

RUTH

Text: Matt 15:21-23

21 Then Jesus went out from there and departed to the region of Tyre and Sidon.

22 And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed."

23 But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, "Send her away, for she cries out after us."

Introduction: We are again faced this morning with a person who has a need that only God can meet. Did you notice that Jesus does not even respond to the woman's cry? The text says, "...But He answered her not a word..." Can there be any hope for this woman? She is desperate and has come to the one person she has heard that could help change her circumstances.

Maybe, someone here is thinking, "How inconsiderate of Him! Doesn't He care?" If this is the norm for Jesus, then our gospel has a flaw. Verse 24 gives us some form of relief but for most of us here today, it will only leave us even more frustrated because we know that there will be similar times for us.

Matt 15:24 But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

I told you didn't I! Let's look back at a woman in His lineage because He is called the 'Christ' and see if there is a reason that He might respond to this poor woman's cry.

Matt 1:5 Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab, Boaz the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth, Obed the father of Jesse,

1. Ruth's Story.

- A. We are introduced to Ruth as the daughter-in-law of a man from Bethlehem in Judah.

Ruth 1:1 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.

1. This man has moved here with his wife and two sons due to the famine in Israel.

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.

2. The two sons married Moabite women after their father's death.

3 Now Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died, and she was left with her two sons.

3. One of the women is Ruth.

4 They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth. After they had lived there about ten years,

- B. She is a Moabite.

1. The father of her nation is the result of incest.

Gen 19:36 So both of Lot's daughters became pregnant by their father.

37 The older daughter had a son, and she named him Moab; he is the father of the Moabites of today.

38 The younger daughter also had a son, and she named him Ben-Ammi; he is the father of the Ammonites of today.

2. Moab means "from my father."

3. The Moabites were ongoing enemies of the people of Israel.

- C. Her husband dies.

Ruth 1:5 both Mahlon and Kilion also died, and Naomi was left without her two sons and her husband.

1. Naomi decides to return to her own land.

Ruth 1:6 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.

2. Naomi encourages her to stay in the land of Moab.

Ruth 1:8 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

3. Ruth clings to Naomi.

Ruth 1:14 At this they wept again. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law good-bye, but Ruth clung to her.

4. Her famous discourse is recorded and is often used in marriage ceremonies.

Ruth 1:15 "Look," said Naomi, "your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her."

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."

D. She returns to the land of Judah with Naomi.

Ruth 1:19 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?"

E. Naomi's misfortune causes her to declare her life is 'bitter.'

20 "Don't call me Naomi," she told them. "Call me Mara, because the Almighty has made my life very bitter.

1. She went away full and now she is empty.

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."

2. Ruth is living in the house of someone who has accepted bitterness as a way of life.

F. Ruth's story changes for the good.

1. She meets Naomi's kinsman redeemer.

Ruth 2:1 Now Naomi had a relative on her husband's side, from the clan of Elimelech, a man of standing, whose name was Boaz.

2. Ruth has gone to glean in the fields.

Ruth 2:2 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. She just happens in Boaz's fields.

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. She is noticed by Boaz.

Ruth 2:4 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?"

6 The foreman replied, "She is the Moabitess who came back from Moab with Naomi.

5. Boaz extends favor to her.

Ruth 2:8 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."

6. Ruth questions Boaz' kindness.

Ruth 2:10 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?"

7. Word of her kindness to Naomi has reached his ears.

Ruth 2:11 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.

8. Observe the blessing Boaz gives her.

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."

9. Ruth acknowledges her unworthiness of his kindness.

Ruth 2:13 "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."

10. Boaz invites her to eat at his table.

Ruth 2:14 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.

11. Boaz gives further guidance concerning his favor.

Ruth 2:15 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."

12. Naomi is amazed at Ruth's success.

Ruth 2:19 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.

13. God had ordained Ruth's steps.

20 "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."

