

SESSION 1 | *January 7, 2025*

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

# *On the Potter's Wheel*



*with* PATTY STUMP

The following pages contain information provided  
by our speaker for your study and enrichment.

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# On the Potter's Wheel

## WEEK 1: *In the Potter's Hands* Session Guide

*"We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand."* – Isaiah 64:8, NIV

In order to form a vessel of use, clay on a potter's wheel will encounter being \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and placed in a refining fire in order for the finished product to be purified, strengthened, and ready for use.

*Yatsar* (Hebrew) means: \_\_\_\_\_

Life circumstances impacted three women, in three different ways:

Naomi: \_\_\_\_\_

Orpah: \_\_\_\_\_

Ruth: \_\_\_\_\_

Difficulties and spiritual dryness can trip us up spiritually. How we respond at life's intersections or perceived dead ends will be largely dependent upon where we place our focus, what we feel 'entitled' to, and what we truly believe about God.

Focus: Hebrews 12:1-2 \_\_\_\_\_

Trust: Proverbs 3:5-6 \_\_\_\_\_

Surrender: Galatians 2:20 \_\_\_\_\_

Will you resolve to surrender yourself daily to God, the Master Potter, allowing Him to press, pound, pinch, and even place you in His appointed refining fires, that you might be a vessel that's purified and strengthened, ready for use as He divinely appoints?

*"Then he said to them all: 'Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.'" – Luke 9:23, NIV*

# On the Potter's Wheel

## WEEK 1: *In the Potter's Hands* Growth Opportunity

**Day 1:** The story of Ruth is one through which God desires to speak to us about several significant matters pertaining to life, humanity, trusting Him, His faithfulness, and His divine providence/sovereignty. As we begin this journey, read Ruth chapter 1. After reading, take a few moments to note the following:

In Ruth 1:1, what are the circumstances that frame the verse? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What do you recall from our session together regarding "*the days when the judges ruled*" (Judges 21:25, ESV)?

\_\_\_\_\_

As chapter 1 unfolds, what are some of the significant events that have transpired? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Difficulties indeed!

What conclusion did Naomi come to in Ruth 1:18, and 1:20-21? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

There may have been times when each of us have felt this way. We can be vulnerable in times of pain, grief, loss, disappointments, and difficulties; and we may assume God has turned against us, but what does Jeremiah 31:3 state? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

God's Word is timeless and true. In John 16:33, Jesus spoke words that invite us to 'frame facts' regarding life in a fallen world: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What words of hope does he offer? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Isaiah 26:3 states: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What are **essentials** for peace according to this passage? \_\_\_\_\_

Making the *choice* to hold our thoughts captive unto Christ (see 2 Corinthians 10:5) is essential if we're to experience peace amid the difficulties, discouragements, and disappointments life brings. God is intimately acquainted with each of us (Psalm 139) and understands that we will become weary and heavy laden.

Knowing that we are but dust (Psalm 103:14), God provides for us in a very special way. According to John 14:16-18, what is that provision?

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In Matthew 11:28, we are also invited to: \_\_\_\_\_

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The landscape of life can feel barren and bitter at times, beautiful and abundant, chaotic and confusing. *In all things, hang onto God! "And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age"* (Matthew 28:20, ESV).

How does Ruth chapter 1 end? (See Ruth 1:22.) \_\_\_\_\_

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Conclude your time today by reading Ecclesiastes 3:1-11. End by noting the truth verse 11 states: *"He has made everything beautiful in its time"* (ESV). \_\_\_\_\_

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*"Though he brings grief, he will show compassion, so great is his unfailing love."* – Lamentations 3:32, NIV

**Day 2:** Begin today by reading Ruth 2. What do you learn about Ruth in this chapter?

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What insights are we invited to glean about Boaz? \_\_\_\_\_

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How did he greet the harvesters in verse 4? \_\_\_\_\_

Boaz was a **kinsman redeemer**: someone whose obligation is to "redeem", or act on behalf of a relative who was in danger or serious difficulty. In what ways does Boaz reflect Christ in chapter 2?

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Boaz's actions toward Ruth foreshadow the redemptive work of Jesus, the 'Kinsman Redeemer' for humanity.

Remember Judges 21:25? In contrast, the life testimonies of Ruth, and Boaz, stand out and bring God glory!

