

9/9/18

The Woman Ruth

Ruth the Moabites is a beacon light of love and commitment, a beautiful love story between Ruth the Moabite, her mother-in-law Naomi and Boaz the Kinsman redeemer.

The book of Ruth bears the heroines name in the Hebrew canon found second in the third section of the writings; Canticle Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther.

1. The book is read at Pentecost because of the wheat harvest connection.
2. The book shows us God's grace to receive even a Moabite who pledges her love to God by faith.

We want to look at Ruth by the three-fold picture of her. Ruth 1-4

- I. Ruth the bride Ruth 1:1-18
- II. Ruth the servant. Ruth 1:19-2:23
- III. Ruth the redeemed. Ruth 3:1-4:22

I. Ruth the bride. Ruth 1:1-18

- A. The occasion that brought about Ruth's marriage was through compromise. Ruth 1:1-5
 1. The time that came to pass is indicated to be when the judges ruled. vs. 1a-b

- a. A time when every man was doing what was right in their own eyes. Jud.17:6; 21:25
- b. Some believe the record fits around sixth chapter of Judges, when the Medianites ruled for 7 years and Gideon was threshing wheat at the winepress.
2. The time was a time of famine in the land of Israel. vs. 1c
 - b. Many times famines declared God's judgment on His people.
 - 1) There was a famines in the time of Abraham and Jacob. Gen. 12:10; 43:1
 - 2) In the days of David for Saul killing the Gibeonites. 2Sam. 21:1
 - 3) In the days of Ahab through prophet Elijah. 1Kings 17:1
3. The man Elimelech of Bethlehem, Judah, went to dwell in the country of Moab. vs. 1d-2
 - a. Bethlehem means the house of bread.
 - b. Judah means praise.
 - c. Elimelech means my God is King.
 - d. Naomi means pleasant.
 - e. Mahlon means sickly or great infirmity.
 - f. Chilion means pining or consuming.
4. The tragedy of the family was grievous. vs. 3-5
 - a. Elimelech, the husband of Maomi died, she was left with her two sons. vs. 3

- b. Malon and Chilion married pagan wives in disobedience to God's word and lived in Moab for ten years. vs. 4
 - 1) Their names were Orpah, which means "fawn" or "deer" and Ruth which means friend or beauty.
 - 2) The Moabites were the descendants of Lot, through an incestuous relationship with one of his daughters. Gen. 19:36-37
 - 2) The Moabites refused to give them passage, bread and water then hired Balaam to curse Israel. Num. 22:1-8
* For this reason they were barred from entering the congregation of the Lord till 10th generation. Deut. 23:3-6
 - 3) Nehemiah recalled God's prohibition to those who had intermarried an Ammonite or Moabite after the return to Jerusalem. Neh. 13:1-3
 - c. The two sons died also at the end of ten years, leaving the three women alone. vs. 5
- B.** The release from marriage was refused by Ruth. Ruth 1:6-13
- 1. Naomi decided to return to Bethlehem with her two daughters-in-laws in view of her husband and sons death for she had heard in Moab Yahweh had visited His people by giving them bread." vs. 6-7

- 2. Naomi released her two daughter-in-laws from any obligation to her, so they could return to their mother's houses. vs. 8-10
 - a. Maomi expressed her appreciation of their loving faithfulness to her sons and herself by desiring that the Lord deal kindly with her son and her. vs. 8
 - b. Naomi revealed the genuiness of her love. vs. 9
 - 1) She expressed her love by desiring that both of the woman would find rest as they remarried. vs. 9a-b
 - 2) She demonstrated her affection by kissing them and they wept together. vs. 9c-d
 - c. Their commitment to Naomi was declared by their reluctance to leave, "Surely we will return with you to your people." vs. 10
- 3. Naomi reasoned with the two women. vs. 11-14
 - a. She asked them if she still had more sons in her womb to be their husbands? vs. 11
 - b. She declared she was too old to have a husband and if she did conceive would they wait without remarrying. vs. 12-13b
 - c. She expressed her sorrow and her much grief for their sakes, "No, my daughters; for it grieves me very much for your sakes that the hand of the LORD has gone out against me!" vs. 13c-e

* How ironic that their names tell their story, they lived in the city called “house of bread”, but did not trust God for bread as the others who remained at Bethlehem nor did they praise God through the famine as their God and King in a pleasant manner, but rather sought to take matters into their own hands and do things for themselves, being sick spiritually and consumed!

C. The loyalty of Ruth was far and beyond marriage obligation. Ruth 1:14-18

1. The widow Orpah wept again kissed her mother-in-law and went home. vs. 14a-b
2. But the widow Ruth cling to Naomi. vs. 14c
* The word cling means to glue together and is the same used for marriage for the husband in marriage. Gen. 2:24
3. The widow Naomi pointed out to Ruth that her sister-in-law had gone back to her people and gods and she should also. vs. 15
 - a. There seems to be a progressive revealing of the spiritual compromise both Elimelech and Naomi had made, first by her acknowledgment that God’s hand had gone out against her. vs. 13e
 - b. Then by her allowing the unequally yoked marriages of her children to

women of Moab who worshipped other gods. vs. 15b-c

4. The commitment of Ruth to Naomi is recorded for us. vs. 16-18
 - a. Ruth’s steadfast love is declared.
 - 1) “Entreat me not to leave you, Or to turn back from following after you.” vs. 16b-c
 - 2) “For wherever you go, I will go; And wherever you lodge, I will lodge.” vs. 16d-g
 - 3) “Your people shall be my people, And your God, my God”. vs. 16h-i
 - b. Ruth’s selfless love is described. vs. 17a-c
 - 1) “Where you die, I will die.” vs. 17a-b
 - 2) “And there will I be buried.” vs. 17c
 - c. Ruth’s oath was to Yahweh God. vs. 17d-g
 - 1) Her decision to follow Yahweh, rather than the gods of her people was a personal decision.
 - 2) Her accountability was to God who sees and hears all things, “The LORD do so to me, and more also”. vs. 17d-f
 - 3) Her escape clause was death, “If anything but death parts you and me.” vs. 17g
 - d. Ruth having made herself strong on her decision was no longer opposed by Naomi “stopped speakig to her.” vs. 18

Illustration

Into the life of Charles Lamb there came a deep attachment to a woman, but he willingly forsook marriage when he saw the need of his own family. Brother, son, and husband, he became the guardian angel of that home, and especially of his sister Mary, who was at times mentally deranged.

