



Ruth

The Book of Ruth – Table of Contents

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INTRODUCTION:

Chapter 1: Ruth’s Loyalty and Journey to Bethlehem

This chapter introduces Naomi, a woman from Bethlehem, who moves to Moab with her family due to famine. After the deaths of her husband and sons, Naomi decides to return to Bethlehem. Her daughter-in-law Ruth displays extraordinary loyalty by choosing to stay with Naomi, uttering the famous words: "Where you go, I will go." This chapter sets the stage for a journey from sorrow to restoration.

Chapter 2: Ruth Meets Boaz

Ruth takes the initiative to provide for Naomi by gleaning in the fields during the barley harvest. She meets Boaz, a wealthy and kind relative of Naomi’s late husband. Boaz shows compassion and generosity toward Ruth, offering protection and provision. This chapter introduces Boaz as a potential redeemer and highlights God’s providence at work.

Chapter 3: Ruth's Bold Request

Naomi devises a plan for Ruth to seek marriage and redemption from Boaz. Ruth approaches Boaz at the threshing floor in an act of boldness and humility, requesting that he fulfill the role of a kinsman-redeemer. Boaz, moved by Ruth's character, agrees to help but acknowledges a legal complication that must be resolved first. This chapter reflects themes of faith, trust, and honor.

Chapter 4: Redemption and Restoration

Boaz takes steps to legally redeem Naomi's land and marry Ruth by negotiating with another kinsman. With the formalities resolved, Boaz marries Ruth, and they are blessed with a son, Obed, who becomes the grandfather of King David. This chapter highlights the fulfillment of God's plan through redemption, love, and legacy, pointing to the lineage of Christ.

CHAPTER 1:

Ruth 1:1

"Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehemjudah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons."

The narrative begins with a historical setting marked by significant turmoil and moral ambiguity, as the time of the judges is characterized by disunity and a lack of central governance in Israel. This backdrop sets the stage for a story of personal struggle and redemption. The mention of a famine serves as both a practical and metaphorical crisis, reflecting a period where the land—a vital promise to the Israelites—was suffering. The choice of a man from Bethlehem, a city known for its agricultural abundance, highlights the severity of the famine that drives him to seek refuge in Moab, a region traditionally viewed with suspicion by the Israelites due to its national identity and cultural practices. His family of four underscores the personal stakes involved; they leave behind their homeland in search of survival, thus foreshadowing themes of loss and the quest for belonging.

Ruth 1:2

"And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Bethlehemjudah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there."

Elimelech's name, meaning "my God is king," subtly contrasts with the challenges they face, signaling an inner conflict between faith and desperation. Naomi, whose name means "pleasant," represents the ideal of comfort and stability, but her journey reflects an impending transformation as she encounters profound loss. The two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, bear names that suggest fragility—"sick" and "wasting away"—hinting at future tribulations. As they arrive in Moab, a land of foreign customs and idol worship, their decision to settle there illustrates the lengths to which families will go to maintain a semblance of life amid dire circumstances. This juxtaposition of identity, culture, and survival lays the groundwork for the unfolding narrative of alienation and the search for hope against adversity.

Ruth 1:3

"And Elimelech Naomi's husband died; and she was left, and her two sons."

The sudden death of Elimelech is a critical turning point in Naomi's life, transforming her role from a partner in a family unit to a widow—a status laden with social vulnerability and grief in the ancient Near Eastern context. With Elimelech gone, the stability of the family is critically compromised, leaving Naomi and her sons to navigate their new reality in a foreign land. This event signals the beginning of Naomi's suffering, emphasizing her isolation in the midst of what should have been a temporary refuge. The duality of her identity—as both a mother and a widow in a land not her own—brings forth complex emotions that permeate the narrative and beckons readers to reflect on the fragility of life and the unpredictability of fate.

Ruth 1:4

"And they took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelled there about ten years."

In seeking to establish lives in Moab, Naomi's sons marry Moabite women, Orpah and Ruth, further entwining their fates with the land and culture they initially sought to escape. This decision reflects both the necessity of forging familial ties in challenging times and the cultural tensions embedded within such relationships. The Moabite women, coming from a lineage viewed unfavorably by Israel, create a complex dynamic of acceptance and alienation. The decade they spend in Moab suggests a gradual adaptation yet deepening investment in a land stained by the very essence of their plight. The expectations of loyalty, love, and identity begin to intertwine, setting the stage for the transformative relationships that will define the rest of the story.

Ruth 1:5

"And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband."

Tragedy compounds itself as both of Naomi's sons perish, leaving her bereft of her immediate family. The loss of her children, after the death of her husband, marks the pinnacle of her sorrow and social vulnerability; it not only strips her of emotional support but also threatens her economic stability in a patriarchal society where women often relied on male relatives for survival. This stark reality highlights a profound theme of loss, where Naomi's identity as a mother and a wife is thoroughly dismantled, pushing her further towards isolation. The narrative thrusts Naomi into a desolate state, prompting reflections on the nature of grief and the resilience required to face overwhelming despair, while also foregrounding the crucial role of Ruth as a source of potential redemption amidst the hopelessness.

Ruth 1:6

"Then she arose with her daughters in law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread."

Amidst her deepening despair, Naomi receives word that the famine in Bethlehem has ended, signaling

a divine intervention that reignites her hope for survival and possibly for restoration of her sense of identity. The decision to return home indicates a profound yearning not only for physical sustenance but for a reconnection to her roots, her community, and her faith. This moment emphasizes the active role of divine providence in human narratives, suggesting that even in the depths of grief, there exists a path toward renewal. The inclusion of her daughters-in-law marks a complex familial bond; although they share her sorrow, their futures remain uncertain in the changing dynamics of belonging and loyalty as they accompany her back to Israel.

Ruth 1:7

"Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters in law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah."

As Naomi sets forth from Moab, her journey back to Judah encapsulates not only a physical movement but also a symbolic return to her past and her identity as a Hebrew. With her daughters-in-law at her side, this act of leaving signifies a pivotal moment of courage amid pervasive grief. The road to Judah represents both a literal path and a metaphorical one, as Naomi seeks solace and the comfort of her homeland. The trip foreshadows the challenges ahead, both in terms of acceptance in Bethlehem and the struggle for sustenance as a widow with two Moabite daughters. It addresses the notion of home—what it means to return to a place filled with memories both joyful and painful.

Ruth 1:8

"And Naomi said unto her two daughters in law, Go, return each to her mother's house: the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead and with me."

In a moment of profound selflessness, Naomi encourages Orpah and Ruth to return to their own families rather than accompany her to Bethlehem. Her gesture reflects a dichotomy of love and relinquishment; she wishes for their well-being even as she grapples with her own sorrows. By invoking the Lord's kindness upon them, Naomi expresses hope for divine favor in their lives, acknowledging the sacrifices they have made thus far. This moment reveals Naomi's recognition of the reality they face—her daughters-in-law are young and have the potential for future happiness which Naomi, in her grief-stricken state, feels she cannot provide. This also underscores the bonds of loyalty and affection that exist, as her daughters-in-law must navigate the difficult choice between familial loyalty and personal futures.

Ruth 1:9

"The Lord grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice, and wept."

In heartfelt farewell, Naomi's blessing for her daughters-in-law radiates both affection and recognition of their shared grief. The quest for "rest"—a deeply meaningful term within the Hebrew understanding, often associated with peace, security, and stability—serves as a poignant reflection of Naomi's desire for their happiness, separate from her own tragic fate. The act of kissing them signifies the depth of their bond and the emotional weight of the moment. Their collective weeping captures the shared sorrow of loss, the uncertainty of the future, and the emotional tumult of separation. The scene

encapsulates the powerful themes of love, sacrifice, and the bittersweet nature of parting as they confront the realities of their respective paths.

Ruth 1:10

"And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people."

