

WEEK FIVE

A STUDY BOOK OF  
**RUTH**



WRITTEN BY  
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*flourish*

DESIGNED & PRODUCED BY  
USA SOUTHERN TERRITORY WOMEN'S DEPARTMENT

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## 6-Week Ruth Bible Study

*ESV translation used unless otherwise noted*

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# Redeemer

## Ruth 4:1-12

Now Boaz had gone up to the gate and sat down there. And behold, the redeemer, of whom Boaz had spoken, came by. So Boaz said, "Turn aside, friend; sit down here." And he turned aside and sat down. And he took ten men of the elders of the city and said, "Sit down here." So they sat down. Then he said to the redeemer, "Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, is selling the parcel of land that belonged to our relative Elimelech. So I thought I would tell you of it and say, 'Buy it in the presence of those sitting here and in the presence of the elders of my people.' If you will redeem it, redeem it. But if you will not, tell me, that I may know, for there is no one besides you to redeem it, and I come after you." And he said, "I will redeem it." Then Boaz said, "The day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the widow of the dead, in order to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance." Then the redeemer said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I impair my own inheritance. Take my right of redemption yourself, for I cannot redeem it."

Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging: to confirm a transaction, the one drew off his sandal and gave it to the other, and this was the manner of attesting in Israel. So when the redeemer said to Boaz, "Buy it for yourself," he drew off his sandal. Then Boaz said to the elders and all the people, "You are witnesses this day that I have bought from the hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and to Mahlon. Also Ruth the Moabite, the widow of Mahlon, I have bought to be my wife, to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his native place. You are witnesses this day." Then all the people who were at the gate and the elders said, "We are witnesses. May the Lord make the woman, who is coming into your house, like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel. May you act worthily in Ephrathah and be renowned in Bethlehem, and may your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, because of the offspring that the Lord will give you by this young woman."



# A NOTE FROM JENIFFER



Chapter 4 begins such a crucial turning point. Ruth has clung to her mother-in-law, journeyed to a foreign land, gleaned through the wheat and barley harvests, and proposed to an older man. She went from being known as the Moabite widow to a worthy woman. And now at the beginning of Chapter Four, Ruth has what might be the hardest task of all. . . Waiting.

She is waiting for someone else to do the work, waiting for an answer to arrive with no guarantee of the outcome. After all, there is another who is closer to her than Boaz. Ruth will be redeemed through marriage. But will it be to the man she has grown to love or to an unknown relative of her dead father-in-law? This week we travel through scriptures with Boaz as he sorts out the matter at hand and leaves Ruth and Naomi waiting in their home. I can't help but think about how the women may have passed the time. I wonder how Naomi reminded Ruth of God's past faithfulness and encouraged her to be patient and trust the process.

# Redeemer

## DAY ONE

Ruth 4:1-2

### PRAYER

*Lord, as Ruth must wait on you this week, please help me to be patient as you work out a plan for my good and your Glory. Please remind me of your faithfulness and your love for me as I work through this daily study. Please Lord, protect this time I have set apart for you, remove the distractions, and focus my heart and mind. Amen.*

### SCRIPTURE

*Now Boaz had gone up to the gate and sat down there. And behold, the redeemer, of whom Boaz had spoken, came by. So Boaz said, "Turn aside, friend; sit down here." And he turned aside and sat down. 2 And he took ten men of the elders of the city and said, "Sit down here." So they sat down*



As he promised, Boaz has set out to make sure Ruth would be redeemed. We know from our earlier study that Boaz desires to marry Ruth, yet he is patient and honorable enough to walk through the appropriate channels to see how Ruth's redemption will come.

Boaz goes to the city gate, meets with the other redeemer, and gathers ten other men of the city to settle the matter, asking them each to turn aside from their planned activity for the purpose of redemption.

Do you have someone in your life who calls you out of your plan to turn aside and be part of God's plan?

