

Wednesday Night Bible Study - Ruth

December 9, 2020

Outline and Structure

I. Prologue introduces the conflict of the story, Naomi bereaved (1:1-5)

a. Key words: _____ and Moab. Naomi leaves Bethlehem (house of bread) with her husband Elimelech (name means My God is King).

They leave the promised land because of famine and their sons marry Moabite Women. The result is death (v. 5)

II. Scene 1: Naomi and Ruth return to Bethlehem (1:6-22)

a. Key Word: _____ (v. 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 21, 22)

III. Scene 2: Ruth provides for Naomi by gleaning in Boaz's field (2:1-23)

a. Key Word: _____ (v. 2, 3, 7, 8, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 23)

IV. Scene 3: Naomi coaches Ruth to petition Boaz for Marriage (3:1-18)

a. Key Word: _____ (v. 2 for relative/one known, v. 3 "do not make yourself known," v. 4 "observe/know the place," v. 11 "townsmen know... you are worthy woman," v. 18 "learn/know how the matter turns out")

V. Scene 4: Boaz redeems Ruth at the gate (4:1-12)

a. Key Word: _____ (v. 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8. Also 2:20, 3:9, 12, 4:14)

VI. Conclusion: Naomi is provided for and blessed with a new family (4:13-17)

a. God is a redeemer (v. 14) and _____ (v. 15)

VII. Genealogy: The blessing extends beyond Ruth and Naomi (4:18-22)

a. The last word of the book is the name _____

Introduction

Redeeming _____

"If your brother becomes poor and sells part of his property, then his nearest redeemer shall come and redeem what his brother has sold.

—Leviticus 25:25

Marrying the _____ of a deceased relative

5 “If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the dead man shall not be married outside the family to a stranger. Her husband’s brother shall go in to her and take her as his wife and perform the duty of a husband’s brother to her. 6 And the first son whom she bears shall succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel. 7 And if the man does not wish to take his brother’s wife, then his brother’s wife shall go up to the gate to the elders and say, ‘My husband’s brother refuses to perpetuate his brother’s name in Israel; he will not perform the duty of a husband’s brother to me.’ 8 Then the elders of his city shall call him and speak to him, and if he persists, saying, ‘I do not wish to take her,’ 9 then his brother’s wife shall go up to him in the presence of the elders and pull his sandal off his foot and spit in his face. And she shall answer and say, ‘So shall it be done to the man who does not build up his brother’s house.’ 10 And the name of his house shall be called in Israel, ‘The house of him who had his sandal pulled off.’

—Deuteronomy 25:5-10

Digging Deeper

I. Setting

a. TIME

- i. Days of _____ – a terrible time. Everyone does what they want
- ii. _____ in the land – a severe hardship

b. PLACE

- i. Bethlehem in the land of Judah. Caleb of the tribe of Judah had a great grandson named Bethlehem. Name means house of bread. A good place
- ii. Moab is a terrible place. The Moabites were descendants of Lot and are always causing trouble for Israel and trying to entice them to worship other gods.

II. Characters

- a. Elimelech, Malon, and Kilion. They are flat characters who lived, moved to Moab, were married, and died. Their action to leave the land and go to Moab is seen as a bad one.
- b. Orpah is a flat character that is a foil to Ruth. She stays in Moab when Ruth and Naomi return to Israel
- c. Villagers appear in various scenes. They are static characters that are necessary for the plot to continue
- d. Ruth is a major character. She starts with a bad reputation as a Moabite. She is a round character with many characteristics. She also changes and develops
- e. Boaz serves as Ruth's redeemer. He is a solid exemplary character. He is obedient to God's commands. We are meant to identify strongly positive with him and like him in the story.
- f. Naomi is actually the _____ character who initiates action and things revolve around her. She is complex, developing with a positive identification
- g. God
 - a. _____ famine in the land and the death of 3 men
 - b. _____ for a redeemer for Ruth and Naomi. Ruth 4:14-15. Note who the redeemer is
- h. Narrator
- i. David is mentioned at the end. The Narrator, possibly Samuel, writing from the time of early kingdom looking back.

III. Plot

- a. Opening & Conflict Ruth 1:1-5
- b. Rising intensity Ruth 1:6-3:18
- c. Climax & Resolution Ruth 4:1-17
- d. Ending Ruth 4:18-22
- e. Key Theme of Redemption points us forward toward Christ

Gospel Connections

Bethlehem – The city in Judah. Means “house of bread” and was located in a fertile area of land. Ephrathah seems to refer to the clan name. Bethlehem became known as the place where King David's family originated from. Micah 5:2 predicts that the messiah, the great future king, will also come from Bethlehem.

But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,
 who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,
 from you shall come forth for me
 one who is to be ruler in Israel,
 whose coming forth is from of old,
 from ancient days. —Micah 5:2

Line of David – Genealogy in Ruth 4 & Matthew 1

Gentile Inclusion

So that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.

—Galatians 3:14

“12 remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.”

—Ephesians 2:12

Redeemer – The word for redeem used 23 times in Ruth.

Who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

—Titus 2:14

Kindness/steadfast love Hebrew word “hesed”

“You have led in your steadfast love the people whom you have redeemed; you have guided them by your strength to your holy abode.

—Exodus 15:13

The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, 7 keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.”

—Exodus 34:6-7

Empty/bitter to full/blessed – The reader understands the Gospel by identifying with Naomi. We are empty, bitter, and completely unable to help ourselves on our own. We need someone powerful to redeem us and provide what we cannot provide for ourselves. We need a worthy person like Boaz who will do whatever it takes to accomplish our redemption and secure our future.

Questions and Answers

1. What does Ruth and the Bible teach about interracial marriage?

2. What is going on in Chapter 3 when she lays at his feet?

3. Other Questions

Application

Who is God?

What has He done?

Who are we?

What are we to do?