
THE BOOK OF

RUTH

TRAVELING PRAYER PARTNERS

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RUTH 1:1-2

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THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

Ruth 1:1-2 (NIV)

In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land, and a man from Bethlehem in Judah, together with his wife and two sons, went to live for a while in the country of Moab. 2 The man's name was Elimelech, his wife's name Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem, Judah. And they went to Moab and lived there.

QUOTE FOR THE WEEK

"And they went to Moab and lived there."

MESSAGE

This week we begin a study of Ruth and look closely at her travels. As I studied this book, I saw not only the application to the nature of our traveling lives, but to the daily life we all lead as ordinary believers. I pray you will be challenged by this extraordinary story about everyday life.

The stage is set: a man, his wife, and two sons relocate. Only 50 miles away, hardly a commute for many modern day travelers, but for them it was a journey to a new country, a new culture, and a new way of life. The change was great, but the circumstances of the day demanded it. Some would argue they should have stayed in their own land and waited upon God for relief; others that it was at God's calling they sought a new life. We do not have specific knowledge of the answers to these questions, only that life changed dramatically for Ruth and her family.

The same is true in our life: each decision we make will impact the rest of our life AND the lives of others. Should we move or stay? Commute or relocate? Leave extended family or stay? These are big decisions and, as we will see, for Ruth (and for us) make a big difference as to how life moves forward. What we DO know is this: our relationship with God Almighty and our daily feeding on His word is what will allow us to make decisions GOD has planned, not decisions that just happen.

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

BY DAVID HEWETT

This week ask God to give you wisdom in decision-making. Pray for God's will to be fully implemented in your life. Pray for those who are traveling that God will allow them to focus on His decision-making ability, not their own.

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RUTH 1:3-7

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THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

Ruth 1:3-7 (NIV)

Now Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died, and she was left with her two sons. They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth. After they had lived there about ten years, 5 both Mahlon and Kilion also died, and Naomi was left without her two sons and her husband. When she heard in Moab that the LORD had come to the aid of his people by providing food for them, Naomi and her daughters-in-law prepared to return home from there. 7 With her two daughters-in-law she left the place where she had been living and set out on the road that would take them back to the land of Judah.

QUOTE FOR THE WEEK

"...she heard in Moab that the Lord had come to the aid of his people..."

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

BY DAVID HEWETT

This week pray for those on the road that they will seek God's counsel and wisdom as they make decisions about travel and other areas of life. Pray that those at home will be blessed with God's special presence and allow God and God alone to influence their decisions.

MESSAGE

As we see the story unfold for Ruth and her family, we see a very difficult time in life. Naomi has lost her husband and two sons and now feels the responsibility for her two daughters-in-law. While this is a lot to bear, let's also keep perspective. These are ordinary people in ordinary times. This is important for us to remember, as the lessons we will see in the book of Ruth are meant for us...ordinary people in ordinary times. We all like to believe that the characters in the Bible are special and the issues and events of their lives are unique. At times they may be, but in reality most are just like us: living life during normal times. Look at the focus of Naomi: amidst the hardship of life, she has heard about the Lord coming to the aid of His people, and she made a decision. A decision to leave the place she was living and to go back to the land of her people and see if she too could experience God's aid. While we will see later that Naomi does not have the best of attitudes, her actions appear to be appropriate.

I believe she could only have heard of God's aid if she was talking to "her people" (similar to other believers), and listening to God. I believe she made a decision to leave because she was listening. The lesson for us is to be sure we are actively listening... to the right people. In your decision-making, are you seeking counsel from those who have spiritual authority over you or who have spiritual wisdom? Are you actively asking God what you should be doing or saying, or where you should be going? Or are you in charge with no need for God or others?

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RUTH 1:8-15

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THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

Ruth 1:8-15 (NIV)

Then Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back, each of you, to your mother's home. May the LORD show kindness to you, as you have shown to your dead and to me. 9 May the LORD grant that each of you will find rest in the home of another husband." Then she kissed them and they wept aloud 10 and said to her, "We will go back with you to your people." But Naomi said, "Return home, my daughters. Why would you come with me? Am I going to have any more sons, who could become your husbands? 12 Return home, my daughters; I am too old to have another husband. Even if I thought there was still hope for me—even if I had a husband tonight and then gave birth to sons— 13 would you wait until they grew up? Would you remain unmarried for them? No, my daughters. It is more bitter for me than for you, because the Lord's hand has gone out against me!"