Throughout the scriptures, God often uses unusual and sometimes difficult circumstances to draw our attention to him. Then once he has our full attention, he speaks. God will not be second to anyone or anything in our lives. Even our to-do lists must be set aside when it comes to God. He makes that clear in the Ten Commandments, but even before it is so clearly written we see it in his character.

*2 And the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. 3 And Moses said, "I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned." 4 When the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." - Exodus 3:2-4*

Please note Moses makes a conscious decision to turn aside. He doesn't turn aside because he is caught off guard, or startled or examining this strange site. Nope, he makes a deliberate choice to turn aside. This choice begins with a verbal commitment spoken out loud. What does that sound like? Only after Moses turns aside does God speak to him.

What if Moses didn't turn aside? He just caught the bush out of the corner of his eye and kept going. What if he used it for dinner conversation but never knew the fullness of what God had planned for him?

The grandness of God's plan for our lives is directly tied to our willingness to turn aside and make space for God to speak.

I think most of us believe we would stop in a heartbeat to hear from the Lord. But that's just not true. When was the last time you took a regular sabbath? Can you remember a time when you stopped all you had to do simply because there was a God moment waiting for you?

The end of Exodus Chapter 2 tells us that God saw the people of Israel and "God knew."

What did God know? I believe he knew who would see the small unusual detail of a burning bush that wasn't consumed and recognize it as the providence of God.

Are your eyes open to God's work in the ordinary? Does God know you to be a person who looks for his presence? Does God know you are available for a conversation? Or does he know you are too busy?

**Reflection:**

What would it take for you to stop and turn aside from your daily activities to see the presence of God hidden in the ordinary and make time to hear the voice of the Lord?

Are you too busy to turn aside?

Are you able to “turn aside” from the work you have planned and “sit down” to hear what is being offered? What would it look like for you to build this flexibility into your schedule?

What is stopping you from spending time with the Lord as he works out his plan for your good?

When was the last time you felt like you didn’t know where your redemption would come from?

**Prayer:**

Lord, help me learn to pause and rest when you speak to me, that I may respond to you when you call me. Lord, help me trust that you are working out my redemption. Lord, I trust you with

\_\_\_\_\_. I will turn aside from my own desires and wait for you.  
Amen.

**NOTES**

# Redeemer

## DAY TWO

Ruth 4:3-4

### PRAYER

*Lord, as Ruth must wait on you this week, please help me to be patient as you work out a plan for my good and your Glory. Please remind me of your faithfulness and your love for me as I work through this daily study. Please Lord, protect this time I have set apart for you, remove the distractions, and focus my heart and mind. Amen.*

### SCRIPTURE

*Then he said to the redeemer, "Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, is selling the parcel of land that belonged to our relative Elimelech. 4 So I thought I would tell you of it and say, 'Buy it in the presence of those sitting here and in the presence of the elders of my people.' If you will redeem it, redeem it. But if you will not, tell me, that I may know, for there is no one besides you to redeem it, and I come after you." And he said, "I will redeem it."*





The gates of the city were more than just a set of wooden doors; they were typically large rooms with doors on each side that people traveled through as they left and entered the city. It would be the location to gather the news of the city and foreign lands. Often these rooms would have benches inside and areas for people to meet. The elders of the city would be there for the purpose of legal transactions and to serve as judges in a disputes. Sure Boaz could have met the other redeemer in a random field and had the same conversation. But having that conversation “behind closed doors,” if you will, opens the floodgates of rumor and suspicion.

So Boaz goes to the city gate to handle the matter of Naomi and Ruth’s redemption legally. He gathers the appropriate men in a room and pulls out the title deed to Naomi’s land.

Are you handling the important matters of God in the right location? Think about that for a minute in light of a specific circumstance. You have an issue at work with some staff members. Do you go to the “water cooler” and complain to your friends, do you sit at home and try to settle the issue with your spouse, or are willing to go to the people who can actually make a change? Are you a field talker or a city gate changemaker?

