAL STUDY OF THE BOOK OF RUTH

PREFACE:

This devotional was written by Common Ground Church in Cape Town, South Africa, in 2023.

Feel free to liberally use this as a discipling resource while giving due credit to the author and the website www.commonresources.co.za, where more resources can be found.

All Bible references are from the English Standard Version translation, accessed through <https://classic.biblegateway.com>

This work has been developed as devotional material for a local congregation and is not published through traditional editors and publishers.

Although Common Ground Church has made every effort to ensure there are no errors (through staff and volunteer writers, editors, and proof-readers), we do not assume, and hereby disclaim, liability to any party caused by errors or omissions, whether such errors or omissions result from negligence, accident or any other cause.

Commentaries leaned on for developing this resource include:

- Africa Bible Commentary: A One-Volume Commentary by 70 African Scholars (Zondervan, 2010).
- Michael Eaton, Ruth Preaching Series (2011).
- David Guzik, Commentary on Ruth, Enduring Word. <https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/ruth-1>
- Ruth and Work, Theology of Work Project: Ruth, <https://www.theologyofwork.org/old-testament/ruth-and-work>



CONTENTS:

Introduction to Ruth.....	04
How to use this devotional	05
WEEK ONE	
Day 1: Ruth 1:1-2.....	08
Day 2: Ruth 1:3-5.....	10
Day 3: Ruth 1:6-10.....	12
Day 4: Ruth 1:11-14.....	14
Day 5: Ruth 1:15-18.....	16
WEEK TWO	
Day 6: Ruth 1:19-22.....	20
Day 7: Ruth 2:1-3.....	22
Day 8: Ruth 2:4-7.....	24
Day 9: Ruth 2:8-12.....	26
Day 10: Ruth 2:13-16.....	28
WEEK THREE	
Day 11: Ruth 2:17-20 ^a	32
Day 12: Ruth 2:20 ^b -23.....	34
Day 13: Ruth 3:1-9.....	36
Day 14: Ruth 3:10-18.....	38
Day 15: Ruth 4:1-6.....	40
WEEK FOUR	
Day 16: Ruth 4:7-12.....	44
Day 17: Ruth 4:13-15.....	46
Day 18: Ruth 4:16-17 ^a	48
Day 19: Ruth 4:17 ^b -22.....	50
Day 20: Jesus the better Redeemer	52

INTRODUCTION TO RUTH:

"Taken as a whole, the story of Ruth is one of those signs. It was written to give us encouragement and hope that all the perplexing turns in our lives are going somewhere good. They do not lead off a cliff. In all the setbacks of our lives as believers, God is plotting for our joy." (John Piper)

The account of Ruth begins in the days of the judges, a tumultuous 400-year period. The Israelites lacked kings and faced anarchy, relying on sporadic deliverers whom God sent during their times of need. Prominent figures among these Judges included Gideon, Samson, and Deborah.

Malawian theologian, Isabel Apawo Phiri, describes the book of Ruth as "encountering a God concerned about the everyday occurrences of ordinary people. It is a remarkable book about God's sovereignty in his overarching plan for redemption, while being wholly engaged in people's daily trials and struggles."

The Book of Ruth is a beautiful depiction of the truth of Romans 8:28: "And we know that for those who love God, all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose."

"God made a simple, faithful, foreign woman, Ruth, part of the royal line of Israel that went through King David, and thus one of the human forebears of Jesus Christ." (I.A. Phiri)

Ruth is a story of redeemers. According to US author Timothy Keller, Ruth teaches us that friendships can change the world (as with Boaz, the kinsman-redeemer) and that we can and must reach across spiritual and cultural barriers to do so (as with Ruth, the hidden redeemer). Both Boaz and Ruth point to Jesus, our true Redeemer. Once we realize that, we can reach across barriers to engage in spiritual friendships and be true disciples of Jesus.

HOW TO USE THIS DEVOTIONAL:

In his book, *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*, John Mark Comer writes of how goals and lifestyles have to be entwined. He notes that you may desire the physique of professional athletes, but unless you live the type of lifestyle and make the necessary sacrifices that they do, you will never realise that goal.

Likewise, if we want to fully experience the life in Jesus that he promises us, we need to live the lifestyle of Jesus – we need to follow the Way of Jesus. We need to spend time with him, get to know him and choose to do things like he would do them.

In striving to practice the Way of Jesus, this devotional is divided into four components each day to help us learn to be like Jesus and live life the way he demonstrated:



BEING WITH JESUS/WORD

Read the daily scripture, and prayerfully reflect on God's word



CONSIDER

What the scripture teaches us about how God would have us live



REFLECT

How this speaks to and applies to our life



WORSHIP/PRAYER

Respond to the day's devotion in prayer and worship



WEEK ONE

RUTH 1:1-18

RUTH 1:1-2



BE WITH JESUS:

Before you read today's verses, still your heart and mind by offering prayers of worship and thankfulness to God. Ask him to quieten your mind from distraction so you can hear what he would say to you today.

¹ In the days when the judges ruled there was a famine in the land, and a man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. ² The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there.



CONSIDER:

At the beginning of the Book of Ruth, we learn why the family she marries into arrives in her land. To move from Bethlehem to Moab, Elimelech and his family would have travelled through the Jericho Pass, the Judean wilderness near the Dead Sea, and crossed the Jordan River. They were, in a sense leaving the land God had given them (the Promised Land) and returning to the wilderness from which God had delivered Israel hundreds of years before.

It may be difficult to see anything wrong in trying to leave a country in famine. That is how the Israelites were led to Egypt in Jacob's time. However, God led the Israelites **into** Egypt in Joseph's time and **out of** Egypt in Moses' time. God had promised Israel favour when they kept true to the Covenant (Deuteronomy 11:13-17). A famine was a sign of judgement. Naomi's family chose to leave God's people and land rather than stay and seek the flourishing of their people.

To **sojourn** means to leave somewhere, intending to return one day. So Elimelech and his family were escaping God's discipline of his people by leaving the land they had been given by God and traveling back toward the wilderness. The Book of Ruth is an example where God's people run away from his purposes, and yet, God is gracious even when the wrong path was chosen or mistakes were made.