14 At this they wept again. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law good-bye, but Ruth clung to her. 15 "Look," said Naomi, "your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her."

QUOTE FOR THE WEEK

""It is more bitter for me than for you ...""

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

BY DAVID HEWETT

This week pray for those on the road to focus on an attitude of thankfulness to God. Ask God to give both those on the road and those at home a hope and joy founded in God's grace and mercy in their lives.

MESSAGE

As we discussed last week, it seems that Naomi is making the right choice to return to Bethlehem. At the same time, her attitude is very disconnected from God. First, she gives up all hope of finding satisfaction in the family God had placed her with. She is in difficult circumstances, living with two daughters-in-law and no husbands between the three of them. Next, she blames God for it. In verse 13 she says, "It is more bitter for me than for you, because the Lord's hand has gone out against me!" [emphasis mine] In effect, she is saying, "Woe is me! You don't have life as bad as I do! God is opposed to me!"

Too many times we see this attitude among believers. I think it is due to a lack of vision and closeness to God. Yes, she saw God's direction to go back to Bethlehem, yet she sounds like she is going out of discouragement or spite, not because she sees God's provision. As we listen to God and seek His will, we MUST have an attitude of thankfulness and gratefulness to God. Do we look around to see how God has blessed us compared to others? Contrast Naomi with Job: from riches to begging on the streets, and yet he praises God no differently while in despair.

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MESSAGE

Our attitude about big things (and yes, Naomi faced some big things...loss of her husband and two sons) comes from our closeness to God, and I believe that relationship is also reflected in little things. How is your attitude about everyday life and circumstances? You can be assured if it is bitter and resentful towards God (and others) in the daily frustrations and difficulties, it will be even more so when the real challenges of life come along. Many questions will never be answered in this life, but this life will be far easier to live day by day if our attitude flows from a close relationship with God Almighty. Naomi chose to obey God with a poor attitude. How will you choose to obey God this week?

TRAVELING PRAYER PARTNERS

RUTH 1:16-18

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THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

Ruth 1:16-18 (NIV)

16 But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. 17 Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me." 18 When Naomi realized that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped urging her.

QUOTE FOR THE WEEK

““Your people will be my people and your God my God.”

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

BY DAVID HEWETT

This week pray for those on the road that they will listen to God's voice. Pray that they will not allow the world and its pressures to interfere with the voice of God. Pray that those at home can clearly hear God's voice as well.

MESSAGE

"Your people will be my people and your God my God." This is a very familiar quote to many of us. I want to focus today on the very next phrase, as it shows clearly why Ruth was able to say what she said and have the attitude she had.

May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely..." Ruth was fully aware of what God intended for her to do. This is especially important to understand as we look at her situation from the standpoint of her culture and the world around her. She had an obligation to obey her mother-in-law in that culture. She had a "right" to obey and find a husband among her own people.

Instead, Ruth was able to fully understand the difference between submission to an earthly authority and the direction God had given her. Ruth had already made God her God. Ruth was focused on what her (and Naomi's!) God wanted her to do, and she knew that God was still in charge even if she did not do as He expected. Of course, we see that Ruth obeyed God's voice. Whose voice are you listening to this week: God's or the world's? It can be easy to get them mixed up if you do not know God's voice. Ruth knew God's voice because she had made God her God

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RUTH 1:19-22

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THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

Ruth 1:19-22(NIV)

19 So the two women went on until they came to Bethlehem. When they arrived in Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them, and the women exclaimed, "Can this be Naomi?" 20 "Don't call me Naomi," she told them. "Call me Mara, because the Almighty has made my life very bitter. 21 I went away full, but the LORD has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi? The LORD has afflicted me; the Almighty has brought misfortune upon me." 22 So Naomi returned from Moab accompanied by Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law, arriving in Bethlehem as the barley harvest was beginning.