During this time in history when land was sold, two title deeds in the form of a scroll were created. The city kept a copy and the owner kept the other. These scrolls listed the original owner of the property and the stipulations by which it could be redeemed. They were typically rolled and sealed with a wax seal.

When a person wanted to redeem the land, they needed to break the wax seal on the scroll and fulfill the requirements. The wax seal could only be broken by the closest living relative, hence the reason Boaz told Ruth there is one who is closer to redeeming her. Once the seal was broken, the redeemer had to be willing to fulfill the requirements and be able to pay the price stated in the scroll to redeem the land.

According to the Law of Leverage Marriage found in Deuteronomy 25, the relative of a widow was required to marry her and have a child with her, so the dead man’s family line would not go extinct. This child would then inherit the family’s land and possessions. But in this case, Naomi was beyond childbearing years. So the redemption of land would increase the wealth of the redeemer with little to no risk to their overall family’s possessions. Taking Naomi, an older woman, to live with him meant another set of hands to help the women of his household. This seems like the deal of a lifetime for the other redeemer.

We know from his conversations with Ruth that Boaz desires to marry her. Yet, sitting among these ten city officials, Boaz is offering the opportunity to serve as the redeemer to another. Why? Because as scary as it seems to hold the very thing you desire with open hands before the Lord, Boaz knew it was the only way.

Boaz has a history of trusting God; he stayed through the famine and saw the hand of God provide. He reminded his workers daily that the Lord was with them, and today his trust in God’s hand of provision would be tested. Boaz knew that God would redeem Ruth, but where the redemption would come from was unknown.

It is in the unknown that God shows up in the most unexpected ways. This section of verses ends with the other man claiming his right to serve as redeemer. But God is writing the story, and he is not finished.

**Reflection:**

How do I handle my issues? With gossip or intentionality to resolve the issue?  
What does it mean to you that God is not finished with the story?  
Is the Lord asking you to hold something open-handed before him?  
Are you being called to trust God with the very thing you want redeemed?  
What are the unknown circumstances you are looking into at this point?  
Create a list of God's past faithfulness to you as an encouragement to his future faithfulness.

**Prayer:**

Lord, help me to trust you when I am looking at the unknown. Help me to remember that you are with me when it seems as though the very thing I desire is at risk. Lord, I know you are a good God who is for me; help me have the eyes and heart to see you at work. Amen.

**NOTES**



# Redeemer

## DAY THREE

Ruth 4:5-6

### PRAYER

*Lord, as Ruth must wait on you this week, please help me to be patient as you work out a plan for my good and your Glory. Please remind me of your faithfulness and your love for me as I work through this daily study. Please Lord, protect this time I have set apart for you, remove the distractions, and focus my heart and mind. Amen.*

### SCRIPTURE

*5 Then Boaz said, "The day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the widow of the dead, in order to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance." 6 Then the redeemer said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I impair my own inheritance. Take my right of redemption yourself, for I cannot redeem it."*





Another reason it is important for Boaz to handle the matter of redemption at the city gate is the honor and protection of both Ruth and Naomi. If this had been a back field deal, the other redeemer may have come back and said he tricked me and tried to take the land without the girl.

It has already been established that the other redeemer is related. The end of verse four leads us to believe that he must be able to pay the price, so now it all comes down to his willingness. Boaz, who is related, able to pay and more than willing, outlines the details of this land, including the required marriage to the Moabite Ruth. This begins to change the closer redeemer's willingness to fulfill his duties as a redeemer. The law of Leverage Marriage would have required him to marry Ruth and father a child who would have carried on Elimelech's name. This child would also receive the inheritance.

I often wonder how much time passed between verse 5 and 6. Was there a beat in which the other redeemer had to think it through and weigh the cost, or was it an immediate, "I cannot redeem it for myself."

Maybe he was already married, and he was honoring his wife by not bringing another wife home. Maybe he had sons, and he couldn't afford to split all the inheritance with another, or maybe he was afraid of the curse God put on those who married Moabites. Whatever the reason, I respect that this man understood that not all things offered to you are right for you.

