

Ruth 1:19 - 2:1 - Thursday, April 11th, 2013

- Being that we're starting in the middle of the chapter, I'll take just a little time to bring you up to speed with where we're at here in Ruth 1.
 - We began with Elimelech, his wife Naomi, and their two sons moving from Bethlehem in Judah to Moab because of the famine in the land.
 - Once there Elimelech dies and their two sons Mahlon and Chilion marry Moabite wives named Orpah and Ruth, but both the sons die too.

- After about ten years go by Naomi, hearing the Lord has provided bread to His people back home in Bethlehem, decides to move back.
 - Thinking the hand of the Lord is against her, and wanting her daughter's in law to find husbands, she tells them to both go back to Moab.
 - Initially they both refuse because of their love and loyalty to their mother in law Naomi however, Orpah ends up returning but Ruth went on.

(19) Now the two of them went until they came to Bethlehem. And it happened, when they had come to Bethlehem, that all the city was excited because of them; and the women said, "Is this Naomi?" (20) But she said to them, "Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me.

- These verses can become a little difficult in the sense that some commentators suggest that Naomi had become bitter towards the Lord.
 - While that may very well be true, I'm more inclined to see Naomi as having drunk from the bitter cup of losing her husband and two sons.
 - In other words, just because she's drunk from the bitter cup of their deaths, doesn't necessarily mean that she's bitter towards the Lord.

- Here's how I get there, rather than forsaking the Lord, she's still following the Lord and even trusting the Lord, in spite of the bitter cup.
 - I think of Job who would say, though He slay me, yet will I praise Him. I think Naomi would say, though He afflict me yet will I follow Him.
 - Another reason I believe this is because of the utter shock that she is met with from the people who haven't seen her for the last ten years.

- Let me explain, when she says, don't call me Naomi, call me Mara, what she is saying is that her outward appearance bares bitter scars.
 - If she was really bitter towards the Lord, I believe they would have told her she was bitter inwardly, instead of her explaining it outwardly.
 - Another reason I believe that she's not bitter towards the Lord is because of what we read next where she tells them about her bitter cup.

(21) I went out full, and the LORD has brought me home again empty. Why do you call me Naomi, since the LORD has testified against me, and the Almighty has afflicted me?"

- Couple of thoughts here, the first of which is that Naomi did not consider her worldly possessions as her wealth by virtue of what she says.
 - Notice how that she tells them she left full, and the Lord brought her back empty. The only thing she left full with was her family, not wealth.
 - Secondly, when she explains her affliction from the Lord she's not actually blaming of the Lord by virtue of what she does not actually say.
 - She only says the Lord testified against her and afflicted her. She doesn't say she's testified against the Lord because He's afflicted her.

- Again, I think of Job who said the Lord gives and the Lord takes away, but blessed be the name of the Lord. So too is this true with Naomi.
 - In effect, she's saying I left full, I came back empty, but blessed be the name of the Lord. Like Job, she's not cursing God nor blaming God.
 - We do err when we share our afflictions in such a fashion that we indirectly bad-mouth God, or poor mouth God. To do so is to blame God.

- I also think of when Aaron was told to keep silent when God struck and killed his two sons, so he wouldn't appear to be blaming God for it.

Leviticus 10:1-3 NKJV Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. (2) So fire went out from the LORD and devoured them, and they died before the LORD. (3) And Moses said to Aaron, "This is what the LORD spoke, saying: 'By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; And before all the people I must be glorified.'" So Aaron held his peace.

- It must have been unspeakably difficult for Aaron to not express outward grief over the death of his two sons, but we're told that he did.
 - Were he to not do this, he could've bad mouthed God Who appears very harsh by killing them, then, telling Aaron not to weep over them.
 - In other words, if Aaron, as their High Priest, had been bitter for this, or outwardly mourned over this, he would have in affect, blamed God.

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

- So the chapter ends, but not before it hints at what's in store for Naomi, who, here-to-for, has felt that the hand of the Lord was against her.
 - She has no idea about God's timing, for such a time as this, namely, at the time of the barley harvest, as we'll see shortly in chapter two.
 - However, before we get into chapter two, I want for us to take a most fascinating look at how the name is the nature here in chapter one.

NAME	MEANING
Elimelech	God is my King
Bethlehem	House of Bread
Naomi	Pleasant
Mara	Bitter
Mahlon	Sickly
Chilion	Ailing
Orpah	Stiff Necked
Ruth	Friendship
Judah	Praise

- God is my King, and as such He will always provide my daily bread. Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I won't fear.
 - If in pleasant times of plenty, or if I drink from the cup of bitter suffering, or am confined to a bed of sickness and suffering, I will still follow.
 - When adversity strikes, I will not stiffen my neck but rather, I will humble my heart and forever praise Him, for He has called me His friend.