Despite Naomi's urging, Orpah and Ruth assert their commitment to remain with her, illustrating the strength of their loyalty and the deep emotional ties that have formed. Their insistence to accompany Naomi signals a profound solidarity, evidencing that their identities have become intertwined with hers through shared loss and experience. This moment creates a tension between duty to family and the inevitability of seeking one's path, highlighting the complexities of human relationships against the backdrop of cultural and personal identity. This commitment foreshadows the trials they will face together and serves to enrich the narrative, suggesting that bonds of love can transcend cultural and geographical boundaries.

Ruth 1:11

"And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters: why will ye go with me? are there yet any more sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands?"

Naomi's poignant question exposes her profound understanding of the realities facing her daughters-in-law. She implores them to reconsider their choices by articulating the bleakness of her own situation—her age, her lack of supportive family structure, and her inability to provide them with future paths through sons. This moment encapsulates the painful recognition of Naomi's circumstances and the cultural expectation for women to find security through marriage. Her rhetorical question layers her grief with realism, suggesting that love alone may not suffice in navigating life's harsh realities. Consequently, Naomi's words deepen the emotional gravity of the choice faced by each woman, revealing the intersection of individual desire and societal expectation.

Ruth 1:12

"Turn again, my daughters, go your way; for I am too old to have a husband. If I should say, I have hope, if I should have a husband also to-night, and should also bear sons;"

With the weight of experience, Naomi implores her daughters to seek their own futures, emphasizing her perceived hopelessness in a way that seeks to protect them from further heartache. Her age and status create barriers that seem insurmountable, making her understand that she cannot offer them the stable future they deserve. This rhetorical exercise pushes the boundaries of the societal expectations surrounding marriage and motherhood, sketching out the profound loneliness and desperation that frame her current perspective. In this moment, Naomi reveals her vulnerability and resignation, deepening the emotional complexity of their journey as they grapple with the implications of her words.

Ruth 1:13

"Would ye tarry for them till they were grown? would ye stay for them from having husbands? nay, my daughters; for it grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the Lord is gone out

against me."

Naomi's rhetorical musings about the impracticality of waiting for potential husbands underscores the urgency of her daughters-in-law's situation. Her recognition of the cultural norms surrounding marriage reveals her deep concern for their futures, which she believes are tethered to her own misfortunes. She articulates her grief—not only for her losses but also for the potential lives of Orpah and Ruth, indicating that she sees her circumstances as a measure of divine displeasure. This imbues the narrative with theological nuance; it reflects the belief in divine retribution while simultaneously portraying Naomi as a character determined to protect her loved ones even at her own emotional expense.

Ruth 1:14

"And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth clave unto her."

The emotional turmoil deepens as the daughters-in-law grapple with the weight of Naomi's words. Orpah's decision to kiss Naomi and ultimately turn back symbolizes a moment of ultimate sacrifice and adherence to societal norms, indicating her choice to prioritize her own future over the ties to Naomi. In contrast, Ruth's refusal to depart, her determination to "clave" (to cling closely) to Naomi, is a fierce testament to loyalty and an unwavering bond that transcends cultural barriers. This moment encapsulates the tension between personal desire and responsibilities, illuminating the stark choices women must face and the differing pathways that emerge from shared experiences of loss.

Ruth 1:15

"And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister in law."

Naomi's acknowledgment of Orpah's departure serves as a poignant reminder of the diverging paths before them. It reinforces the notion of returning not only to one's homeland but also to the familiar beliefs and customs associated with the Moabite identity. This stirring declaration not only reflects Naomi's despair over her own situation but also underscores the cultural context of their identities—where loyalty to one's people often supersedes personal commitment. Through this lens, Ruth's choice becomes all the more significant—her resolve to remain with Naomi represents an act of defiance against the cultural expectations of her time and signifies a deeper transformation of identity and faith.

Ruth 1:16

"And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

Ruth's declaration is a profound moment of loyalty, courage, and commitment that resonates deeply within the narrative. Her insistence on remaining with Naomi symbolizes a transformative journey from her Moabite identity towards an acceptance of Naomi's Hebrew heritage and God. This pledge establishes the foundation for her personal metamorphosis, as she chooses not only to embrace Naomi's people, but also adopts Naomi's faith, signifying a radical infusion of belief and belonging. Ruth's words encapsulate the themes of kinship and commitment that underpin the story, showcasing her

steadfastness in the face of adversity and lacing her journey with a sense of purpose and divine alignment.

Ruth 1:17

"Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me."

Ruth's passionate vow emphasizes her unfaltering commitment, portraying a bond that transcends both life and death. By affirmatively stating where she will die and be buried, Ruth articulates an unbreakable intention to remain with Naomi until the end, which is a powerful declaration of loyalty steeped in ancient customs and beliefs about familial ties. The invocation of the Lord in her vow reinforces an element of seriousness to her promise, highlighting the binding nature of her commitment. This moment illustrates both the strength and depth of Ruth's character—a woman who is willing to defy societal expectations to forge her own path of loyalty and love, setting a precedent for future acts of courage borne out of deep connection and faith.

Ruth 1:18

"When she saw that she was steadfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her."

Recognizing Ruth's unwavering resolve, Naomi understands that her daughter's commitment is sincere and resolute, prompting her to cease further urging for Ruth to return to Moab. This pivotal moment marks a shift in the narrative; rather than continuing in denial or offering resistance, Naomi accepts Ruth's decision and the weight of the commitment that has been made. The cessation of discussion signifies a crucial turning point in their relationship, solidifying their partnership as they embark on a shared journey filled with uncertainty. The bond formed in this acknowledgment sets the stage for their collective experiences, underscoring the importance of solidarity amidst adversity while signaling the start of a new chapter in their intertwined lives.

Ruth 1:19

"So they two went until they came to Bethlehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Bethlehem, that all the city was moved about them, and they said, Is this Naomi?"

The return to Bethlehem marks a significant transition, both geographically and emotionally, for Naomi and Ruth. Their arrival elicits a response from the townsfolk, highlighting the enduring connections within the community and revealing Naomi's transformed state. The villagers' astonishment at her return signals the passage of time and the overwhelming changes Naomi has endured, both personally and physically. The question, "Is this Naomi?" speaks volumes; it encapsulates a sense of familiarity shadowed by deep loss. This moment sets the stage for Naomi's forthcoming identity crisis, as she stands on the threshold of rekindled connections amidst overwhelming grief, laying the groundwork for the evolution of her character.

Ruth 1:20

"And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me."

Naomi's declaration to the townspeople encapsulates her sorrow and disillusionment, as she requests to be called Mara, meaning "bitter." This profound name change signifies her rejection of her former identity and the embrace of her current reality as shaped by loss and grief. Her claim that "the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me" reflects a raw and honest confrontation with her circumstances, suggesting a deep wrestle with faith and an acknowledgment of her suffering. Through this act, Naomi articulates the language of lament integral to the human experience of loss, while also laying bare the emotional and spiritual depth of her struggle—a powerful testament to the transformative nature of grief and the complexities of faith during times of calamity.

Ruth 1:21

"I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty: why then call ye me Naomi, seeing the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?"

In this poignant reflection, Naomi captures the essence of her profound loss as she contrasts her once-fulfilled life with her current state of emptiness. The imagery of leaving full and returning empty highlights not just physical loss, but the deep emotional chasm created by death and separation from her loved ones. Her rhetorical question underscores her internal conflict, expressing a deep sense of abandonment and questioning of divine justice. Naomi's admission that the Lord has testified against her illustrates a powerful theological struggle—where faith confronts despair. This revelation invites a broader contemplation of loss, the expectations of divine favor, and the search for meaning amidst suffering, establishing a foundational context for Ruth's future actions and the potential for redemption.

Ruth 1:22

"So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter in law, with her, which returned out of the country of Moab: and they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest."

The chapter concludes with a sense of hopeful anticipation as Naomi and Ruth arrive in Bethlehem during the barley harvest season—a time symbolizing renewal and the potential for new beginnings. This setting introduces an opportunity for sustenance and the possibility of restoration, juxtaposed against the backdrop of Naomi's lament. Ruth, identified specifically as the Moabitess, emphasizes her outsider status and the complexities of her identity as they return to a land filled with Naomi's memories. The timing of their return signifies a pivotal moment of transition; amidst Naomi's bitterness, Ruth's presence and loyalty foreshadow the unfolding narrative of hope, community, and eventual redemption, hints at the agricultural abundance of the harvest that will play a critical role in alleviating their collective hardships.

