

Ruth 2:1-17

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[0 : 01] Ruth chapter 2 verses 1 through 16 greatly encouraged this evening as I walk through fellowship hall earlier I know I hear so many things and I try to learn from my wife just by personality okay personality my personality I walk into a room probably most of you realize this I walk up to each person and I want to talk to each person and I want to make at least contact with each person wow that got loud on me brother but you're good and not really my personality don't take this in the wrong way I'm not one by natural tendencies to sit down have real deep conversations with you I just that's just who I am very extrovert my wife on the other hand complete opposite she's going to go in and find one person sit down talk to that one person learn a whole lot about that one person and so I've learned from her how to listen how to slow down a little bit and that's good and then you know it kind of helps me do that but I was encouraged I don't always I said that because I don't always remember things I hear I was encouraged had a young man tell me as I was walking through he said because many of you you know I gave up driving the bus right around well

Christmas break so step of faith by us but we're doing it one of them said you know so-and-so on the bus told me they're missing you I said yeah I miss you guys too he said I told them if they want to see you then come church I said that's good he says as a matter of fact I've told everybody on the bus they just need to come to church I said that's good I appreciate that word so I'll take that you know I'm not so sure I want to drop a bunch of them here but it will be good so I was like that's encouraging right when you start hearing hearing that that vigor and that excitement so so so good to hear Ruth chapter 2 verses 1 through 16 remember the setting of Ruth don't ever separate the text from its context so as we read it we'll read it together and then we will reset it back in its context now Naomi had a kinsman of her husband a man of great wealth of the family of Elimelech whose name was Boaz and Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi please let me go to the field and glean some of the ears of grain after one who in whose sight I may find favor and she said to her go my daughter 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 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 then Boaz said to his servant who was in charge of the reapers whose young woman is this the servant in charge of the reaper replied she is the young Moabite woman who returned with Naomi from the land of Moab and she said please let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves thus she came and has remained from the morning until now she has been sitting in the house for a little while then Boaz said to Ruth listen carefully my daughter do not go to glean in another field furthermore do not go on from this one but stay here with my maids let your eyes be on the field which they reap and go after them indeed I have commanded the servants not to touch you when you are thirsty go to the water jars and drink from what the servants draw 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 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 and how you left your father and your mother in the land of your birth and came to a people that you did not previously know 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 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 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 served her roasted grain and she ate and was satisfied and had some left when she rose to glean Boaz commanded his servant saying let her glean even among the sheaves and do not insult her 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 look at verse 17 so she gleaned the so she gleaned in the field until evening then she beat out what she had gleaned and it was about an ephah of barley

Ruth chapter 2 verses 1 through 17 I want you to see this evening an encounter with the Redeemer an encounter with the Redeemer if you remember the book of Ruth takes place in the days when the judges judged in Israel which automatically puts it in the context of the book of Judges we realize the book of Judges is not a time in history especially in the nation of Israel in which we would have found very many good things taking place during the period of the judges we don't move very far into that period before even the judges themselves leave a lot to be desired as a matter of fact only the first judge mentioned in the book is one that is lifted up as the standard and the further we go down the line the further we get away from the standard and it is not long after they have come into the promised land that things begin to deteriorate and they deteriorate pretty quickly those days if you remember each man was doing what was right in his own eyes they were setting their own standard now the reason we always allude to that is because even in the darkest days God has the greatest hope and he has the greatest lights that he proclaims if you remember that it was in those days that a famine came into the land always keeping it in context a famine in the Old Testament is a sign of God's judgment because one of the initial promises that God gave his people when they went into the land is that he would not fail to send the early rains and the latter rains if they obeyed him he would bless them disobedience led to discipline and we see that when the famine comes in rather than responding to him in humility and in confession

Elimelech leaves his family and they go away they go and sojourn in the land of Moab they do more than sojourn they actually go live there he stays there long story short throughout the first chapter we've seen how both Elimelech and both of their sons die Naomi's bereft of all caretakers she's bereft of anyone that would be a beneficiary to her and she has her two daughters in law there one of which turns and goes back home and then she comes back to Bethlehem with Ruth so this is where we're at Naomi went out she says I went out blessed but God has brought me back emptied she has lived under the disciplining hand of the Lord God she even uses his name El Shaddai at the end of that the almighty because it doesn't matter how far we run it doesn't matter where we go it doesn't matter how much we try to avoid it when God desires to discipline his children he can always reach his children and he disciplined them now she's back in this land and without hope and she's without any provider but she's got Ruth the Moabitess and she's here and they're waiting when we turn the page into chapter two the focus is no longer so much on Naomi and Elimelech and that family unit now the focus is on a Gentile and even more than a Gentile a Moabite woman now to us that's okay we understand that we know that the gospel is for all that it reaches all but in this time the women of