Let me caution you; not every offer is for you. Just because it seems like it could be a good thing doesn't mean it is. Scientifically, the grass is ALWAYS greener on the other side of the fence.

When you look at the grass at an angle, the flat portion of the blade reflects more green back to your eyes than when you stare directly down at the thin blade from the top. When you look down at the grass between your two feet, you see more of the dirt than anything else. This is why you see your work or home environment for what it is: a pile of dirt that manages to nourish patches of life, sometimes greener than other times but always more messy than what "they" have. It is tempting to, as my Amish friends say, "Jump the Fence." David fell into this trap in 2 Samuel. He appears to be flourishing as the new king. He is setting up Jerusalem as the epicenter of the kingdom, uniting tribes both politically and spiritually. He is bringing the worship back to the people by building a tent for worship and planning a national event for the return of the Ark to the city. He is exhausted, and I am sure he is seeing all the dirt between his feet. David, "the man after God's own heart," is running on empty. The grass must look so green on the other side.

As a result, David chooses what the world offers him without processing the impact. He moves the Ark on a new cart, a man literally explodes, his kingly robes get covered in man guts, the parade stops short, and the Ark is put into storage before it ever gets to its final destination.

The grass looked greener until David got there, and he realized this wasn't what God called him to, and it wasn't how God instructed him to do it. It took David three months of studying the scriptures to learn what went wrong and how to get it right.

Satan often distracts us with the beautiful green pastures of the places we are not called to be in order to remove our joy for where we are called to be.

When you are looking at everything "over there" as inviting and perfect, can I challenge you to take a moment to seek God's will and ask yourself if this is what God is calling you to? When you take offers that are not for you, you may be stepping into someone else's story and out of your own.



**Reflection:**

Am I taking what the world is offering or trusting what the Lord has called me to?

Am I using discernment when I am offered an opportunity?

How can I protect myself from saying YES to everything?

How do I measure an offer in order to determine if it is a yes or a no?

**Prayer:**

Lord, help me to see the goodness of what you have called me to. Protect me from being attracted to what appears to be a greener pasture, that I may know your will and seek your face above all else. Lord, give me peace to say no to the offers that would steer me away from your will and the strength to stay the course. Amen.