CHAPTER 2:

Verse 1

Ruth 2:1

"And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name was Boaz."

Naomi, having returned to Bethlehem after the death of her husband and sons, is introduced to a pivotal character in this narrative: Boaz. Described as a "mighty man of wealth," Boaz not only possesses material riches but also embodies qualities of strength and integrity. The reference to him as a kinsman of Naomi's deceased husband, Elimelech, establishes a connection that is significant within the context of Israelite customs regarding family ties and redemption. This verse sets the stage for the unfolding story of redemption, highlighting the importance of family loyalty and community support in the ancient Hebrew society. It hints at the hope and practicality that Naomi and Ruth might find in seeking assistance within their familial connections.

Verse 2

Ruth 2:2

"And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter."

Ruth, the Moabitess and daughter-in-law of Naomi, exhibits remarkable initiative and determination. Her desire to glean in the fields reflects her resourcefulness and willingness to provide for herself and Naomi in a time of need. Gleaning was an important practice in ancient Israel, allowing the poor and marginalized to gather leftover crops after the harvest. Ruth's mention of finding grace indicates her awareness of the social dynamics at play; she hopes to encounter a kind landowner who will permit her to glean without harshness. Naomi's endorsement, "Go, my daughter," not only provides Ruth with permission but also signifies her trust in Ruth's judgment and capability. This interaction showcases the bond between the two women as they navigate hardship together, strengthening their commitment to each other.

Verse 3

Ruth 2:3

"And she went, and came and gleaned in the field after the reapers: and her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech."

Ruth's actions demonstrate both her determination and serendipity; she goes to glean in the fields, and by chance—or perhaps by divine providence—she ends up in Boaz's fields. The phrase "her hap was to light" suggests an element of fate, indicating that her path was not merely a random occurrence but a significant turning point in the narrative. This moment foreshadows the unfolding relationship between Ruth and Boaz, highlighting the intertwined fates of these two characters. The fact that the field belongs to Boaz, a kinsman of Naomi's late husband, provides a critical link that foreshadows the themes of kindness, redemption, and familial duty that will be explored throughout the text. Ruth's diligence in gleaning amidst the reapers also reflects her character and commitment to survival.

Verse 4

Ruth 2:4

"And, behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said unto the reapers, The Lord be with you. And they answered him, The Lord bless thee."

Boaz's arrival marks a pivotal moment in the story, as he embodies the ideals of a godly and respected leader. His greeting to the reapers, "The Lord be with you," reflects his concern for their well-being and reinforces the relationship of mutual respect and camaraderie that exists on his land. The reapers' response, "The Lord bless thee," indicates that this is a well-established practice in Boaz's fields, where both employer and laborers share a spirit of blessing and support. This interaction not only reveals Boaz's character as a kind and righteous man but also sets the tone for the respectful and benevolent environment of his estate. It emphasizes the importance of community and faith in the daily interactions of life, preparing the reader for Boaz's forthcoming interactions with Ruth.

Verse 5

Ruth 2:5

"Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, Whose damsel is this?"

Curiosity piques Boaz's interest as he notices Ruth working in the field, and he inquires about her identity. His question, "Whose damsel is this?" reflects both his position as a landowner and his respectful attitude towards those who work for him. By asking about Ruth, he acknowledges her presence and significance, rather than treating her as an anonymous gleaner. This moment marks the beginning of Boaz's interest in Ruth, hinting at the attraction that will develop. Furthermore, it demonstrates Boaz's awareness of those in his employ—characteristics of a good leader who takes the time to know his workers. The question opens the door for introducing Ruth's story to Boaz, creating a foundation for the emerging connection between them.

Verse 6

Ruth 2:6

"And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said, It is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab."

The servant's response provides crucial background information about Ruth, identifying her as "the Moabitish damsel" who returned with Naomi. This emphasizes Ruth's foreignness and her outsider status in Bethlehem, which is significant given the cultural tensions between Moabites and Israelites. By labeling her as a Moabitess, the servant underscores the bravery and loyalty Ruth has shown in accompanying Naomi back to her homeland, indicating her commitment to family despite the challenges. This moment of recognition serves to elevate Ruth's status in Boaz's eyes, revealing her character and highlighting her determination to help Naomi. The information shared not only fosters Boaz's awareness of Ruth's situation but also sets the stage for the themes of acceptance and redemption as the story progresses.

Verse 7

Ruth 2:7

"And she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves: so she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house."

Ruth's request to glean signifies her humility and her willingness to work hard for what she needs. Her statement reveals her proactive nature and her desire to contribute, not merely relying on the kindness of others. The servant's account of Ruth's efforts—working from morning until now, with only a little break—illustrates her diligence and strong work ethic. This portrayal of Ruth enhances her character as determined and resolute, earning her respect and admiration. The fact that she has been working tirelessly demonstrates her commitment to providing for herself and Naomi and foreshadows the favor she will find with Boaz. This verse encapsulates Ruth's resilience and sets a tone of industriousness that resonates throughout the chapter.

Verse 8

Ruth 2:8

"Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearken thou not to my daughters, Go to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens."

In this pivotal moment, Boaz directly addresses Ruth, signaling his interest in her welfare and well-being. His directive not to go glean in another field demonstrates his desire to protect and provide for her, ensuring that she remains safe while working. By inviting her to stay close to his maidens, Boaz offers Ruth a sense of security and inclusion in his community. This invitation to stay indicates a profound respect for Ruth's character and hard work. Boaz's approach marks a significant turning point in Ruth's experience, shifting from mere survival to potential acceptance and protection under Boaz's care. This moment illustrates the beginning of a relationship built on respect and kindness, laying the groundwork for future developments.

Verse 9

Ruth 2:9

"Let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them: have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? And when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn."

Boaz's generous and protective instructions further emphasize his character and the safety he intends to provide Ruth. By telling her to focus on the field, he allows her to concentrate on her work without fear, while also ensuring she remains unaware of any potential dangers nearby. His command to his young men to not harm Ruth conveys a powerful message of respect and protection; this is critical given her vulnerable status as a foreign widow. Additionally, Boaz's offer of sustenance—encouraging her to drink from the vessels provided by the young men—affirms his commitment to her well-being. This dialogue establishes a nurturing tone in their interaction, showcasing Boaz's role as a guardian figure, thus building a significant connection between the two characters.

Verse 10

Ruth 2:10

"Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?"

Ruth's response to Boaz's kindness is one of humility and gratitude, showing respect for his generosity. By falling on her face and bowing, she demonstrates her recognition of Boaz's esteemed position and the favor he has shown her. Her question, "Why have I found grace in thine eyes?", reflects her astonishment at being treated with such kindness despite being a foreigner in Israel. This moment brings to light crucial themes of acceptance and grace, as Ruth grapples with the stark contrast between her outsider status and the respect she receives from Boaz. It highlights the beautiful potential for inclusivity and love that transcends cultural boundaries in the narrative. Ruth's vulnerability renders her genuine, endearing her further to Boaz and the readers alike.

Verse 11

Ruth 2:11

"And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been showed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore."

Boaz's response is insightful and compassionate, revealing his awareness of Ruth's sacrifices and commitments. He acknowledges the depth of her loyalty toward Naomi, noting her actions since the death of her husband, which highlights Ruth's selflessness and the strength of familial bonds. By leaving her home and her own family in Moab to support Naomi, Ruth has demonstrated tremendous courage and fidelity, qualities that Boaz deeply admires. This recognition serves to honor Ruth's character and choices, illustrating how her integrity has reached beyond her actions and left a lasting impression on the community. Boaz's words reflect not just admiration but also a profound respect for Ruth's courage to embrace the unfamiliar and to stake her claim in a new culture, further reinforcing the themes of loyalty and redemption within the text.

Verse 12

Ruth 2:12

"The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust."

