

VIA EMMAUS: A CHRIST-CENTERED WALK THROUGH THE BIBLE

Ruth: Painful & Pleasant Providence (11)

Context

1. **Judges 21:25** – *Everyone was doing what was right in his own eyes.*
 - Elimelech leading his family to leave Bethlehem for Moab.
2. **1 Samuel 3:1** – *The Word of God was rare in those days.*
 - The Lord does not speak once speak in Ruth.
 - Nevertheless, God’s activity in Ruth is remarkable.
3. **Ruth 4:18-22** – *It is all about King David.*
 - Explicit promises of a kingdom (Genesis 17:6, 16; 35:11-12; 49:9-12)
 - Balaam’s prophecy (Numbers 24:17)
 - Laws for an Israelite king (Deuteronomy 17:14-20)
 - Israelite chaos attributed to Israel’s royal need (Judges 17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25)
 - The Royal Line of David is grounded in a sovereign miracle (Ruth 1-4)

RUTH 1 :: PROVIDENCE

vv. 1-5 :: Naomi’s plight

People	Elimelech / Mahlon & Chilion (lit. “sickly” and “pining away”) / Naomi
Place	Bethlehem (lit. “house of bread”) → Moab
Rule	Famine = God’s Judgment on the Land

vv. 6-18 :: Ruth’s Plea

v. 6-10	Naomi intends to leave Moab for greener pastures (v. 6)
v. 11-14	Levirate Marriage
v. 15-18	Orpah stayed with her people and her gods (v. 15) Ruth clings to Naomi; She covenants with Naomi and YHWH (v. 16)

vv. 19-22 :: Naomi’s **plaint** & Ruth’s **Prospect**

v. 20	Naomi attributes her bitter life to YHWH <i>Have you ever someone say that? Have you ever felt that way?</i> Is she right to blame God? (cf. Gen 37-50; Ps 105)
v. 22	“Ruth the Moabite” – What hope does she have?

RUTH 2 :: THE GOSPEL OF RUTH

Place	Boaz’s field – a field dedicated to the Lord (2:4)
People	A worthy man (v. 2) – godly (2:4); kind & protective (2:8-9 & 2:14-17) A worthy woman (3:11) – industrious (2:2, 7), lawful (2:3), faithful (2:11) <i>Does this make her gospel one of works?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Her ‘reward’ is given because she sought refuge, not a wage (2:12) • Her attitude of gratitude shows no self-reliance (2:11)
Rule	The kingdom of God is going forward in Boaz’s field <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Godly masculinity – protection & generosity (cf. 2:23) • Godly femininity – industry & dependence • God intends for his kingdom to grow through sexual relations – <i>Be fruitful and multiply</i>

RUTH 3 :: STRATEGIC RIGHTEOUSNESS

Ruth 3 is one of the most fascinating accounts in the Bible!

- Was everyone doing what was right in their own eyes?
- Was ‘Strategic Righteousness’ employed? Based on the caliber of Ruth & Boaz?
- *The end result is a matched made in heaven... NOT FOR DUPLICATION*
- **The Power of Purity for the Purposes of God**

Why would Ruth approach a man she hardly knew? Is she taking the lead?

- **2:11-12** → An implicit invitation: “under whose wings...to take refuge!”
- **3:9** → “Spread your wings over me”
- John Piper’s interpretive suggestion (*A Sweet & Bitter Providence*, p. 86ff)

The glory of a righteous life

- Naomi strategizing for the good of her ‘daughter’
- Ruth submitting to customs of Israel and forsaking seduction & fornication
- Boaz likewise submitting to the laws of Israel – He rejects immorality & accepts his secondary position, taking the redemption to the city elders

An amazing thought : Perhaps this midnight rendezvous took place near Christ’s birth

RUTH 4 :: RISKY RIGHTEOUSNESS, REDEMPTION, & THE REST OF THE STORY

v. 1-13 :: Righteousness almost Ruined it All !?

What would you have done if you were Boaz?

Doing the right thing is ALWAYS RIGHT – **Ps 37:5**, “*Trust in the Lord and do good!*”
God works all things (good & evil) for the good for his plans of redemption

The life of faith...

- Does not manipulate, strive, or circumvent God’s word
- Obeys even when it hurts, doesn’t make sense, or threatens to undo your plan
- Is blessed (**Ruth 4:11-12**)
- *All of this is evident in Ruth.*

v. 14-22 :: Redemption: Ruth’s, Naomi’s, and Yours

- v. 10** “Ruth the Moabite” is purchased by Boaz
Illustrates the kind of love Christ has for his church – typology
- v. 14** Childless Ruth has a son – *ten years married in Moab without a child*
Naomi’s bitterness is restored (cf. Psalm 107:33-43)

Two Lessons

- God’s Providence in History Brings Himself Glory (4:14)
- God’s Providence in History Brings Greater Good (4:15)

v. 18ff The Rest of the Story

- In Your Bible – *All stories find their final purpose in Jesus Christ!*
- In Your Life – *What are you going through, God will use to advance his grand plan of redemption!*