**NOTES**

# Redeemer

**DAY FOUR**

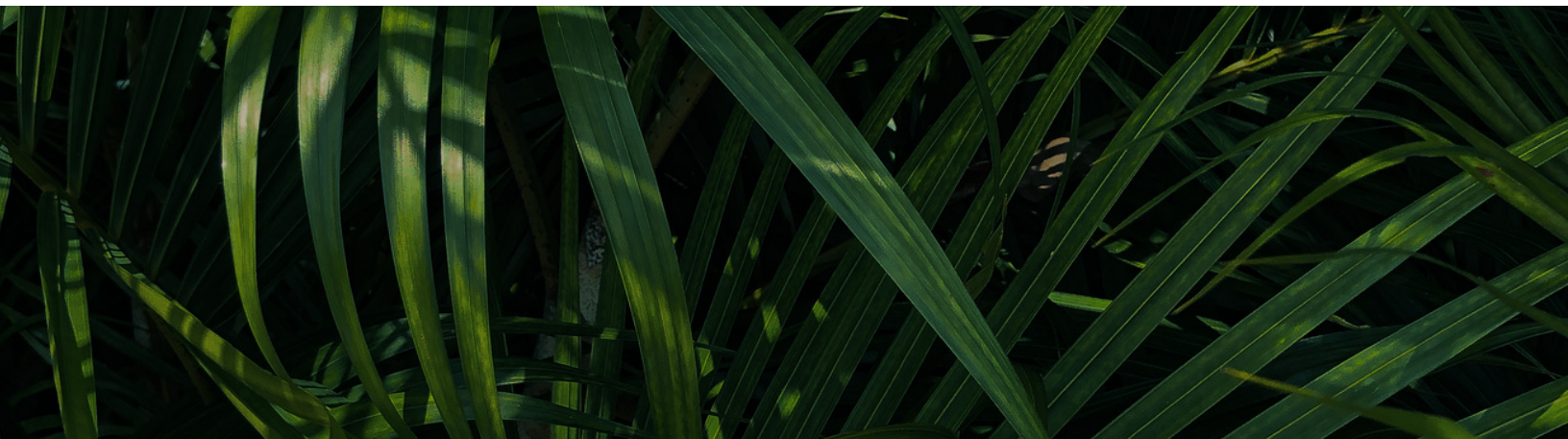
Ruth 4:7-10

**PRAYER**

*Lord, as Ruth must wait on you this week, please help me to be patient as you work out a plan for my good and your Glory. Please remind me of your faithfulness and your love for me as I work through this daily study. Please Lord, protect this time I have set apart for you, remove the distractions, and focus my heart and mind. Amen.*

**SCRIPTURE**

*7 dNow this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging: to confirm a transaction, the one drew off his sandal and gave it to the other, and this was the manner of attesting in Israel. 8 So when the redeemer said to Boaz, "Buy it for yourself," he drew off his sandal. 9 Then Boaz said to the elders and all the people, "You are witnesses this day that I have bought from the hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to eChilion and to Mahlon. 10 Also Ruth the Moabite, the widow of Mahlon, I have bought to be my wife, fto perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his native place. You are witnesses this day."*



The tides have changed; God shows up and the other redeemer passes his sandal to Boaz.

I am grateful for the sake of the other redeemer that the customs of the OT have changed a bit since the law of Deuteronomy was written. According to the original Law, Ruth would have been brought to the city gate to spit in the man's face and take his shoe, and his family name would have been changed to: The Family of the Unsandaled.

Boaz trusted the Lord, and now he holds the title deed to land he does not need. Boaz never redeemed the land for the sake of the land; he redeemed the land to get the girl, his hidden treasure.

In the book of Matthew, Jesus tells the love story of his great-great-grandparents as a parable of God's love for his people. "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy, he goes and sells all that he has and buys the field." A man finds a treasure hidden in a field, and that man gives up all he has to buy the field. The scripture notes how this is done in joy. He willingly gives up all he has for the sake of the treasure.

While the parable of hidden treasure has been interpreted in a variety of ways, I believe it is a story of one (Jesus) who is willing to do all it takes to guarantee the redemption of that which has been hidden (the sinner). It reminds us that even while we are in hiding, God is seeking us. From the very first time man hid from God in the garden, to the darkest of your days, God is seeking you. We do not buy the field and seek out our salvation, for Jesus is not hidden from us, and there is nothing we can do to pay for our salvation. Even if we sold everything we had, would it be enough to purchase our redemption? No! Of course not. Our salvation is in Christ alone, by grace alone, through faith alone.

So it is Jesus who seeks us in our hiding. It's not that he doesn't know where we are, but that he desires to draw us out of hiding so that we may walk into the power of his presence. God wants us to turn aside and give him our full attention.

Boaz may not have sold all he owned to buy Naomi's field, but when he married Ruth, the Moabite, he was giving up his rights to the assembly of the Lord for 10 generations of his family. (Deuteronomy 23:2-3). He was risking his ability to father a child, as Ruth had been proven to be barren in her first marriage, and who could predict the reaction of the townswomen?

Boaz knew the treasure was worth the risk because he trusted that God was working for his good.



**Reflection:**

Are you in hiding? What part of your life have you buried?

How does it make you feel to know that the Lord desires to draw you out of your hiding?

What risks do you need to take?

Do you trust that God is writing the story?

**Prayer:**

Lord, help me to remember that you are writing the story, and even in my darkest moments, you are seeking me. I am precious enough for you to give up all you had for me. Lord, help me to trust the process. Help me to see your good hand at work. Amen.