In this verse, Boaz offers a blessing upon Ruth, invoking God's providence and care over her efforts. His wish that the Lord recompense her work signifies his acknowledgment of her sacrifices and dedication, expressing a belief in divine justice and reward. The metaphor of being under the "wings" of the Lord suggests protection, safety, and care, much like a bird shielding its young. This language reveals Boaz's understanding of Ruth's spiritual journey and the faith she placed in the God of Israel as she transitions into a new life. His blessing also serves to connect their lives spiritually, implying that Ruth's commitment to Naomi has pleased God and will not go unnoticed. Overall, this moment encapsulates the themes of divine providence and faithfulness, while also creating a deeper bond between Ruth and Boaz.

Verse 13

Ruth 2:13

"Then she said, Let me find favour in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be not like unto one of thy handmaidens."

Ruth expresses her deep gratitude to Boaz for the kindness and comfort he has shown her, admitting her desire to find favor in his sight. Her respectful address, "my lord," reflects both humility and recognition of his status, while the acknowledgment that she is "not like unto one of thy handmaidens" highlights her awareness of her outsider status. Despite being a foreigner, Boaz treats her with dignity and kindness, which impacts Ruth profoundly. This verse reveals Ruth's vulnerability as she seeks acceptance in a community where she feels different. Her desire for favor not only demonstrates her appreciation for Boaz's actions but also highlights the broader theme of inclusivity and grace that marks her relationship with him and her new environment.

Verse 14

Ruth 2:14

"And Boaz said unto her, At mealtime come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the reapers: and he reached her parched corn, and she did eat, and was sufficed, and left."

Boaz's invitation to Ruth to join him for a meal is a significant gesture that conveys warmth, inclusion, and further protection. The act of sharing food with Ruth symbolizes an embrace of her into fellowship and community, setting her apart from the other gleaners. By offering her bread and dipping it in vinegar, Boaz shares a meal that not only nourishes Ruth physically but also fosters a deeper social connection. The detail of him reaching out to provide her with parched corn signifies a personal touch and intimate concern for her well-being, further developing the sense of protection he offers. As Ruth eats and is satisfied, the moment is laden with meaning—she experiences kindness, acceptance, and the promise of potential hope for her and Naomi in a foreign land, juxtaposing her previous struggles with newfound nourishment and camaraderie.

Verse 15

Ruth 2:15

"And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean among the sheaves, and reproach her not."

Boaz's protective nature shines anew as he gives explicit instructions to his young men regarding Ruth's gleaning rights. By allowing her to glean among the sheaves, Boaz not only grants her access to the better parts of the harvest but also elevates her status among the workers. His command to "reproach her not" further emphasizes his desire for Ruth to be treated with dignity and respect, showing that he is proactive in creating a safe space for her. This action illustrates a transformation in Ruth's circumstances, transitioning her from a marginalized foreigner to one whom Boaz protects and honors. This act of kindness not only cements Boaz's role as a protector figure but also serves as a moral statement about compassion and generosity within the community. It reinforces the narrative's

themes of redemption and the importance of treating others with kindness, regardless of their background.

Verse 16

Ruth 2:16

"And let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not."

Boaz takes his benevolence a step further by instructing his young men to intentionally drop extra grain for Ruth as they harvest. This act reflects a generosity that goes beyond mere compliance with the law of gleaning; it signifies an act of love and care. By allowing the "handfuls of purpose" to be left for Ruth, Boaz demonstrates a thoughtful and deliberate kindness—an acknowledgment of her hardship and a means to ease her burden. This moment emphasizes the spirit of compassion and community care, as it contrasts starkly with the harsh realities often faced by those in need. It enhances the developing narrative of Ruth's favor in Boaz's eyes while underscoring the importance of generosity in relationships, further building the atmosphere of hope and potential for the future.

Verse 17

Ruth 2:17

"So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned: and it was about an ephah of barley."

Ruth's hard work in the field culminates in a significant harvest—a tangible reward for her diligence and perseverance throughout the day. The mention of gleaning "until even" showcases her unwavering commitment to provide for herself and Naomi, illustrating the lengths to which she will go to ensure their survival. The quantity she gathers, "about an ephah of barley," indicates that her efforts not only yielded enough for sustenance but also reflect Boaz's generosity in allowing her access to better resources. This abundance not only signifies physical nourishment but also represents hope and the potential for a better future for Naomi and Ruth. The verse demonstrates the fruitfulness of hard work and God's provision in their lives, culminating in a sense of achievement that contrasts with their earlier struggles.

Verse 18

Ruth 2:18

"And she took it up, and went into the city: and her mother in law saw what she had gleaned: and she brought forth and gave to her that which she had reserved after she was sufficed."

Ruth's return to town with her substantial harvest demonstrates both her dedication and the blessings of her labor. Naomi's reaction upon seeing what Ruth has gleaned speaks volumes; it illustrates the rejoicing that comes from provision and sustenance. The detail that Ruth also shares her reserved food after she has eaten highlights her character and commitment to care for Naomi first. This moment encapsulates their relationship—a constant cycle of support and love in the face of their shared hardships. Furthermore, Ruth's bounty serves as evidence of Boaz's generosity, setting the stage for

Naomi's realization that their fortunes may be changing. The act of caring for Naomi echoes the broader themes of familial loyalty and community sustenance, reinforcing the power of shared success and unity amidst adversity.

Verse 19

Ruth 2:19

"And her mother in law said unto her, Where hast thou gleaned today? and where wroughtest thou? blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee. And she told her mother in law with whom she had wrought, and said, The man's name with whom I wrought to day is Boaz."

Naomi's inquiry about Ruth's gleaning reflects her surprise and hope as she perceives the abundance Ruth has brought home. The blessing she bestows upon Boaz demonstrates gratitude and recognition of the kindness that Ruth has received. Naomi's keen interest in the source of this bounty indicates her awareness of the miraculous turn of events in their lives since returning to Bethlehem. When Ruth reveals the name of Boaz, it is a significant moment of realization for Naomi, connecting the past to the present. Boaz's status as a kinsman redeemer becomes an essential thread in the narrative, setting the stage for future developments in their story. This interaction serves to highlight the roles of both women—their resilience, mutual support, and the transformative power of kindness during difficult times.

Verse 20

Ruth 2:20

"And Naomi said unto her daughter in law, Blessed be he of the Lord, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. And Naomi said unto her, The man is near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen."

Naomi's blessing of Boaz recognizes not only his generosity but also the divine orchestration within their circumstances. By acknowledging the Lord's kindness, she interprets these blessings as manifestations of God's grace and providence—not just for them but for their late family as well. The phrase "the living and the dead" signifies a memorable connection between the present and the legacy of her husband and sons. Additionally, Naomi's revelation that Boaz is a kinsman redeemer introduces a critical concept in Israelite culture: the possibility of familial redemption. This verse deepens the narrative's themes of hope and restoration, illustrating how Ruth's diligence has drawn them closer to security and future possibility. Boaz's identity as a near relative sets the stage for what is to come, intertwining their lives further and emphasizing the importance of family bonds.

Verse 21

Ruth 2:21

"And Ruth the Moabite said, He said unto me also, Thou shalt keep fast by my young men, until they have ended all my harvest."

Ruth's recounting of Boaz's instructions serves to reinforce her connection to him and the secure environment he has created for her. By relaying Boaz's directive to keep close to his young men, Ruth

emphasizes Boaz's care and the protective nature offered to her as a gleaner. This act of staying close during the harvest season symbolizes safety and support, fortifying an emerging relationship built on mutual respect. Ruth's status as a Moabitess remains significant; it underscores the cultural barriers she must navigate, yet Boaz's words offer her dignity within her current circumstances. This moment enhances the narrative by illustrating the trust that is developing between Ruth and Boaz, further deepening the themes of redemption and community within the overarching story.

Verse 22

Ruth 2:22

"And Naomi said unto Ruth her daughter in law, It is good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they meet thee not in any other field."

