



Approaching God

Begin your time with an opening prayer

Take a moment to quiet your heart and ask God to help you experience his presence today. Ask Him to free you from any distractions as you begin to read and meditate on today's passages.

Bible Reading, Study & Meditation - Slowly Read the Following Passages

Start with Engaging the Text: Take a few minutes to highlight, circle, or underline key words.

Ruth 2:5-12

5 Boaz asked his servant who was in charge of the harvesters, "Whose young woman is this?" 6 The servant answered, "She is the young Moabite woman who returned with Naomi from the land of Moab. 7 She asked, 'Will you let me gather fallen grain among the bundles behind the harvesters?' She came and has remained from early morning until now, except that she rested a little in the shelter." 8 Then Boaz said to Ruth, "Listen, my daughter. Don't go and gather [grain] in another field, and don't leave this one, but stay here close to my young women. 9 See which field they are harvesting, and follow [them]. Haven't I ordered the young men not to touch you? When you are thirsty, go and drink from the jars the young men have filled." 10 She bowed with her face to the ground and said to him, "Why are you so kind to notice me, although I am a foreigner?" 11 Boaz answered her, "Everything you have done for your mother-in-law since your husband's death has been fully reported to me: [how] you left your father and mother, and the land of your birth, and [how] you came to a people you didn't previously know. 12 May the Lord reward you for what you have done, and may you receive a full reward from the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge."

Matthew 25:35-36

35 For I was hungry and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; 36 I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you took care of Me; I was in prison and you visited Me.'

John 4:3-26

3 He left Judea and went again to Galilee. 4 He had to travel through Samaria, 5 so He came to a town of Samaria called Sychar near the property that Jacob had given his son Joseph. 6 Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, worn out from His journey, sat down at

the well. It was about six in the evening. 7 A woman of Samaria came to draw water. "Give Me a drink," Jesus said to her, 8 for His disciples had gone into town to buy food. 9 "How is it that You, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" she asked Him. For Jews do not associate with Samaritans. 10 Jesus answered, "If you knew the gift of God, and who is saying to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would ask Him, and He would give you living water." 11 "Sir," said the woman, "You don't even have a bucket, and the well is deep. So where do you get this 'living water'?" 12 You aren't greater than our father Jacob, are you? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and livestock." 13 Jesus said, "Everyone who drinks from this water will get thirsty again. 14 But whoever drinks from the water that I will give him will never get thirsty again-ever! In fact, the water I will give him will become a well of water springing up within him for eternal life." 15 "Sir," the woman said to Him, "give me this water so I won't get thirsty and come here to draw water." 16 "Go call your husband," He told her, "and come back here." 17 "I don't have a husband," she answered. "You have correctly said, 'I don't have a husband,'" Jesus said. 18 "For you've had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true." 19 "Sir," the woman replied, "I see that You are a prophet. 20 Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, yet you [Jews] say that the place to worship is in Jerusalem." 21 Jesus told her, "Believe Me, woman, an hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. 22 You Samaritans worship what you do not know. We worship what we do know, because salvation is from the Jews. 23 But an hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. Yes, the Father wants such people to worship Him. 24 God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." 25 The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will explain everything to us." 26 "I am [He]," Jesus told her, "the One speaking to you."

Thoughts to Ponder - Making Room for The Stranger

Read the short essay from Claire Gibson - <https://shereadstruth.com/making-room-for-the-stranger/>

My husband and I moved into a new house last summer—well, a new house to us, at least. In fact, it is a very old house, full of drafty windows and narrow stairs, but all those quirks were glossed over with stainless steel appliances, fresh paint, and marble countertops. For us, part of the appeal was extra space to share, but we had no idea how quickly the need would arise. We hadn't finished unpacking when we learned that a missionary family from Spain needed a place to live for a month. Not knowing who they were or how much English they spoke, we agreed, then hurried to set up a bed and buy some extra towels for the guest bathroom.

The couple arrived a few days later with their 18-month-old son, who had bright blonde hair and a gap-toothed grin. I had only a few semesters of high school Spanish under my belt, but after just a few days, through smiles and hugs and the heavy use of words like *gracias*, Rebecca and I had become fast friends. We communicated with a mix of Spanglish and charades, soon sharing some of our deepest heartaches and joys, even though we only had the shared vocabulary of kindergarteners. It's amazing the connection God can forge between strangers.

I love that we serve a God who shows no favoritism ([Romans 2:11](#)). In a society where women were ostracized, Jesus frequently addressed women directly, talking to them about their most intimate fears and sins. He had no concern for His own reputation. He saw no difference between rich and poor, able-bodied and lame. Jesus made room for everyone. This makes me wonder, Is it possible that there is no such thing as a stranger? Is it possible that all the boundaries we draw are invisible? Is it possible that the lines of language and skin color and difference are passing away?

It was fun and exciting to welcome a family from Spain into our home. But as I read these verses of Scripture, I'm struck by how much harder it is for me to welcome in those "close" strangers who are a regular part of my life. The sister-in-law who doesn't quite fit in. The mother who doesn't live up to my needs or expectations. Sometimes emotional boundary lines are harder to cross than oceans. Yet, God is with us as we welcome those strangers too. He blesses our feeble efforts. He is with us when our patience wears out. He repairs the damage of lost years, and He quiets us with His love.

As Christians, it can be easy to isolate ourselves from the world. But God has shown us that this world is not our home. We, too, are foreigners in a strange land, living here only for a short while before passing on to our permanent address with the Lord. We, of all people, can afford to open our homes to the stranger, the ostracized, the forgotten. "For our momentary light affliction is producing for us an absolutely incomparable eternal weight of glory" ([2 Corinthians 4:17](#)).

Daily Reflection Questions

1. What do today's passages tell us about making room for strangers?
2. How can we make room for strangers?

Close in Prayer:

Read Lev. 19:34 - "***You must regard the foreigner who lives with you as the native-born among you. You are to love him as yourself, for you were foreigners in the land of Egypt; I am the Lord your God.***" Who is a specific person in your life who is a stranger, refugee, or foreigner? Pray for this person. Ask God to give you a soft heart toward this person and courage to make room for them in your life.