**Lessons from a Life of Bitterness, Pt. 2**

*Ruth 2-3*

Introduction (reminder)

Set in the period of the judges, the book of Ruth records how a famine in Judah forces Naomi and her husband to leave Israel and move to Moab, where their sons marry Moabite women. When Naomi’s husband and sons die, she decides to return to her home in Bethlehem in Judah, and her daughter-in-law Ruth chooses to go with her.[[1]](#footnote-1)

* Moab (the perennial enemy of Israel, which was east of the Dead Sea) originated when Lot fathered Moab by an incestuous union with his oldest daughter (Gen. 19:37).
* The date of the story is c. 1370 to 1041 b.c. (Judg. 2:16–19) during the time of the judges. It bridges time from the judges to Israel’s monarchy.
* The book covers about 11 or 12 years.

At least seven major theological themes emerge in Ruth.[[2]](#footnote-2)

1. Ruth the Moabitess illustrates that God’s redemptive plan extended beyond the Jews to Gentiles (2:12).
2. Ruth demonstrates that women are co-heirs with men of God’s salvation grace (cf. Gal. 3:28).
3. Ruth portrays the virtuous woman of Prov. 31:10 (cf. Ruth 3:11).
4. Ruth describes God’s sovereign (1:6; 4:13) and providential care (2:3) of seemingly unimportant people at apparently insignificant times which later prove to be monumentally crucial to accomplishing God’s will.
5. Ruth along with Tamar (Gen. 38), Rahab (Josh. 2), and Bathsheba (2 Sam. 11–12) stand in the genealogy of the messianic line (Ruth 4:17, 22; cf. Matt. 1:5).
6. Boaz, as a type of Christ, becomes Ruth’s kinsman-redeemer (Ruth 4:1–12).
7. David’s right (and thus Christ’s right) to the throne of Israel is traced back to Judah (4:18–22; cf. Gen. 49:8–12).

A few key passages on bitterness

**Ephesians 4:31-32**—*Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.*

**James 3:13-18**—*But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth.*

**Hebrews 12:15**—*See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled…*

**Hebrews 12:1-17**—*See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled; that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal. For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears.*

3 lessons on how our faith helps us overcome bitterness

**I. Believe in His \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

1. Regarding “**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**”

**Ruth 2:2**—*And Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, “Please let me go to the field and glean among the ears of grain after one in whose sight I may find favor.”*

**Deuteronomy 24:19**—*When you reap your harvest in your field and have forgotten a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be for the alien, for the orphan, and for the widow, in order that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.*

1. Applies to all people—including foreigners

**Ruth 2:2**—*Ruth the Moabitess…*

**Ruth 2:6**—*…the young Moabite woman…*

**Ruth 2:10**—*…seeing that I am a foreigner…*

**Ruth 2:11a**—*…you left your father and mother and the land of your birth…*

**Ruth 2:11b**—*…came to a people you did not previously know…*

1. Regarding **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**made

**Ruth 2:12**—*May the Lord reward your work, and your wages be full from the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to seek refuge.*

1. Regarding **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** (and in-laws)

**Exodus 20:12**—*Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the Lord your God gives you.*

**Ruth 1:14**—*And they lifted up their voices and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.*

**Ruth 2:11**—*Boaz replied to her, “All that you have done for your mother-in-law after the death of your husband has been fully reported to me…*

**Ruth 2:18**—*She also took it out and gave Naomi what she had left after she was satisfied.*

**Ephesians 6:1-3**—*Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.* ***2****Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise),* ***3****so that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth.*

1. Regarding **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Ruth 2:2**—*And Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, “Please let me go to the field and glean among the ears of grain after one in whose sight I may find favor.”*

**Ruth 2:7**—*And she said, “Please let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves...”*

**Ruth 2:10**—*Then she fell on her face, bowing to the ground and said to him, “Why have I found favor in your sight that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?”*

**Ruth 2:13**—*Then she said, “I have found favor in your sight, my lord, for you have comforted me and indeed have spoken kindly to your maidservant, though I am not like one of your maidservants.”*

**Romans 10:9-13**—*that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;* ***10****for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.* ***11****For the Scripture says, “Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed.”* ***12****For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him;* ***13****for “Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.”*

**II. Believe in His\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

1. God’s **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** care

**Ruth 2:3**—*So she departed and went and gleaned in the field after the reapers; and she happened to come to the portion of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech.*

1. God’s **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** through Boaz  
   1. Boaz’s love for God

**Ruth 2:4**—*Now behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem and said to the reapers, “May the Lord be with you.” And they said to him, “May the Lord bless you.”*

* 1. Boaz’s love for people

**Ruth 2:14**—*At mealtime Boaz said to her, “Come here, that you may eat of the bread and dip your piece of bread in the vinegar.”*

Notice throughout how Boaz manifested the spirit of the law in going beyond what the Mosaic legislation required by 1) feeding Ruth (2:14), 2) letting Ruth glean among the sheaves (2:15), and 3) leaving extra grain for her to glean (2:16).[[3]](#footnote-3)

1. God’s **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** through food

**Ruth 2:14**—*At mealtime Boaz said to her, “Come here, that you may eat of the bread and dip your piece of bread in the vinegar.” So she sat beside the reapers; and he [*[*j*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ruth+2&version=NASB#fen-NASB-7164j)*]served her roasted grain, and she ate and was satisfied and had some left.*

**Ruth 2:17-18**—*So she gleaned in the field until evening. Then she beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley.* ***18****She took it up and went into the city, and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. She also took it out and gave Naomi what she had left after she was satisfied.*

1. God’s provision through **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Ruth 2:16**—*Also you shall purposely pull out for her some grain from the bundles and leave it that she may glean, and do not rebuke her.*

1. God’s provision through **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**John 6:35**—*Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst”*

**III. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with courage and trust**

**Ruth 2:20**—*Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, “May he be blessed of the Lord who has not withdrawn his kindness to the living and to the dead.” Again Naomi said to her, “The man is our relative, he is one of our closest relatives.”*

1. The MacArthur Study Bible [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)