Naomi's encouragement for Ruth to continue working among Boaz's maidens reflects her understanding of the importance of safety and community for Ruth. By ensuring that Ruth stays within Boaz's field, Naomi emphasizes the protective element of Ruth's situation, as this environment not only provides sustenance but also safeguards her dignity. Naomi's call of "my daughter" reinforces the familial bond between Naomi and Ruth, highlighting their mutual respect and reliance on one another. This moment exemplifies the nurturing nature of their relationship, as Naomi takes on an advisory role, providing guidance during this pivotal time. It also foreshadows the strengthening ties between Ruth and Boaz, suggesting a secure and hopeful future as they navigate their roles and potential for redemption within the community.

Verse 23

Ruth 2:23

"So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest; and dwelt with her mother in law."

Ruth's commitment to gleaning alongside Boaz's maidens signifies her acceptance and integration into this new environment, showcasing her adaptability and resilience. By remaining within the bounds of Boaz's fields throughout both the barley and wheat harvests, Ruth not only secures the necessary provisions for herself and Naomi but also deepens her relationship with Boaz and the agricultural community. This continuous thread of gleaning serves as a metaphor for sowing hope and gathering blessings, illustrating the fruits of her labor. The final note that she dwelt with her mother-in-law reinforces the importance of family and support as they continue to navigate their challenges together. This verse encapsulates the transformative period in their lives, indicating the sustenance not only of food but of relationships and community bonds that are vital in their journey toward healing and potential redemption.

In summary, Ruth Chapter 2 paints a beautiful picture of resilience, kindness, and the importance of community and familial bonds. Each interaction and decision sets up a narrative rich with themes of redemption, highlighting how God's providence and human kindness can significantly change lives amidst hardship.

CHAPTER 3:

Ruth 3:1

"Then Naomi her mother-in-law said unto her, My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee?"

In this opening verse, the enduring bond between Naomi and Ruth is highlighted as Naomi takes on a maternal role after their shared losses. She recognizes Ruth's need for security and a stable future, reflecting her concern for Ruth's well-being in a challenging world characterized by widowhood and uncertainty. The term "rest" signifies more than mere physical comfort; it embodies the societal expectation for women to have a husband to ensure economic stability and protection. This verse sets the stage for the unfolding plan that Naomi will devise for Ruth, revealing both her strategic thinking and her deep love for her daughter-in-law. Naomi's question is not just rhetorical; it indicates her intent to take action in finding a solution to Ruth's precarious situation, emphasizing her unwavering support and commitment to Ruth's happiness.

Ruth 3:2

"And now is not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley to night in the threshingfloor."

Here, Naomi introduces Boaz as a kinsman and potential redeemer for Ruth. This verse is crucial as it presents the idea of "kinsman-redeemer," a levirate duty found in Israelite law, whereby a relative has the responsibility to help a family member in dire circumstances, particularly concerning marriage and inheritance. By mentioning that Boaz will be winnowing barley at the threshing floor, Naomi reveals an opportunity for Ruth to approach him, thus initiating a plan that combines practicality with cultural traditions. The mention of "winnoweth barley" also alludes to the end of the barley harvest, symbolizing both labor and the fruits of their hard work, thus setting a backdrop that represents hope and potential regeneration.

Ruth 3:3

"Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor: but make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking."

In this verse, Naomi instructs Ruth on how to prepare herself to meet Boaz. The steps of washing, anointing, and dressing reflect a ceremonial preparation, indicating that this encounter is not merely casual but rather one filled with intention and significance. By advising Ruth to wait until Boaz has eaten and drunk, Naomi demonstrates a keen awareness of social customs—suggesting that a relaxed and satisfied Boaz will be more receptive to Ruth's boldness. This preparation symbolizes Ruth stepping into a new role and phase in her life, signifying both vulnerability and empowerment. Naomi's guidance further emphasizes her protective nature, as she wants Ruth to present herself in a way that honors the customs of their culture while also aligning with the importance of their intentions.

Ruth 3:4

"And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do."

Naomi's instructions become increasingly intimate and daring, emphasizing the depth of her strategy for Ruth. Marking the place where Boaz lies indicates a calculated approach, demonstrating that this encounter is born out of deep thought and intention. Uncovering his feet is a symbolic gesture meant to signify Ruth's submission and request for his protection, as well as an invitation for Boaz to take the role of kinsman-redeemer. This act echoes cultural traditions surrounding marriage and the roles therein, suggesting that in doing so, Ruth is also taking a bold step towards her own future. Naomi's confidence in this plan showcases her faith not only in Ruth's strength but also in Boaz's character and willingness to fulfill the responsibilities entrusted to him.

Ruth 3:5

"And she said unto her, All that thou sayest unto me I will do."

Ruth's response to Naomi expresses her loyalty and trust. This simple yet profound affirmation signifies Ruth's commitment to Naomi not only as a daughter-in-law but also as a companion in navigating the uncertainties of their lives. By agreeing to follow Naomi's instructions, Ruth demonstrates her willingness to embrace change and take proactive steps toward her future. This verse encapsulates the essence of their relationship—one built on mutual respect, love, and support amidst adversity. Ruth's dedication to Naomi further highlights the themes of loyalty and resilience that permeate the narrative. This moment also serves as a pivotal transition, marking Ruth's transition from a passive participant in her life to an active seeker of her own destiny.

Ruth 3:6

"And she went down unto the floor, and did according to all that her mother-in-law bade her."

Ruth's action of going down to the threshing floor emphasizes her determination and courage. By following Naomi's guidance so closely, she embodies the virtues of obedience and fidelity, reflecting the deep trust she has in Naomi's wisdom. This act of compliance signifies more than mere submission; it is an embodiment of Ruth's agency. The threshing floor, a site of labor, harvest, and potentially new beginnings, becomes the stage for a crucial turning point in Ruth's life. Her choice to follow Naomi's instructions brings to light the partnership that exists between the two women, showcasing their mutual reliance during a time of hardship, and prepares the reader for the unfolding moments of connection and emotional depth that will occur as Ruth interacts with Boaz.

Ruth 3:7

"And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn: and she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down."

This verse captures a moment rich with tension and anticipation. Boaz, having enjoyed his meal and drink, represents a contrast to the laborious days of harvesting, and his merriment suggests a sense of

completion and satisfaction. Ruth's careful approach—softly uncovering his feet and laying down—speaks to her boldness, but also her humility. This act signifies her submission and request for his protection. The dynamics of the situation intensify as Ruth boldly steps into the unknown, driven by her desire for security and belonging. The metaphorical uncovering of feet can be seen as a revelation of both vulnerability and the invitation for Boaz to awaken to the responsibilities of his role. This moment foreshadows the potential shift in their lives and sets the stage for a transformative dialogue.

Ruth 3:8

"And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and turned himself: and behold, a woman lay at his feet."

The sudden shock Boaz experiences upon discovering Ruth at his feet creates an atmosphere filled with drama and intrigue. The midnight hour symbolizes both mystery and revelation, as the darkness gives way to unexpected encounters. Ruth's presence at the threshing floor challenges traditional social norms, placing both characters in a vulnerable position where they must confront their roles and desires. Boaz's fear indicates the gravity of the situation; it underscores the cultural implications of Ruth's approach, where propriety could easily be questioned. This moment is pivotal, marking the transition from anonymity to recognition—signifying that Ruth is not merely a widow seeking refuge but a woman with agency and purpose.

Ruth 3:9

"And he said, Who art thou? And she answered, I am Ruth thy handmaid: spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman."

Ruth's declaration, "I am Ruth thy handmaid," serves as both an introduction and an assertion of her identity. In this moment, Ruth not only identifies herself but also reclaims her status and highlights her relationship with Boaz. The phrase "spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid" is laden with cultural significance, symbolizing Ruth's request for protection and her desire for Boaz to fulfill his role as kinsman-redeemer. This bold statement encapsulates the themes of loyalty and covenant, as it calls upon Boaz to recognize his duty toward her and her deceased husband's family. Ruth's brave proclamation signals a shift in their relationship, moving from mere acquaintances to a potential partnership that would fulfill the sacred duties outlined in their tradition.

Ruth 3:10

"And he said, Blessed be thou of the LORD, my daughter: for thou hast shewn more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich."