The story of Ruth demonstrates how God works our lives towards his good purposes. We are never beyond his reach. Our mistakes or decisions will never thwart his purposes and plans. This journey through Ruth is a sign of God's sovereignty and graciousness at work in the redemption story of humanity and to individuals in the plan.

If you have ever felt like you are an overlooked pawn in the greater story of God, this journey through Ruth is for you!



REFLECT:

- What does a current-day example of avoiding God’s will look like? (Consider some modern-day decisions like immigration, where we buy property, whom we socialise with, and what we give our time, talent, and treasures towards.)
- How might I be in danger of focusing on my own immediate needs at the detriment of the community God has placed me in?
- Where have I seen God’s goodness in my life decisions (good or bad)?
- Are there any areas or decisions I am seeking his wisdom and guidance for currently?



PRAY:

Reflect on how God has been faithful to you during challenging times, and thank him for working in mysterious ways to deepen your understanding of his unending love, mercy and grace.

Spend some time praying through your reflections and bring them before God.

Are there any decisions or opinions that you need to bring before God in confession surrender or repentance? Do that now.

Pray for this journey through Ruth and that God would use it to grow you into his likeness and to teach you to see him more clearly.

RUTH 1:3-5



BE WITH JESUS:

Before delving into today's verses, settle your emotions and thoughts by expressing worship and thankfulness in some prayers to God. Thank him for what he said to you yesterday as you worked through the first passage of Ruth. Ask him to quieten your mind to focus on him and his wisdom today.

³ But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. ⁴ These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. They lived there about ten years, ⁵ and both Mahlon and Chilion died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband.



CONSIDER:

Things were going to get more difficult before they got better. We considered how Elimelech's family had likely gone against God's will in leaving their people and land. Now we see that Elimelech never got to return to Israel as he had intended. There is wisdom in how we plan our lives and how we see our decisions, as highlighted by James:

¹³ Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit" — ¹⁴ yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. ¹⁵ Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that." [James 4:13-15]

Elimelech's death left his family struggling even more than before. Naomi had known adversity. The time of the judges was tumultuous for the nation, and the famine only intensified their struggles. Now, in Moab, Naomi found herself without her husband. Her sons, Mahlon and Chilion, married Moabite women, Orpah and Ruth; going against God's instructions in Deuteronomy 7 that his people were not to marry pagans. Within a decade, Naomi then faced the tragic loss of her sons.

Now a childless widow, she belonged to one of society's most vulnerable groups. She was in a foreign land, grieving the loss of her family, and now responsible for two Moabite childless widows in the same predicament as her. Life was very difficult, from ongoing adversity to Naomi's personal grief and suffering. The only way to survive Naomi's new social status relied on the kindness of strangers.



REFLECT:

But God hadn't abandoned Naomi. He was already working out the plan for her redemption and salvation, as we will see in the passages to come. Suffering, though a difficult aspect of the human experience, can ultimately lead us to hope in God. Scripture is full of accounts of individuals who endured great trials, only to emerge with renewed faith and hope in God's promises. Many trials can be self-inflicted by our decisions, but many are out of our control. Yet scripture is clear – God is sovereign and can take the worst situation and turn it around for good.

² Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, ³ for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. ⁴ And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. (James 1:2-4)

- How have you experienced hardships or trials?
- How has God spoken and provided for you in these times?
- Where are you currently trusting God for guidance and help?
- How can you plan and live your life more in the type of wisdom James wrote about above?



PRAY:

Pray that God would strengthen your faith for unexpected losses or difficulties.

Thank him that we can know that he will use even challenging circumstances for our good and His glory.

Ask God to open your eyes to areas where hope is hidden in your life, allowing you to see his ongoing work and provision even during dark times.

Pray for opportunities to be the kind stranger to others who are facing trials and suffering.

RUTH 1:6-10



BE WITH JESUS:

Before you read today's verses, still your heart and mind by speaking prayers of worship and thankfulness to God. Ask him to quieten your mind from distraction so you can hear what he would say to you today.

⁶ Then she arose with her daughters-in-law to return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the fields of Moab that the Lord had visited his people and given them food. ⁷ So she set out from the place where she was with her two daughters-in-law, and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah. ⁸ But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return each of you to her mother's house. May the Lord deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. ⁹ The Lord grant that you may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband!" Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept. ¹⁰ And they said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people."



CONSIDER:

Things had taken a turn for the better back in Israel. Naomi heard about it in the fields of Moab. She and her daughters-in-law were in grief. They had lost the men in their family and, therefore, their safety, security, and hope for a future. To be a childless widow in those days was to live without security or hope for lineage and a future. Yet, in their grief, they were a close family. So much so, that when Naomi decided to head home after a decade away, her two Moabite daughters-in-law decide to join her.

We witness Naomi's deep love for her daughters-in-law and her desire for their well-being. Naomi knew that as foreigners, Ruth and Orpah could be even more ostracised and oppressed in Israel. They certainly couldn't hope for husbands in Israel. However, they were still young and could find husbands and a future in their own land. Selflessly, Naomi tells them to remain in Moab, she will make the journey alone back to Israel.



REFLECT:

And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.

(1 Peter 5:10)

When Naomi hears that God is doing a good thing, she returns to him and her people. We can often draw away or feel envious that God is doing something good and wish we had a part of it, rather than seeing the invitation he always extends for us to come and be part of what he is doing. Naomi was settled in Moab and yet risked uprooting herself, traveling the long distance, and experiencing the shame of returning with less than what she left. She returned to God and her community empty-handed and humbled, knowing that even in her loss, God was worth it.

- Think about Naomi’s experiences and response to returning to God. Are there any ways you can relate to her story?
- Have you ever returned to God after walking away, whether physically or in an act of disobedience? How did you experience him in that time?
- How have you experienced the advantage of friendship and community amidst challenging situations?
- Are there any relationships or situations you are currently facing where you could show a similar selfless love that Naomi showed Orpah and Ruth, when she put their needs above her own?



PRAY:

Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.

{John 15:13}

Thank God for his faithfulness and provision, even during heartache and loss.

Ask God for strength to remain loyal and committed in your relationship with him and others.

