

Message #9

Ruth 4:13-22

When this story in the book of Ruth began, you would never dream this will turn out to be a happy ever after story. It began in the times of Judges with a family who decided to leave the Promised Land and go to the heathen land of the Moabites. Shortly after that move, three members of the family died and a widow was left with nothing but a Moabite daughter-in-law.

But this script was far from being over. The book of Ruth is a story like no other. It is a unique story that ends up with a man whose name is Boaz, marrying a woman whose name is Ruth, and out of this union that is so blessed by God eventually comes King David and Jesus Christ.

What a story. The ingredients of this story are worth careful study and analysis. This story is one of tragedy, life and blessings.

When Naomi made a decision to go back to Bethlehem and back to the Lord, she had no idea what would happen. When Ruth made the decision to go with Naomi back to Bethlehem from the land of Moab, both probably assumed we are destined for a long, lonely life.

Ruth loved Naomi and she wanted to have a relationship with God and she moved, probably thinking I won't marry again, but I will be in land that features the God of Israel.

But when she got to Bethlehem, things took a dramatic turn in her life. She had no way of knowing the future blessings that would come her way. She had no idea what God would ultimately do for her commitment to Him.

GOD SOVEREIGNLY BLESSES RUTH AND NAOMI IN BOTH TEMPORAL AND ETERNAL WAYS THEY COULD HAVE NEVER DREAMED BECAUSE THEY WERE FOCUSED ON HAVING A RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM.

When an individual purposes to put God and His word first, he/she will never end up regretting it. In fact, from that point on the person has no idea what God will eventually do.

We come now to the finale of the book of Ruth and it has an amazing ending. There are seven final observations we want to make:

FINAL OBSERVATION #1 – Boaz marries Ruth. 4:13a

This relationship will be one God blesses remarkably. If we think through what this couple did prior to the wedding, we get some idea as to the kind of relationship God will bless at the ultimate level:

- 1) They kept the relationship pure. They did not engage in any sexual behavior before marriage.
- 2) They obeyed the law. They obeyed social legal law of marriage.
- 3) They obeyed God's word. They carefully followed land and marriage stipulations of the law.
- 4) They met with religious leaders. They submitted themselves to godly leadership.

What we learn here is that Boaz married Ruth.

This was in itself an amazing event. Boaz had legally married Ruth, who was a Moabite woman. In Deuteronomy 23:3, Moses writes that Israel needed to be careful about their relationship with the Moabites and here is Boaz marrying one. But keep in mind that Ruth had earned a reputation as being a woman of excellent reputation (Ruth 3:11) so Boaz married her.

She had been elevated from being a foreigner and a nobody to one of the highest levels she could have ever dreamed. She is now the wife of Boaz, the most reputable and important man in Bethlehem.

When the text says that “he took Ruth” it means that he legally married her and took her to his house. This actually was a legal part of the process when a man took his wife to his house to live with him.

Notice how the status of Ruth has dramatically changed in the progression of this story:

- 1) She was a foreigner. (2:10) - nokriyya
- 2) She was the lowest maidservant. (2:13) - siphha
- 3) She was a maidservant. (3:9) - ama
- 4) She is now Boaz wife. (4:13) - issa

When a person decides to put God and His word and will first in life, down the road amazing things will happen. There will be a progression of development and blessings.

FINAL OBSERVATION #2 – Ruth conceived a baby. 4:13b

Now don't overlook a key statement here, “the LORD” enabled her to conceive a baby. Only two times in the book do we see the direct intervention of God (1:6; 4:13). Those who support abortion had better realize they are taking the life of something God has ordained. They will be held accountable for the murder they committed. God is the One who permits a woman to conceive.

She had been married to Mahlon for ten years and had not conceived, but as soon as she was married to Boaz, this immediately happened.

The writer telling this part of the story points out that after marriage, Boaz had intimacy with his wife and she conceived.

This child was a gift from God and they did not know the half of what this child would become.

FINAL OBSERVATION #3 – Ruth gave birth to a son. 4:13c

In the narrative, we jump ahead nine months from the wedding of Ruth to the time she gives birth to a baby. Not only did Ruth have a baby, but she also has a son and not a daughter.

God was secretly and silently and sovereignly working in the birth of this boy in ways they could never have imagined.

FINAL OBSERVATION #4 – The women honor Naomi. **4:14-15**

This is an amazing turn of events in the life of Naomi. When this story began, Naomi and her family moved away from Bethlehem and moved to the land of Moab. When she returned she did not feel like a winner. But she would end up an honored woman in this very city.

This great blessing for Naomi came after her husband and sons were dead and after Ruth was married and had a baby.

When the baby was born, these women went to Naomi to honor her. These women of Israel are honoring Naomi, who at one time had moved away from them.

The women of Israel are actually honoring Naomi, who at one time had moved away and gone to the land of Moab. This is an amazing reversal of things: There are six realities we want to observe:

(Reality #1) - They bless the Lord. **4:14a**

These women give God, literally Jehovah, all the credit for all that has happened here. The first thing these women of Bethlehem did was burst out in a praise to God for His kindness and blessing in permitting this baby to be born to the daughter-in-law of Naomi. Naomi finally had a grandchild that would carry on the family name, and these women are praising God for that.

(Reality #2) - They acknowledge that she has a redeemer. **4:14b**

God not only had not left Naomi, but He had redeemed her and blessed her. God had turned things around dramatically for Naomi.

Now this is quite an amazing statement. The actual kinsman redeemer was Boaz, but these women are talking about a baby that would be Naomi's redeemer.

The word "today" indicates that the baby would be the redeemer. First, the baby would be the goel, who would carry on the name of the family and secondly, through this baby would come a lineage that would bring the ultimate redeemer into this world.

