

Ruth

In our first reading we hear about Ruth, a Moabite woman, who refuses to remain in her homeland, but instead clings to her mother-in-law Naomi in returning to the land of Judah. Ruth says, *“for where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God.”* In saying this, we get the sense that this was the original role of Israel.

In serving the one true God, and living virtuously, Israel was called to draw the surrounding nations into that same worship. Obviously, this did not happen as we learn of the frequent relapses into idolatry in the Book of Judges. Nonetheless, with Ruth we have a beautiful soul who is committed to knowing the Lord in leaving her people and wanting to know the one, true God.

And if you keep reading the little book – only four chapters long – you learn how God rewards Ruth for her faithfulness. He gives Ruth and her mother-in-law, Naomi, a place to stay, food for them to eat, and eventually, even a husband and child for Ruth.

At the end of the book, the author provides a little genealogy for us so that we know just a blessed Ruth will be because of her faithfulness. At the end of the book, we learn that Ruth bore a son named Obed, who bore a son named Jesse. And Jesse, bore a son named David – the most celebrated king in Israel.

Ruth, then, is the great-grandmother of the great King David – who was greatly loved by the Jewish people. It is really something that a Moabite woman is in the lineage of the great king David, and eventually the Lord Jesus Christ as we learn at the beginning of Matthew’s Gospel.

For us today, Ruth can help us see that despite our background or our social-economic class, God can do great things if we remain faithful. Certainly the odds were against Ruth – she had no idea where the Lord was leading them, what the people were like, or even how to worship as the Israelites had been accustomed to do. However, she clung in faithfulness to Naomi and in the end, she was greatly rewarded. We pray and hope that like Ruth, if we remain faithful to the Lord, while there will be bumps in the road, He will greatly reward us with a greater participation in Himself.