Boaz's response to Ruth's bold request underscores the deep respect and admiration he holds for her. His blessings reveal not only his acknowledgment of her as a woman of virtue but also his appreciation for the loyalty she has shown to Naomi and her deceased husband. By indicating that Ruth has exhibited greater kindness in her current actions than at the beginning of her journey, Boaz highlights her character, resilience, and willingness to pursue what is right rather than what may be easy or socially conventional. This verse reinforces the theme of divine providence, as Boaz recognizes that

Ruth's choices are guided by a higher purpose, establishing a foundation for their growing relationship, steeped in mutual respect and integrity.

Ruth 3:11

"And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest: for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman."

Boaz's reassurance to Ruth, "fear not," reflects his protective nature and counters any anxieties she may have regarding her boldness. His promise to fulfill her request reveals his willingness to embrace the responsibilities of a kinsman-redeemer. The acknowledgment of Ruth's reputation as a virtuous woman not only affirms her character but also elevates her standing in the community, reinforcing the narrative of loyalty, integrity, and sacrificial love. This verse signifies a turning point in Ruth's life, as it marks the transition from uncertainty to a sense of hope and potential fulfillment. The community's awareness of Ruth's virtue connects her personal journey with the collective narrative of her people, showcasing how individual character can influence societal perceptions and relationships.

Ruth 3:12

"And now it is true that I am thy near kinsman: howbeit there is a kinsman nearer than I."

In this verse, Boaz delineates the complexities surrounding the kinsman-redeemer role, bringing a realistic perspective to the hopeful potential between him and Ruth. While he expresses his willingness to take on the responsibility, he acknowledges the existence of a closer relative, highlighting the social responsibilities ingrained within their customs. This interaction not only adds a layer of tension to the narrative but also emphasizes the theme of rightful inheritance and redemption, stressing that even amid love and desire, there are obligations that must be honored according to tradition. Boaz's candor reflects his character and integrity, ensuring that the process remains honorable and within the bounds of their customs, deepening the reader's appreciation for the moral framework guiding both characters.

Ruth 3:13

"Tarry this night, and it shall be in the morning, that if he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsman, well; let him do the kinsman's part: but if he will not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee, as the LORD liveth: lie down until the morning."

Boaz's invitation for Ruth to stay the night presents both a practical solution to the uncertainty surrounding her future and a means to safeguard her honor. By encouraging her to wait until morning, he demonstrates a blend of respect, responsibility, and genuine care for Ruth's well-being. This offer signifies a quiet assurance, with Boaz willing to ensure that Ruth's rights are protected, regardless of the outcome. The commitment he expresses—"as the LORD liveth"—not only underscores the seriousness of his intentions but also invokes divine witness to his promise. This verse encapsulates the intertwining of human action with divine providence, indicating a belief that their futures are guided by a higher power. It exhibits the themes of patience and hope as their story unfolds in the narrative of redemption.

Ruth 3:14

"And she lay at his feet until the morning: and she rose up before one could know another. And he said, Let it not be known that a woman came into the floor."

Ruth's decision to stay at Boaz's feet until morning highlights her adherence to his guidance and her respect for social decorum. The phrase "before one could know another" conveys the importance of discretion in their encounter, emphasizing Ruth's integrity and the precautions taken to preserve her reputation. Boaz's instruction that no one should know of Ruth's presence reflects both his protective nature and a desire to maintain her virtue in a patriarchal society where whispers can lead to scandal. This moment encapsulates their developing relationship, built on mutual respect and understanding. The secrecy involved in their interaction adds an element of intrigue and tension to the narrative, foreshadowing the complexities that lie ahead in their pursuit of redemption and love.

Ruth 3:15

"Also he said, Bring the vail that thou hast upon thee, and hold it. And when she held it, he measured six measures of barley, and laid it on her: and she went into the city."

In this significant verse, Boaz's act of giving Ruth six measures of barley serves multiple purposes. It acts as a tangible expression of his commitment to Ruth's well-being and signals his intention to care for her, regardless of the outcome of the kinsman-redeemer situation. The act of measuring and laying the barley upon her is both a practical gesture and a symbol of blessing and abundance, indicating that Ruth is not only to be provided for but also honored. This moment represents a transition from vulnerability to empowerment; Ruth carries with her a promise of hope and sustenance as she returns to the city. The vail serves as a metaphorical representation of Ruth's protective journey, while the barley signifies Boaz's support and acknowledgment of her worth. This illustrates the unfolding theme of provision and care that undergirds their relationship.

Ruth 3:16

"And when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, Who art thou, my daughter? And she told her all that the man had done to her."

When Ruth arrives home and is greeted with the question, "Who art thou, my daughter?" it underscores a moment of curiosity and anticipation in Naomi. The use of "Who art thou" emphasizes not only Ruth's physical transformation through her experiences but also her spiritual and emotional journey. In sharing the details of her encounter with Boaz, Ruth reveals the depth of their interaction, the generosity shown, and the significant gift she received. This moment is both a culmination of her efforts and a testament to the bond of trust and support between her and Naomi. The careful unveiling of information conveys a sense of hope and expectancy, setting the stage for their next steps and highlighting the implications of their actions. Naomi's inquiry signals that the journey of redemption is not merely about individual actions but about the relationships and commitments that weave their lives together.

Ruth 3:17

"And she said, These six measures of barley gave he me; for he said to me, Go not empty unto thy mother-in-law."

Ruth's recounting of Boaz's gift highlights his thoughtfulness and intention behind the measure of barley. The phrase "Go not empty unto thy mother-in-law" serves as a profound acknowledgment of Naomi's sacrifices and the respect Boaz holds for her. This is a pivotal moment, as it signals Boaz's recognition of the family bond between Ruth and Naomi, emphasizing the importance of familial support and the continuation of legacy. The gift becomes a symbol of hope and restoration, suggesting that both women's lives will be enriched by Boaz's generosity and care. It reiterates the theme of abundance arising from faithfulness and loyalty, illustrating how the love they share as a family manifests in communal blessings. The emotional weight of this moment underscores the interdependence of their fates, hinting at the intertwined destinies that weave their stories together.

Ruth 3:18

"Then said she, Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day."

Naomi's words to Ruth, "Sit still, my daughter," emphasize a profound lesson in patience and trust. This moment conveys her wisdom and understanding of the social dynamics at play, encouraging Ruth to refrain from anxiety and allow the events to unfold naturally. Naomi's assurance that Boaz will not rest until he resolves the matter speaks to his character and commitment to doing what is right, reinforcing the trust that both women have placed in him. This verse encapsulates the notion of waiting on the Lord's providence, suggesting that divine timing is a key component of their unfolding narrative. The phrase reflects the strength of their bond and speaks to the importance of community as they navigate their uncertain future. It also sets the stage for a decisive action that is to come, highlighting the anticipation and hope that permeate their situation.

This chapter in Ruth is a rich tapestry of loyalty, courage, and the promise of redemption, weaving together the lives of two women determined to navigate their futures amidst societal and familial expectations. The relationships depicted serve not just as a narrative but as a reflection of deeper spiritual truths regarding loyalty, responsibility, and the profound connections that define human experience.

CHAPTER 4:

Ruth 4:1

"Then went Boaz up to the gate, and sat him down there: and, behold, the kinsman of whom Boaz spake came by; unto whom he said, Ho, such a one! turn aside, sit down here. And he turned aside, and sat down."

In this verse, we see Boaz strategically positioning himself at the city gate, which serves as a place for legal transactions and community gatherings in ancient Israel. This demarcation of space indicates the seriousness of Boaz's intentions; he seeks to clear the way for Ruth and ensure her future is secured

through a rightful marriage. The mention of the kinsman highlights the importance of family ties and the laws of redemption that govern Israelite society, emphasizing that Boaz is acting within the lawful framework of their customs. By calling out to the kinsman and inviting him to sit down, Boaz establishes an atmosphere of formality and respect, setting the stage for the unfolding dialogue regarding Ruth's inheritance and the responsibilities that come with it.

Ruth 4:2

"And he took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, Sit ye down here. And they sat down."

