

Famous in Bethlehem

Scripture Reading — Ruth 4:1-17

“May you . . . be famous in Bethlehem . . . through the offspring the Lord gives you by this young woman. . . .” — Ruth 4:11-12

The story of Ruth is one of the Bible’s great love stories. It overflows with kindness and compassion. It also highlights how God’s people experience his sovereignty and tender mercy as he works through the lives of his people.

As Ruth had shown kindness to Naomi her mother-in-law, (Ruth 1:16-17), so Boaz, a close relative of Naomi, showed kindness to Ruth. Boaz’s kindness is not only personal but also flows from the kindness of God as he acts to provide Ruth and Naomi a home because they are his relatives (Ruth 2:20). Boaz acts as the guardian-redeemer for Ruth and Naomi, and the people of Bethlehem bless Boaz by saying, “May you . . . be famous in Bethlehem.”

We might never have given Beth-lehem a second thought if not for the fact that Ruth and Boaz, with their son Obed, became ancestors of David there (Matthew 1:5). And many years later, Jesus, a descendant of David, was also born in Bethlehem.

Jesus saves us from our sin through his birth as the Son of God and through his death on the cross. Why? Love. In fact, it’s the greatest love story ever! “God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16).

Prayer

Father, you honored Ruth and Naomi, showing kindness to them through Boaz as their guardian-redeemer. And today, through their descendant and your Son, Jesus, you honor us by redeeming us from sin! In his name, Amen.

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Printed on June 24, 2021

