

"Waiting on God"

Ruth 3:12-18

Introduction: Last week in our study of the book of Ruth we stepped into chapter 3. It was in this chapter that Naomi sought rest for Ruth.

Notice Ruth 3:1

The "rest" spoken of here was safety and security for Ruth and it would only be found in a relationship/marriage with Boaz. Boaz was a near kinsman of Naomi's husband's family and therefore he qualified to do 2 things:

1. He could redeem the land that once belonged to Elimelech.
2. He could marry Ruth and continue the family name of Elimelech.

Naomi knew as the kinsman redeemer Boaz qualified to carry out both of these responsibilities. Therefore, Naomi instructed Ruth to put on her best clothing and her best perfume and go down to the threshing floor and silently lay at the feet of Boaz. When he was aware that she was there he would then instruct Ruth as to what she should do.

Notice Ruth 3:3-9

When she asked Boaz to spread his skirt over her that was asking him to fulfill the responsibility of the kinsman redeemer.

The response of Boaz was that he would do the part of the kinsman redeemer but there was a problem and the problem was there was a kinsman who was nearer in relation than Boaz. So, this meant the nearer kinsman would have the first opportunity to buy back the land and to marry Ruth.

Notice Ruth 3:12

This is where we left Ruth last week.

I. Ruth Tested

Notice Ruth 3:13

Boaz assured Ruth that he would seek out the other kinsman and present the offer to him but the final outcome would not be known until the next day. So she was to just lie down and wait.

Notice Ruth 3:14

The next morning she rose up before the light of day and Boaz was determined to send her away before anyone knew she was there because he desired to protect her reputation. He did not want to give anyone the opportunity to gossip and the situation.

Notice Ruth 3:15

Before she left for home Boaz gave her what many believe to be about 42 quarts of barley which would have made a very heavy load. Ruth then made her way back to Naomi.

Notice Ruth 3:16

Naomi wanted to know if she was Miss Ruth or Mrs. Boaz.

Notice Ruth 3:17-18

When Naomi heard the story she told Ruth to sit still and wait for Boaz to work it all out. Now let me give you some thoughts to roll around in your mind.

It took a great deal of courage for Ruth to present herself to Boaz. Then when she finally worked up the nerve to approach him there would have been the anxiety of wondering how he would respond. When he said he would do the part of the kinsman redeemer her heart must have leaped. But then the very next words would have taken all the wind out of her sails. There was another kinsman.

Then she found out she would have to wait until the next day to find out who her husband would be. Then her mother in law tells her to sit and wait!

This was not an easy situation for Ruth to face. This was a test which God had allowed to come across the path of Ruth.

Application:

God often allows times of testing to cross our paths as we follow Him through this life. God allows our faith to be tested many times in order to make us stronger. Let me show you some verses.

Hebrews 11:6

⁶ But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

God desires that we walk by faith and that we trust Him with every situation which we face and He often allows us to be in situations where we have no control.

John 6:2-6

² And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased.

³ And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.

⁴ And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.

⁵ When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?

⁶ And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.

II. Lessons from Ruth's Life

So how do we handle the times of testing in our lives? I want to use the verses we just walked through and show you the keys to handling the times of testing.

1. Draw nearer to God!

If you get nothing else from the message this morning I want you to understand this first point here. The more we KNOW God the more we can rest in His sovereign control over the situations which we have no control over.

James 1:2-4

² My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

³ Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

⁴ But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

I show you this because I want you to see how a man who was close to the Lord faced the trials of this life. He instructed his readers to COUNT IT ALL JOY. How could James say that? Answer: because He was walking close to the Lord.

The closer we walk to the Lord the more we learn of Him and the more we learn to trust Him.

Notice Ruth 3:18

Here at the end of chapter 3 we see the faith of Naomi. She tells Ruth to sit and wait. You see Naomi had come back to God. For over 10 years she was away. She had seen God working in the life of Ruth and she knew that God would work His will in the midst of this situation.

There was something else that Naomi knew about God that all of us need to know also. We can see this in something she said when she returned from Moab.

Ruth 1:19-21

¹⁹ So they two went until they came to Bethlehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Bethlehem, that all the city was moved about them, and they said, Is this Naomi?

²⁰ And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.

²¹ I went out full and the LORD hath brought me home again empty: why then call ye me Naomi, seeing the LORD hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?

There are 2 times in these verse that Naomi refers to God as THE ALMIGHTY. On the surface that does not seem top be that important but with a little research we can see that this was huge.

The NAME "ALMIGHTY" is El Shaddai. This name of God means "MOST POWERFUL". This name of God first appears in the account of Abraham.

Genesis 17:1-2

And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God: walk before me, and be thou perfect.

² And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.

Here is Abraham at the age of 99 and God comes to Him as El Shaddai and tells him He will multiply him which means that from Abraham would come a great family.

Now let me show you the demonstration of El Shaddai's power in Abraham's life.

Genesis 21:1-5

And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken.

² *For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.*

³ *And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.*

⁴ *And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him.*

⁵ *And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him.*

There are many lessons to learn from the birth of Isaac but there is one major lesson that connects with the name El Shaddai.

God's power is not limited by human ability!

The bottom line is that with God all things are possible.

Now Naomi knew this about God. That is exactly why she used the name El Shaddai. So that knowledge allowed her to surrender the entire situation over to the Lord with absolutely no anxiety. The more we know the more we can trust Him.

Now let me show you something else that will help when facing the times of testing.

2. Learn to be still.

Notice Ruth 3:18 again.

Naomi instructed Ruth to "sit still" until the matter was resolved.

Application:

Let me just say that when we have a deep knowledge of the Lord then we are better able to sit still and allow the Lord to work His will.

Hymn writer **Phillips Brooks** admitted,

"The hardest task in my life is to sit down and wait for God to catch up with me....The trouble is that I am in a hurry, but God isn't."

Henry Morris says:

"Sometimes, when a believer has done all he knows to do according to God's word, he must be content simply to "sit still," and wait for God to work."

Ruth had done all she could do and now it was time to allow God to work His will. There are times when we have exhausted all of our resources and it is then that we must "SIT STILL" and allow God to work His will.

Psalm 37:4-6

⁴ *Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.*

⁵ *Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.*

⁶ *And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.*

Psalm 46:10

¹⁰ *Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.*

Conclusion:

Let me give you some encouragement for sitting still and waiting upon the Lord to work His will. In Psalm 55 there is a verse that I want you to see.

Psalm 55:22

²² *Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.*

Now I want to show you a picture of this verse.

Notice Ruth 3:15

The barley would be that which would sustain the life of Ruth and Naomi. So we can see that Boaz gave to them that which was need to sustain them while they waited.

This is a picture of how God gives to us what we need when we find ourselves in situations where we must wait.

What does He give to us?

1. **Grace**
2. **Strength**
3. **Patience**
4. **Hope**

Isaiah 40:29-31

²⁹ *He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.*

³⁰ *Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:*

³¹ *But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.*