(Reality #3) -They ask that his name be famous in Israel. **4:14c**

These ladies sensed the birth of this baby was much more than the average birth of a baby. They viewed this as something very significant for Israel. They had a prophetic perception here that is far reaching.

These ladies sensed that this baby was destined to become famous for God in regard to the nation Israel. This is amazing because these Jewish women are saying this about a baby who was born to a Moabite woman.

The idea of His name becoming famous or great in Israel is clearly a prophetic statement about the future of what would happen to the pedigree of this baby. One would come from this baby who would be high and exalted in Israel.

There are no names that are higher in Israel than King David and Jesus Christ.

(Reality #4) - They ask that this boy restores life. **4:15a**

The birth of this baby would restore life to Naomi. We may remember that when this story began, Naomi had been bitter and she seemed hopeless (1:11-13). She believed the hand of God was against her and when she got back to Bethlehem, she said don't call me Naomi, but call me Mara/bitter (1:20). She said Almighty God has seen fit to afflict me (1:21).

These women realize that God had just done something wonderful for her. He would restore her and take away her shame and would bless her in her old age.

God is a God who can restore hope and life if people choose to move close to Him.

(Reality #5) - They ask that this boy sustains her old age. **4:15b**

The women realize that Naomi is old but now she has a grandson who can look out for her. This baby was Boaz's son; Naomi would be cared for the rest of her life.

(Reality #6) - They acknowledge that her daughter-in-law is the best she could have. **4:15c**

These are Jewish women singing high praises of a Moabite woman. This relationship was not solely based on the birth of a baby.

A. Ruth loves Naomi - Ruth truly loved Naomi.

Not many old women have a daughter-in-law who is willing to take care of her the rest of her life.

B. Ruth is better than seven sons - Ruth is better than seven sons.

Now the Jewish women are actually placing a higher value on having Ruth as a daughter-in-law than they are on seven sons. Seven sons were considered to equal complete blessings of God. These women are telling Naomi that Ruth is better than that.

C. Ruth has given birth to a son. This son will turn out to be an incredible son.

FINAL OBSERVATION #5 – Naomi takes the child and became his nurse. **4:16**

In response to all of this, Naomi picked up her grandson and laid him in her lap. Naomi would play a very important role in raising and training this child. She became this child's nanny.

FINAL OBSERVATION #6 – The neighbor women name the child. **4:17**

This is very unusual. In Exodus 2:10, Pharaoh's daughter named Moses, Moses. In Luke 1:59, Elizabeth's neighbors wanted to name John Zacharias and Elizabeth said no. In Matthew 1:21, the angel told Joseph that the baby Mary would have was to be named Jesus.

Other than that this is very odd. The neighbor ladies showed up to name the baby. They named him "Obed," which means one who serves and worships God. The name Obed is mentioned three times in this context: **17, 21, 22**.

Now it doesn't mean that Naomi, Ruth or Boaz didn't agree to the name, but it is odd that neighbor women would get involved in this. They don't realize the importance of this name because through this very baby would come the greatest servant of God to ever walk on this earth.

This baby would have a far reaching serving influence on more than just one family. By these women naming the baby, it means that God was going to use this baby in ways they never dreamed. He is the father of Jesse, who is the father of David, who was the key agent in the line of Jesus Christ.

FINAL OBSERVATION #7 – The generations of David are specifically listed. **4:18-22**

The book of Ruth ends with a genealogical lineage. The word "generation" is that word toledoth which is reminiscent of the "toledoth" sections in Genesis.

We may recall that a good way to understand a toledoth section is this is what became of the line of Perez: Perez was the illegitimate son of Judah, in his immoral relationship with Tamar (I Chron. 2:5). The list here is identical with the list in I Chronicles 2:9-15. There are ten names in the section:

The first five names on the list (Perez to Nahshon) take us from the time of entry into Egypt until the time of Moses. There is a gap of about 450 years. The last five names on the list (Salmon to David) take us from the early time of living in the Promised Land to the closing years of the judges into the kings.

To Perez was born Hezron - Hezron born in Egypt (Gen. 46:12).

To Hezron was born Ram - Ram second son of Hezron (I Chron. 2:9).

To Ram was born Amminidab - Amminidab was father-in-law of Aaron, high Priest (Ex. 6:23).

To Amminidab was born Nahshon - Nahshon tribal chief; military commander (Num. 1:7; 10:14).

To Nahshon was born Salmon - Not much known but father of Boaz (I Chron. 2:11).

To Salmon was born Boaz - (I Chron. 2:11).

To Boaz was born Obed - (I Chron. 2:12).

To Obed was born Jesse - (I Chron. 2:12).

To Jesse was born David - David was Jesse's 7th son (I Chron. 2:15).

Now let us remember when this story actually happened, "in the days of the Judges" (Ruth 1:1). So what we have here is God sovereignly at work in the dark days of the Judges. His program was fully operating in those who would be born. He had a future Redeemer in mind who could save people from the dark times and sins.

This story of Ruth is not just a story about a Moabite woman; it is a story about the sovereignty of God.

God is sovereignly at work in all situations and circumstances of life. Think of what we have seen in this book. We have seen tragedy and death. We have seen travel and relocation. We have seen work and need for groceries. We have seen eating and sleeping. We have seen repentance and risk. We have seen dating and marriage. We have seen the birth of a baby. God was in every bit of every one of those episodes of life.

Naomi and Ruth are more than just a grandmother and mother of a baby. They are part of producing an incredible lineage that would lead to the birth of the Son of God.

One other point we make. Naomi had moved away from God and His word and His people. But she went back and when she did, she went to great blessings.

You may have been one who moved away from God's word, from God's will, from God's church. Turn around and come back. You may come back to the greatest blessings of your life, no matter what your age.

That is the story of Ruth.