[8 : 10] Moab were not really looked upon with pleasantness because they were the reason that in the plain of Moab before they went into the promised land that 24,000 men fell in a single day because of their sins with these women we see here that now she's come she's made this decision and she committed to following that Ruth is a good case study as an individual if we had time we will go back and maybe we will before we finish the book there are certain qualities in Ruth that made her really I don't want to say there's anything in her that made her acceptable but there are attributes in her that we see of those who seek after God right she was determined she had a desire she had a willingness she she forsook things but yet the initiative in case we miss it when we change to chapter two as good as Ruth is in her intentions her forsaking her family and moving forward there's no mistaking in chapter two that the initiative is not of Ruth Boaz initiates now one thing we find out if we cannot rightfully understand our salvation event without a proper understand of the exodus event which means to truly understand what it means to be saved we have to go back to the exodus event because Jesus is the lamb slain before the foundation of the world he is the Passover lamb so we need to understand the

Passover event people that were born into captivity people that were born into sin that they did not choose people who had no way out of that captivity who cried out in desperation and God took notice of them and God called a man to himself to prepare him and then God sent that man to them and God by that man led them out right so salvation or redemption in exodus is all the initiative of God he is drawing them to himself he brought them out out remember they came out in order that they may go in right he didn't just bring them out of Egypt he brought them out so that they may go into the promised land he redeems us or saves us that he may bring us into fellowship with him so for salvation we have to understand exodus for the savior or the redeemer we need to understand Boaz the kinsman redeemer because that's the word here we don't have it written out as much in our English translation but the kinsman literally is the kinsman redeemer if you remember when we were going through the book of judges and I know this is a lot of going back and reminding ourselves but we can't separate the two so we have to take them in context if you remember we're going through the book of judges there was a judge that was raised up there was a judge that was raised up and this judge delivered them for a time that word judge is a very peculiar word and it's a very intentional word and the word judge is actually redeemer that God would raise up a redeemer that he would raise up a redeemer and he would raise up a redeemer and at every time that there was one who delivered people it was that God raised up a redeemer and we saw that redemption by man is but temporary because when the redeemer died or the judge died the people went back so what is needed is a redeemer that can save us and set us free eternally right so the great need is for a redeemer who is eternal a redeemer that though he dies will live again a redeemer that will come back from the dead and eternally set his people free we know who that is that's Jesus Christ the forerunner our redeemer who has redeemed us we see a another type during the same dark moment painted in the man Boaz who is in the lineage of the one to come and we see it here very clearly throughout this small book and we see a little short encounter with him in these 16 verses in this encounter with the redeemer I want us to notice four things okay four things that are important to every understanding of who Christ is to us because

I think the danger is this the book of Ruth isn't in the Old Testament just so we could say that's a cool story right it's not there so that we can get a even a snapshot of something that happened among God's people because there are a lot of these things God is always in control he always has his people as dark as the days of judges were if there could be a man named Boaz living in Bethlehem where everything seemed to be falling apart by the time we left the book of Judges surely God had people everywhere else too this is the one God wants to show us now we know why when we open up our when we continue on and we see the coming of David and we see the Davidic covenant and then we open up the New Testament and we see these same people included in the lineage of Christ we know why but God is showing us the character and the attributes of the redeemer we have and what it looks like to encounter him and even what it looks like to be redeemed because the Bible is not a collection of a bunch of stories this is not multiple stories the Bible is one story told in a number of ways Charles Spurgeon used to say wherever your text is preach your text and then stick a plow in the ground and plow a ditch straight to the cross because every text will take you to the cross of Calvary and it will because it's the same story being told in a number of ways and here we see this great encounter with the redeemer the first thing we see is the presence of the redeemer long before we're not even long just right before we even encounter the desire of Ruth to do anything we are told that in the land there is a redeemer it seems like coming out of nowhere because the last thing we have heard is Naomi said don't call me Naomi call me Mara right don't say I am full and blessed call me bitter because nothing good is ever happening to me and then we read and they were in the land at the time of the harvest and the very next verse says now Naomi had a kinsman of her husband now she didn't think herself blessed she did not think herself full she did not think herself worthy but we are told the fact kind of apart from Naomi that Naomi had a kinsman of her husband a man of great wealth of the family of a limeleck whose name was Boaz now the new American standard says a man of great wealth other translations put it another way but actually what it literally means is he is a magnificent man of valor he is one of great standing not just in possessions but even in character remember who Boaz's mother is right Rahab the harlot and yet here is a man of valor we talk about one that God called out of his past circumstances out of his past events and we understand how these things really God redeems but here is a man of great possessions here is a man of great standing here is a man of great valor and then we are kind of just told that that we are introduced to him before we see these events the first thing we need to know is that there was a redeemer there he was presence because his presence absolutely matters it says now Naomi had a kinsman that is kinsman redeemer one who is close to them of her husband a man of great wealth of the family of a limeleck whose name was Boaz and then we start reading about Ruth and Naomi it's just the author whoever it is some think that it's Samuel it could