Charles Spurgeon - [Naomi, who's name means pleasantness or sweetness, shows to us how] "God can soon change our sweets into bitter, therefore let us be humble; but He can with equal ease transform our bitter into sweets, therefore let us be hopeful. It is very usual for Naomi and Mara, sweet and bitter to meet in the same person. He who was called Benjamin, or 'the son of his father's right hand,' was first called Benoni, or 'the son of sorrow.' The comforts of God's grace are all the sweeter when they follow the troubles of life."

Ruth 2:1 There was a relative of Naomi's husband, a man of great wealth, of the family of Elimelech. His name *was* Boaz.
 - Right out of the shoot in here, we're introduced to a wealthy man by the name of Boaz, who is actually related to Naomi vis-à-vis Elimelech.
 - It's important to note how that the word used for relative, or as the King James translation renders it, "kinsmen," is the Hebrew word "goel."
 - The reason this is significant is goel can be translated as both kinsmen and redeemer, and as such points to the typology in Jesus Christ.

Leviticus 25:25 NKJV 'If one of your brethren becomes poor, and has sold *some* of his possession, and if his redeeming relative comes to redeem it, then he may redeem what his brother sold.

- This meant that the kinsman redeemer could buy the land and possessions in the event that one of their brothers had fallen on hard times.
 - In other words, if they owed a debt they couldn't pay, the kinsman redeemer could redeem them, by purchasing it, or redeeming it for them.
 - This kinsmen redeemer is beautifully illustrated in the person of Boaz and prophetically and ultimately fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ.

In the case of Naomi this was Boaz; in our case it is Jesus Christ. Redemption, as described in [Leviticus 25], it had to do with persons and lands; and each illustrates Christ's work on behalf of believers throughout all ages. He has redeemed our Persons. - It often happened that a Hebrew waxed poor, and was compelled to sell himself to some wealthy Gentile who sojourned in the land. He who had owned his own patrimony now wrought as a bondservant for another. But after he had sold himself he might be redeemed by his next kinsman. So we had sold ourselves for naught; we wrought the will of the flesh; we were enslaved to the fashions of the world; we obeyed the promptings of the prince of the power of the air. Alas for us! But we have been redeemed, not with corruptible things, but with the precious blood of Christ. We have been made free by right, and have only to claim and act upon the freedom with which the risen Christ has made us free. He has redeemed our Inheritance. - What we lost in the first Adam we have more than regained in the second. For innocence, we have purity; for external fellowship with God, his indwelling; for the delights of an earthly paradise, the fullness of God's blessedness and joy. He is our nearest Kinsman. "My brother, my sister," He says of each who will do the will of his Father. He has made Himself one with us by taking on Himself our nature, and identifying Himself with our race. We know that Jesus, our Göel and Redeemer, liveth; and that He will come to redeem us from the power of the grave, and receive us to Himself.

F.B. Meyer Devotionals on Leviticus (http://preceptaustin.org/leviticus_sermon_illustrations_2.htm)

(2) So Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, "Please let me go to the field, and glean heads of grain after *him* in whose sight I may find favor." And she said to her, "Go, my daughter." (3) Then she left, 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 family of Elimelech.

NAOMI AND RUTH	JEW AND GENTILE
Ruth 1:19 So the two women went on until they came to Bethlehem.	The Jews when celebrating this "Feast of Harvest" read the book of Ruth about Naomi a Jew and Ruth a Gentile.
Ruth 2:2-3 Naomi said to her, "Go ahead, my daughter." 3 So she went out and began to glean in the fields behind the harvesters. As it turned out, she found herself working in a field belonging to Boaz, who was from the clan of Elimelech.	Ruth meets Boaz, (Lord of the Harvest), Elimelech's brother (Naomi's deceased husband). Deut. 25:5-12 allowed Boaz to fulfill the kinsman law of redemption, buy the field, and marry the Gentile bride of this mans son, to carry on the name.
Ruth 4:13 So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife. Then he went to her, and the LORD enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son.	The field (world) is bought by the next of kin, (Jesus became a man next to us, Kins-man), because he so loved the bride. Out of this love for the bride a son is born.
Ruth 4:14 The women said to Naomi: "Praise be to the LORD, who this day has not left you without a kinsman-redeemer. May he become famous throughout Israel!	Boaz (Jesus) is the Kinsmen Redeemer who so loved Ruth that He gave her a son so she would not be left without the seed keeping the name throughout life.
Ruth 4:16 Then Naomi took the child, laid him in her lap and cared for him. 17 The women living there said, "Naomi has a son." And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.	This child is now embraced in the lap of Naomi (Jews), and Ruth (Gentile Bride) isn't seen again in the scriptures (rapture). The Son was Obed, David's Grandfather, and the line from which Jesus would be born in Bethlehem.