Thank God for the example Jesus gave in extending friendship to us, even though we did not deserve it.

Pray for opportunities to extend kindness, just as Naomi did, so that others may experience God’s love through your actions.

RUTH 1:11-14



BE WITH JESUS:

Before engaging with today's verses, take a moment to calm your heart and mind by expressing prayers of worship and gratitude towards God. Ask God to make his presence real and to prevent distractions. Open yourself to be receptive to his message for you today.

¹¹ But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters; why will you go with me? Have I yet sons in my womb that they may become your husbands?" ¹² Turn back, my daughters; go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. If I should say I have hope, even if I should have a husband this night and should bear sons, ¹³ would you therefore wait till they were grown? Would you therefore refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, for it is exceedingly bitter to me for your sake that the hand of the Lord has gone out against me." ¹⁴ Then they lifted up their voices and wept again. And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.



CONSIDER:

Now it is Ruth's turn to display selflessness. Naomi paints a bleak future for herself and her two Moabite daughters-in-law. She cannot promise that life will be better for Orpah and Ruth in Israel. In fact, she knows that it will likely be worse for the two young women as foreigners.

Naomi is left in the most vulnerable place a woman could be at that time. She loved her daughters-in-law enough not to want them to share her fate. So, she pleads with them to remain in their land and remarry within their own people. She clearly has the affection of both young women, as neither wants to leave their mother-in-law. Eventually, Orpah agrees and returns home, while Ruth remains with Naomi.

Naomi possibly felt that the calamity which fell upon her family came because they were disobedient (in leaving the Promised Land of Israel and marrying their sons to Moabite women). This is reflected when she says "The hand of the Lord has gone out against me". And yet, Naomi was returning to God and her people, even though it would be obvious to others that her family would have done better had they just stayed.



REFLECT:

Despite feeling like the Lord’s hand had turned against her, Naomi returned to Israel and her faith. Although she experienced hardship, she did not become resentful toward God. She sought repentance and understood that drawing nearer to him was the answer rather than distancing herself even more.

We see here that Naomi refrained from blaming God for her difficulties. If she had harboured bitterness or anger toward God, she might have chosen a path that took her further away from the God of Israel and his people. She certainly wouldn’t have called on his Name to bless her daughters-in-law when she prayed that God would deal kindly with them. Like the prodigal son, Naomi knew that no matter her station in life or the circumstances she was in, returning to God was the wisest decision she could make.

- What is your natural inclination when you face hardship? To whom do you turn?
- Consider asking a trusted friend who knows you what they have observed in you when you go through difficult times.
- In what ways does Naomi demonstrate a better way to respond?



PRAY:

Spend some time praying about your reflections.

Ask God to help you to trust him more and to guide you.

Ask him to remind you of his unfailing love and provision when doubts and fears threaten to overwhelm you.

RUTH 1:15-18



BE WITH JESUS:

Before reading today's verses, center your heart and mind by offering prayers of worship and gratitude to God. Reflect on what your mind is currently focused on, and present it before God. Now ask him to speak to you through today's scripture.

¹⁵ And she said, "See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law." ¹⁶ But Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. ¹⁷ Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the Lord do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you." ¹⁸ And when Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more.



CONSIDER:

Naomi tries to persuade Ruth to return home one final time. Both women exemplify friendship, loyalty, and commitment. Naomi remains steadfast in her faith in God while experiencing grief. She demonstrates godly character by placing her daughters-in-law's needs above her own. Naomi's life has clearly impacted Ruth, who now pledges herself to Naomi, her people, and her God.

Ruth's vow powerfully reflects commitment, sacrifice, and trust within a friendship. Her decision to stand by Naomi amid their grief and uncertainty highlights that true friends face joyous moments and difficult times together.

Jesus encourages us to develop this type of intentional companionship and friendship in our own lives as well. In John 15:13-15, Jesus says, ***"Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends..."***

What a privilege to be called a friend by Jesus! His example of friendship encompasses the same themes of loyalty, sacrificial love, and putting others before oneself that we see in Ruth and Naomi. This type of friendship is vital for true community.

The relationship between Ruth and Naomi also highlights the vulnerability and therefore risk involved in forming deep connections with others. Yet Jesus calls us

to press in and risk for godly community. He calls us to generous acts of forgiveness and love. In our individualistic society, where self-interest often triumphs over genuine care for others, Naomi and Ruth's bond illustrates the power of choosing community over isolation.



REFLECT:

The two women's relationship is a powerful example of how true friendship transcends cultural barriers and demonstrates unwavering loyalty and love. This teaches us important lessons about the strength of relationships that go against the prevailing trend of individualism.

- How have you experienced unwavering love and loyalty in your own life?
- How are your friendships doing in terms of loyalty, commitment and challenging accountability?
- Are there ways you need to grow in forming the type of godly friendships scripture calls us to?
- Is there a specific friend you need to thank or encourage today based on your reflections?



PRAY:

Thank God for the loyalty, love, and faith example demonstrated through Ruth and Naomi's relationship.

Thank him that Jesus came to make a way for us to be friends with God.

Ask him to help you to learn from his selflessness and strengthen your bonds with your community.



WEEK TWO

RUTH 1:19-2:16

RUTH 1:19-22



BE WITH JESUS:

Before you read today's verses, still your heart and mind by praying prayers of worship and thankfulness to God. Ask God to quieten your mind from distraction so you can hear what he would say to you today.

¹⁹ So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem. And when they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them. And the women said, "Is this Naomi?" ²⁰ She said to them, "Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. ²¹ I went away full, and the Lord has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi, when the Lord has testified against me and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?"

²² So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabite her daughter-in-law with her, who returned from the country of Moab. And they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest.



CONSIDER:

This heartfelt passage paints the picture of Naomi's return showing her grief, loss, and sorrow. Naomi shares her deep anguish with those around her, giving an example of someone willing to be vulnerable with her community in times of distress.

Naomi wasn't trying to manage her reputation with her community. She shares with her people that her family only knew trouble after leaving their community and land. She also describes the tragedies as an example of God's affliction. She is confessing that her family had made the wrong decision in leaving their people. Naomi demonstrated deep humility and vulnerability in how she shared with her people.