very well be it seems to fit the context and it seems to fit the time frame but we don't want to really say empirically that's who it is but some think that it probably is but whoever the author is God is moving the hand of man to write the word of God and this is the word of God being breathed out to us to remind us that though things did not look good in the land there was a redeemer there was someone who could solve the problem there was one who was present and the thing we notice about this one who was present he was not only present in that he was there he was also in the right position he had the wealth and the resources to be able to do it he was of the right family lineage he was of the right bloodlines as we read the story we know that he's not the closest kinsman redeemer but he is the right kinsman redeemer so we understand it he is the man who is present he's the man of the right status he's the man of the right position he has all of these things because what the author wants us to know is there is one who is able for Naomi and Ruth things don't look that good though they're back in the land of Bethlehem though they're back in the land where God has reigned his favor back down upon his people because there's food in the land now no more famine though they're back where they should be to them they're not in good standing but what God is trying to get across to us here is but there was one who was there there was one who was present and then by the time we get down to verse 4 we read this now behold Boaz came from Bethlehem and said to the reapers now we'll come back in just a minute and catch Ruth but what we're trying to figure out here is the presence of the redeemer there was someone in the land who could redeem and then lo and behold he came to where Ruth was at there was one who was able and he came to where she was at she didn't go to where he was don't lose that she was in the field with his reapers she was in the field with his maidens now if he is a man of great status and of great wealth and of great possessions surely he has more than just one field because status and possessions was not measured by the size of your bank account but by the number of your livestock and the number of your fields right so we understand here that it just so happened that on the very day that Ruth chose to go to that particular field the man who was able even showed up because here's the picture we need to see of the redeemer not only is there someone who is able the one who is able comes to us when we are unable the one who can does and that is magnificent Paul would say it this way while we were yet sinners

Christ died for us the beauty of Emmanuel is that we were in the field of God's harvest it doesn't matter if we're hanging out in his field what only matters is if the redeemer shows up and he came to us even apart from the bodily incarnation of Christ because we serve a resurrected savior now you say well I wasn't walking the face of the earth I've never seen Jesus in the flesh and we understand that but the reality is that even in my own sins when in all my wrestling and all my struggling and in all my uncontrolled anxiety and all these things while I was yet a sinner the one who was able who was present because he is omnipresent he is always present decided one day to come to me and he came to the field I was in because did you notice that as soon as he gets there he pronounces a blessing upon his workers and then the very first thing he asks is who's that woman how many people do you think were in that field how many people how many because he makes it clear all of his maidens but yet there was one he said who is that one never lose sight of that

[21 : 04] Ruth did not approach him he approached her you know why you're redeemed not because you came to Christ but because Christ came to you and see if we get those two if we get those two swapped or misunderstood then we lose the beauty of salvation because somehow or another we have this if we think we came to Christ on our own strength and in our own well-being and if we came to Christ for our own choosing then somehow or another we think by our own efforts we were able to approach the unapproachable one we think that somehow by our even listen Paul says all of my righteousness is like filthy rags if my righteousness which I am righteous in Christ it is imputed righteousness it's not earned righteousness so it's been given to me if my righteousness is like filthy rags then let's go back before I came to Christ and there was nothing righteous in me the Bible says in the book of Romans that everything that is within me is wicked right it is all wickedness it is all undesirable so in my wickedness do I think that I have any right whatsoever to come to him no the beauty of the gospel is not that I came to Christ the beauty of the gospel is that the one who was able came to me and here we have to stand and say he is holy holy holy and worthy worthy worthy because he came to me and this is one of the major this is a big stone thing right we all talk about big stone little stones right little stone things we can kind of fill in a little bit but big stone things this is a big rock this is a big rock for me is getting this and the reason this is a big rock is because when Adam sinned