*“Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation. Then **you will shine** among them like stars in the sky as you **hold firmly to the word of life**. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in vain.”* – Philippians 2:14-16, ESV (emphasis added)

As chapter 2 ends, the barley and wheat harvests are finished. In the approximate seven weeks of harvesting, Ruth had gleaned enough to provide for herself and Naomi for a year—exceedingly abundantly more than she could have imagined! God is always at work, even when it may be difficult to see Him. Hebrews 12:1-2 exhorts us to take to heart two specific words of instruction as we run the course marked out for us:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Conclude your time in prayer, noting takeaways God impresses upon your heart:

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**Day 3:** Today, read Ruth chapter 3, where things take an interesting turn! In Ruth 3:1, what is Naomi’s desire? \_\_\_\_\_.

Naomi gave very specific instructions to Ruth. (It can be difficult to read this without imposing our current cultural immorality upon this scenario.) Naomi knew the character of Boaz; she knew him to be trustworthy, honorable, and God fearing. As Ruth is a widow, her next of kin bears a responsibility to provide and care for her. Boaz has become aware of Ruth’s character (3:10-11). *“All the people of my town know that you are a woman of \_\_\_\_\_ (3:11 NIV).”* God has tendered the heart of Boaz for Ruth. Boaz honors the cultural requirement regarding a kinsman redeemer, recognizing that there is another who must first be given the opportunity to be Ruth’s guardian/kinsman redeemer. According to Ruth 3:12-13, Boaz declares that if the closest relative redeemer defers, *“as the LORD lives” (3:13 NIV)* he will step into this role. How does chapter 3 end?

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Walking with integrity and waiting on the Lord can be difficult. *But God!!* Close today by reading Isaiah 55:8-13. There are several takeaways worth noting and acknowledging before the Lord in prayer. Enjoy your time with Him!

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*“Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD.”* – Psalm 27:14, NIV

**Day 4:** Before beginning chapter 4, take a moment to read Proverbs 31:29-31. Where is it that the character of such a woman is publicly praised? \_\_\_\_\_

(Remember how Boaz described Ruth's character in Ruth 3:11? \_\_\_\_\_.)

As Ruth 4 begins, where do we find Boaz? \_\_\_\_\_.

Boaz has positioned himself to address the closest kin; the guardian redeemer who is first in line for Ruth. In verse 4, how does the first relative respond to the offer Boaz placed before him? \_\_\_\_\_

Then, in verse 5, Boaz adds a bit more information; what else comes with the land? \_\_\_\_\_

How is Ruth described in this verse? \_\_\_\_\_. Yikes! Now how does the first kinsman redeemer respond? \_\_\_\_\_.

Boaz has wisely taken witnesses to behold the agreement; no room for error! As he now has the opportunity to be Ruth's kinsman redeemer, you can almost hear the cheers of the elders and people gathered at the gate to witness this God-appointed outcome! What takes place in Ruth 4:13? \_\_\_\_\_.

Ruth had been married for 10 years to Naomi's son, yet did not conceive a child. In these closing verses of Ruth 4, the LORD enabled her to conceive and give birth to a son. What was his name? \_\_\_\_\_. Obed also had a son: \_\_\_\_\_, who also had a son: \_\_\_\_\_. David was the most noteworthy of kings; Boaz and Ruth were his great grandparents! Now turn to Matthew 1:1-16. Where does this lineage culminate in the recorded genealogy? \_\_\_\_\_.

God is at work in our lives; and while our stories may seem insignificant, riddled with trials, or far from noteworthy, God has a plan and He promises in Romans 8:28 that \_\_\_\_\_.

It is fitting today to conclude by reading a Psalm written by David: Psalm 103. Thoughts? \_\_\_\_\_

**Day 5:** As we conclude our first week of Bible study, *On the Potter's Wheel*, we've glanced at three women in the book of Ruth who each had choices regarding where they would put their focus, trust, and the investment of their very lives. We've seen how circumstances can be daunting and devastating, as well as redeemed and spiritually rewarding. We've also seen how God is sovereignly at work in our circumstances. No matter how things may appear, He can bring about the miraculous from the mundane, triumph from trials, and heavenly hope amidst hardships and heartache. 2 Corinthians 5:7 states that: \_\_\_\_\_.

Conclude Day 5 by rereading Matthew 1:1-17. Do you see it? How lives upon lives unfolded and God moved in their midst, bringing forth that which He appointed before the beginning of time (Ephesians 2:10)? He calls us to trust and stay focused on Him, walking by faith.

There is a God-story unfolding even now, and your life and walk of faith are part of God's divine design. Ask God to speak truths into your heart that will take *deep* root through His Word, prayer, and the Holy Spirit. Be still, quiet yourself, and listen for what God stirs within you as you conclude today by reading this passage in Ephesians 3:

*“I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.” – Ephesians 3:16-21, NIV*