



Volume 16 Issue 22

May 30, 2021

RUTH DIDN'T KNOW

I am sure most Bible students are familiar with Ruth, the Moabitess who was widowed but followed her mother-in-law back to Bethlehem to live. Once there, she met and married Naomi's kinsman, Boaz. To their union came Obed, and in time she became the great-grandmother of David. It is easy for us, having read the story, to focus upon Ruth being David's great-grandmother and all that this would imply in God's plan for man's salvation. In fact, Ruth is one of only four women mentioned in the earthly lineage of Christ (Matt. 1:5). What makes this good lady stand out in my mind was her conscientious, considerate, and sacrificing attitude. Unlike us, who have the benefit of reading the book, ***Ruth didn't know what the outcome of her life would be!*** Still, she displayed an attitude that continues to shine for future generations. Like Abel, she "*being dead yet speaketh*" (cf. Heb. 11:4)! The first time we read anything of substance about Ruth is after she had become a widow. When Naomi

wanted to go back to Bethlehem, Ruth begged to accompany her mother-in-law (v. 7-18) when all that was promised to her was a life of poverty, living among strangers, speaking a foreign language, worshiping a foreign god, and no promise of ever returning to Moab. (So far as the book of Ruth is concerned, she never returned to see her family.) Such faithfulness to a mother-in-law tells me just what kind of woman Naomi was and how she conducted herself among her daughters-in-law during her years in Moab! Yet, our thoughts right now are focused upon Ruth. Such people as Ruth stand out and serve as good examples for the rest of us (Rom. 15:4). Just as she faced hardships and unknown elements in her life, so also it happens today. Isn't this the real challenge of being faithful to God? It is easy to be faithful to God when things are going well,

and we are not facing the pitfalls, challenges, temptations, and hard choices in life. It is much more complex when we are in the middle of enduring temptations, hardships, and challenges! It is at this time we need to remember Ruth's example of faithfulness. We would do well also to remember the words of Ruth's great-grandson: *"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me"* (Ps. 23:4)! While married and then widowed in Moab, while following a mother-in-law to a strange land, Ruth didn't know how her life would go. In like manner, we don't know how our life will turn out (Prov. 27:1), but choosing to be faithful to God through it all brings true blessedness. (Rev. 2:10; 1 Cor. 15:58; 1 Cor. 16:13-14; Matt. 24:13). — Jarrod Jacobs

The Stars of Heaven On January 5, 2015, NASA released the largest picture at the time of our closest galactic neighbor in the universe, the Andromeda Galaxy. The photo shows only a section of the entire Andromeda Galaxy and shows over 100 million stars. It is hard to fathom — 100 million stars in just one piece of one galaxy. Astronomers and other scientists estimate there may be as many as 100 billion galaxies in the universe! When I saw the

picture[1], I was amazed at what man has been able to discover. I was also humbled because such pictures brought to mind David's praise: *"Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite"* (Ps. 147:4). The pictures NASA has released through the years of our universe reminds me of the words of God relative to His people. Please read the following. To Abraham and Isaac, God said, **"Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be"** (Gen. 15:5). *"By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying **I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven,** and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice"* (Gen. 22:16-18). **"And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven,** and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 26:4). In addition to these passages, please read Exodus 32:13; 1 Chronicles 27:23; Nehemiah 9:23, and see God's repeated promises concerning His people being like

the stars of Heaven. Finally, I want to add Jeremiah 33:22 to our study. Though more than three millennia had passed since Abraham was alive, God still said, *"As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured: so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me"* (Jer. 33:22). When we read the New Testament, we can read divine commentary of Genesis 15 and 22 in the book of Hebrews. There, the Holy Spirit said, *"Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable"* (Heb. 11:11-12). As always, man is trying to "catch up" with the words of God. God knows His creation, and states things in a correct manner even before man understands it fully! God stated the promise of Abraham's descendants being like the stars of Heaven long before man even had a telescope! Think about it, God already knew how Abraham's descendants would fill the earth, and stated it before Abraham and Sarah had their son Isaac (Gen. 21:1-3)!

Abraham had physical descendants that became nations of people (Both "circumcised" and "uncircumcised" people, Gen. 16:1-4, 21:1-3, 25:1-4). Yes, conservative estimates would place the number of these people in the millions! Yet, when we read the New Testament, we see the full extent of God's promise. Read passages like Romans 4:12-13, Galatians 3:26-29, and I Peter 3:6, and be impressed with the fact that God's promise to Abraham continues to be fulfilled to this good day! This is because, in addition to the millions who were Abraham's physical descendants, beginning at Pentecost (Acts 2), we learn that every person who becomes a Christian also becomes a child of Abraham (Gal. 3:29)! Thus, God's promise to Abraham is fulfilled every time someone becomes a Christian (Mk. 16:16)! Are you a Christian (Acts 2:38)? If so, I pray that the thought of God promising Abraham's seed will be like the "stars of heaven" will humble you. Let us shine like the stars, and let us be grateful to a loving and merciful God who made a way that we can be saved (Matt. 20:28) and considered part of His family (Rom. 8:16-17) that is as innumerable as the stars!! - Jarrod Jacobs

FIFTH SUNDAY PHOTOS

Every fifth Sunday of the month, we try to highlight some of great things happening around our congregation that were captured through photography. If you happen to get a good picture of one of those great things, please feel free to post it on our Facebook page, tag us on Instagram (@wellsburgchurch), tweet us at @wellsburgchurch, or e-mail us at minister@wellsburgchurchofchrist.com with a little description of what is happening in the picture.



Little Roo is such a sweet baby!
We are so happy for Roland and Melody and continue to pray for wonderful blessings for their sweet family!



Paul does his best to fight off the remainder of cabin fever through March anticipating playing outside in warmer weather!



Sweet Ashby is so sweet enjoying her story time! We are so happy for Nathan and Shannon and pray for great blessings for their wonderful family!



It was a beautiful day for a bible study at Swallow Falls! We enjoyed the beauty of the scenery and were encouraged looking at evidences for God in nature.