**NOTES**



# Redeemer

## DAY FIVE

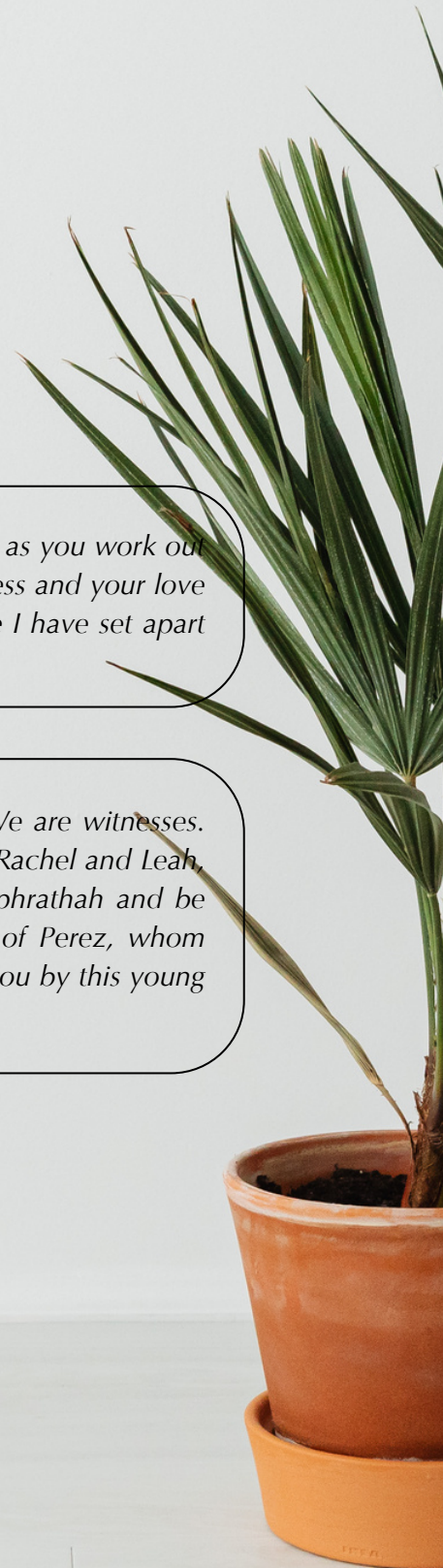
Ruth 4:11-12

## PRAYER

*Lord, as Ruth must wait on you this week, please help me to be patient as you work out a plan for my good and your Glory. Please remind me of your faithfulness and your love for me as I work through this daily study. Please Lord, protect this time I have set apart for you, remove the distractions, and focus my heart and mind. Amen.*

## SCRIPTURE

*11 Then all the people who were gat the gate and the elders said, "We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman, who is coming into your house, like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel. May you act worthily in Ephrathah and be renowned in Bethlehem, 12 and may your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, because of the offspring that the LORD will give you by this young woman."*



At this point, Boaz and his city elders have gained quite the audience. The news would have spread as people traveled through the gate. This was the only soap opera drama they had.

"Boaz and another man are attempting to redeem Naomi's land."

"Do they know they have to marry the Moabite?"

"I heard Boaz wants the Moabite!"

"The other guy said he's going to take the land."

The matter of redemption has become the talk of the town. The other redeemer has backed out of the deal, and Boaz has the sandal. He has stated his intention to marry Ruth and redeem the land of Naomi's husband, Elimelech. With his proclamation of intent, the marriage is complete and nothing else needs to be said.

### ***But God is writing the story.***

I imagine those gathered at the gate respond to Boaz's statement with a variety of reactions, but the one record here is the blessing spoken over Boaz and Ruth's marriage and the fruitfulness of their family.

There is such beauty in this public blessing of Boaz and Ruth's marriage. While Boaz joyfully and willingly redeemed Ruth, she is still a Moabite, which means their marriage is a bit controversial, to say the least. Boaz has already told Ruth that his friends see her as a "worthy woman." While this provided Ruth and Boaz with a peer group and a comfort zone, I am certain there would still be a discomfort in the marketplace for Ruth.