God came to Adam right when Abram was called out of the land of the Ur-Chaldeans God called Abram out of the land of the Ur-Chaldeans over and over and over and over and over again every time you meet something God came to Moses right Moses didn't come to him over and over and over and over and over again all throughout scripture what you see is God is the initiator of the entire events it's all his work not ours and we see it again in Boaz so we see the presence of the Redeemer the second thing we see is the promise acted on by faith the promise acted on by faith now let's back up to Ruth the Redeemer was present in the land and not only was the Redeemer present in the land but the Redeemer initiated and came to her but Ruth we don't want to separate this because we're trying to let's get real theologic here right let's get real deep real quick we're trying to balance human responsibility and divine sovereignty right that's what we're trying to balance don't get too bent out of shape

I think it was D.L. Moody who said they're like two wings on the dove you remove one of them and you fly in circles you gotta have both on the fly straight line okay I don't believe in all of D.L. Moody's theology but that was a pretty good analogy Ruth is not completely just discounted in this okay Boaz met her where she was at but she was at the right place to be met it's not of her works that she may boast but we do see some attributes in her that are really assuring for us and something that would encourage us and the one that we see here is the promise relied on by faith so they're in this place and they're desperate it is Ruth who initiates the conversation not Naomi Ruth looks at Naomi and says let me go to the fields and reap to see where I may glean Naomi says go my daughter we wonder why Naomi doesn't do it other than the fact that she maybe she's too old to do it so

Ruth many people believe is probably in her mid-twenties because of the word that Boaz responds to her as my daughter the word there is intentional it's kind of reserved from someone to teenage years to mid-twenties so that's probably about right she would have been married about 12 or 13 and then you know her husband lived for 10 years so she's probably in her mid-twenties so she says go my daughter so she goes to reap in the field now let's put ourselves in this context she is a Moabite woman who is an alien in the land so she doesn't belong there she's not among her people the Jews were not to have any interactions with the Moabites especially Moabite women they were not have no dealings with that yet she asked to go out and reap in the field behind Jewish harvesters how could she do that well the reason we know that she could do that and the only reason she had for doing that is because there was a commandment by God

God gave a commandment right remember that before they went to the promised land that when you harvest your fields leave some behind they were intentionally to leave some behind and they were my dad tells me he remembers being young when he was young he lived up in Indiana and a lot of grain fields they were dairy farmers and he said I remember leaving the edge of our fields we didn't cut the edge of our fields because people from the community would come pick the corn and we left it for them and that's just what you were supposed to do so that was that biblical principle that you know was carried on but anyway so God had given a command and he said leave some of the gleanings and leave it and there were two particular people there was the orphans there was supposed to be but then there was the widow right the widow could do it but then there's another one and the alien or sojourner so now Ruth has what we would call biblical what she's calling authoritative word from God she has a word from God that gives her the ability to go do what she's about to do but it's not until we take a step of faith based on that word does that actually become applicable

[27 : 37] God had said that the reapers were to leave some behind for the widows and aliens that didn't matter until Ruth said you know what if he said it I think it could be true so I'm going to go do it remember this is in the day of the judges when there was no king in Israel and every man did what was right in his own eyes and even though it was a very tumultuous time even though it was a time where it seemed as if sin was running rampant even though it seemed at a time when things were really in chaos even around Bethlehem here is one at least who decides that it would be better to take God at his word by faith and to at least go step out on faith and do what God has said to be done than it would be just to sit at home and wait so by faith she determines that she's going to go to the field because God had said she had a right to it she didn't know whose field she was going into she didn't know anybody of that area remember when they came in all the women talked to Naomi no one talks to Ruth we don't know how long she was there they came during that season so it had not been long so surely she hasn't built enough relationships to really know anyone she doesn't know whose field because it tells us so she happened to go into this field she doesn't know anything about any of the men she's going to encounter the reapers were men she doesn't know anything about any of the people she's going to encounter it's a very dangerous thing yet by faith she determines that if God has declared it to be so then it must be so so I'm going to go and take God at his word and I'm going to go behind the reapers and gather leftovers and it was as she was taking God at his word and walking by faith in what God has said then the redeemer shows up what else does it say does it say faith comes by hearing and hearing through the word right but how will they hear unless someone has been sent and see here's one at least who may not have known all of the word of God at this time the word of God would have been comprised of the first five books of the

