

# Portraits of Redemption

## Portrait of Revelation

Ruth 2:23 – 3:13

### I. **The Creation of Seasons Reveals the Power of Urgency (2:23)**

GOD BRINGS US TO MOMENTS OF URGENCY ON PURPOSE...BECAUSE THOSE MOMENTS OF URGENCY HAVE THE ABILITY TO PRESS US INTO MAKING CHOICES THAT WE WOULD OTHERWISE IGNORE.

**THERE ARE THREE POINTS WRAPPED UP IN RUTH 2:23 THAT TEACH US HOW TO WALK IN THE TRANSITION BETWEEN RESOURCE AND REDEMPTION:**

- **REMAIN in the Presence of the Redeemer**
- **RECOGNIZE the Season You are In**
- **RESPOND to the Urgency of the Opportunity**

We ALMOST left the end of Ruth chapter 2 settled

As chapter 2 gives way to chapter 3 we see that Ruth and Naomi are not satisfied - their present has been made more comfortable but their future has not yet been resurrected.

- **don't be satisfied with a comfortable present at the expense of a resurrected future...you have to know your season!**

THEY DETERMINED THAT THE PRESENCE OF BOAZ WAS FAR MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE PROVISION OF BOAZ – BECAUSE THE PROVISION OF BOAZ WAS A RESOURCE, BUT THE PERSON OF BOAZ WAS REDEMPTION.

- a) Now as Chapter 2 gives way to Chapter 3 we suddenly realize, Boaz hasn't made a move, Ruth is still just an employee, Naomi still has no tangible future, AND THE HARVEST IS ENDING!
  - (1) The barley harvest gleaning was a temp job - probably between 2 and 3 months
  - (2) So in this passage we see that a moment of URGENCY has emerged!

**We measure time and appointments with clocks and calendars...but God chooses to use moments and seasons.**

He teaches us that ALL THINGS ARE MADE TO CHANGE in the never-ending transitions from summer to autumn to winter and to spring.

**YOU'RE DESIGNED TO MOVE FROM SEASON TO SEASON IN YOUR LIFE - NOT TO FALL STAGNANT, BUT TO BECOME MORE POTENT!**

- (a) Ruth won't be in the fields with Boaz anymore
- (b) the opportunity for him to embrace his role as redeemer is slipping away at an alarming momentum!
- (c) this is it, bottom of the ninth, 2 minute warning, red line, the gas light is on - Ruth and Naomi feel the seriousness, the exigency, of this moment!

**GOD MIGHT HAVE YOU IN A PLACE WHERE YOU FEEL BURDENED FOR A REASON!**

GOD MIGHT HAVE YOU IN A MOMENT OF DECISION FOR A REASON!  
GOD MIGHT HAVE YOU THINKING AND RETHINKING THE CONDITION AND DIRECTION OF  
YOUR LIFE FOR A REASON!

God loves us as we are, but He loves us too much to let us stay that way!

**DON'T IMMEDIATELY ASSUME THAT YOUR DISCOMFORT IS FROM THE ENEMY, YOUR  
DISCOMFORT MIGHT BE FROM GOD!**

- If you aren't in the place of your purpose, the enemy of your life doesn't have to attack you, he can simply let you atrophy in your comfortable place.
- But God - because He loves you enough to push you out of the nest - just might!

WE COME TO MOMENTS OF URGENCY AND THAT PRESSES US INTO ACTION!

- In **2 Kings 13:14-19** the story of King Joash and Elisha is a fascinating test case
  - Elisha helps him shoot an arrow that signifies the defeat of Syria (the prophetic and royal offices coming together releases a unique securing of the promise of victory)
  - BUT then, Elisha tells the king to take the arrows and beat the ground...the king does this three times – and instead of receiving the prophet's affirmation, Joash is confronted with a scathing rebuke: **"You should have struck 5 or 6 times; then you would have struck down Syria until you had made an end of it, but now you will strike down Syria only three times."** (2 Kings 13:19)
    - What does this mean? It seems almost unfair to blame Joash for NOT KNOWING that more swings from the arrows would have meant total victory!
    - But, perhaps that's the point.
      - Elisha knew. Elisha understood that they were in a season of victory (and he as much told Joash this in verse 17 after they shot the first arrow)
      - But Joash did not recognize the season they were in, so he pursued the instruction as someone who didn't understand the opportunity he had!

**IT IS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO WALK IN THE OPPORTUNITIES UNIQUELY CONTAINED IN  
THE SEASON YOU'RE IN WHEN YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND THE SEASON YOU'RE IN!**

- Had Naomi and Ruth not recognized the that the season they were in was coming to close, they would not have been motivated by the urgency that led them to the crazy story of chapter 3!!

DO YOU KNOW WHAT SEASON YOU ARE IN?

In the fourth act of Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar," he puts these words upon the lips of Brutus trying to enlist Cassius in his aid in the Battle of Philippi:

There is a tide in the affairs of men  
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;  
Omitted, all the voyages of their life  
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.  
On such a full sea are we now afloat  
And we must take the current when it serves  
Or lose our ventures.

What Shakespeare is saying is not only that the tides have great power, but that they also are irretrievable, unstoppable, unrecalable. Their lifting strength comes for but a few hours and then is gone. And if you miss the flood, you will be left in shallows and in miseries, having lost your ventures.

