

God's Sticky and Stubborn Love: David Papillon
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Ruth Chapters 1 and 2

Spiritual Contentment: Active, deliberate trust that God will provide me everything I need to please the Lord and walk in obedience to Him.

The Book of Ruth: Act I and II (III and IV Next Week)

1) **ACT I: The Bitter Return:** Judges 21:25 ends with Israel in a lawless and evil period, Naomi and Ruth's life is in this difficult period. Everyone did what was right in their own eyes.

- V1-2, Israel was in famine due to spiritual darkness and wickedness because they forsook God's commands as God declared to them would happen in Deut. 28:15-48
 - i. Famine has started, other curses would follow if they continued in disobedience.
- V4, Ruth's sons take Moabite women as their wives, which is not the practice of Hebrews. Num. 25:1, speaks of the wickedness of Moabite women and the command of Deut. 23:3, that no Moabite was ever to be allowed in the assembly of Yahweh.
- V5, Ruth's sons die as well, leaving Naomi with two Moabite daughter-in-laws and no husband.
- V6-7, Naomi had heard that Yahweh had given His people food. She determined to return home.
- V8-15, Naomi speaks to the daughters telling them to return to their homes so that Yahweh might show them mercy and care for them in their mother's house.
- V16-18, Ruth clung (same word as Gen. 2:24 speaking of marriage) to Naomi. Ruth gives an oath to remain with Naomi and serve Yahweh.
 - i. Ruth could expect: 1) There were none of her people in Israel. 2) She likely would remain a widow as no one would marry her (Num. and Deut. laws). 3) She could return to her father's house and be protected.
 - ii. Ruth instead follows Naomi: 1) There would be no human wisdom that would support her decision as a Moabite widow. 2) Naomi's faith in Yahweh was Ruth's only reason for going.
- V19-21, Naomi sees the bitterness of the discipline of the Lord in her life. Knowing she is a sinner in need of the Lord's mercy but knowing that Yahweh is sovereign over all things.
- V22, the barley harvest had begun. Under the Law of Moses, the poor and widows could glean during that time.

2) **ACT II: The Hidden Love:** Chapter 2 starts with an introduction to Boaz, who was a relative of Naomi's Elimelech and an excellent (well to do and good) man.

- V2, Ruth goes to glean as this is the time for the poor to gather from the harvest bounty.
 - V3, Ruth happens upon the field of Boaz, relative to Elimelech.
 - V4, Boaz blesses the men that work to gather the harvest on his fields.
 - V5-8, Boaz finds out about Ruth, blesses her, and offers protection to her, after hearing she came back with Naomi and left her family and home to follow Naomi and Yahweh.
 - V9-12, Boaz knows her story and offers protection and provision to her and prays for her.
 - V13-18, Boaz arranges for her to take home large portions from her gleanings.
 - V19-23, Naomi learns from Ruth that Boaz has provided food for her, protection in the field, and can glean from his fields throughout the harvest.
- **MAIN POINT:** Naomi teaches us to choose contentment even in bitter circumstances because you can expect God's sticky and stubborn lovingkindness to follow you wherever you go.
- **OTHER POINTS:**
- Even in our stubborn sin He doesn't desert us. His love remains and expresses itself in God's time. Ps. 23:6, His lovingkindness pursues us all the days of our lives. In the same way, the curses upon Israel would pursue them as well, Deut. 28:45.
 - The 'hesed' love of God is only for those who put their faith in God and come to Christ.
 - God's lovingkindness shows itself through people who are used by God to show love to us when we can't see the Lord's work in our lives.

Further Discussion and Application

Sanctification is the process of God conforming us into the image of Christ. God uses trials, tests, people, teaching, suffering, pains, and time to mold us and wring sin out of our lives and increase our faith, James 1:1-4. These are times we gain wisdom (Jam. 1:5) and see the fruit of righteousness in our lives (Heb. 12:11). How has God used circumstances to mold us into Christlikeness? How has God used other people to help us along the way?

Naomi and Ruth give us a deep look into how God views His own people. What did He grant Naomi and Ruth so that they would trust and obey Him? What actions did they take to exercise the gift they received? What costs or threat of loss did they overlook to show their faith in Yahweh? How does the New Covenant describe this change of heart, change of allegiance, and change of loyalty? What is the origin of this confession of faith? What Scriptures show the believer what has changed in their lives when they came to Christ?

Why is there great comfort in seeing our sin? Who do we turn to when our life is in a difficult way? Why does the believer find peace and rest in God alone? What is the hope of Romans 8: 29-30? What is this calling? What is this justification? What is this glorification we have (and will) receive?

When we consider Romans 8:31-39 and compare it to the story of Naomi and Ruth, what are the parallels of these stories? What is God demonstrating in 1100-1200 BC (when Ruth occurred) to believers in Yahweh? What does David know about God's 'hesed' love as becomes king of Israel? What is Paul teaching us in Romans about our sinful state and God's great mercy?