QUOTE FOR THE WEEK

“...the Lord has...”

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

BY DAVID HEWETT

This week pray that those on the road will TRUST God for His provision in their lives. As you are traveling this week, ask God to allow your anxiety and frustration to be turned to TRUST in Him. Pray for those at home to have faith in God and His control over those they are missing.

MESSAGE

This week we see the homecoming of Naomi. She has been away for over ten years, and her life has been altered dramatically. She left with a husband and two sons and has returned with only a daughter-in-law. As I read this portion of the book I struggled deeply. I read into Naomi's words bitterness and anger at God, yet others have read a strong sense of her struggle with God and acceptance of what she has been through. Either of these can be true as we look at what Naomi fully understands. She knows that God is in control of her life, as well as the world around her. She states, "...the Lord has brought me back empty... The Lord has afflicted me..." Comments from Naomi to her friends...friends she has not seen for over ten years!

We all have times when we struggle with what God has allowed to happen in our lives or the world about us. The key for us is to continue to look to God for control. If we seek to move away from His control we will only feel more frustrated and anxious. God has promised to protect and hold us through anything we face here on earth. The key word being "through". The task assigned to us is to trust IN HIM and to allow His will to be accomplished.

TRAVELING PRAYER PARTNERS

RUTH 2:1-12

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THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

Ruth 2:1-12(NIV)

Now Naomi had a relative on her husband's side, from the clan of Elimelech, a man of standing, whose name was Boaz. 2 And Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, "Let me go to the fields and pick up the leftover grain behind anyone in whose eyes I find favor." Naomi said to her, "Go ahead, my daughter." 3 So she went out and began to glean in the fields behind the harvesters. As it turned out, she found herself working in a field belonging to Boaz, who was from the clan of Elimelech. 4 Just then Boaz arrived from Bethlehem and greeted the harvesters, "The LORD be with you!" The LORD bless you!" they called back. 5 Boaz asked the foreman of his harvesters, "Whose young woman is that?" The foreman replied, "She is the Moabitess who came back from Moab with Naomi. 7 She said, Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves behind the harvesters.' She went into the field and has worked steadily from morning till now, except for a short rest in the shelter."

So Boaz said to Ruth, "My daughter, listen to me. Don't go and glean in another field and don't go away from here. Stay here with my servant girls. 9 Watch the field where the men are harvesting, and follow along after the girls. I have told the men not to touch you. And whenever you are thirsty, go and get a drink from the water jars the men have filled." 10 At this, she bowed down with her face to the ground. She exclaimed, "Why have I found such favor in your eyes that you notice me—a foreigner?" Boaz replied, "I've been told all about what you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband—how you left your father and mother and your homeland and came to live with a people you did not know before. 12 May the LORD repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge."

QUOTE FOR THE WEEK

BY DAVID HEWETT

"I've been told all about what you have done ..."

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

Pray for those on the road that they might be bold in their worship of God. Pray that the strong characteristics God has blessed them with will shine through as testimony of God. Pray for the families at home, that God will bless them through the strong character of their traveler.

MESSAGE

This week and next I want to look at the same passage, first to see Ruth's character continue to be revealed, and second to see the character of Boaz unfold.

The phrase, "I have been told all about you," can be our greatest fear or our greatest dream. For Ruth it was a strong statement about the character God had built in her.

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MESSAGE

In chapter one, we see a devoted daughter. As we start chapter two, we see that same devotion lead to hard work. Not content to allow Naomi to be taken care of by others as an old woman with no family, Ruth goes to work in the fields. This is back breaking work, filled with humility. Those who were gleaning were the poor, and they were gleaning because they had no other rights or method of income or way to feed themselves. They were picking up what remained after others had harvested. Ruth simply did what had to be done. What was the foreman's report? She worked steadily all day! Where do we find ourselves?

Do we demand of others (or of God) the perfect job or the right opportunity? Are we satisfied with the provision in our life? Or frustrated and mad at the world and God? Ruth was poor, in a foreign country, and faced with supporting her mother-in-law. She went out to work and did what needed to be done. Worship of God and service to Him is not solely (or even mostly) in the temple or church building; it is in the actions we take every day. Ruth worshipped God in all she did, and the people took notice. This week allow others to see you worship God.

