

Courage and Obedience

Note Taker

going to Moab in time of famine. There are a number of wadis that cross the region of Moab, and the combination of adequate rainfall and porous soil makes it good for agriculture. The family of Elimelech would have traveled north to the area of Jerusalem and then taken the Jerusalem to Jericho road to cross the Jordan at the fords by Jericho. From there the road east up to Heshbon would connect them to the north-south King’s Highway leading through the region of Moab. Depending on where they settled, the trip would have been seventy to one hundred miles and would have taken about a week.

Moab. The region of Moab, east of the Dead Sea, extended from the plains north of the Arnon River south to the Zered River. The region measures about sixty miles north to south and about thirty miles from the Dead Sea to the eastern desert. The “plains of Moab” north of the Arnon was a region that had belonged to Sihon (see Numbers 21) and had been distributed to the tribe of Reuben. Little is known of Moab during this period, though archaeological surveys have identified several dozen settlements during this time.

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Courage and Obedience

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The book of Ruth took place during the time of the Judges. The exact date is uncertain however since the time of the Judges span some 350-400 years (1450-1100 BC). For the next two weeks we will learn from Ruth. Her courage and obedience is an example for all to follow. Adversity is a grim fact of life, we all face it. What sets us apart is not the adversity itself, but how we respond to it. I wonder, is it book (testimony) worthy? We must remember that sometimes the only reason we go through adversity is so that we can testify of God’s provision, deliverance and peace, both during and afterwards. It is this very testimony that defeats the power of the devil (Revelation 12:11).

I. COURAGEOUS DECISION - Ruth 1:1-18 (NKJV)

Ruth 1:1-5¹Now it came to pass, in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehem, Judah, went to dwell in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. ²The name of the man was Elimelech, the name of his wife was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion—Ephrathites of Bethlehem, Judah. And they went to the country of Moab and remained there. ³Then Elimelech, Naomi’s husband, died; and she was left, and her two sons. ⁴Now they took wives of the women of Moab: the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth. And they dwelt there about ten years. ⁵Then both Mahlon and Chilion also died; so the woman survived her two sons and her husband.

How many times have you found yourself in a situation that just seemed to worsen with no hope of relief?

Ruth 1:6-13 (7-13 not included in the lesson text)

⁶Then 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 that the Lord had visited His people by giving them bread. **Good news from Judah reached Naomi...certainly this was a result of God’s people crying out to Him.**

Ruth 1:14-18 (15-18 not included in the lesson text)

¹⁴Then they lifted up their voices and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her. **Ruth refused to leave her mother-in-law, but chose to stay with her instead of her own family and people. Is this not the commitment God is looking for from each of us?**

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II. FAITHFUL SERVICE - Ruth 2:1-20 (NKJV)

Ruth 2:1-7 (3-6 not included in the lesson text)

¹There was a relative of Naomi's husband, a man of great wealth, of the family of Elimelech. His name *was* Boaz. ²So Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, "Please let me go to the field, and glean heads of grain after *him* in whose sight I may find favor." And she said to her, "Go, my daughter." **The custom of gleaning (collecting what had been missed by the officially employed reapers) was a divinely ordained provision for the poor of the land (see Leviticus 19:9, 10; Deuteronomy 24:19). It is interesting to note that gleaning would not have been allowed in Moab.**

Ruth 2:8-10

⁸Then Boaz said to Ruth, "You will listen, my daughter, will you not? Do not go to glean in another field, nor go from here, but stay close by my young women. ⁹*Let your eyes be* on the field which they reap, and go after them. Have I not commanded the young men not to touch you? And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink from what the young men have drawn." ¹⁰So she fell on her face, bowed down to the ground, and said to him, "Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I *am* a foreigner?" **Boaz's kindness, protection and provision were not nearly a coincidence, but a demonstration of God's great mercy toward His children.**

Ruth 2:11-20 (12-20 not included in the lesson text)

¹¹And Boaz answered and said to her, "It has been fully reported to me, all that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband, and *how* you have left your father and your mother and the land of your birth, and have come to a people whom you did not know before. **It is obvious that Boaz was drawn to Ruth; perhaps it was her youthful beauty, her hard work or her love for her mother-in-law. Whatever it was, he welcomed her to eat lunch with him, and this set her apart from the rest of the gleaners.**

What did Naomi state about Boaz and why would she thank God for his (Boaz's) kindness?

III. HUMBLE OBEDIENCE - Ruth 3:1-18 (NKJV)

Ruth 3:1-9 (2-9 not included in the lesson text)

¹Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, shall I not seek security for you, that it may be well with you? ²Now Boaz, whose young women you were with, *is he* not our relative? In fact, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor. **Naomi was demonstrating her faith in God's word, being very familiar with the obligation of the Kinsman Redeemer, she facilitated events to ensure that Boaz would embrace his legal obligation.**

Ruth 3:10-18 (15-18 not included in the lesson text)

¹⁰Then he said, "Blessed *are* you of the Lord, my daughter! For you have shown more kindness at the end than at the beginning, in that you did not go after young men, whether poor or rich. ¹¹And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you request, for all the people of my town know that you *are* a virtuous woman. ¹²Now it is true that I *am* a close relative; however, there is a relative closer than I. ¹³Stay this night, and in the morning it shall be *that* if he will perform the duty of a close relative for you—good; let him do it. But if he does not want to perform the duty for you, then I will perform the duty for you, *as* the Lord lives! Lie down until morning." ¹⁴So she lay at his feet until morning, and she arose before one could recognize another. Then he said, "Do not let it be known that the woman came to the threshing floor." **Boaz recognized that the actions of Ruth were an invitation for him to fulfill the role of the Kinsman Redeemer.**

How has Christ fulfilled the role of our Kinsman Redeemer?