

Deliver Us From the Evil Within: Ruth

Ruth 1, 3:1-9

Week of Nov 22

As you enter into prayer now, take a moment to settle your mind. Put aside your concerns and what needs to get done today, or what didn't get done today. Take a slow, deep breath. Center yourself in His Peace. He is the Alpha and Omega. The Beginning and End. You are found in Him.

Be Still.

Our final episode in this series is a departure from the judges and military leaders we've studied so far. Nestled in the midst of this time period, we have the story of Ruth.

I love the juxtaposition of Ruth with people like Samson and Esther. There are so many of us who are not called to public leadership, but we are all called to the kind of faithfulness Ruth and Boaz display.

Ruth was a Moabite who married into a Jewish family. However, in short order, the family was cut in half. Her father-in-law died, her husband died, and her brother-in-law died—leaving her mother-in-law widowed and without children to provide for her. Ruth's mother-in-law Naomi despairs. She tells Ruth and Orpah to leave her, to go and find other husbands. They are still young, they can return to their people and marry again. But Naomi will return to her homeland and be forced to depend upon her tribe as her immediate family is gone.

Though Orpah goes, Naomi will have none of it. Instead, she clings to Naomi and her Jewish God, and returns to Naomi's homeland. Through Ruth, a Moabitess, God will work. Again, showing us that there are really no outsiders in His plan.

Pause and Pray.

Jesus, I am here because I want to experience You. As I meditate on this passage, draw to mind those things that You would have me become more aware of. Center my heart and mind on Yourself. Use your Word to draw my heart to You. Amen.

In the chapter we'll read today, Ruth has already come to know Boaz. She has been gleaning in his fields and he has been very generous with her and Naomi. Now, Naomi guides Ruth to make a move—to ask Boaz in their culturally appropriate way if he would marry her and become her kinsman-redeemer, as he is next in line. We read from Ruth chapter 3.

One day Ruth's mother-in-law Naomi said to her, "My daughter, I must find a home¹ for you, where you will be well provided for.² Now Boaz, with whose women you have worked, is a relative of ours. Tonight he will be winnowing barley on the threshing floor.³ Wash, put on perfume, and get dressed in your best clothes. Then go down to the threshing floor, but don't let him know you are

there until he has finished eating and drinking. ⁴When he lies down, note the place where he is lying. Then go and uncover his feet and lie down. He will tell you what to do.”

⁵“I will do whatever you say,” Ruth answered. ⁶So she went down to the threshing floor and did everything her mother-in-law told her to do.

⁷When Boaz had finished eating and drinking and was in good spirits, he went over to lie down at the far end of the grain pile. Ruth approached quietly, uncovered his feet and lay down. ⁸In the middle of the night something startled the man; he turned—and there was a woman lying at his feet!

⁹“Who are you?” he asked.

“I am your servant Ruth,” she said. “Spread the corner of your garment over me, since you are a guardian-redeemer[Ⓜ] of our family.”

REFLECT.

Naomi steps out in faith, encouraging Ruth to give Boaz the opportunity to redeem their situation.

Ruth steps out in obedience, following Naomi’s guidance.

Boaz will also step out, and will follow the appropriate channels and make sure he is next in line to carry on the name of Naomi’s family. In the end, he will marry Ruth, and the family line will be redeemed. This same family line that will eventually lead to Jesus.

Are there areas of my life today that I am unsure of the outcome? Wondering where the answers will come from? Naomi and Ruth didn’t know where their security would come from, how they would provide for themselves. Do I also struggle in this area? Or do I feel insecure in another way? (PAUSE).

I name these areas of insecurity before you now, Lord. I give them to you, and ask you’re your peace as I face them.(PAUSE).

In this situation Lord, are there ways that you are calling me to obedience? Show me where you are at work. (PAUSE). Now Lord, show me how you would have me join you. (PAUSE).

PAUSE, PRAY AND ASK.

The kind of social and financial insecurity that Naomi and Ruth faced was a real risk for women without ties to a man in the ancient world. It may look different in our world, but so many people face insecurity every day. And still today, there are so many links between financial insecurity and relational insecurity. People need community.

Lord, I intercede now for those today who find themselves without family support. The vulnerable who lack the relational foundations to give them security in this life. Without strong family ties and loved ones, they find themselves adrift. I lift them in prayer to you now. (PAUSE).

I pray specifically for anyone I know that needs your peace and grace in the midst of a lonely situation. (PAUSE).

Lord, give me eyes to see the loneliness and isolation in those around me and give me grace for them. Make me faithful to pray for them.

YIELD.

I return now to the text:

One day Ruth's mother-in-law Naomi said to her, "My daughter, I must find a home¹ for you, where you will be well provided for. ² Now Boaz, with whose women you have worked, is a relative of ours. Tonight he will be winnowing barley on the threshing floor. ³ Wash, put on perfume, and get dressed in your best clothes. Then go down to the threshing floor, but don't let him know you are there until he has finished eating and drinking. ⁴ When he lies down, note the place where he is lying. Then go and uncover his feet and lie down. He will tell you what to do."

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CLOSE IN PRAYER.

God, I thank you that you are at work in every circumstance. I ask today that You would guide me in my present situation. Make me obedient to your leading. Make me faithful to your call. And may my life be used to bring you glory. In Jesus Name, Amen.