Yet, amid all these bitter circumstances, Naomi did not describe herself as bitter against God. Things have gone awfully wrong for her and her family, but she knew and demonstrated that the answer wasn't going further from God but in drawing closer to him and his people. Naomi demonstrated vulnerability, courage, and wisdom in her actions since calamity hit her family.

But Naomi hadn't returned without a blessing. God had brought her home with someone who would both help her and ultimately would lead to full restoration.

In her grief, Naomi was not yet able to see the ending of her story. But she had taken the right step in coming back to the God who had written her future.



REFLECT:

- Are you experiencing pain or grief currently?
- How does Naomi’s journey speak courage and comfort to your circumstances?
- In your own relationships, are there people to whom you can mirror Ruth’s loving commitment?
- Are there people in your life that are in pain that you can move towards in love and comfort?
- How does the love shared between Ruth and Naomi display God’s unwavering promise of hope amidst our suffering?



PRAY:

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. (Psalm 23:4)

Bring your pain and grief before God.

Pray for strength and comfort as you face loss or despair, and ask for God’s guidance on how to navigate through difficult circumstances.

Pray for gratitude and wisdom to appreciate the sacrifices made by our loved ones who stand by us, even during hard times.

Ask God to help you embody Christ-like love and loyalty in your relationships with friends, family, and even strangers.

RUTH 2:1-3



BE WITH JESUS:

Before you read today's verses, still your heart and mind by speaking prayers of worship and thankfulness to God. Ask him to quieten your mind from distraction so you can hear what he would say to you today.

¹ 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.



CONSIDER:

The word "glean" comes from God's instruction in Leviticus 19:9-10 where he commanded farmers not to harvest their fields completely. They were commanded always to leave some behind. If they dropped a bundle of grain, they were commanded to leave it on the ground.

This was so the poor and needy could come and glean the remains of the harvest for themselves. It commanded the farmers to have a generous heart and for the poor to be active in working for their food – a way for them to provide for their own needs with dignity.

The two friends are now back in Naomi's home. Life is very difficult for them because women were easy targets for economic and social abuse and exploitation. Scripture makes much of God's heart towards widows and orphans – the most vulnerable of society.

Rather than wallowing in her change of fortune and circumstances, Ruth offers to go into the fields to glean. She is someone who not only shows great levels of loyalty and trust in the God of her mother-in-law, leaving Moab to be with his people, but also she has a good work ethic and makes plans to provide in whatever way she can.

Theologian and author, JI Packer, wrote: *"The Christian's motto should not be 'Let go and let God' but 'Trust God and get going.'"*

While we are to wait on God, and to submit to his timing, we are also not to be idle. Ruth demonstrates a beautiful balance of faith in God and willingness to work diligently.



REFLECT:

- What do you think God's view on work and productivity is based on today's scripture?
- Do you think you over-value or under-value productivity in comparison?
- How do you see the principle of gleaning applying to your personal and professional life?
- How can you incorporate gleaning practices to benefit others and strengthen your faith?



PRAY:

Ask God to help you recognize and trust his providence and provision during difficult times.

Spend some time praying about your work situation, whatever it may be, and how you can live and work for God's glory.

Spend some time asking him to show you where he would like to see you grow in dependence, productivity and generosity.

RUTH 2:4-7



BE WITH JESUS:

Take a moment to quiet your heart and mind through prayers of worship and gratitude towards God. Reflect on something that has occurred in the past day or week that you deeply appreciate, and express your gratitude for it. Humbly ask God for his guidance while engaging in today's devotion.

“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.”



CONSIDER:

This passage shows a key interaction between Boaz and his labourers. Boaz's warm greetings towards his workers indicate his genuine care. He also instantly recognized Ruth as new. Which shows that he knew his labourers and community well. He is described as wealthy. Yet in his behaviour we see he provides a good working environment for his workforce (Ruth 2:9), he is generous to those in need (Ruth 2:14) and he is willing to work alongside them (Ruth 3).

The labourer's response suggests that Boaz is fair-minded and obeyed God's commandments, and expected his workforce to do the same. They had high ethics and there was transparency in how they conducted their work with their employer.

This is an example that reminds us of Jesus' words:

⁴² “You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. ⁴³ But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴ and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” (Matthew 10:42-45)

Later, when Naomi hears about Ruth's experiences with Boaz, she prays blessing over him. This is a challenge for us! If we are leaders and employers, do we demonstrate

God's example of servant leadership? Do the families of our workers see working for us as a blessing? Are they quick to praise God's name as a result?



REFLECT:

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. [Colossians 3:12]

- What guidance does today's passage provide for those in a position of authority within a workplace, education institution, or for those in a leadership role?
- Consider the people who work for you or anyone you are overseeing. How do you think they would describe your leadership style?
- Are there areas or relationships where you can imitate Boaz's example of kindness and respect toward others?



PRAY:

Thank God that he is so kind and compassionate towards you.

Pray that he would help shape you into being a servant-hearted leader like him.

Pray for opportunities in your relationships and interactions with others to display kindness and consideration.

RUTH 2:8-12



BE WITH JESUS:

Before diving into today's verses, take a moment to center yourself and prepare your heart and mind. Begin by offering prayers of worship and gratitude to God. Ask him to calm your thoughts and remove any distractions hindering your ability to listen to him.

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!"



CONSIDER:

Boaz goes further than simply permitting Ruth to glean from his field. He demonstrates kindness by providing guidance and protection to Ruth. He extends protection over her by commanding that no one who works for him should harass or exploit her. So much so that Ruth is astounded by his grace and favour.

Ruth expects to be mistreated as a foreigner. But God had been clear about his heart for outsiders when they came to live with his people. Deuteronomy 10:18-19 says, "[God] executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. Love the sojourner, therefore, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt." As a godly man and leader, Boaz clearly leads his life in a way that brings God honour and glory.

Boaz is grateful for Ruth's character. His worker had already described her as productive and humble enough to ask permission to glean. He also knew of her reputation as Naomi's daughter-in-law. He is so grateful that he prays a blessing over her. Boaz is gracious and generous towards her. He sees her as being under the care of God (v. 12) and so treats her with respect and honour, in light of who God is.



