



CONSIDER IT

LEADER DEVO

“Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come to his people and redeemed them.

—Luke 1:68

“When Naomi heard in Moab that the LORD had come to the aid of his people by providing food for them, she and her daughters-in-law prepared to return home from there.” (Ruth 1:6)

The story of Ruth and Naomi is touching, but some people wonder why it’s in the Bible. Other than in a few passing references like the one above, at first glance it doesn’t seem that God’s a part of the story at all.

There are no dramatic miracles. No angels dropping by. No profound prophecies. It’s 2 widows, all but invisible and powerless, making their way in a harsh world where they have little hope of survival.

Until Boaz, their redeemer, enters the picture.

That’s the moment Ruth and Naomi’s story becomes our story. And perhaps, under God’s direction, that’s one reason this brief book is among the collection of books that form the Bible.

To become a friend of God, we also need to be redeemed—to be paid for, rescued, and set right. We need to be brought into God’s family, and here’s the good news: God has already sent our Redeemer in the person of Jesus.

If there’s a message in the book of Ruth for us, it’s this: *We need a Redeemer*. And when God shows up to be with His people in the person of Jesus, we have one.

Pause now to thank God for His saving grace. For showing up. For loving us. For adopting us into His family through Jesus.



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BIBLE BACKGROUND

GOD IS WITH HIS PEOPLE

Take a few minutes to read the entire book of Ruth in one sitting. It's a quick read.

Here's a quick overview: An Israelite family moves to Moab to escape a famine. While there, all the male family members die. Naomi, who loses her grown sons as well as her husband, returns to her homeland with Ruth, one of her widowed daughters-in-law. They arrive in Bethlehem destitute. And, since the men in the family are dead and no one will carry on the name of Naomi's husband's family, the widows aren't restored to their original family. Things are bleak for the widows until Boaz steps forward as a redeemer.

Earlier, God provided a way to restore widows and orphans to their families through the custom of the redeemer. (See Leviticus 25:25, 47-49; Deuteronomy 25:5-10.)

Boaz obeys this law in 2 ways: He buys the land belonging to Naomi's dead husband and then marries the widowed daughter-in-law. Naomi and Ruth are restored to their original status in their family and Naomi has justice and the land she needs. Plus, Ruth and Boaz's son, Obed, is adopted into Naomi's original family to receive the inheritance of Naomi's family. Boaz, Ruth, and Obed become ancestors of David and Jesus.

Read Galatians 4:4-5. The Greek word Paul uses for adoption in this verse is only found in his writings to those with a background in Roman culture. A Roman adoption was a final and nonreversible relationship—giving an adopted son all the privileges of a natural son.

This is the relationship Paul describes in Galatians. Instead of our being banished from God's family because of our sin, God chooses to adopt us into His family. Jesus pays the price for our forgiveness and adoption through His death and resurrection. We're restored to our original family—God's family—and have the inheritance of eternal life.

Think of the story of Ruth and how God has redeemed you so you can be adopted into His family. Read Galatians 4:4-5 again and the next time you're describing your family, mention you're adopted ... adopted by God. Ask your heavenly Father to guide you as you lead the activities in this episode. And pray that everyone will see God as their Redeemer.