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RUTH 2:1-12

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THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

Ruth 2:1-12(NIV)

Now Naomi had a relative on her husband's side, from the clan of Elimelech, a man of standing, whose name was Boaz. 2 And Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, "Let me go to the fields and pick up the leftover grain behind anyone in whose eyes I find favor." Naomi said to her, "Go ahead, my daughter." 3 So she went out and began to glean in the fields behind the harvesters. As it turned out, she found herself working in a field belonging to Boaz, who was from the clan of Elimelech. 4 Just then Boaz arrived from Bethlehem and greeted the harvesters, "The LORD be with you!" The LORD bless you!" they called back. 5 Boaz asked the foreman of his harvesters, "Whose young woman is that?" The foreman replied, "She is the Moabitess who came back from Moab with Naomi. 7 She said, Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves behind the harvesters.' She went into the field and has worked steadily from morning till now, except for a short rest in the shelter." So Boaz said to Ruth, "My daughter, listen to me. Don't go and glean in another field and don't go away from here. Stay here with my servant girls. 9 Watch the field where the men are

harvesting, and follow along after the girls. I have told the men not to touch you. And whenever you are thirsty, go and get a drink from the water jars the men have filled." 10 At this, she bowed down with her face to the ground. She exclaimed, "Why have I found such favor in your eyes that you notice me—a foreigner?" Boaz replied, "I've been told all about what you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband—how you left your father and mother and your homeland and came to live with a people you did not know before. 12 May the LORD repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge."

QUOTE FOR THE WEEK

BY DAVID HEWETT

"I've been told all about what you have done ..."

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

This week pray that those on the road will seek out others to give God's reward. Pray that God will give strength and insight to those traveling. Pray that those at home will continue to praise God for his strength and His Love.

MESSAGE

Last week we saw the character of Ruth continue to unfold. This week let's begin to explore the character of Boaz. Boaz is a man with property. In fact, he owned enough fields to employ many people. We are told he is a "man of standing", a statement which most likely referenced his knowledge of Scripture and his godly character. All these add up to a man of spiritual influence and wealth, a combination not often seen in their world (or ours for that matter). What was Boaz really like? Look to the relationship with his workers. He comes to the fields to give them God's blessings...and they respond back with the same. He had a strong relationship with those around him.

He notices Ruth, the new girl, gleaning. This is like the CEO taking notice of the new janitor. He not only notices, but also asks how she is as a worker and about her background. He sees her character and IMMEDIATELY rewards her for it and protects her. Remember, this job Ruth was doing could also be considered dangerous, and in many cases she might have been forced off or hurt by others. Boaz saw her godly character and rewarded her for it. He does not hesitate at all. Do you take the time to see God's character in others, AND then reward them for it? This week take the time to see whom God wants to reward through you.

TRAVELING PRAYER PARTNERS

RUTH 2:13-23

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THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

Ruth 2:13-23(NIV)

"May I continue to find favor in your eyes, my lord," she said. "You have given me comfort and have spoken kindly to your servant-though I do not have the standing of one of your servant girls." 14 At mealtime Boaz said to her, "Come over here. Have some bread and dip it in the wine vinegar." When she sat down with the harvesters, he offered her some roasted grain. She ate all she wanted and had some left over. 15 As she got up to glean, Boaz gave orders to his men, "Even if she gathers among the sheaves, don't embarrass her. 16 Rather, pull out some stalks for her from the bundles and leave them for her to pick up, and don't rebuke her." 17 So Ruth gleaned in the field until evening. Then she threshed the barley she had gathered, and it amounted to about an ephah. 18 She carried it back to town, and her mother-in-law saw how much she had gathered. Ruth also brought out and gave her what she had left over after she had eaten enough. 19 Her mother-in-law asked her, "Where did you glean today? Where did you work? Blessed be the man who took notice of you!" Then Ruth told her mother-in-law about the one at whose place she had been working. "The name of the man I worked with today is Boaz," she said.