REFLECT:

Boaz is a foreshadowing of the ultimate Saviour, Jesus. How Boaz views and treats Ruth, in light of how he knows God sees her reflects Jesus' sacrifice that covers Israelites and people from all nations, inviting everyone to take refuge under God's saving grace.

- Have you ever felt like an outsider? How does that experience help you empathize with others who struggle to feel like they belong?
- What do you think today's scriptures reveal about God's heart for immigrants and those who are marginalized?
- What aspects of your current work life or lifestyle align with the biblical idea of providing for those in need?
- How can you strive to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for everyone you encounter?
- What do you see about the character of God in today's passage?



PRAY:

Thank God for the demonstration of his love through acts of grace and kindness in your life.

Ask God to open your eyes to see opportunities where you can extend his love, compassion and grace to others.

Pray for courage and obedience to step out in faith, trusting that God will provide security.

RUTH 2:13-16



BE WITH JESUS:

We're halfway through our journey in Ruth. Before you read today's verses, consider what God has been saying to you over this time. Pray prayers of gratitude and surrender to him. Now ask him to speak to you through today's devotion.

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."



CONSIDER:

In this passage, we see a beautiful picture of Christ in Boaz. Before meeting Boaz, Ruth was destitute – like each one of us before encountering Jesus.

Despite her foreign background and widow status, Boaz welcomes Ruth and ensures she is cared for. He recognises her worthiness in God's eyes.

In Genesis 1, Imago Dei (Image of God), is first mentioned when God says, "**Let us make man in our likeness.**"

When we truly understand this reality – when we see the greatness of God and that every single person, no matter their origin, beliefs, opinions, or even behaviour, are made in God's image and reflect him in their very created existence – it changes the way we engage with others. This is carved into God's instructions throughout scripture, and Boaz beautifully demonstrates God's heart here.

Boaz chooses to be sensitive to Ruth's vulnerabilities and shows her kindness, even pulling out stalks from the bundles so she can gather them more easily. He sees her as an image bearer of the God he loves and he sees that God loves her completely. This shapes the way he interacts with and how he serves Ruth.



REFLECT:

There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations - these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub and exploit - immortal horrors or everlasting splendours. This does not mean that we are to be perpetually solemn. We must play. But our merriment must be of that kind (and it is, in fact, the merriest kind) which exists between people who have, from the outset, taken each other seriously - no flippancy, no superiority, no presumption.” (C.S. Lewis)

- Consider a recent encounter with someone, whether it was a close friend, family member, a colleague, a stranger, or someone online. How did you perceive that person at the time?
- Consider how acknowledging their being made in the image of God himself might change your perspective on their value and significance.
- In what ways can you actively practice recognizing the presence of God's image in every person you meet or interact with (even, or especially, online)?



PRAY:

Pray for an open heart and open eyes to see people as God sees them – as his image bearers – no matter who they are or where they come from.

Ask God for discernment in recognising ways to demonstrate kindness to others.

Pray that he would shape you more into his likeness as you seek to follow and worship him.



WEEK THREE

RUTH 2:17-4:6

RUTH 2:17-20^a



BE WITH JESUS:

Before you read today's verses, still your heart and mind by speaking prayers of worship and thankfulness to God. Ask him to quieten your mind from distraction so you can hear what he would say to you today.

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!"



CONSIDER:

As we have seen, Boaz demonstrates extraordinary kindness towards Ruth, going above and beyond societal expectations. His attitude and behaviours reflect God's heart for all people, including those who may be considered outsiders or less important by society's standards. By extending grace and generosity towards Ruth, Boaz foreshadows God's ultimate act of kindness through Jesus. Boaz demonstrates grace and mercy towards Ruth.

Both grace and mercy reveal God's love and character. God's mercy is this: he didn't give us what we deserved – his wrath towards our sin and rebellion – but poured that out on Jesus. In God's grace, he gave us what we don't deserve – the rewards earned by Jesus.

Boaz was merciful to Ruth by allowing her to glean in his fields. He showed grace by instructing his labourers to watch out for her, protect her, and drop more crops so she could glean even more from his lands.



REFLECT:

The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
[Psalm 145:8]

- In what ways have you experienced unexpected kindness or grace in your life?
- How have you seen God's mercy and grace in your life so far?
- Have you accepted God's mercy as given through the life and death of Jesus, before?
- How does this passage deepen your understanding of the nature of God's love and grace?



PRAY:

Thank God for the unexpected kindness and grace you have experienced in your life.

Ask him to help you recognize his goodness even when it comes in unexpected ways.

Pray for opportunities to extend kindness and generosity to those who may feel like outsiders or are struggling.

Ask God to make you more mindful of his love and grace, giving you the courage to share the good news of Jesus with others.

If you have never received God's mercy, ask him for it now by confessing and repenting of a life of rebellion apart from him and asking for his forgiveness and mercy. (If you prayed that prayer, consider reaching out to a Christ-following friend to let them know.)

RUTH 2:20^b-23



BE WITH JESUS:

Before diving into today's devotion, allow yourself to focus by pausing and offering prayers of adoration and appreciation to God. Ask for his help in calming your thoughts from distractions and interruptions, so you can fully listen to what he wants to say to you today.

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.



CONSIDER:

'Kin' means family. The kinsman redeemer concept is a prominent theme in the Old Testament. Like the Passover Lamb, the concept of kinsman redeemer, instilled into Israel's history by God was foreshadowing for the coming Messiah who would be the ultimate sacrifice and redeemer for humanity.

"If your brother becomes poor and sells part of his property, then his nearest redeemer shall come and redeem what his brother has sold." (Leviticus 25:25)

In Israelite society, the kinsman redeemer was responsible for land redemption, family protection, and maintaining family lineage (often by marrying a childless widow). This was another sacrificial mechanism in God's people, like gleaning, that ensured that society looked after the vulnerable and marginalised.

Naomi recognises that Boaz will protect her daughter-in-law and encourages Ruth to remain with his people and work under their protection. Ruth obeys Naomi and continues working to support her mother-in-law and herself in Boaz's field.

