**RUTH LESSON**

**MARIETTA SQUARE MIDWEEK**

**20 March 2019**

**Setting**

* *Elimelekh* (Hebrew: “My God is King)”—connection with Judges
* Back to **Judges 17:6—18:1—19:1—21:25**
* Then look ahead:
  + Obed is David’s grandfather, Ruth his great grandmother
  + Bethlehem, city of David
* Consider Yahweh’s promise to Abraham (Gen 12)—the grand theme of Gentile inclusion in the covenant.
* Now we have set the book in historical biblical context.

**Narrative**

* Basic narrative
  + Famine — **1:1-5** & Flight — **1:6-18**
  + Return & Reconnection — **1:19-22**
* Step of faith of Naomi
* Conversion of Ruth
* Faithfulness of Bethlehem
* Marriage of Boaz
  + Serious about family responsibility—even though it may not have been convenient.
  + DJ letter (8 similarities)—"Love, Boaz"
* Birth of Obed — why important?
* Big question: Is there a future for God’s people?

**Conclusions**

1. **Ruth**
   1. A great model for women and men alike!
   2. Yet if this is a love story, it’s Yahweh/Israel, not Boaz/Ruth.
2. **God** 
   1. Scripture does not portray a savage tribal God who blesses only one ethnic group! God’s purposes are universal!
   2. Yahweh works amidst chaos.
      1. God’s people
         1. Judges period
         2. Middle Ages
         3. Our own churches
      2. Chaos in God’s people’s lives
         1. Health
         2. Aged parents
         3. Children
         4. Special issues
         5. Financial surprises
         6. Relationship chaos
   3. Yahweh works amidst pain.
      1. Death
         1. Loss of spouse
         2. Loss of children
         3. Loss of parents
      2. Other losses
         1. Loss of homeland
         2. Loss of ministry purpose?
   4. Yahweh works amidst hopelessness.
      * 1. Life is transposed into a minor key.
        2. Skies tend to be gray — dark gray — more than azure blue.
3. **Boaz as a Christ-figure.**
   1. Saves, protects, brings into family.
   2. Kinsman-Redeemer
   3. No discrimination. All who will be loyal to Yahweh (true biblical faith, or allegiance) receive his blessing.