

REVIEW

-Naomi, an old widow, and Ruth, a young widow, found themselves in poverty when all the men in their family had died.

-Ruth had expressed her faith in God, and her faithfulness to stay with Naomi, her mother-in-law, even though it seemed Naomi could not do anything for Ruth.

-Because there were no men in the household to earn their living, Ruth went out to work; she took a hard, hot job, but worked hard at it.

-The boss at her work turned out to be a relative of her late husband's. Admiring Ruth for her faithfulness to her mother-in-law, the man, Boaz, set a good example of what it is to act like a man toward a woman. He provided for Ruth, protected Ruth, praised Ruth (not her beauty, but her work, faithfulness, and faith), and prayed for Ruth

-All of this was going on in the town of Bethlehem, and was God working through these people's difficulties to bring about the birth of King David in Bethlehem a few generations later, and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in Bethlehem a thousand years later.

-Naomi advised Ruth to let Boaz know she would be willing to marry him. Ruth followed her mother-in-law's advice and let him know.

-Boaz wanted to marry Ruth, because he knew she was a virtuous woman. He completed all the business he needed to do before they could get married.

-Their friends and relatives prayed that Ruth would have lots of children.

-Boaz and Ruth were able to get married.

That's how much we read and discussed last week. At that point, it was starting to get late, so we left off there. And in many fairy tales and other stories, we're just told that they lived happily ever after. But what about having children? And what about Naomi, the old mother-in-law? Let's read the Bible to the end of the history of Ruth's family, to see what else happened.

At the same time, we'll look for practical lessons for ourselves, especially about family life.

At the end, we'll discover something about God's work of salvation for sinners through Jesus Christ.

LESSON

Ruth 4:13b-17a

In answer to people's prayers, God granted that the couple could have a baby

4:13b the Bible says here, and in other places, that God is the one who either shuts the womb or opens it, who either grants that a woman can have a baby, or does not

4:14-15 The other women spoke to Naomi

-blessing the Lord for what he had done

-preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ in a shadowy way without realizing it!

-expressing a high view of the value of children and grandchildren

-restorer of life; GEN shall bring thy life againe

-nourisher of old age; GEN cherish thine olde age

Illus: I remember watching Anna hand-feeding Pop, her grandfather, with his pie when our family visited him in the nursing home.

Let everyone here be good to his parents and grandparents as they get old.

Make yourself a blessing to them; bring them joy and do them good.

-recognizing Ruth's great worth (a virtuous woman is worth more than rubies)

Girls and women, there are some ways in which God has put men over you in this life. And there are some ways in which men are stronger than you. But if you trust in God, are faithful to your family, and work hard at whatever needs to be done, you can end up more valuable than seven men put together.

Boys and Men	Girls and Women
provide, protect, praise, pray	trust in God; be faithful to your family; work hard at what needs to be done

4:17b-22

It comes out at the end that all of this was God's working toward salvation

-for Israel in King David, who saved the Israelites from death at the hand of their enemies, such as the Philistines

-for sinners in Jesus Christ, who is the Son of David, who saves us sinners from going to hell under the wrath of God, to eternal life

-Everything that goes on in our lives, important as it is, is far less important than God saving sinners through Jesus Christ

-God uses all of our normal work to advance the cause of the gospel