Both Boaz and Naomi know that Ruth is especially at risk because of her vulnerable status and want to ensure she wasn't assaulted.

Ruth lived in a society where women faced numerous challenges. They were often vulnerable to societal injustices, including assault and abuse. Ruth demonstrates

resilience and courage as she navigates her way through these challenges, seeking safety and stability for herself and her mother-in-law, Naomi.

Boaz stepped in as a redeemer in allowing her to have as much as she needed from his fields and instructing her to remain in the safety of the other women on his fields.



REFLECT:

For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who is not partial and takes no bribe. ¹⁸ He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. [Deuteronomy 10:17-18]

- What do Boaz’s character and actions teach us about the character of God and his love for us?
- What does the Book of Ruth teach us about God’s view of those needing protection?
- How can we help to protect those in our society that are vulnerable?
- Consider your immediate sphere of people: is there anyone you could assist to help them be and feel safer?



PRAY:

Pray for the courage to trust God even when things seem uncertain or uncomfortable. Ask for his comfort, strength, and guidance for any areas you are struggling with currently.

Pray for those around you who are vulnerable. Pray that God would use his people to help those in society that need it.

RUTH 3:1-9



BE WITH JESUS:

Before exploring today's passages, set your heart and mind at ease through prayers filled with thankfulness towards God. Ask him to help you quieten distractions. Pray that he would speak to you through his word.

¹ Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, should I not seek rest for you, that it may be well with you?" ² Is not Boaz our relative, with whose young women you were? See, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor. ³ Wash therefore and anoint yourself, and put on your cloak and go down to the threshing floor, but do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. ⁴ But when he lies down, observe the place where he lies. Then go and uncover his feet and lie down, and he will tell you what to do." ⁵ And she replied, "All that you say I will do."

⁶ So she went down to the threshing floor and did just as her mother-in-law had commanded her. And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain. Then she came softly and uncovered his feet and lay down. ⁸ At midnight the man was startled and turned over, and behold, a woman lay at his feet! ⁹ He said, "Who are you?" And she answered, "I am Ruth, your servant. Spread your wings over your servant, for you are a redeemer."



CONSIDER:

"Should I not seek rest for you?" (v.1) The Hebrew word "rest" (*manowach*) used here speaks of a sense of rest and security. Naomi is once again seeking the ultimate good of her daughter-in-law and friend. She suggests that Ruth approach Boaz in a way that will communicate her wish that he would fulfil the role of kinsman redeemer in her life.

This situation may seem odd when read with our contexts eyes, a woman trying to trap a man. But the opposite is true. Ruth is submitting herself to her new people's culture and following the advice of someone she knows loves her, and risking possible rejection from someone who has already shown himself godly and kind. It was socially accepted that someone who could "redeem" another person's family would do it. Ruth was appealing to Boaz's kinsman redeemer status to change the trajectory of her and Naomi's life.

Ruth was bold in her faith, but there is wisdom in her risk-assessment of risk as she trusts Naomi and Boaz to treat her rightly.

Nevertheless, this was a courageous step for Ruth. Even if she knew Boaz was honourable, she still risked rejection and humiliation if Boaz had responded negatively. He was permitted to say no (as we will see in later passages).



REFLECT:

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go. (Joshua 1:9)

- Ruths follows Naomi’s advice, what does this demonstrate about her trust in God and the promises he made to his people in the Old Testament?
- Are there currently any steps of obedience and faith that you are reluctant to take because of fear? Given what you have learned about God in the book of Ruth, what do you think God would say to those fears?
- How does God’s faithfulness in this passage encourage you in your own journey?



PRAY:

Thank God for his unfailing faithfulness and ask him to guide you as you navigate unexpected situations.

Ask God to show you where you may be avoiding stepping out in faith due to fear.

Pray for courage and wisdom to follow him in obedience.

RUTH 3:10-18



BE WITH JESUS:

Ask God to be with you as you open his word. Pray that he would speak to you and shape you into his likeness as you spend this time with him.

¹⁰ And he said, "May you be blessed by the Lord, my daughter. You have made this last kindness greater than the first in that you have not gone after young men, whether poor or rich." ¹¹ And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you ask, for all my fellow townsmen know that you are a worthy woman. ¹² And now it is true that I am a redeemer. Yet there is a redeemer nearer than I. ¹³ Remain tonight, and in the morning, if he will redeem you, good; let him do it. But if he is not willing to redeem you, then, as the Lord lives, I will redeem you. Lie down until the morning."

So she lay at his feet until the morning, but arose before one could recognize another. And he said, "Let it not be known that the woman came to the threshing floor." ¹⁵ And he said, "Bring the garment you are wearing and hold it out." So she held it, and he measured out six measures of barley and put it on her. Then she went into the city. ¹⁶ And when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, "How did you fare, my daughter?" Then she told her all that the man had done for her, ¹⁷ saying, "These six measures of barley he gave to me, for he said to me, 'You must not go back empty-handed to your mother-in-law.'" ¹⁸ She replied, "Wait, my daughter, until you learn how the matter turns out, for the man will not rest but will settle the matter today."



CONSIDER:

Interestingly, Ruth herself was the first person to stand in the gap to help a family member find redemption in this book. Only through Ruth's sacrifice, in leaving her people and culture to journey to Naomi's home, was Naomi able to find redemption. However, legally, both women needed someone better qualified as a redeemer to step into the gap created by the death of their husbands and the break in the family lineage.

A kinsman redeemer had to have at least three qualifications. He must have the power to redeem (financially and status-wise), he must have the legal right to redeem (being part of that family and in the correct order of redemption), and he must have the desire to redeem.

Ruth exemplifies the importance of relying on God's guidance and provision in our lives by seeking Boaz as her kinsman-redeemer. God had instituted the pathway to

redemption for her and Naomi through the kinsman redeemer into his law for his people. Ruth is relying on God's providence to see his will realised as she goes to Boaz.



REFLECT:

This passage reveals God's unfailing love and care for his people, even amidst challenging circumstances. We can learn about patience and God's plan for our lives by valuing and trusting in the relationships he brings into our lives.