"The LORD bless him!" Naomi said to her daughter-in-law. "He has not stopped showing his kindness to the living and the dead." She added, "That man is our close relative; he is one of our kinsman-redeemers." 21 Then Ruth the Moabitess said, "He even said to me, 'Stay with my workers until they finish harvesting all my grain.' " 22 Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, "It will be good for you, my daughter, to go with his girls, because in someone else's field you might be harmed." 23 So Ruth stayed close to the servant girls of Boaz to glean until the barley and wheat harvests were finished. And she lived with her mother-in-law.

QUOTE FOR THE WEEK

BY DAVID HEWETT

"You have given me comfort and have spoken kindly to your servant..."

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

This week pray for those on the road that they will be able to display God's comfort and kindness to the individuals they encounter. Ask God to open their eyes to opportunities to show His character. Pray for those at home that they will be gracious in accepting the gifts God gives them as their loved ones are away.

MESSAGE

As we have seen the interactions of Ruth and Boaz, we can see their godly character shine through. In this passage we continue to see Boaz and Ruth exhibit the character of God. First, Ruth is very thankful for the comfort and kindness she has received. This is a characteristic of a true believer. How often we deal with people who only think of what they do not have. Ruth is thankful for a job that is very hard work, on the low end of the pay scale, and even lower end of the social scale. Yet her attitude is one of gratefulness.

What a refreshing and great example for us! Boaz also exhibits God's character as he continues to help and protect Ruth. At the time of the meal Boaz invites Ruth to eat with him and the rest of the servants. First, note that Boaz is eating with his servants. As we have seen, Boaz is not the typical CEO! Next, he invites Ruth, the foreign girl who is gleaning his fields (a.k.a. ½ step away from begging...) to sit and have lunch. Such care and real comfort given to her. Just as God loves and cares for ALL of His creation, Boaz does the same.

TRAVELING PRAYER PARTNERS

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MESSAGE

What a great example for us as we travel in the various circles of life: social, business, friends etc. We live in a hard and fast-paced world, and moments or acts of kindness and comfort are rare, and yet much enjoyed by those on the receiving end. Are we giving comfort and kindness when we have the opportunity? Do we respond in graciousness and thankfulness when God and others reward us? This week look for opportunities to show kindness and comfort. Be a person of comfort and graciousness.

TRAVELING PRAYER PARTNERS

RUTH 3:1-6

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THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

Ruth 3:1-6(NIV)

One day Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, should I not try to find a home for you, where you will be well provided for? Is not Boaz, with whose servant girls you have been, a kinsman of ours? Tonight he will be winnowing barley on the threshing floor. Wash and perfume yourself, and put on your best clothes. Then go down to the threshing floor, but don't let him know you are there until he has finished eating and drinking. When he lies down, note the place where he is lying. Then go and uncover his feet and lie down. He will tell you what to do." "I will do whatever you say," Ruth answered. So she went down to the threshing floor and did everything her mother-in-law told her to do.

QUOTE FOR THE WEEK

"I will do whatever you say..."

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

BY DAVID HEWETT

This week pray for those on the road that God will open their eyes to His care and to the care others have given them. Pray for those at home and missing their loved ones that God will give them both encouragement and a sense of caring for others.

MESSAGE

Mark your calendars! Here we have it! A family that actually works together! And the in-laws no less. Naomi knows she should be helping her daughter-in-law find a husband. The journey from a foreign country, the responsibility of a redeemer among her family: all these add up to a time for action. She takes the lead and tells Ruth what to do. Ruth listens and then obeys. Verse 6, "...she went down to the threshing floor and did everything her mother-in-law told her to do." Simple caring produced simple obedience. Ruth and Naomi had developed a loving and caring relationship that led to proper responses in difficult decisions.

This is a great example for us. We tend to complicate the easy situations. Instead of simple obedience, we try to figure a way out. Instead of caring, we try to avoid responsibility. The society and world we live in today tells us to do what is best for us. Naomi and Ruth cared for the other, and God's will was found. This week try to un-complicate relationships. Focus on caring and obedience, that is, caring for others and obedience of others! You might find you have no time left for feeling sorry for yourself.