Boaz demonstrates his leadership and authority by gathering ten men from among the elders of the city, which underscores the communal nature of the transaction he is about to undertake. In Israelite culture, the presence of elders signifies the formalization of any significant decision, providing legitimacy to the proceedings. By insisting they sit, Boaz prepares to engage in a matter of serious importance, one that involves both family heritage and societal law. The act of gathering these elders reflects the communal responsibility placed upon members of the society, where decisions were not made in isolation but were sanctioned by the wisdom and agreement of the community. This assembly represents a group who will bear witness to Boaz's actions, lending credibility to the process of redemption and the legalities surrounding Ruth.

Ruth 4:3

"And he said unto the kinsman, Naomi, that is come again out of the country of Moab, selleth a parcel of land, which was our brother Elimelech's."

In this verse, Boaz introduces the proposition at hand, stating that Naomi, who has returned from Moab, is selling a parcel of land that belonged to her deceased husband, Elimelech. This not only establishes the immediate legal matter but also invokes the family's history, drawing the kinsman into a longstanding familial obligation. Boaz's reference to Naomi and Elimelech underlines the importance of lineage and the customs of land redemption where a relative was expected to help preserve the family's heritage. This context places a moral imperative upon the kinsman to consider not just the financial implications, but the familial duty that accompanies the transaction. Boaz's careful wording subtly emphasizes the bond between them, hinting at the social responsibilities that come with being a "kinsman".

Ruth 4:4

"And I thought to advertise thee, saying, Buy it before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it: but if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know: for there is none to redeem it beside thee; and I am after thee. And he said, I will redeem it."

Here, Boaz lays out the options for the kinsman in a transparent manner. He invites the kinsman to redeem the land, demonstrating both fairness and respect for his position as the closest relative. The phrase "before the inhabitants" and "before the elders" underscores the public nature of the transaction, ensuring accountability and communal acknowledgment of whatever decision is made. The kinsman's

acceptance of the offer reveals his initial willingness to adhere to familial duty but also foreshadows the upcoming complexities as Boaz subtly maneuvers the situation. Boaz's phrase "I am after thee" hints at both respect for the legal chain of redemption and his latent interest in Ruth, creating a tension between duty and personal desire.

Ruth 4:5

"Then said Boaz, What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance."

In an astute turn of the conversation, Boaz makes it clear that redeeming the land involves more than just a financial transaction; it also necessitates marrying Ruth, the widow of Elimelech's son. This detail significantly complicates the kinsman's decision, as his initial offer was made without awareness of this additional responsibility. Boaz emphasizes the duty to raise up a name for the deceased, which invokes the levirate law and highlights the cultural expectation to keep family lines intact. This not only frames Ruth as intrinsically tied to the land but also aims to invoke a moral and ethical obligation over mere financial considerations, compelling the kinsman to weigh his options against the backdrop of honor and duty towards family legacy.

Ruth 4:6

"And the kinsman said, I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance: redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem it."

The kinsman's response reveals his reluctance to undertake the dual obligations of land redemption and marrying Ruth. His concern for "marring" his own inheritance suggests that he may already have a family or the kinsman's own financial or social status may be jeopardized by extending his responsibilities. This highlights the practical implications of such decisions in a societal context; not every kinsman was prepared—or willing—to take on the debt or complexity that accompanied family responsibilities. The kinsman's relinquishment of his right paves the way for Boaz to step into the role of redeemer, illustrating that while laws provided for redemption, personal circumstances and relationships deeply influenced such decisions.

Ruth 4:7

"Now this was the manner in former time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things, a man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbour: and this was a testimony in Israel."

This verse serves as a cultural annotation, explaining the ancient custom associated with redemption transactions in Israel. The act of removing a sandal and handing it over symbolizes the transfer of rights and the sealing of an agreement, marking a public declaration of the terms agreed upon. This grounding in tradition reinforces the legitimacy of the proceeding, as customs provided not just legal frameworks but also social cohesion, ensuring that community members understood and respected such practices. Boaz's reference to this manner demonstrates his awareness of cultural norms and his commitment to

honoring them, adding a layer of solemnity and importance to the undertaking of redeeming Ruth and the land.

Ruth 4:8

"Therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz, Buy it for thee. So he drew off his shoe."

At this juncture, the reality of the situation crystallizes as the kinsman officially relinquishes his right to redeem, allowing Boaz to proceed with the transaction. By drawing off his shoe, he not only signals his acceptance of Boaz as the rightful redeemer but also participates in the communal acknowledgment of this significant transfer. This act underscores the public nature of legal agreements within the society and the accountability that comes with it. The seamless transition to Boaz as the redeemer not only resolves the immediate legal matter of land and family legacy but also creates a narrative transition—Boaz is now positioned as both a savior of Naomi and Ruth and a man of integrity.

Ruth 4:9

"And Boaz said unto the elders, and unto all the people, Ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi."

Boaz calls upon the gathered elders and people to serve as witnesses to the transaction, reinforcing the idea that such significant decisions were meant to be made with community oversight. By formally declaring that he has purchased the land of Elimelech, Chilion, and Mahlon, Boaz asserts his commitment to restoring the family's legacy and ensures that Naomi and Ruth are taken care of. This proclamation embodies the themes of redemption and community responsibility that underline the entire narrative. Furthermore, by invoking the community in this important event, Boaz solidifies his reputation as a man of honor, one willing to uphold not only his personal obligations but also the values of kinship and compassion that were paramount in their culture.

Ruth 4:10

"And Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: ye are witnesses this day."

Boaz's declaration of marrying Ruth emphasizes the dual purpose of the transaction: the redemption of the land and the continuation of the family line through Mahlon's name. By explicitly stating he has bought Ruth to be his wife, Boaz demonstrates his commitment to fulfilling both the legal and moral obligations dictated by their customs. This noble action seeks to protect the dignity of both Naomi and Ruth, ensuring that their family's name and legacy will endure. His repetition of the phrase "ye are witnesses" invokes a collective responsibility among the community, further cementing the importance of this moment not just for himself, but for the entire society invested in the continuance of familial lines and honor.

Ruth 4:11

"And all the people that were in the gate, and the elders, said, We are witnesses. The LORD make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel: and do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem:"

The response from the assembled people and elders demonstrates a communal affirmation of Boaz's marriage to Ruth. Their blessing for her to be like Rachel and Leah—the matriarchs who contributed to the foundation of Israel—signifies the hope for a fruitful and blessed union. This statement intertwines personal and communal aspirations; they wish for Boaz to “do thou worthily” and become a respected figure in Ephratah and Bethlehem, thereby ensuring that his lineage and actions are commendable. This blessing encapsulates the spirit of the community, showing their investment in the social fabric and the moral imperative for lineage and family devotion to flourish within their midst.

Ruth 4:12

"And let thy house be like the house of Pharez, whom Tamar bare unto Judah, of the seed which the LORD shall give thee of this young woman."

The reference to Pharez, the son of Tamar and Judah, invokes themes of redemption and the unexpected providence of God in human affairs. The mention of Tamar, who also navigated complex situations related to her own family line, serves as a reminder of God's faithfulness even amidst unconventional circumstances. The people wish for Boaz's house to be fruitful, filled with children who will carry on his legacy, drawing a parallel with the biblical precedent of lineage that intertwines divine purpose and personal agency. This desire encapsulates the community's hope for divine blessing in Boaz's marriage to Ruth, framing their union within the larger narrative of Israel's heritage.

Ruth 4:13

"So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went in unto her, the LORD gave her conception, and she bare a son."

In this verse, the culmination of Boaz's and Ruth's journey together is realized as they marry. The divine intervention is acknowledged as the LORD grants Ruth conception, highlighting the idea that their union is under God's favor. This bears significance not only for Boaz and Ruth but also for Naomi, who finds hope and restoration through the birth of a grandchild. The child symbolizes the renewal of family lineage and the continuation of God's promise to His people. This moment encapsulates key themes from the narrative: loyalty, redemption, and divine providence, marking a new chapter for all involved as they experience the blessings of God through the fulfillment of familial obligations.

Ruth 4:14

"And the women said unto Naomi, Blessed be the LORD, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel."

