

Ruth 4:14-22

The last verses in this book are compiled of the blessings given to Naomi upon her family's restoration, and the genealogy of Ruth and Boaz's first son, Obed. In verses 14 and 15, we read an account of the women in Naomi's life rejoicing with her for God's blessings.

Ruth 4:14-15 Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed is the LORD who has not left you without a redeemer today, and may his name become famous in Israel. "May he also be to you a restorer of life and a sustainer of your old age; for your daughter-in-law, who loves you and is better to you than seven sons, has given birth to him."

This response is similar to when Elizabeth gave birth to John the Baptist in Luke 1:58, "And her neighbors and her relatives heard that the Lord had displayed His great mercy toward her; and they were rejoicing with her".

Notice in both these instances, **rejoicing is a result of recognizing the goodness of God**, "Blessed is the Lord" and "the Lord had displayed His great mercy". There is no attribution to any deserved conclusion from a person's actions, for instance 'look at what I have done', only glory to God for His mercy and kindness.

🔍 Psalm 34:1-3; Psalm 103:1-2; 1 Thessalonians 5:18

♥ **How is this different from many reactions we might see today of 'good' results?**

♥ **In your own life, do you attribute blessing to God or do you act as though you deserve His favor?**

We may often hear words of encouragement that sound like, 'you worked hard', or 'you deserve this'. While these statements might hold some credence, the real fact is all good things come from God's hand. The women involved in Naomi's life encouraged her. There are several scriptures that affirm our support of one another through both the pleasant and difficult circumstances of life.

Romans 12:15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.

1Corinthians 12:26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if [one] member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.

♥ **What does it look like to rejoice in the blessing of others?**

♥ **How might you be able to sorrow with another?**

Blessings were given to Boaz upon acquisition of Elimelech's land and Boaz's marriage to Ruth. Ruth had been on quite a journey. Roughly fifteen years earlier, the thought of all that had happened to her would have been inconceivable. Her marriage to Mahlon from the land of Bethlehem, his early death, her faithful relationship with her mother-in-law, her conversion to the Jewish religion, leaving the land of her birth and traveling to the hometown of her husband's family, her acceptance into a foreign culture and working as a poor widow in the fields, meeting Boaz, trusting the advice of Naomi, and approaching Boaz as the redeemer of Elimelech's family name and property, are the elements of a story that could only be written by God's hand.

Take a moment to recognize God's direction of your life.

♥ **Do you see His blessing in circumstances you might not have chosen for yourself?**

- ♥ Are you thankful for the times He caused you to turn right when you wanted to turn left?
- ♥ How has He used the more difficult times in your life to cause your trust in Him to grow?

🔍 Psalm 55:22

Naomi had lost all and now the future that had seemed bleak is full of hope and promise. We can hardly imagine the devastating loss of a husband and two sons, yet, God gave Naomi a daughter-in-law who loved her and showed kindness and care through difficulty. Often, we do not understand the circumstances God allows. In His perfect time, He bestows a path that is so much better than what we could have hoped. This leads us to the necessity of following Ruth's example to trust in God for all things, even when the path is unclear or undesirable. It is not about what we want, it is about how God will use our life to glorify Himself.

Psalm 55:22 Cast your burden upon the LORD, and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken.

Ps 37:5 Commit your way to the LORD, trust also in Him, and He will do it.

Recognize that the above scriptures do not state that God *might* sustain or *might* direct. Rather, God *will* care for those who sincerely follow Him. There is no question of His faithfulness in our lives.

Read this encouragement in Isaiah 58:10-11, "And if you give yourself to the hungry, and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, Then your light will rise in darkness, and your gloom [will become] like midday. "And the LORD will continually guide you, and satisfy your desire in scorched places, and give strength to your bones; and you will be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters do not fail".

We have choices. We can either be discontent and bemoan our circumstances, wishing things were different, spending our time sorrowing for what we no longer have or how things might have been, or we can walk forward in trust, asking God to show us where we can be used as we fill our days with serving Him.

Psalm 48:14 For this God is our God for ever and ever; He will be our guide even unto death. (KJV)

As long as we are still here on Earth, God has a plan for us. We are to continue to be committed to serving Him in whatever capacity we are able, remaining joyful for His care and guidance. He will carry us through. Find joy in this truth!

Isaiah 46:4 Even to your old age, I shall be the same, and even to your graying years I shall bear [you!] I have done [it,] and I shall carry [you,] and I shall bear [you,] and I shall deliver [you.]

Ruth 4:16 Then Naomi took the child and laid him in her lap, and became his nurse.

We are given a glimpse of Naomi's broken heart and spirit in the first chapter of Ruth. She had encouraged her daughters-in-law to forge ahead with their own lives in Moab as she was contemplating her loss of husband and sons. Now, in this final chapter of Ruth, we see God has a very direct plan for Naomi's involvement in her grandson's life. She has a significant role in his upbringing as was the custom in this culture. Naomi had a part in teaching her grandchild, showing him her affection and caring for him. According to *Smith's Bible Dictionary*, in ancient times, the position of a

nurse, wherever one was maintained, was one of much honor and importance. This position is akin to being a foster-mother or guardian.

In a way, God had given to Naomi a son – meaning a builder of the family name – to restore what she had lost.

Ruth 4:17 And the neighbor women gave him a name, saying, "A son has been born to Naomi!" So they named him Obed. He is the father of Jesse, the father of David.

Obed, the son of Boaz and Ruth, became the grandfather of David. Here is the conclusion of this book, the genealogy of Christ, from the line of David. Consider this picture of redemption. Boaz did not reject Ruth because of her low estate. Instead, he chose to give her honor by marriage. Likewise, God has not rejected us because of our sin, rather He sent Jesus to redeem us so that we might have a position in heaven with Him. We are wholly undeserving yet fully blessed.

Ruth 4:18-22 states the genealogy of our Savior, sent from heaven to be born of man. Commentaries agree that some names are omitted in the genealogy. More complete lists are found in the book of 1 Chronicles, Numbers and Matthew. What is written is what we need to know, God used a Gentile woman from the land of Moab to fulfill His promise of a Messiah.

This is only an account that God could have written. Read this excerpt from the *Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*, "The distress of Naomi; her affectionate concern for her daughter-in-law; the reluctant departure of Orpah; the dutiful attachment of Ruth; and the sorrowful return to Bethlehem ... the account of Ruth's industry and attention to Naomi; of the elegant charity of Boaz ... the care of Divine Providence over those who sincerely fear God, and honestly aim at fulfilling His will, the circumstance of a Moabitess becoming an ancestor of the Messiah seems to have been a pre-intimation of the admission of the Gentiles into his church. It must be remarked, that in the estimation of the Jews, it was disgraceful to David to have derived his birth from a Moabitess ... This book, therefore, contains an intrinsic proof of its own verity, as it reveals a circumstance so little flattering to the sovereign of Israel ...

- ♥ **Ruth's loyalty and Boaz's kindness are themes in this book. What does your life say of your loyalty to God? How do you express kindness to others?**
- ♥ **Do you trust God in all circumstances, remaining patient for His answers? How is trust exemplified in your life?**
- ♥ **Consider Ruth's example of humility. How will you apply this example in your present circumstances?**

God's care and providence are highlighted throughout the book of Ruth. As we sincerely follow God, He will care for us and guide us along a path that will honor His name. Take a moment to think about the ending of this book.

- ♥ **Who does it point to?**

"All the Scriptures are intended to lead us in faith to the great Redeemer. God grant that they may not miss their design in our case". *Spurgeon Devotional Commentary*

