

# W O R D A T W O R K

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Sonship Gift VI: Redeemed C

## SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1

Scripture: Ephesians 1:7, Genesis 45:45-46

Ephesians 1:7 says, *“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace...”* Redemption is a very interesting word. It is **ap-ol-oo-tro-sis**. It’s a compound word meaning ‘to release or liberate through the payment of a ransom.’ In effect Jesus has liberated us through the payment of His Blood. But redemption takes on various degrees of preparation in the lives of people that God uses, like Joseph. So we not only have to look at redemption from the perspective of being blood-bought by Christ, but also as agents of redemption like Joseph who endured a preparational price-tag to qualify. *“I am Joseph your brother whom you sold into Egypt. For God sent me before you to preserve life.”* Scripture is full of individuals God chose and took through tremendous adversity only to raise them up to a position of authority in a very critical moment so that they could redeem God’s people from destruction. Mordecai and Esther were such individuals. We see in Scripture that redemption is a two-edged sword. If we are on the side of God liberating us personally, then Someone else (Jesus) is paying the price. It is also possible to be the one that is paying the price and who’s being used as the agent of redemption. This requires qualifying for a position of influence during a critical moment in this end-time season that unfolds. Redemption, in effect, is a two-edged sword. The first edge Jesus paid for on the cross, inviting us into the glorious liberty prepared for God’s children. The second edge we, as God’s assigned agents, do the paying by what we suffer to qualify for a position of authority. It all depends on what God has ordained in the scope of our assignment and the preparational price to fit our end-time assignment! We are His witnesses and have to walk accordingly. It is always easier if someone else is buying the shoes. It is ten times more difficult when we buy the shoes that the end-time witnesses walk in! This is the pattern of Christ in Scripture. He redeems us and He expects us to pay the price to redeem others. All those who attain the testimony of Jesus qualify! Redemption should be viewed from two different perspectives.

## MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 2

Scripture: Genesis 41:1-4

Genesis 41:1-4 says, *“Then it came to pass, at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh had a dream; and behold, he stood by the river. Suddenly there came up out of the river seven cows, fine looking and fat; and they fed in the meadow. Then behold seven other cows came up after them out of the river, ugly and gaunt, and stood by the other cows on the bank of the river. “And the ugly and gaunt cows ate up the seven fine looking and fat cows. So Pharaoh awoke.”* Joseph had been incarcerated in Egypt. When the butler was released, he thought he was about to escape the false imprisonment that captured him but he still had two full years! God waited two full years after Pharaoh’s butler was redeemed from prison to set Joseph free. The unfairness of the past did not matter. Joseph said, ‘I’ve done nothing to deserve this.’ The butler promptly forgot about Joseph for two full years. Who was involved in that? God was! What can we say about a God Who was willing to pay the price to redeem us from sin, then could sell us into slavery to help others? That was Joseph’s testimony. It was God who purposed and ordered Joseph’s life. It was God who brought him up and ordained him for this. It was God Who extracted the preparational price out of Joseph’s life. It was Joseph’s blood in the street that qualified him to be an agent of redemption. Do many preach about this side of the cross? It is no wonder that we have people who don’t understand who God is or His plan and purpose. The most central truth in all

of Scripture is called the cross. In all of history the cross is the dividing line event that redeems failure. Thousands of believers go to church every Sunday and how many of them learn to carry the cross? How many Christians learn to embrace the cross? The Lord told us that in the last days not everyone would want to hear the truth. Are we willing to speak real truth about redemption? The cross cost Jesus everything. It will cost us something if we embrace the Spirit's leadership. According to the book of Revelation walking through the last days is very costly for the church! The church overcomes by the blood of the lamb and the word of our testimony, loving not our own lives even unto the death, Revelation 12:11b.

### TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3

Scripture: 2 Timothy 4:1-5, 1 Corinthians 6:9a

2 Timothy 4:1-4 is quite descriptive of church life in many, many places today. It says, *"I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at his appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word. Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up to themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables."* The cross is hard to hear. Grace is a much more appealing message. It is much easier to tolerate than to hate the evil that God judges. Many churches accept sexual sin that God forbids. We can't redeem people who won't repent. Sound doctrine shows us what to repent for. Christianity without repentance for sin is not Christianity. God accepts a repentant heart. 1 Corinthians 6:9a says, *"Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived."* Will we repent for violating what God refuses to accept in heaven? Jesus redeemed us from our sin but we have to acknowledge and turn from it! Repentance becomes a way of life for a believer! Deception seems to rule in many churches where they see no need for repentance! Some false prophets teach licentious grace where we only repent once and, that is enough according to them. According to God, repentance is a way of life!

### WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4

Scripture: Genesis 41:2-7

Pharaoh had a dream. In that dream seven cows, fine and fat came up out of the river. And then seven other cows came up after them who were ugly and gaunt. The ugly, gaunt cows ate up the fine looking cows. Then Pharaoh had a second dream. There were seven heads of grain that came up on one stalk looking plump and good. Then seven thin heads blighted by the east winds sprang up after them and the seven thin heads devoured the good heads. When Pharaoh awoke, he pondered the perplexing dream. Pharaoh had a problem. He needed an interpretation—Who could interpret such a dream? Can we imagine a circumstance that might arise that would cause a high-ranking official to search for us? What assignment does God have for us concerning the issue of redemption? We've been redeemed and Jesus bought and paid for that but there is another question that we need to wrestle with and that is, what is our personal assignment concerning the redemption of the church and the lost? Can we represent God as an ambassador of redemption? Will we be ready, like Joseph if an opportunity arises? Is the pattern of the cross being reproduced anywhere in our life concerning the issue of redemption? Is it possible in our adversity, even in the midst of devastating circumstances that God could be sculpting and shaping us to be agents of redemption? That is a question that some of us may not be ready to ask God because we are not ready to hear the answer. Is redemption a message we get to preach to other people and bless them with it? Or is it a walk where the price is extracted out of our life to bring redemption to other people through us? Are we ready to ask this question?

### THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5

Scripture: Genesis 41:9-14

Upon hearing of Pharaoh's dream the chief butler, once imprisoned alongside of Joseph, was grieved and repentant concerning his fellow prisoner, Joseph. The butler says, *"I remember my faults this day. When Pharaoh was angry with his servants, and put me in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, both me and the chief baker, we each had a dream in one night, he and I. Each of us dreamed according to the interpretation of his own dream. Now*

*there was a young Hebrew man with us there, a servant of the captain of the guard. And we told him, and he interpreted our dreams for us; to each man he interpreted according to his own dream. And it came to pass, just as he interpreted for us, so it happened. He restored me to my office, and he hanged him. Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him quickly out of the dungeon; and he shaved and changed his clothing, and came to Pharaoh.”* Could it be possible? Would God ever do anything like this with us? Would He use our past experience in order to bring redemption to others, perhaps many others. Joseph was assigned to redeem the lives of multitudes that would have faced starvation. That is a major league assignment on a national level. And that also has a national price tag. Let’s realize something. That price varies from top to bottom. It could be as little as the sacrificing of our time to be available or as much as being in jail for no reason! Jails come in various forms. They may come in a lack of provision or in affliction. They may come in a variety of ways. ‘Lord, turn our captivity into our anointing that redeems other people.’ He does it all the time. It is amazing how many believers walk through captivity of one sort or another only to get delivered and become an agent of redemption. What they were delivered from becomes their preparation and qualification for ministry. Let’s note that there is a pattern here. It is called the pattern of the cross!

#### FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 6

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 1:17

1 Corinthians 1:17 says, *“For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the Gospel, not with wisdom of words, but the cross of Christ should be made of no effect.”* In how many churches today is the cross of Christ of no effect? If we as leadership were doing a thorough job of Biblical preparation, Christians would know and understand the cross. There is a phrase that runs as a thread through Revelation—*“the testimony of Jesus”* is that phrase. Becoming a redeemer requires that we embrace a life-style that reflects the testimony of Jesus. It was for Joseph and it certainly can be for us. But do we see it as God’s Hand of preparation? Or do we see it as God against us? If we are looking at it as God against us and it is actually God qualifying us, then the real Biblical truth of redemption has been hidden. We don’t see the cross for what it is. We don’t recognize the principle of the cross as the real intervention of God that changes history. How can such eternal truth be hidden from so many believers. Probably because it was too pricey to hear, Peter refused to hear it and rebuked Jesus for it! Nobody among the disciples wanted to pay the price so they ran. All twelve denied Christ! They, like Peter, all declared their faithfulness and then promptly failed. They had to repent! That response brought the humility that qualified them. Repentance and humility are good soil in which to plant seeds of redemption. Are we living out the same preparational pattern without realizing it. We need to seek God about our response to major adversity. It may perhaps be the pattern of the cross and God’s preparation for our season to be an ambassador of redemption. Tough truth! Pricey truth! Throughout the Bible, we read of the warriors of faith who submitted to the cross. Abraham embraced it. Joseph yielded to each reversal and succeeded as an overcomer!

#### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 7

Scripture: Genesis 41:25-36

Joseph related Pharaoh's own dream to him and he proceeded to tell Pharaoh what his dream meant. Beyond that he told Pharaoh exactly what to do. Pharaoh was stunned and amazed because it made perfect sense. The word of wisdom had come to Pharaoh through Joseph. When Joseph’s price tag of adversity ended, a different price emerged. He had the responsibility of administering the dream as it unfolded for the purpose of saving nations. The price of separation, waiting, loneliness and isolation all fell on Joseph’s shoulders as he carried the weight of a foreign nation. He possessed a heart for redemption which was formed in the fiery furnace of a dungeon where slavery, servanthood and rejection ruled. Now Joseph qualified for being God’s divine Hand leading to the pathway for preservation in answer to Pharaoh's prophetic dream. Fourteen years of administering the dream that not only saved Israel but made Egypt the wealthiest nation of that era.

## SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8

Scripture: Genesis 41:37-46

Genesis 41:37-46 marked Joseph's transition from prison to being number two in command in the nation of Egypt. He now reigned over Pharaoh's house and all his people. Joseph's word became law in Egypt! By Pharaoh's own decree, only in regard to the throne was Pharaoh greater than Joseph. Pharaoh took off his own signet ring and put it on Joseph's hand. This ring was a symbol of governmental power. Pharaoh placed Joseph in a chariot as second in command and they cried before him, "*Bow the knee!*" The ruler set Joseph over all the land of Egypt! Pharaoh said to Joseph, "*I am Pharaoh, and without your consent no man may lift his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt.*" Joseph acquired a new name, and a wife and he began to administrate the nation of Egypt. He was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh and now he experienced fourteen years of the vision coming to pass. He realized that God was willing to spend thirty years of his life just in preparation to sculpt him as a redeemer for his own nation. Will we wake up and realize that we serve a God who's willing to spend decades forming and shaping our heart before He releases us to be an agent of redemption. It's enough to make us consider and ponder our personal calling and purpose. Our life is not our own. We've been bought with a price therefore we have a choice. Will we serve God acceptably? Will we say yes to the cross? Will we pay the price to follow in the footsteps of our Redeemer and lay down our life for others?

## MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

Scripture: Genesis 41:49-57

The Bible says clearly in Genesis 41:49, "*Joseph gathered very much grain, as the sand of the sea, until he stopped counting, for it was immeasurable.*" *Joseph had two sons, Manasseh, for God made him forget all his toil and all his father's house. The name of the second was Ephraim for God caused him to be fruitful in the land of his affliction. When the seven years of plenty ended, the famine became so great that other nations started coming to Egypt. When people cried for food Pharaoh sent them to Joseph saying, "Whatever he says to you, do."* Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians and the famine became so severe in the land of Egypt and beyond. All countries came for food to buy grain because of the severity of the famine. God set Joseph up and Joseph transferred the wealth of the nations to Egypt because of their storehouses of provision. What is that a picture of? That is a picture that is prophesied over and over again in Scripture for the end-time church. From Genesis to James that is a Biblical principle concerning the wealth of the wicked. But before we causally start claiming it maybe we ought to consider the price tag of Joseph. If the price tag of Joseph is the picture of what it takes to execute the anointing to spoil maybe we should think twice about whether or not we want to pay that price for such an anointing. Who knew that redemption could be so costly? The testimony of Jesus can only be gained by sheer obedience as we lay down our life for others! Do we recognize the pattern?

## TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

Scripture: Hebrews 12:1-4

Hebrews 12:1-4 is an exhortation to embrace the cross! It says, "*Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.*" How much opposition did Joseph face? How much by Potiphar himself who believed the lies of his wife and threw him in prison? How much opposition? The price of being a redeemer is incredible. The Bible makes it clear that we have a choice as to whether or not we are going to accept that price or not. Part of that process includes resisting sin. How many of us resist and how many of us yield. God didn't give up, He sent us His Son who paid the price to redeem us! Even if we are in a multiple repeat type of bondage, Jesus paid the ultimate price for redemption. He redeems us and does so as soon as we accept it. We can start taking the anointing of redemption to others. We have to receive it first! That is what Hebrews 12 is all about. Will we receive what God has done for us so we can be the agents of redemption?

### WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11

Scripture: Genesis 42

Genesis 42 gives us the account of Joseph's brothers as they went down to Egypt to buy grain. Joseph set them up by secretly restoring their money with which they purchased the needed grain. When they arrived home they were shocked to find the money with their belongings. So Joseph caught ambushed them with the money and then accused them and set them up when they returned that they must include their youngest brother along with them. Joseph knew exactly what needed to happen in order to bring the brothers into admission of sin and repentance. Joseph had a long time to construct an avenue of repentance for his brothers!. Isn't it interesting that God offers the path to redemption by acknowledging and facing the truth of our sin! We have to be truthful to ourselves and to God. We have to be truthful with others. Joseph set his brothers up to face their own sin. It had to happen. It was the price of redemption. Surely we will recognize that and agree to it so that we can shoulder the full measure of God's anointing to redeem. Joseph initiated a plan in which his brothers would eventually have to admit and take responsible ownership of their sin. God has such a plan for multitudes. Will we fully submit to it and go on to participate in executing it!

### THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

Scripture: Genesis 43

In Genesis 43 Joseph sprang his trap on the brothers who now had Benjamin with them and Joseph had to work very hard to hide his feeling because he yet had one more surprise to pull on them. He invited them to his house. They ate together and he set them up to acknowledge what they had done. Joseph had already recognized God's Hand in sending him ahead to redeem the Israelites. What do we say as we look at the truth of God's preparation and the price tag? Joseph was willing to forgive their treachery and become a redeemer. How many of us will accept such a weighty path? How many even recognize what's unfolding in front of us. 'God, deliver us from itching ears and from the inability to see Your ways and plans. God, transition us to a point that we can recognize Your Hand in our lives making us representatives of Christ in our generation!' If the church is going to be the church, we are going to have to stand up as agents of redemption in the last days. 'God give us ears to hear and eyes to see and an understanding, obedient heart, in Jesus name!'

### FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

Scripture: Genesis 44:1-13

In Genesis 44:1-13 Joseph commands a steward in his house to fill the brothers' sacks with food, as much as they could carry and to put each man's money in the mouth of his sack. Joseph also has his own silver cup put in Benjamin's sack. The morning dawned the brothers headed back to their father. They were not too far off when Joseph sent men after them saying, *'Why have you repaid evil for good?'* Joseph trapped his brothers! Joseph's servants searched each sack and the silver cup was found in Benjamin's sack. The brothers tore their clothing in grief and they all returned to the city and they were brought before Joseph. What a set up! It was a set up with a purpose and the purpose was redemptive. It was their moment of truth presenting them with an opportunity to acknowledge their sin. That was what God asked them to do, to be truthful and take ownership of their sin. It is in speaking the truth that we are set free and qualify to be redeemed and then to go on to become agents of redemption ourselves.

### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

Scripture: Genesis 44:14-31

Judah and his brothers came to Joseph's house and Joseph acted offended saying, *"What deed is this you have done? Did you not know that such a man as I can certainly practice divination?"* Judah answered, *What shall we say to my lord? What shall we speak? Or how shall we clear ourselves? God has found out the iniquity of your servants; here we are, my lord's slaves, both we and he also with whom the cup was found."* Joseph responded, *"Far be it from me that I should do so but the man in whose hand the cup was found, he shall be my slave. And as for you, go up in peace to your father."* Judah replied, *"O my lord, please let your servant speak a word in my lord's hearing, and do not let your anger*

*burn against your servant; for you are even like Pharaoh.”* Judah confessed and told the truth concerning the sin against Joseph those many years ago. He admitted their sin toward Joseph. Judah told of his father’s inconsolable grief and explained that going home without Benjamin would bring the grief of death to their father. Joseph has perfectly set up the trap by forcing the brothers to recollect and recount why the father has such deep ties with his youngest child Benjamin. It was because of the loss of Joseph. They were being forced to face the truth. Joseph engineered the perfect trap. Will we learn from what we find in Scripture? I trust that we will because that is precisely how God prepares some for His agents of redemption. An assignment of redemption on such a large scale requires an equally deep and large preparation. Repentance opens a flood of redemption!

#### SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 15

Scripture: Genesis 45:1-5

In Genesis 45:1-5 we are told, *“Then Joseph could not restrain himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, “Make everyone go out from me!”* So no one stood with him while Joseph made himself known to his brothers. And he wept aloud, and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard it. And Joseph said to his brothers, *“I am Joseph; does my father still live?”* But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed in his presence. And Joseph said to his brothers, *“Please come near to me.”* So they came near. Then he said: *“I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life.”* The dismayed brothers couldn’t answer because they faced their guilt. When they came near they didn’t receive judgment, they received redemption. *“And Joseph said to his brothers, “Please come near to me.” So they came near. Then he said: “I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life.”* What a statement! Joseph was, in effect, saying, what happened to me was God’s doing! Can we say that? Kenneth Hagin was near death with sickness as a child. In the midst of that experience God taught him faith. In order for him personally to carry an anointing to heal the sick, he had to wrestle with sickness for several years before the Word healed him! How many times have we seen that happen, over and over again! It happens with a variety of bondages. God sets people up to be redeemers by letting them taste the need for redemption. Joseph just walked this pattern and he declared it. Instead of judgment his brothers received redemption. Are we living the pattern that Joseph lived? Is it possible that we may yet see a healing or deliverance so that we can fulfill our destiny as believers? It is time we start looking at how God operates, and accept that it may be happening to us.

#### MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

Scripture: Genesis 45:6-13

In Genesis 45:6-7 Joseph says, *“For these two years the famine has been in the land, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting. And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.”* What a powerful statement! ‘God sent me before you to redeem your lives, it wasn’t you, it was God!’ How many times is this repeated in the lives of people. Over and over and over again the cross comes on us. And when deliverance comes the anointing to be a redeemer comes with it. Joseph is declaring that he has tasted the cross of Christ and now God has done it by His Mighty Hand and He’s done it through His divine intervention. The whole purpose was to save Joseph’s family and preserve salvation’s path through Abraham’s lineage. The truth of the cross unfolding in the lives of people has developed through the life of Joseph. Isn’t it possible that it might be unfolding in us? We should at least be asking, ‘Lord, am I living part of this pattern and never realized it. We may be stunned at the answer we hear from the Lord.

#### TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

Scripture: Genesis 45:13-23

In verse 13 Joseph said, *“So you shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that you have seen; and you shall hurry and bring my father down here.”* In verses 17-23 the message to the sons of Jacob was, *“Say to your brothers, ‘Do this: Load your animals and depart; go to the land of Canaan. Bring your father and your households and*

*come to me; I will give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you will eat the fat of the land. Now you are commanded—do this: Take carts out of the land of Egypt for your little ones and your wives; bring your father and come. Also do not be concerned about your goods, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.’ Then the sons of Israel did so; and Joseph gave them carts, according to the command of Pharaoh, and he gave them provisions for the journey. He gave to all of them, to each man, changes of garments; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of garments. And he sent to his father these things: ten donkeys loaded with the good things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain, bread, and food for his father for the journey.”* Joseph became the redeemer. What are we to become? What fruit does God want us to bring into eternity with us? Is this pattern unfolding in our life? Probably it is, to one degree or another. Let God show us and let’s walk it out without bitterness or defeat. Then we like Joseph will eventually be able to say, “For God sent me before you to preserve life.” That is an eternal truth worth living!

#### WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

Scripture: Genesis 46:1-5

The sons of Jacob brought their father down to Egypt to see Joseph. *“So Israel took his journey with all he had and came to Beersheba and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. Then God spoke to Israel in visions of the night and said, ‘Jacob, Jacob’ and he said, ‘Here I am and He said, I am God the God of your father, Do not fear to go down to Egypt for I will make you a great nation there. I will go down with you to Egypt and I will also surely bring you up again,’ and Joseph will put his hand on your eyes. Then Jacob arose from Beersheba and the sons of Israel carried their father Jacob to Egypt...”* God redeemed the Israelites in the time of great famine. How many people does God want to redeem and what is coming in the future that the anointing He gives us will cause us to be agents of redemption?

#### THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

Scripture: Genesis 47:5-ff

In Genesis 47 we are told, *“Then Pharaoh spoke to Joseph, saying, ‘Your father and your brothers have come to you. The land of Egypt is before you. Have your father and brothers dwell in the best of the land; let them dwell in the land of Goshen. And if you know any competent men among them, then make them chief herdsmen over my livestock.’ Then Joseph brought in his father Jacob and set him before Pharaoh; and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. Pharaoh said to Jacob. ‘How old are you?’ And Jacob said to Pharaoh, ‘The days of my pilgrimage are one hundred and thirty years; few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage.”* We serve a God that can cause you and I to bless a ‘Pharaoh.’ The question is, are we willing to pay the price that redeemers have to pay to qualify for the anointing to redeem? Thank God that Joseph did. And thank God that we are called to this very thing. The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. This means preparation for the future must include the willingness to accept the cross!

#### FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

Scripture: Genesis 19:30-38, Ruth 1:1-5

The story of Ruth is the narrative of an Israelite family who journeyed to Moab to flee a severe famine. Both sons of Elimelech and Naomi marry Moabite women. After the death of the husband and both sons, Naomi decided to return to Israel. Studying this account necessitates that we look at the history of Moab. In Genesis 19 we discover that both Moab and Ammon were born out of an incestual relationship between Lot’s daughters and himself after the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. These two nations have a parallel origin in history and are often mentioned together as the cause of Israel’s unfaithfulness to the Lord. It is amazing to see how two nations dedicated to the destruction of Israel were born out of Lot’s sin and consistently fought against Israel throughout their history.

### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

Scripture: Revelation 2:14, Numbers 24, 25:1-13

In studying Moab it was Balak the king of Moab who hired the prophet Balam to curse the children of Israel. When that did not work, Balam instructed the Moabite women to seduce the men of Israel and lead them to worship their idols thus breaking God's covenant so they could defeat Israel. This was so abhorrent to God it is referenced in Revelation 2:14 as a doctrine which Jesus hates called the doctrine of Balam. Because of this 24,000 Israelites were killed by the plague and because of this in Numbers 25:9 the Moabites were forever banned from the assembly of the Lord's people. When we look at Moab and Ammon these people groups are consistently enemies of God and their people are almost born with a penchant to seduce and bring destruction upon Israel and lure them into sin.

### SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

Scripture: 1 Kings 11:2-7, 32-24

A few hundred years after the Balam incident King Solomon would choose to marry Moabite women. These women seduced Solomon to worship their false God's and erect high places. Solomon's relationship with the descendants of Lot and his subsequent worship of their idols led directly to the division of the kingdom into the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah. This liason with the descendants of Lot contributed to the downfall of Israel. Moab used the same pattern as originated by Lot's daughters and they brought the wrath of God on covenant Israel. It is no wonder God banned them from the congregation forever, which was unusual. It shows a persistent, determined enemy and their origin. Do we see the doctrine of Balaam today? Yes, championed consistently by one political party whose world view increasingly rejects Bible morality as it applauds God-hating, God-mocking and God-robbing. The spirit of anti-Christ dominates educational, judicial and increasingly commercial institutions as well!

### MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

Scripture: Nehemiah 2:10, Jeremiah 48:3-4, Nehemiah 13:2,13

In the book of Nehemiah we read of Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite. A Horonite was person from a city of Moab. Again we discover the Moabites and the Ammonites seeking the downfall of Israel. Sanballat used every trick in the book to discourage Nehemiah and his group in their work including mockery, threats, attacks and blackmail all of which proved to no avail. Sanballat tried to lure Nehemiah into an ungodly alliance just as Moab had done on previous occasions. Fortunately Nehemiah saw through the scheme and would not even meet with the enemy. When this did not work the Moabites tried to tempt Nehemiah to sin by entering the temple in the hope the Lord would judge Nehemiah as he had the people of Israel but this too did not work. The war was not really over for Nehemiah because just when it appeared that Moab would fail in their seduction we read that quite a few Israelites married Moabites and Ammonites. In Nehemiah 3:13,23 this mixed multitude degraded the value of the Lord's people so that many of them could not speak the language of Israel but adopted the language and customs of the Moabites and Ammonites as stated in Nehemiah 13:24 To appreciate the story of Ruth we really have to understand the magnitude of hatred that both the Moabites and the Ammonites had for the Israelites. It was a lifelong opposition. Overcoming that was almost like a betrayal of the family that you grew up in, a betrayal of her heritage making the story of Ruth all the more appropriate and poignant to the issue of redemption. God, however, looks for a righteous and receptive heart even in a Moabite or an Ammonite who had been completely banned from the congregation. God recognizes and honors that heart, even when it comes from a culture of the most idolatrous, hateful enemies Israel had ever known. Redemption truly is available for everyone and that is the story of Ruth.

### TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

Scripture: Ruth 1:6-15

When Naomi's husband died she could still depend upon her two sons. With the death of both sons, she was left in a strange country with two foreign-born daughter-in-laws and no protector or provider. She does the honorable thing and releases both young women to return to their families. Ruth 8:1 says, "*Go, return each to her mother's house.*"



*The Lord deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me.”* In verse 10 the women replied, *“Surely we will return with you to your people.”* Naomi argues and says, *“Turn back, my daughters; why will you go with me? Are there still sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands? Turn back and, my daughters, go—for I am too old to have a husband.’* She then says, *‘It grieves me very much for your sakes that the hand of the Lord has gone out against me!’...she said, ‘Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after her.’”* Ruth had every opportunity including the ties of her birth family that no doubt pulled on her to stay. This was a real choice and one that would have great physical, social and relational consequences because of the customs of that day.

#### WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

Scripture: Ruth 1:16-17

We get a glimpse into Ruth’s heart when she says, *“Entreat me not to leave you, or to turn back from following after you, For wherever you go, I will go; And wherever you lodge, I will lodge; Your people shall be my people, And your God, my God. Where you die I will die, And there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also, If anything but death parts you and me.”* Naomi witnessed Ruth’s fervor and determination and stopped trying to dissuade her from returning to her native land. Together they journeyed to Bethlehem. What we’ve seen revealed so far in this narrative is a pivotal choice. Ruth made a life-altering choice, *‘I like you better than my family. I like your God better than the God's of Moab. So I choose you! And I choose your God.’* In returning to a land of previous famine, they were the lowest of the low and had no future except poverty. In the natural that was what was ahead. They were utterly dependent upon God! The question was, would they find redemption in Israel? Would God honor Ruth’s choice to leave her family, her life, her culture and the gods of her land? Ruth was choosing sacrifice, humility and servanthood, embracing the cross!

#### THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

Scripture: Ruth 2:1-7

When they reached Bethlehem, they arrived during the time of the barley harvest. Naomi was related to a wealthy kinsman of her husband Elimeleh. Ruth said to Naomi, *“Let me go to the field and glean heads of grain after him in whose sight I may find favor.”* And Naomi agreed. Ruth went to the field of Boaz. She caught the eye of Boaz, and Boaz instructed the servant giving oversight to his field to be mindful and kind to Ruth. Ruth asked for permission to glean in his field and was granted the right to stay. The first thing that we see happen was Ruth found favor in Israel. A path of provision had opened. Now the question was, how wide would the door open?

#### FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

Scripture: Ruth 2:8-12

Ruth 2:8-12 says, *“Then Boaz said to Ruth, ‘You will listen, my daughter, will you not? Do not go to glean in another field, nor go from here, but stay close by my young women. Let your eyes be on the field which they reap, and go after them. Have I not commanded the young men not to touch you. And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink from what the young men have drawn.’ So she fell on her face and bowed down to the ground and said to him. ‘Why have I found favor in your eyes that you should take notice of me since I am a foreigner?’ And Boaz answered and said to her. ‘It has been fully reported to me, all that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband, and how you have left your father and your mother and the land of your birth and have come to a people whom you did not know before. The Lord repay your work, and a full reward be given you by the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge.”* Boaz saw Ruth’s heart, took notice of her honorable character and blessed her for it.

## SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

Scripture: Ruth 2:17-23

In Ruth 2:17-23 Ruth gleaned in the field and returned with grain for she and Naomi. When she set an abundant supply before Naomi, Naomi questioned her about where she had gleaned. In verse 19 she said, *“Where have you gleaned today? And where did your work? Blessed be the one who took notice of you.”* So she told her mother-in-law that it was Boaz. *“Then Naomi said to her daughter-in-law. Blessed be the Lord, who has not forsaken His kindness to the living and the dead!”* And Naomi said to her, *“This man is a relation of ours, one of our close relatives.”* Naomi instructed Ruth to stay in Boaz’s fields. Ruth followed her counsel and they were blessed. Naomi saw the provision of God. God had honored Ruth’s heart and exemplary character, and He had brought them both provision in their return to Israel, and Naomi’s home. Now the question was, where would God take them from here?

## SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

Scripture: Ruth 3:1-9

Naomi was inspired to take another important step. God had opened a door of favor and Naomi sensed the prompting of the Lord to walk through. Naomi decided to seek security and shelter for Ruth and herself as if Ruth were truly her daughter. Naomi says, *“My daughter, shall I not seek security for you, that it may be well with you? Now Boaz, whose young women you were with, is he not our relative? In fact, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor. Therefore wash yourself and anoint yourself, put on your best garment and go down to the threshing floor; but so not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. Then it shall be, when he lies down, that you shall notice the place where he lies; and you shall go in, uncover his feet, and lie down; and he will tell you what you should do. And she said to her, ‘All that you say to me I will do.’”* Ruth obeyed Naomi’s words. She went to the threshing floor and uncovered Boaz’s feet and quietly waited. Verse 8 goes on to say, *“Now it happened at midnight that the man was startled, and turned himself; and there a woman was lying at his feet. And he said, ‘Who are you?’ So she answered, ‘I am Ruth, your maidservant. Take your maidservant under your wing, for you are a close relative.’”* Boaz was both stunned and amazed and impressed. Naomi’s plan was in the process of fulfillment. The wisdom that she had been given was unfolding just as she hoped.

## MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

Scripture: Ruth 3:10-18

In Ruth 3:10-18 Boaz revealed his heart, *“Then he said, ‘Blessed are you of the Lord, my daughter? For you have shown more kindness at the end than at the beginning, In that you did not go after young men, whether poor or rich. And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you request, for all the people of the town know that you are a virtuous woman. Now it is true that I am a close relative, however, there is a relative closer than I. Stay this night, and in the morning it shall be that if he will perform the duty of a close relative for you-good; let him do it. But if he does not want to perform the duty for you, than I will perform the duty for you, as the Lord lives! Lie down until morning.’ So she lay at his feet until morning, and she arose before one could recognize another. Then he said, ‘Do not let it be known that the woman came to the threshing floor...’* When she returned with the measures of barley Naomi said, *“Sit still, my daughter, until you know how the matter will turn out; for the man will not rest until he has concluded the matter this day.”* What an amazing story of redemption was unfolding in Ruth’s life as she chose to turn her back on her family and all that was familiar. She had to choose to reject the gods of the Moabites and their ways. She chose the God of Israel, and she chose the harder path, the unfamiliar path. Ruth willingly chose to place herself in the mercy of the God. For Ruth God’s shelter and destiny were on the horizon and it was initiated through her humble willing heart. Will we choose God’s shelter and destiny for ourselves? Will we venture into the unfamiliar if that is what God requires?