**Lessons from Ruth**

*Ruth*

**Introduction**

1. The book of Ruth is an account of a family’s tragic loss, persistence in the face of adversity, love, loyalty, and the redemption of a family name. (*Furthermore, we will come to understand some further reaching, and important implications from the story.*)
2. It is written as an addendum to the book of Judges to some sort. The events of the short book take place in the time of the judges **(1:1).**
3. It is a moving record inspired by the Holy Spirit which we can benefit from in study **(cf. Romans 15:4).**
4. Let us consider some lessons from the story of Ruth.
5. The Story of Ruth
6. **Chapter 1** – **Tragedy in Moab, and the Return to Israel**
   1. **(vv. 1-5)** – Elimelech moves his family from Bethlehem to Moab during the famine.
      1. Elimelech dies – Naomi is widowed.
      2. Sons of Elimelech – Mahlon and Chilion – marry (Orpah and Ruth – Moabite Women)
      3. Mahlon and Chilion die – Orpah and Ruth widowed.
   2. Naomi decides to return to Judah after hearing they have been given bread by God – **She tells Orpah and Ruth to stay** – BETTER CHANCE AT FINDING PROSPECTS FOR MARRIAGE.
      1. **(v. 10)** – resolve to stay with Naomi. (Then Naomi insists that they go back to their people and gods.)
      2. **(vv. 14-18)** – Ruth refuses to leave Naomi. (Famous line from the account.)
7. **Chapter 2** – **The Meeting between Ruth and Boaz**
   1. **(vv. 1-2)** – Ruth assumes the responsibility of providing for Naomi and herself.
      1. ***“When you reap your harvest in your field, and forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.” (Deuteronomy 24:19)***
      2. Ruth was working hard to gather the leftovers for her and her mother in law.
   2. **(vv. 8-12)** – The field belonged to Boaz, and he dealt kindly with her, for he heard of the good she was doing for Naomi.
      1. **(vv. 15-16)** – He told his young men to purposefully drop more grain for her to glean.
      2. **(vv. 20)** – Naomi learned that Ruth gleaned from the field of Boaz, and was joyed – **Boaz was a close relative**.
      3. ***“close relative”*** – *gâ'al* (gaw-al)– to *redeem* (according to the Oriental law of kinship), that is, to *be the next of kin* (and as such to *buy back* a relative’s property, *marry* his widow, etc.) (Strong)
      4. When a poor man had to sell his property, the next of kin would buy it back for him – redeem it for him. **ALSO, WOULD MARRY HIS WIDOWED WIFE IF HE DIED TO CONTINUE HIS FAMILY NAME.**
      5. **NAOMI HAD HOPE. 🡪**
8. **Chapter 3** – **The Request for Favor from Boaz**
   1. Naomi sent Ruth to Boaz to request his favor concerning him being the ***“close relative”*** – family redeemer.
   2. **(vv. 8-13)** – She made the request – ***“take your maidservant under your wing, for you are a close relative”*** – and he agreed to do so.
      1. However, there was a closer relative who had the right before him.
      2. **He would go to him to see whether he wished to be the redeemer.**
9. **Chapter 4** – **The Family Name Redeemed**
   1. **(vv. 3-6)** – Boaz went to the closer relative, and asked if he wished to redeem the land.
      1. Initially the man wanted to redeem the land.
      2. Then he found out he would have to marry Ruth to ***“perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance,”*** and he refused.
      3. **Then Boaz redeemed the land, and took Ruth as his wife 🡪**
   2. **(vv. 13-17)** – Ruth became Boaz’s wife and they had a son – Obed – Naomi had a grandchild, and the family name was continued.
10. **This is a wonderful account of a transition from tragedy to joy. It also has several lessons we can glean from it, and an important implication in the overall view of the story.**
11. Lessons from Ruth
12. Ruth’s Devotion to the Lord
    1. (1:14-17) – This is more than simply Ruth’s loyalty and love toward Naomi.
       1. (v. 15) – Orpah went back to her people, and her gods (false gods).
       2. (v. 16) – Despite the fact of her being a stranger in Judah, and the lack of prospects for marriage, Ruth devoted herself to God. (YOUR GOD IS MY GOD.)
       3. However, this was not simply a decision based on her relationship with Naomi 🡪
    2. **(2:12)** – Boaz telling Ruth why she found favor in his eyes.
       1. In coming back with Naomi, she put her trust in God!
       2. ***“under whose wings thou art come to trust” (KJV)***
       3. **To place this decision for her to stay simply under her loyalty to Naomi is to minimize the entire choice!**
    3. ***SHE WAS TRULY CONVERTED!***
       1. ***“He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.” (Matthew 10:37-38)***.
       2. We can learn from Ruth’s devotion.
13. Ruth’s Loyalty to Naomi
    1. This is seen in the verses we read before.
    2. **In addition to her devotion to the Lord, Ruth saw the plight of her mother in law, and sought to aid her.**
    3. **(2:11)** – Her care for her mother in law was noticed by Boaz.
    4. **(4:14-16)** – Ruth gave Naomi and grandchild, and became better to her than 7 SONS!
    5. We should be loyal to our family, and have a good relationship with them.
    6. **Virtue and Duty:**
       1. **Where Orpah turned her back on virtue in duty to find ease of life in Moab, Ruth endured the hardship, and performed her duty as a virtuous woman.**
       2. **(2:7)** – Servant of Boaz to Boaz – Ruth worked all day to provide for herself and Naomi.
       3. **(3:11)** – Boaz called her a virtuous woman – her character was seen throughout the town! (**SHE EXHIBITED THE CHARACTER OF THE PROVERBS 31 WOMAN.)**
       4. Consider that her devotion to duty, and God was noticed by others – ***“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16)***
14. God’s Providence, and the Scarlet Thread of Redemption
    1. **God’s providence** – God’s carrying out of His will through the decisions and lives of men.
       1. **God gives men free-will, and then uses them through their choices to fulfill His purposes.**
       2. We see this in countless Bible accounts – one of the most notable is Joseph.
          1. We also see God using the evil decisions of man to further His purposes 🡪
          2. Pharaoh and Egyptians against Israel; Evil nations against Israel; Evil men against Christ 🡪 redemption of mankind.
       3. **God may providentially work in our lives to carry out His will – WE NEED TO MAKE SURE WE ARE DOING HIS BIDDING.**
          1. Regarding evangelism.
          2. Regarding the church, and her members.
    2. **God’s providence in the lives of Ruth and Naomi.**
       1. God is mentioned a couple of times by characters in the account, but that is about it.
       2. However, His hand is in it all!
       3. **(4:9-10)** – Boaz became the family redeemer, and by marrying Ruth perpetuated the name of Elimelech and Mahlon – to ensure the family name was not cut off 🡪
       4. **(4:17-22)** – Obed, Ruth’s son and Naomi’s daughter, was the grandfather of David, whose lineage led to the Christ.
    3. This account becomes a grand story of God’s provision of salvation for mankind.
    4. ***“I know that You can do everything, and that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You” (Job 42:2).*** (NOT EVEN DEATH COULD KEEP HIM FROM HIS PURPOSE – Through His providence, and His will came the Christ.)

**Conclusion**

1. We would do well to remember the story of Ruth, and emulate her character.
2. We should continually give thanks to God for His successful scheme of redemption, and His providential care for us.
3. **We should always seek to follow Him, and do His will, understanding that He may be working through us providentially to carry out His purposes.**