The women's proclamation to Naomi highlights the fulfillment of her hopes and prayers, praising God for blessing her with a redeemer in Boaz. Their lament before was rooted in loss, but now there is a recognition of renewal and restoration as they celebrate the new kinsman who will preserve the family name. The mention of the child gaining fame in Israel draws attention to the importance of legacy, not only for Naomi but for the whole nation. Thus, through Ruth's and Boaz's union, the community praises God's faithfulness in providing a means for Naomi's family to continue, situating her story within the broader narrative of God's action in the world.

Ruth 4:15

"And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age: for thy daughter-in-law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath borne him."

The women commend Naomi for the valuable role Ruth has played in her life, noting that Ruth's love and loyalty surpass that of seven sons, which symbolizes great worth and blessing in biblical times. The child's birth not only brings joy but also serves as a source of sustenance and hope for Naomi in her old age. The term "restorer of thy life" reflects the transformative power of community bonds and God's providence, indicating that Ruth's marriage to Boaz has revitalized Naomi's sense of purpose and familial connection. This brings to light the importance of women in the narrative, as both Ruth and Naomi play pivotal roles in the unfolding of redemption and continuity within their family line.

Ruth 4:16

"And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it."

Naomi's act of taking the child into her arms illustrates a poignant moment of healing and joy. The infant serves as a living testament to God's unfailing kindness, renewing Naomi's spirit and restoring her sense of family. By nursing the child, Naomi enters a new phase of life, where she partakes in active nurturing, symbolizing her full integration back into the fabric of family and community. This moment emphasizes the deep emotional connection that extends beyond mere words; it showcases the profound joy and fulfillment that comes from familial love and presence, allowing Naomi to reclaim her identity as a matriarch in the line of her family.

Ruth 4:17

"And the women, her neighbours, gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed: he is the father of Jesse, the father of David."

In this celebratory moment, the neighbors affirm the significance of the child born to Ruth and Boaz, giving him the name Obed. This choice of name not only honors Naomi but underscores the community's role in recognizing and celebrating the redemption of her family line. By linking Obed to Jesse and ultimately to David, the text foreshadows the larger redemptive story that will thread through Israel's history, culminating in the lineage of David—a pivotal figure in the narrative of the Old Testament. This connection further cements Ruth's story within the grander themes of God's faithfulness and the unexpected ways in which He works through ordinary lives, highlighting the transformative impact of love, loyalty, and divine providence at every turn.

Ruth 4:18

"Now these are the generations of Pharez: Pharez begat Hezron,"

This verse serves as a geneological bridge, tracing the lineages from Pharez, the son of Judah, through subsequent generations. This reference roots the narrative of Ruth and Boaz within the broader context of Israel's tribal systems, intertwining their personal story with the ancestry of the nation. It emphasizes the importance of genealogy in biblical literature, as it reaffirms the continuity and fulfillment of God's promises to His people. The mention of Pharez and Hezron not only highlights Ruth's significance within God's salvific plan but also beckons readers to appreciate how individual lives contribute to the divine narrative woven throughout history—a testament to the interconnectedness of personal choices and national destinies.

Ruth 4:19

"Hezron begat Ram, and Ram begat Amminadab,"

The lineage continues with Hezron begetting Ram and Ram begetting Amminadab, maintaining the focus on the hereditary path that God has established through the generations of Judah. This particular genealogy reflects the meticulous care taken in preserving historical records within Jewish tradition, illustrating the vital role names and lineage played in cultural identity. Each name carries its weight of history, legacy, and community connection, driving home the point that every individual contributes to the unfolding story of God's people. As these names unfurl, they remind the reader of the significance of their journeys, individual struggles, and relationships forming the rich tapestry of faith and family that serve to fulfill divine promises over time.

Ruth 4:20

"And Amminadab begat Nahshon, and Nahshon begat Salmon,"

Continuing the genealogy, this verse links Amminadab with Nahshon and then Salmon, reaffirming the ongoing legacy of Judah's line. The continuity of names not only represents the passage of time but also the faithfulness of God in preserving His promises through generations. It highlights the divine orchestration behind the scenes, even in seemingly ordinary events concerning family lineages. Each name—and vital connection—provides a glimpse into the unfolding narrative that leads to significant biblical characters, serving as a reminder of the faithfulness God displayed in the lives of His people. Furthermore, recognizing these connections creates a bridge to understanding the fulfillment of covenantal promises in the broader tapestry of Scripture.

Ruth 4:21

"And Salmon begat Booz, and Booz begat Obed,"

The lineage arrives at significant names—Salmon giving birth to Booz (Boaz), who is also the father of Obed, linking the previous verses directly with Ruth and Boaz's story. This moment embodies the confluence of personal redemption and historical legacy. Boaz, already a figure of nobility in dealing with the plight of Ruth and Naomi, is further elevated as an ancestor in the line leading to David. Each

name mentioned in the genealogy contributes layers of meaning and implication, weaving together personal stories with national history. This progression illuminates the theme of God's ongoing work through human lives, showcasing how individual choices and acts of faith have the power to resonate through generations.

Ruth 4:22

"And Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David."

The final verse concludes the genealogy with the birth of Jesse and ultimately David, framing the narrative of Ruth not just as an isolated story of love and redemption but as a pivotal element within God's grand plan for Israel. The introduction of David highlights the significant role he would play in the history of Israel, embodying the fulfillment of God's promises to establish a kingdom. It encapsulates the idea that the actions of individuals, rooted in loyalty, faith, and perseverance, contribute profoundly to the unfolding of God's redemptive plan. This conclusion of Ruth's story invites readers to celebrate the continuity of faith flowing through generations, emphasizing the importance of each person's story in the collective journey of God's people.

CONCLUSION:

Chapter 1 Conclusion: Hope Amid Loss

The first chapter concludes with Naomi and Ruth returning to Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest after a long and difficult journey. Naomi, whose name means "pleasant," now asks to be called "Mara," meaning "bitter," as she attributes her suffering to God. Despite Naomi's bitterness, the chapter ends with a subtle glimmer of hope—the timing of their arrival during the barley harvest signals the possibility of future restoration. Ruth's loyalty and decision to stay with Naomi establish her as a symbol of love, devotion, and faithfulness, setting the foundation for the redemptive journey ahead.

Chapter 2 Conclusion: Providence and Protection

This chapter concludes with Ruth finding favor in the fields of Boaz, a wealthy and compassionate relative of Naomi's late husband. Boaz's kindness ensures Ruth's safety and provides abundant grain for her and Naomi. Through Boaz's generous actions, readers see God's providence working quietly behind the scenes. The chapter closes with Naomi's renewed hope, as she recognizes Boaz as a potential "kinsman-redeemer," someone who could redeem their family from poverty and provide a secure future.

Chapter 3 Conclusion: A Bold Proposal

Ruth's encounter with Boaz at the threshing floor concludes with a deepening trust and mutual respect between them. Ruth's bold proposal for Boaz to act as her redeemer highlights her courage and

determination to secure a future for herself and Naomi. Boaz, impressed by Ruth's loyalty and character, agrees to fulfill this role if another closer relative declines the responsibility. The chapter ends with Ruth returning to Naomi, carrying a gift of grain from Boaz and the promise of a resolution soon, reinforcing themes of hope and divine provision.

Chapter 4 Conclusion: Redemption and Restoration

The final chapter brings the story to a joyous conclusion. Boaz successfully redeems Naomi's family by marrying Ruth after the closer relative declines the offer. This union not only restores Naomi's household but also brings new life through the birth of Obed, who becomes the grandfather of King David. The women of Bethlehem praise God for providing Naomi with a redeemer and celebrate Ruth's loyalty, recognizing her worth as greater than seven sons. The genealogy at the end connects Ruth and Boaz's story to the broader narrative of Israel's history, pointing to the messianic lineage of Jesus Christ. The book closes with a powerful reminder of God's faithfulness and the transformative power of love, loyalty, and redemption.

Dr. Paul Crawford is more than just a Christian Author; His books are a source of inspiration and guidance on your spiritual journey. His books are created with a deep sense of faith and a desire to uplift and inspire all who read.