- Bruce Thielemann, "Tide Riding," Preaching Today, Tape No. 30.

**Ecclesiastes 3:1-8** speaks clearly that there is a season for everything! Seasons to be born and to pass away, to sow and to reap, to break down and to build up, to weep and to laugh, to mourn and to dance, etc... - Solomon goes to great length to remind us that there are ABSOLUTELY SEASONS IN LIFE, AND SEASONS COME WITH A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES!

- You have a season with your spouse – how are you going to treat them, love them, serve them, bless them and value them? YOU NEED TO KNOW WHEN THAT’S YOUR SEASON BECAUSE SEASONS DON’T LAST FOREVER.
- You have a season with your kids and grandkids – so how are you going to love them, instill a true identity into them, shape them, surround them with the word of God and keep them in a pattern that forms their imagination and spirit with a knowledge of Jesus? YOU ONLY GET SO MANY YEARS BEFORE YOUR WORDS CARRY A DIFFERENT WEIGHT, AND THAT SEASON WON’T LAST FOREVER.
- You will find seasons in the church
  - God gives us the wisdom of some people whose hair color might be a little grayer and who might not walk quite as quickly, BUT WHO HAVE BEEN THROUGH THE FIRE AND CAN HELP YOU GET THROUGH WHAT YOU’RE WALKING THROUGH!
  - We have some seasons where worship services are rich and dense and the presence of God is unmistakably tangible, and others where we are plowing hard ground and pressing deeper into uncharted territories – AND BOTH ARE GIFTS FROM GOD, BUT BOTH HAVE UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES IN THEM!

**WHAT SEASON ARE YOU IN? WHAT SEASONS ARE COMING TO CLOSE? DO YOU FEEL THE URGENCY DRIVING YOU TO EMBRACE THE OPPORTUNITY???**

ELISHA IS LOOKING AT US, ON THE VERGE OF FRUSTRATION, SAYING,

- KEEP STRIKING THE ARROWS!
- KEEP LOVING YOUR WIFE!
- KEEP PRAYING WITH AND FOR YOUR KIDS!
- KEEP INVITING THOSE SAINTS OUT TO LUNCH SO YOU CAN HEAR THEIR WISDOM!
- KEEP SERVING YOUR HUSBAND!
- KEEP COMING TO THE ALTAR!
- KEEP RETURNING TO YOUR PRAYER CLOSET EVEN WHEN YOU DON’T THINK YOU’VE GOT ANY TEARS LEFT TO CRY OR WORDS LEFT TO SAY!
- KEEP OPENING THE BIBLE NO MATTER MUCH IT’S CONFUSING YOU!
- DON’T SETTLE FOR LESS THAN THE OPPORTUNITY OF THIS SEASON! GOD GAVE YOU THIS SEASON...RECOGNIZE IT, EMBRACE IT, AND MAKE THE MOST OF IT!!

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**Ruth 3:1** – “should I not seek REST for you, that it may be WELL with you.”

“rest” – Hebrew word *Manoah* – home, a settle place

“well” – Hebrew word *yatab* – to make good, right or beautiful...also the idea of acceptance is understood here in a few of its uses.

WHAT IS REQUIRED FOR A STORY OF DISPLACEMENT TO BECOME A STORY OF HOME...WHAT IS REQUIRED FOR A STORY OF BROKENNESS TO BECOME A STORY OF BEAUTY??

- To recognize the season they were in
- To seize the opportunity created by the urgency of that season

NAOMI RECOGNIZES THE SEASON AND EMBRACES THE URGENCY OF THE OPPORTUNITY. BUT THERE'S SOMETHING RUTH DOES HERE THAT IS ABSOLUTELY STUNNING, WE SEE IT

**RUTH 3:5:**

And she replied, “All that you say I will do.”

**RUTH LEANS INTO THE RISK, INTO THE FAITH, INTO THE CHANGE.  
AND BECAUSE OF THIS HER LIFE IS NEVER THE SAME.**

**Isaiah 55:6**

“Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near;

**Isaiah 55:1**

“Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters;

SO HOW DO I KNOW IT'S THE SEASON WHEN GOD CAN BE FOUND?

- What's incredible about Jesus is that IF there was any confusion regarding the Father, the Son clears it up
  - Look at **John 2** –Jesus said it wasn't yet His time, and yet THE NEED REVEALED THE SEASON
  - In **Matthew 15** – The Syrophenician woman came to Jesus and He told her this wasn't the season of her people...BUT SHE PRESSED AND HER NEED REVEALED THE SEASON
  - **Mark 5:23-34** – the woman with the persistent hemorrhage wasn't sought out by Jesus, he wasn't looking for her in the crowd...BUT AS SOON AS SHE TOUCHED HIM HE SAID, “WHO TOUCHED ME? SOMEONE JUST RECOGNIZED THE SEASON, I FELT POWER LEAVE MY BEING BECAUSE SOMEONE REFUSED TO QUIT PRESSING, PUSHING AND REACHING!!”

IT SEEMS LIKE THE BEST WAY TO TELL IF THIS IS THE SEASON TO SEEK GOD WHILE HE CAN BE FOUND IS TO SEE IF YOU'VE GOT A NEED!! BECAUSE THE PRESENC OF YOUR NEED REVEALS THE SEASON OF HIS EMBRACE!