That uncomfortable feeling is like the scarlet letter we have all worn at one time or another. It is the shame we carry with us as we enter certain public places and that feeling that everyone knows what's happening or has happened in what should be a private moment of life, but it has become public. It is the heartache we have because of something that has happened to us or in spite of us, but somehow the guilt fear, and shame are still ours to carry.

Are you carrying a weight with you that taints your understanding of the goodness God has for you in the place you are? Is there a shame or guilt or fear that you carry even in the midst of your redemption?

Oh, how Satan desires to pollute the waters, to bring up our past failures in an attempt to create unrest. Even in the midst of being redeemed, Ruth carries the title of a Moabite, the enemy of God. I wonder how many whispering accusations she has heard since she entered Judah. In the midst of God's goodness, she was nothing. Even Naomi failed to recognize her worth when they arrived. These hurts are not easily forgotten, especially if they have not been addressed.

But here at the city gate the elders and those random people from town who came for the drama are about to speak a public blessing over the marriage of Boaz and Ruth. It is a blessing that Ruth and Boaz would draw strength from when they walked through the city gates, in the market place, and into the temple courts. They received the blessing of the community. What would it look like for you to feel the blessings of your community, of those in leadership around you? Who are the people who need to hear you proclaim a blessings over them? Office staff? Other officers? Your family? Neighbors?

Boaz trusted the process God had in place. He may not have understood it, and he may have been afraid of the potential outcome, but his integrity and willingness to trust the process brought about the blessings of God.

In what area of your life do you need to honor the process more than the outcome?

**Reflection:**

What are you carrying that blocks the joy of your redemption?

Are you being faithful to honor the process?

Are you more about the outcome than you are the process?

How is God growing you in the process of where he has placed you?

How is God writing your story?

**Prayer:**

"Create in me a clean heart, oh God

And renew the right spirit within me

Create in me a clean heart, oh God

And renew the right spirit within me

Cast me not away from Thy presence, oh Lord

And take not Thy holy spirit from me

Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation

And renew a right spirit within me"

Dear Lord,

Help me to release the brokenness I carry. Help me to know the joy of your presence. Help me to trust the process. Help me to see how you are working out the details and writing the story. Thank you for refining me and loving me right where I am.





## Weekend Challenge

I think it is important as we close out the only week Ruth was not a key player, with the reminder that there is nothing Ruth could have done to redeem herself. She had served her mother-in-law well and kept a humble and grateful spirit in the midst of her most difficult days.

Ruth has placed her need before her redeemer, and now she must wait and see how the Lord works out the details. She didn't have the opportunity to speak her case or influence a judge. Nope, she wasn't even present as the potential redeemers worked out the details.

As it is with us, we cannot redeem ourselves, and more often than not, we are in a place of waiting upon the Lord. God is working it out for you. He is the one writing the story, and he has promised to write it for our good and His glory. This doesn't mean we just sit back and do nothing, and life isn't without suffering, pain, and trials. But when the anxiety of the details overwhelms you, it is time to remember you are not in charge of writing the story or weaving the details together. You don't have to make it happen. You do, however, have to choose your attitude and your work ethic. You are responsible for turning aside from the chaos of daily life and focusing on God's presence in the most ordinary of moments.

### Thoughts of Reflection:

What can you do this weekend to turn aside and turn to the presence of God?

Who do you have in your life that calls you to be a part of the work God is doing?

How are you going to tackle the task you have been given?

What draws you into the presence of God and out of hiding?

**Prayer:** *Use the prompts below as a guide:*

God I see you in the ordinary moments of my day. I know you are present when \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for \_\_\_\_\_

I have been hiding from your presence because \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for redeeming me from \_\_\_\_\_

Please grow my ability to see you in the ordinary.

Please help me to make a habit of turning aside to be in your presence.

Amen.