Bible the Pentateuch she didn't know all of the Pentateuch but she did know there was one part of that Bible that said or that book that said that the widow and the alien has a right to go into the field so by faith she went into the field and by faith she was just doing what it is that God had said should be done and it was when she was walking by faith that the redeemer took notice of her and saw something so we see the promise relied on by faith she was trusting in the promises of God which by the way anytime we come to a promise in scripture we have one of two options we can either trust it by faith or we could reject it in fear we have to choose how we're going to respond to what God has promised us is it by faith we're going to take steps to show our trust in that or is it through fear that we're going to take steps of self preservation she chose rather to go by faith number three in this encounter with the redeemer we see the protection that's offered

Boaz comes into the field the first thing he asks is concerning Ruth he noticed her Warren Wearsby says it must have been love at first sight because he saw her from the beginning and seemed to take a liking to her we don't know why Boaz isn't married he's not we don't know why no never tells us that in scripture and we don't need to really look into it any more than that we do know that he's quite a bit older than her by this time but he walks into the field and the first thing he notices is there's someone different here and he asks concerning this young maiden who is this young girl and he tells her but then we notice that he tells her he calls her to himself and he says in verse 8 listen carefully my daughter do not go to glean in another field furthermore do not go on from this one but stay here with my maids what is he doing he's offering protection he's offering protection right don't leave the protection of my people he says don't do that let your eyes be on the field which they reap and go after them indeed

I have commanded the servants not to touch you again another level of protection because the redeemer comes to protect undergirding with protection he says if you're thirsty get you something to drink he says 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 I love this I miss this in the reading I only saw it I believe it was weird but again it pointed it out Boaz replied that word replied there means he raised his voice and said at a louder level he wasn't screaming at her he said it so that all would hear right he declares for all to hear this is why he's offering protection look he raised his voice to a higher level and says all that you have done for your mother-in-law after the death of your husband has been fully reported to me and how you left your father and your mother in the land of your birth and came to a people that you did not previously know here it is 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 which is a sign of protection he is saying you have sought the protection that comes from the Lord God of Israel and that protection is found with me it's his people I will be the instrument of that protection here the redeemer that she encounters he's not a redeemer yet he's going to be he's a kinsman redeemer who's there but he offers her protection from what may come upon her this is why when we read of the armor of God it's the shield of faith that is able to quench the fiery darts of Satan because it's trusting that Christ our redeemer is also our great protector here we see this offer of protection fourth and finally we see the provisions enjoyed the presence of the redeemer promises acted on of faith the protection offered and the provisions enjoyed as the day goes on not only is he saying you can get anything to drink you want to it says that at mealtime

[34 : 14] Boaz said to her come here that you may eat of the bread and dip your piece of bread in the vinegar so he invites her to a meal he evidently is a very compassionate master of his fields he has a meal time with his people there and he invites her to a meal and then did you notice that it is Boaz who serves her because it says and so she sat beside the reapers and he served her roasted grain think of that the redeemer serving the outcast we don't have to think too far on that because that is the exact picture that we see fulfilled in Christ the night of his betrayal he took a towel and he girded himself he served them he washed their feet right he served her and what he provided for her look at this was more than sufficient because it says and she ate and was satisfied and listen when the redeemer serves you you are satisfied satisfied you are satisfied and then it goes even beyond that and had some left the old gospel song

I was singing it the other day and I actually played it for a colleague to hear it drinking from a saucer most people don't I think gold city quartet did it I'm not even saying it's a great song I just never will forget that but all it is is that one final chorus is I'm drinking from my saucer because my cup overflows I remember that I heard that years ago when I first came to Christ and I realized that when he serves you you're always eating from the overflow because she was satisfied and then she had enough to take back to Naomi and then when she took it to Naomi notice Naomi went from bitter to praise we didn't see that tonight but the first thing Naomi does is start blessing the Lord because now the Redeemer's provisions have reached her too after she has eaten and been satisfied and put some back he tells his reapers he says hey leave a little extra as a matter of fact just set some intentionally by and allow her to get whatever she wants and she's there and she's enjoying these provisions and it says in verse 17 that when she threshed it out she had about an ephah of barley that's enough grain to feed her and Naomi for 10 days and one day she gathered enough to feed them 10 days she goes back the next day and the next day and the next day if we were to continue reading on she's there for several weeks because she goes through the barley harvest and then the wheat harvest she gets there but in this encounter with the Redeemer we see his presence we see the promises she trusted in we see the protection he offered and we see the provisions that meet the need that's what we find when we encounter the Redeemer he is present he meets us in the promises of God he's a great protector of his people and what he provides is sufficient for every need of every moment these are the things we experience when we encounter the Redeemer and this is what

Ruth encountered when she met the Redeemer for the first time in Ruth chapter 2 verses 1 through 17 thank you my brother so asked Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[39 : 57] Thank you.