For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory. (2 Corinthians 1:20)

- How does trusting in God's promises bring hope and peace during times of uncertainty or trials? How has Ruth demonstrated this so far in the Book of Ruth?
- How do you find out what God has promised?
- What makes it difficult for you to trust God completely and rely on His promises?
- In what areas of your life do you need to surrender control and trust God's guidance, knowing he is faithful to provide?



PRAY:

Thank God for his unchanging faithfulness and the truth of his Word.

Pray that he would give you a high view of the privilege of having his very words available through scripture.

Pray for a heart of courage and faith like Ruth to trust God's provision in every aspect of your life.

Ask him to grow your faith to trust deeply in the promises of God, even during times of uncertainty or hardship.

RUTH 4:1-6



BE WITH JESUS:

Begin today's devotional by praying to God, readying your heart and mind for the Scripture passages. Ask him to help focus your thoughts, allowing you to hear from him clearly. Give him thanks for how he has spoken to you so far in this journey. Ask God to further reveal his truth and nature through his Word.

¹ Now Boaz had gone up to the gate and sat down there. And behold, the redeemer, of whom Boaz had spoken, came by. So Boaz said, "Turn aside, friend; sit down here." And he turned aside and sat down. ² And he took ten men of the elders of the city and said, "Sit down here." So they sat down. ³ Then he said to the redeemer, "Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, is selling the parcel of land that belonged to our relative Elimelech. ⁴ So I thought I would tell you of it and say, 'Buy it in the presence of those sitting here and in the presence of the elders of my people.' If you will redeem it, redeem it. But if you will not, tell me, that I may know, for there is no one besides you to redeem it, and I come after you." And he said, "I will redeem it." ⁵ Then Boaz said, "The day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the widow of the dead, in order to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance."

Then the redeemer said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I impair my own inheritance. Take my right of redemption yourself, for I cannot redeem it."



CONSIDER:

We again see Boaz's protection and care for Ruth and Naomi as he makes plans to resolve their circumstances. He understands the significance and responsibility of being a kinsman-redeemer and is committed to acting honourably toward Ruth. However, Boaz only fulfilled two of the criteria of a kinsman redeemer. He was able to redeem and desired to redeem, but legally he was in second place to redeem. So he organised to meet with the closer redeemer, in the presence of wise counsel to discuss the matter,

As we see in this passage, there was a cost to redeeming Naomi and Ruth. Boaz is willing to pay this cost but asks the closer redeemer if he is willing to pay it. When the other redeemer heard that the cost included marrying Ruth to allow Elimelech's lineage to continue, he decided the cost was too high. He was worried about his own inheritance. It is interesting that this man is not named in the book of Ruth – while



WEEK FOUR

RUTH 4:7 - 22

RUTH 4:7-12



BE WITH JESUS:

Start today's devotion by asking God to help you focus your mind and heart on his presence. Ask him to speak through today's scripture and grow you in his strength and wisdom.

⁷ Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging: to confirm a transaction, the one drew off his sandal and gave it to the other, and this was the manner of attesting in Israel. ⁸ So when the redeemer said to Boaz, "Buy it for yourself," he drew off his sandal. Then Boaz said to the elders and all the people, "You are witnesses this day that I have bought from the hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and to Mahlon. ¹⁰ Also Ruth the Moabite, the widow of Mahlon, I have bought to be my wife, to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his native place. You are witnesses this day." ¹¹ Then all the people who were at the gate and the elders said, "We are witnesses. May the Lord make the woman, who is coming into your house, like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel. May you act worthily in Ephrathah and be renowned in Bethlehem, ¹² and may your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, because of the offspring that the Lord will give you by this young woman."



CONSIDER:

This passage shows a beautiful example of God's redeeming love through Boaz's decision to take Ruth as his wife. Boaz now fulfills all the criteria to be their kinsman redeemer and willingly accepts responsibility for Ruth and Naomi's future, welcoming Ruth into his family.

Just like Boaz redeemed Ruth and restored security to her life and hope for her future, Jesus redeems us and provides hope, salvation, and a new beginning.

The elders who are witnesses reference another Old Testament account of kinsman redemption found in Genesis 38. Tamar had married Judah's oldest son. When he died, Judah instructed his next son to take Tamar and provide an heir on behalf of his deceased brother. He was unwilling to do so and he also died. In the end, Tamar has to trick her father-in-law into redeeming her as God would want. She blesses Judah by giving him twin sons – Perez and Zerah. Boaz was a descendent from Perez, and

RUTH 4:13-15



BE WITH JESUS:

Take a moment to focus on the unwavering love and faithfulness of God displayed throughout the story of Ruth. Remember how Ruth chose to commit herself to the God of Israel amid her loss and personal struggles. Think of God's kindness and provision in your life, think of his unchanging character throughout the generations and thank him. Ask God to reveal more of himself through today's devotion.

¹³ So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. And he went in to her, and the Lord gave her conception, and she bore a son. ¹⁴ Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed be the Lord, who has not left you this day without a redeemer, and may his name be renowned in Israel! ¹⁵ He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age, for your daughter-in-law who loves you, who is more to you than seven sons, has given birth to him."



CONSIDER:

In these verses, we read about how God's providence works through the actions of devoted individuals. Ruth's loyalty to Naomi and Boaz's commitment as a redeemer results in the birth of their son, Obed.

Ruth's story demonstrates how God works unexpectedly through people's lives. While these ordinary individuals are living out their daily lives, their unwavering faith and devotion help bring about pivotal moments in the history of God's people.

By this stage of the book, the worth of Ruth was highly esteemed. Once a childless widow and foreigner, she was now described as better than seven sons to her mother-in-law. This phrase suggests the best blessing God could have given in ancient times; seven represented a perfect amount, and sons meant future prosperity and security. Yet Ruth was described as better than this. She was seen as God's greatest gift to Naomi. Through Ruth, God restored all that Naomi had lost.

It is fitting that these blessings in the life of Naomi be given so much attention at the end of the book. Naomi was the one whose original return to God and his people began all this great work of God. If Naomi had not decided to return to Bethlehem, the land of Israel, and the God of Israel, her life would not have been restored.