G. Boaz takes Ruth to be his wife.

1. Naomi gives Ruth instructions.

Ruth 3:1 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?"

2 Is not Boaz, with whose servant girls you have been, a kinsman of ours? Tonight he will be winnowing barley on the threshing floor.

3 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.

4 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."

2. Ruth agrees to follow Naomi's instructions.

5 "I will do whatever you say," Ruth answered.

6 So she went down to the threshing floor and did everything her mother-in-law told her to do.

3. Ruth lays at Boaz's feet.

Ruth 3:7 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.

Ruth 3:8 In the middle of the night something startled the man, and he turned and discovered a woman lying at his feet.

4. Ruth invites Boaz to be her covering.

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."

5. Boaz commits to act as Ruth's kinsman-redeemer.

Ruth 3:11 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.

Ruth 4:9 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!"

6. Boaz actions are witnessed.

Ruth 4:11 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."

7. Their union is blessed with a son.

Ruth 4:13 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!

8. The son is named Obed, the grandfather of David.

Ruth 4:16 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.

2. The Canaanite Woman.

A. A Canaanite woman petitions Jesus for deliverance for her daughter.

Matt 15:22 And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed."

B. Even though she cries "Son of David," Jesus ignores her plea.

23 But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and

urged Him, saying, "Send her away, for she cries out after us."

C. Jesus gives His reason for not responding.

24 But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

1. She was a gentile.
2. The door for the gentiles to enter had not yet been opened.

D. She will not be denied.

1. Worshiping she cries out for help.

25 Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, help me!"

2. His response should have sent her running.
3. He calls her a 'dog.'

26 But He answered and said, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs."

4. You don't waste the children's bread on dogs.
5. But she reminds Him of a very real truth.

27 And she said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table."

6. If the Church could get this very simple truth, "Crumbs from the Master's table are enough."

Conclusion: "Gentiles are dogs." Every good Jew knows that! What could cause Jesus of Nazareth to respond any further to this woman's request?

There is the matter of lineage. There is in His lineage, His heritage a Gentile woman named Ruth, a Moabitess. What's more is that being a Moabite she carries the reproach of her forefathers illicit affair.

Ruth represents in the Church, the Body of Christ, all those who are less than dirt. Sin and the sins of your parents and family have left you with a title. Your society calls you trash, and I will avoid the other names offered since they are not in the King James Version of the Bible.

But you are the accepted of the Lord, if you have acknowledged Him as Lord of your life through confession of sin

and acceptance of forgiveness. Paul tells us about his congregation at Corinth that sophisticated, religious members of the Church would not be guilty of leaving outside the fellowship of the Church any that had repented regardless of their past.

1 Cor 1:26 For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.

1 Cor 6:9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

“And such were some of you...” That was and will always be the testimony of the Church of the Living God. We were sinners saved by grace. Sin made us wretched. **“DOGS!”** if you please.

Not deserving of anything of God’s goodness or God’s grace or God’s love. But this is the message of Jesus Christ:

Rom 5:6 For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die.

8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.

10 For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having

been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

11 And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

Ruth should have been an outcast. Yet she is given the honor of bearing the father of King David, who is the model for Jesus Christ.

How could Jesus of Nazareth turn aside this outcast of His society? He could not and He would not!

Listen to what happens:

Jesus acknowledges her faith and delivers her daughter.

Matt 15:28 Then Jesus answered and said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

When Jesus responded to this "**dog**" of His society, He opened the door for His Church to do the same. Freely we have received forgiveness, healing, cleansing and hope everlasting.

Folks! I don't care how low you have gone in sin. His hand can reach you. And His church will receive you when you receive His forgiveness and cleansing.

Ruth represents to most theologians the Bride of Christ and Boaz as the Bridegroom. Church help me welcome the outcasts into the king's chamber. Help me point them to where the living waters flow. And somebody kill the fatted calf, the prodigal has come home!!