TRAVELING PRAYER PARTNERS

RUTH 3:7-18

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THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

Ruth 3:7-18(NIV)

When Boaz had finished eating and drinking and was in good spirits, he went over to lie down at the far end of the grain pile. Ruth approached quietly, uncovered his feet and lay down. 8 In the middle of the night something startled the man, and he turned and discovered a woman lying at his feet. 9 "Who are you?" he asked. "I am your servant Ruth," she said. "Spread the corner of your garment over me, since you are a kinsman-redeemer." 10 "The LORD bless you, my daughter," he replied. "This kindness is greater than that which you showed earlier: You have not run after the younger men, whether rich or poor. 11 And now, my daughter, don't be afraid. I will do for you all you ask. All my fellow townsmen know that you are a woman of noble character.

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

BY DAVID HEWETT

This week pray for those on the road that God will build their lives with His character and His strength. Ask God to allow those at home to feed on His Word and His Love, and that our Savior will also build their character. Pray that God will open your heart and allow His character to be built in you.

Although it is true that I am near of kin, there is a kinsman-redeemer nearer than I. 13 Stay here for the night, and in the morning if he wants to redeem, good; let him redeem. But if he is not willing, as surely as the LORD lives I will do it. Lie here until morning." 14 So she lay at his feet until morning, but got up before anyone could be recognized; and he said, "Don't let it be known that a woman came to the threshing floor." 15 He also said, "Bring me the shawl you are wearing and hold it out." When she did so, he poured into it six measures of barley and put it on her. Then he went back to town. 16 When Ruth came to her mother-in-law, Naomi asked, "How did it go, my daughter?" Then she told her everything Boaz had done for her 17 and added, "He gave me these six measures of barley, saying, 'Don't go back to your mother-in-law empty-handed.'" 18 Then Naomi said, "Wait, my daughter, until you find out what happens. For the man will not rest until the matter is settled today."

QUOTE FOR THE WEEK

"You have given me comfort and have spoken kindly to your servant..."

MESSAGE

Character has come into much debate and discussion over the past few years (and at many other times in history). Are there accomplishments that transcend character? The Bible is clear in many places that this is not the case. The Bible is also very clear that our character can be CHANGED! Ruth shows us how character can be the foundation of building the relationships God desires. First, she leaves her people and moves to a foreign country with her mother-in-law. Then, she finds the lowest of all jobs and works hard and diligently to support her mother-in-law, then obeys her mother-in-law in what will be a life-changing event. Ruth has shown the entire town that she is a woman of character, a much-needed virtue for her next challenge.

She is now to go to Boaz and ask for his "protection" by way of marriage. Boaz' response is based on her character. He knows that he is not entitled to be the first in line to redeem. Rather than embarrass her or reject her, he comforts her and reminds her not only of her noble character, but of her kindness. "This kindness is greater than that which you showed earlier." He then gives her food for her and her mother-in-law and promises her to do what is right and proper by the covenant of God for her and her mother-in-law and promises her to do what is right and proper by the covenant of God. All this is done in a caring and comforting manner.

TRAVELING PRAYER PARTNERS

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MESSAGE

I believe the foundation of why Boaz was able to respond in such a way was not only Ruth's character but also his own. He too, as we have seen, was a man of godly character. Is your character showing this week?

TRAVELING PRAYER PARTNERS

RUTH 4:1-12

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THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

Ruth 4:1-12(NIV)

Meanwhile Boaz went up to the town gate and sat there. When the kinsman-redeemer he had mentioned came along, Boaz said, "Come over here, my friend, and sit down." So he went over and sat down. 2 Boaz took ten of the elders of the town and said, "Sit here," and they did so. 3 Then he said to the kinsman-redeemer, "Naomi, who has come back from Moab, is selling the piece of land that belonged to our brother Elimelech. 4 I thought I should bring the matter to your attention and suggest that you buy it in the presence of these seated here and in the presence of the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, do so. But if you will not, tell me, so I will know. For no one has the right to do it except you, and I am next in line." "I will redeem it," he said. 5 Then Boaz said, "On the day you buy the land from Naomi and from Ruth the Moabitess, you acquire the dead man's widow, in order to maintain the name of the dead with his property." 6 At this, the kinsman-redeemer said, "Then I cannot redeem it because I might endanger my own estate. You redeem it yourself. I cannot do it."