RUTH 4:16-17^a**BE WITH JESUS:**

Before you read today's verses, still your heart and mind by speaking prayers of worship and thankfulness to God. Let your thoughts and emotions revolve around the awe-inspiring power of God, who is always present in our lives, even during difficult times. Reach out to him through prayer as you seek comfort and wisdom.

¹⁶ Then Naomi took the child and laid him on her lap and became his nurse. ¹⁷ And the women of the neighbourhood gave him a name, saying, "A son has been born to Naomi."

**CONSIDER:**

In this passage, we see the culmination of Naomi's story in the Book of Ruth as she takes her grandson Obed into her arms. This beautiful moment signifies the restoration of her life after a period of great tragedy and loss.

Naomi was once a woman filled with bitterness and despair, but God transformed her sorrow into joy through his grace and kindness.

Obed was regarded as being a son for Naomi. The suffering with which this book began has been eradicated and overruled for good. Naomi has a family again, she has a community, she has a future and most importantly, she has returned to God himself.

**REFLECT:**

The idea that the prince of Heaven would empty himself and become poor, to live and dwell among us is humbling. The idea that there is nothing in the human experience that God himself has not suffered, even losing a child, is sustaining. And the idea that in his resurrection, Jesus' scars became his glory is empowering. God will use these scars for his glory, as they become our glory. Indeed, the end hasn't been written." (Timothy Keller)

Naomi's journey from heartache to hope is a powerful example of God's redemptive power at work in our lives.

Amid life's challenges, we can feel abandoned or forgotten by God. However, it is important to remember that God is always present with us, even in our darkest

RUTH 4:17^b-22



BE WITH JESUS:

Before you read today's verses, still your heart and mind by speaking prayers of worship and thankfulness to God. Ask him to quieten your mind from distraction so you can hear what he would say to you today.

They named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David. Now these are the generations of Perez: Perez fathered Hezron, ¹⁹ Hezron fathered Ram, Ram fathered Amminadab, ²⁰ Amminadab fathered Nahshon, Nahshon fathered Salmon, ²¹ Salmon fathered Boaz, Boaz fathered Obed, ²² Obed fathered Jesse, and Jesse fathered David.



CONSIDER:

In the closing verses of the Book of Ruth, we see God's remarkable redemptive story unfold. The union of Boaz and Ruth lead to King David within two generations. From David's line would come the Messiah. It is a testimony to God's faithfulness and providence in fulfilling his promises.

The story of Ruth shows that God can use ordinary people and unlikely circumstances to extend his love and provision.

Naomi's return to Bethlehem, and the roots of David in Bethlehem (going back to Ruth and Boaz) are why Joseph and Mary had to go to Bethlehem to register in the census of Augustus (Luke 2:1-5). Ruth and Boaz are the reason why Jesus was born in Bethlehem.

This genealogy reveals how God chooses to bring about redemption through even the most unexpected people, as we can see with Ruth's inclusion into this sacred lineage. From a childless widow and gentile foreigner comes the line of the great kings of Israel, leading to the greatest King of Heaven – Jesus himself.



REFLECT:

At its core, this passage is a powerful reminder that God uses ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things for his greater story of redemption. Though Ruth was a foreigner and considered an outsider, her faith in God led to her becoming an

JESUS THE BETTER REDEEMER



BE WITH JESUS:

Before you read today's verses, still your heart and mind by speaking prayers of worship and thankfulness to God. Thank him for this journey and how much he has shared of himself through Ruth.

⁴ "Fear not, for you will not be ashamed; be not confounded, for you will not be disgraced; for you will forget the shame of your youth, and the reproach of your widowhood you will remember no more. ⁵ For your Maker is your husband, the Lord of hosts is his name; and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer, the God of the whole earth he is called. ⁶ For the Lord has called you like a wife deserted and grieved in spirit, like a wife of youth when she is cast off, says your God. ⁷ For a brief moment I deserted you, but with great compassion I will gather you. ⁸ In overflowing anger for a moment I hid my face from you, but with everlasting love I will have compassion on you," says the Lord, your Redeemer.

(Isaiah 54:4-8)



CONSIDER:

In the beautiful story of Ruth, we find powerful reflections of God's redemptive love through the figure of Boaz. As a kinsman-redeemer, Boaz paints a vivid picture of Jesus, our Redeemer, who ultimately takes on the responsibility and privilege to purchase us from sin's bondage. Jesus comes into our lives as the ultimate Redeemer, taking on our sins and providing reconciliation between us and the Father.

The requirements for redemption as written into the Old Testament law paved the way for us to understand why only Jesus could die for us.

The redeemer had to have the power and status to redeem. Jesus as God had the power to save us. He had the status of being holy, perfect and without sin to redeem us. The redeemer had to have the legal right to redeem. Jesus could not have redeemed us without becoming one with us. He had to be our kinsman before he could be our redeemer.

Only Jesus, the eternal God who added humanity to his eternal deity, can be both the kinsman and the redeemer for mankind. He was God and Man – the perfect substitute and representative between fallen man and our Holy God.

Finally, the redeemer had to have the desire to redeem.

³ *This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior,* ⁴ *who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.* ⁵ *For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,* ⁶ *who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.* (1 Timothy 2:3-6)



REFLECT:

Ruth's story is not just about God's redemption for Israel alone but for all people. Likewise, Jesus' redemptive love knows no borders and welcomes all who choose to follow Him.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him."

(John 3:16-17)

As the kinsman-redeemer, Boaz took responsibility for Ruth and rescued her from her circumstances. Ultimately, Jesus goes even further by sacrificing himself and shedding his blood for all nations to deliver us from sin.

In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. (1 John 4:10)

- How does recognizing Christ as your protector and defender change your perspective on daily struggles?
- In what ways has Jesus shown redemption in your life?
- How does Ruth's story encourage you to share the gospel message with people who are different from you?



PRAY:

Thank God for Jesus' redeeming love that purchases you from sin and sets you free. Pray prayers of gratitude for your journey through Ruth. Ask God to continue to shape you into his likeness and reveal his will to you.

Pray for wisdom and understanding to see the worth and potential of each person, even those who might seem unlikely or unqualified.

Ask for guidance and opportunities to share God's redemptive story with others.

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