

Day 29

- As I said yesterday, we are going into the book of Ruth — let me set the stage a little before we dive into all the awesome things God is showing us in these 4 chapters in Ruth.
- Ruth was a Moabite - now, that may mean nothing to most if not all of us, but to understand the incredible beauty of the account of Ruth, we must dive into the meaning of Moabite — now, when we see the “ite” after a name, it means descendants. So, a Moabite is a descendant of Moab. Ruth is a descendant of Moab.
- Many of you may remember the account in the Bible of Abraham’s nephew Lot. Or maybe you remember the account of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. (All of this is found in Genesis 13–19).
- In short, Sodom and Gomorrah (two cities) were full of the vilest corruption you can think of — Abraham’s nephew Lot lived there with his wife and two daughters — Because the two cities had seeded for a massive harvest of death — the angel of the LORD came down to deal with them. Before the destruction was to happen, Lot and his family were removed. Now, his daughters were betrothed to be married to two men in the village, but those men did not flee Sodom and Gomorrah with Lot’s family.
- The family was told not to look back at the destruction as it was happening, or they would die. Lot’s wife did not heed this protective warning from the LORD, and she turned into a pillar of salt — I’m sure there is a whole lot more to that story than we have seen over the years. Anyway, Lot and his two daughters hid in nearby caves to the now destroyed sister cities.
- This part is gross and disturbing — I will keep it brief. The daughters were concerned their father’s line would die with them because they had no men to marry and no way to have children to carry on the line.
- The oldest said to the youngest, let’s get our father drunk and then sleep with him, so we can preserve the family line — I know — so many levels of wrong here. But, through this story, we see God’s real amazing redemption carried out later in the book of Ruth.
- The daughters both slept with their father Lot, got pregnant, and conceived. The oldest daughter named her son Moab. So, Ruth, from the book of Ruth, is a descendant from the incest between Lot and his oldest daughter.

- Alright, fast forward a whole lot of years. There was a famine in the land of Israel — we could go into why there was a famine, but I will keep us on point here, but remember, there is a reason for everything — there was a famine in Israel because the people of Israel had seeded for a harvest of famine — okay, the account of Ruth.
 - Elimelech, a descendant of the tribe of Judah, took his wife Naomi and their two sons into the land of Moab because there was food there.
 - Elimelech died while they are in Moab, and Naomi’s two sons married Moabite women.
 - After about ten years, both of the sons died (childless I might add) — Naomi decided to go back to her tribe of Judah’s land because she had heard the LORD had blessed Israel with food. The one daughter-in-law returned to her own people, but Ruth chose to go with Naomi, saying, “Entreat me not to leave you, or to turn back from following after you; for wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God, my God.” Ruth 1:16.
 - Let me add here, that this is a foreshadowing of God grafting in the Gentiles into His vine; Like I said, first the Jew and then the Gentile. This is a foreshadowing of what God’s plan was all along.
 - Naomi conceded to her daughter-in-law’s plea and takes her back to the land of Judah with her.

- Side note: Judah is the tribe King David is from and the tribe Jesus is from.
- Upon their return to the land of Judah, Ruth immediately wanted to find a way to bless her mother-in-law, so she said to Naomi, “Please let me go to the field, and glean heads of grain after him in whose sight I may find favor.” Ruth 2:2
 - Now, take into account, that although in a twisted sense the Moabites were distant cousins to the 12 Tribes of Israel, they were not considered as such. They were not under the Abrahamic Covenant with God. The Israelites looked at the Moabites as the descendants of a horrific and diabolical sin against the LORD. They were looked upon as vile, a people you definitely did not allow your sons to marry into.
 - We also need to understand how marriage and land transfer worked in Israel. Most Israelites who dwelled in the Promised Land, married within their own personal tribe. Men of Judah married women of Judah; men of Gad married women of Gad. Now, this had mostly to do with land ownership. If women of Gad married men of Judah, then any land connected to those women would transfer out, or could transfer out of the tribe of Gad to the tribe of Judah. Now, when a year of Jubilee came, any land that had been sold or transferred within the tribes of Israel, would automatically go back to the original owners, BUT if any land was transferred, sold, or claimed by people outside of the tribes, that land was most likely lost to the tribes.
 - So, Naomi and Ruth owned land through their husband’s, of which, “Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, sold the piece of land which belonged to our brother Elimelech.” Ruth 4:3.
 - So, if land had been sold by them, and they wanted to acquire the land back, they would have to go to one of their family (Tribe’s) Kinsman Redeemers. A Kinsman Redeemer was a person in the family who had the right to redeem the land back for the family member who had lost it. Redeem — to recover ownership of by paying a specified sum; to set free, as from slavery or kidnapping, by providing money or other compensation; to save from a state of sinfulness and its consequences; to restore the honor, worth or reputation of; to atone for.
 - You can see why Jesus is called our Redeemer. Again, God foreshadowed the coming of His Son to be our Redemption through the Israelite Tribes’ Kinsman Redeemers. A Kinsman Redeemer could also buy back a fellow tribesman if he or she had been sold into slavery.
- This is the place we find Naomi and Ruth — they need to sell the land owned by their husbands to a kinsman redeemer because they need the financial and protective covering.
 - This is where the hero of the account of the book of Ruth enters the scene. And to me, Boaz is a great hero; he represents the heart of compassion in Jesus; he represents the love and true redemption we see through Jesus in the account of the woman at the well in John 4, and the incredible redemption of Mary Magdalene found in Mark 16 and Luke 8.
 - Now, we may look at Boaz and say, why was he such a man of great compassion? Well, that question will take us back to the battle of Jericho and to a prostitute named Rahab. Rahab is one of my other favorite accounts in the Bible. I love every place where God redeems those who the world has deemed non-redeemable.
 - So, we will pause the historical account of Ruth and Boaz, so that we can, once again, look into the incredible, intricacy of our God.

- Tomorrow we will start reading and discussing the account of Joshua and the Tribe's of Israel found in Joshua 2 - 6 — The entering of the Promised Land. Through the history of the fall of Jericho, we will come to learn why Boaz was the man he is in the book of Ruth.
- Until tomorrow, be blessed and encouraged, knowing that our God, who wove in the kinsman redeemer into the history of Israel, is the same God who planned from the foundation of the world to send His Son, our Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Each one of us has been a part of God's perfect plan long before the foundations of the earth were laid. Before God created anything we now see and know, He thought of each one of us and planned for us, desiring great loving relationship with us. We will see the foreshadow of this incredible redemptive love through Rahab and Salmon, and Boaz and Ruth.
- Until tomorrow, have a fantastic day!