(Now in earlier times in Israel, for the redemption and transfer of property to become final, one party took off his sandal and gave it to the other. This was the method of legalizing transactions in Israel.) 8 So the kinsman-redeemer said to Boaz, "Buy it yourself." And he removed his sandal. 9 Then Boaz announced to the elders and all the people, "Today you are witnesses that I have bought from Naomi all the property of Elimelech, Kilion and Mahlon. 10 I have also acquired Ruth the Moabitess, Mahlon's widow, as my wife, in order to maintain the name of the dead with his property, so that his name will not disappear from among his family or from the town records. Today you are witnesses!" 11 Then the elders and all those at the gate said, "We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel. May you have standing in Ephrathah and be famous in Bethlehem. 12 Through the offspring the LORD gives you by this young woman, may your family be like that of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah."

QUOTE FOR THE WEEK

BY DAVID HEWETT

"Meanwhile Boaz went up to the town gate and sat there."

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

This week pray that those on the road can take action as God leads them. Pray for the families at home that they will be able to see the will of God as it is displayed in those around them. Ask God to let you know what action steps you have to take this week.

MESSAGE

Boaz knew the importance of the next few hours and the steps and decision he was about to make. He did not avoid his responsibility or the proper steps that had been outlined in the law.

There was great risk. He had now promised Ruth he would do what was right, and what was right may not have ended up like he wanted it.

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MESSAGE

He had to place 100% of his confidence in God, because he could not change the rules; they had been set for centuries, and he could only watch them be applied. What was the outcome? God found favor on him. The man closer could not accept the responsibility, and Boaz redeemed Ruth. This is a blessing for everyone! Naomi has fulfilled her "obligation" and love for Ruth by finding her a husband (Naomi is also sure to be taken care of, as she will be part of this new family). Ruth now has the protection (and rest, as Naomi describes a husband in chapter one) of a husband, and Boaz has the joy of a wife.

The strong godly characters of Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz all led to this, but also the ACTION of each made it happen. Each had to take steps that were difficult and full of uncertainty, but when they did, God gave the blessing. What steps do you need to take this week?

TRAVELING PRAYER PARTNERS

RUTH 4:13-22

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THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

Ruth 4:13-22(NIV)

13 So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife. Then he went to her, and the LORD enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son. 14 The women said to Naomi: "Praise be to the LORD, who this day has not left you without a kinsman-redeemer. May he become famous throughout Israel! 15 He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age. For your daughter-in-law, who loves you and who is better to you than seven sons, has given him birth." 16 Then Naomi took the child, laid him in her lap and cared for him. 17 The women living there said, "Naomi has a son." And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David. 18 This, then, is the family line of Perez: Perez was the father of Hezron, 19 Hezron the father of Ram, Ram the father of Amminadab, 20 Amminadab the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father of Salmon, 21 Salmon the father of Boaz, Boaz the father of Obed, 22 Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David.

QUOTE FOR THE WEEK

"He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age."

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

BY DAVID HEWETT

As you pray this week, ask God to allow your character to be built by Him. Ask God to give you His Strength and to build a future that you will see in heaven. Pray for both those on the road and those at home, that God will give them His special comfort as they grow in His word.

MESSAGE

The women of Bethlehem were very excited for Naomi. She had found her daughter-in-law a husband, and now she was a grandmother! The joy of a grandchild for a woman who had lost her husband and both of her sons can only be imagined by most of us. Naomi was the talk of the town, to be sure; she was no longer bitter, to be certain! What is even better is what else we are told. While Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz could be excited to see how God had worked in their lives, they had no idea about the future of their family. We are able to see how God not only orchestrated the coming together of Ruth and Boaz, but we also are able to view the divine plan of God, and His desire to use them to be part of the earthly portion of His grand plan.

Their son would be King David's grandfather, and the family tree continued to Mary, Mother of Jesus! What does God have for your family's future? The answer to that we do not know this side of heaven. What we do know is that God is building our character so He can continue to surprise the world! This week, keep working on your "surprise" future, with the Creator of the Universe!