After she had stabbed her mother to death in one of her mad moments, Charles Lamb stripped himself for his sister Mary as Jonathan stripped himself for David; and for eight and thirty years he watched over her with a tender solicitude. A friend tells how he would sometimes see the brother and sister walking hand in hand across the field to the old asylum, both their faces bathed in tears. A sad story, and yet a grand story of commitment and loyalty. # 3209

This was Ruth the bride!

II. Ruth the servant. Ruth 1:19-2:23

- A. Ruth was willing to not be the center of attention. Ruth 1:19-22
1. The entire city was excited about them returning but Naomi was the focus of attention, “Is this Naomi?” vs. 19f
 - a. Ruth knew she was a foreigner.
 - b. Ruth knew she was there for Naomi.

- c. Ruth knew she had trusted in the God of Israel.
2. The response of Naomi was that they not call her Naomi, “pleasant”, but Mara “bitter” for the Almighty “El Shaddai” had dealt bitterly with her. vs. 20
 3. The widow Naomi further stated that she had gone out full and returned empty, since the Almighty had afflicted her. vs. 21
 - a. The word afflicted means to break or be broken.
 - * God at times has to break us trusting our own resourcefulness and self-dependence, that He might work in us!
 - b. The second proclamation, stated that all was due to the hand of God’s judgment!
 - * Both proclamations were acknowledgments they had taken their lives into their own hands and in their self-will did not choose to trust God nor obey Him.
 4. The women arrived at the beginning of the barley season towards the end of April. vs. 22
 - a. They had returned from Moab which means “of his father” describing the incestuous birth through his oldest daughter, which was displeasing to God. Gen. 19:36-38

- b. They had returned to Bethlehem, “the house of bread”, returning to a right and pleasing relationship to God.
- B. Ruth was willing to be the provider for Naomi.**
Ruth 2:1-3
1. The man Boaz was a relative of Naomi’s husband. vs. 1
 - a. He was related through Maomi’s deceased husband Elimelech. vs. 1a
 - b. He was a man of great wealth. vs. 1b
 - c. He was named Boaz which means “The Lord is strength” or “quickness”. vs. 1c
 - d. He was from Bethlehem, Ephrathah. vs. 2:4b; 4:11g
 2. The woman Ruth requested permission to go glean heads of grain. vs. 2
 - a. The gleaning was after the provision of the Law, leaving the corners of the fields unharvested for those who were destitute. Lev. 19:9-10; 23:22; Deut. 24:19
 - b. Notice she expressed hopefulness by the expression, “in whose sight I may find favor” implying mercy.
 3. The text says that Ruth happened to come to the fields of Boaz. vs. 3
 - a. Nothing happens by chance when one knows the Lord.
 - b. Nothing is overlooked by God when done to one of God’s people.

- 1) Ruth had committed herself to Yahweh rather than the gods of Moab!
 - 2) Psalms tells us that the steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, And He delights in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; For the LORD upholds *him with His hand.* Ps. 37:23-24
- C. Ruth was willing to humble herself.** Ruth 2:4-13
1. The occasion was when Boaz came from Bethlehem to his fields and took notice of Ruth. vs. 4-6
 - a. The relation between employer and employee was godly, despite the it being in the time of the judges. vs. 4
 - b. The inquiry was to his servant who was in charge of the reapers, “Whose young woman is this?”. vs. 5
 - c. The servant pointed out that Ruth had come back with Naomi from the country of Moab. vs. 6
 2. The woman Ruth had pleaded for permission to glean. vs. 7
 - a. She revealed her humility by her words, “Please let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves.” vs. 7a-b
 - 1) The very task was a mark of poverty and destitution.

- 2) The fact that she was the enemy of Israel magnified her humility.
- b. She revealed her earnestness to work by her actions, “So she came till now, though she rested a little in the house.” vs. 7c-d
- 3. The woman Ruth was not publicizing what she had done for Naomi, but it was widely known. vs. 8-14
 - a. Boaz invited her to remain in the his fields for safety among the women, in view of her care for Maomi, affirming her acceptance. vs. 8
 - b. Boaz assured her of her protection from the young men also and to quench her thirst as need by the drawing of water by the young men. vs. 9
 - 1) She expressed her unworthiness by falling on her face and bowing down to the ground. vs. 10a-b
 - 2) She declared gratitude by her words, “Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?” vs. 10c-f
 - * When word and deed become one, that is truth! 1Jn. 3:18
 - c. Boaz declared to her all that had been told him about her benevolence. vs. 11-13
 - 1) Her cleaving to Naomi and the abandoning of her own family and

- native land, willing to come to a people she did not know. vs. 11
 - a)) She was reaping to the kindness she had sown.
 - b)) She was a model of faithful love putting others first.
 - c)) She was courageous knowing she could have been treated as an outcast being a Moabitess.
 - 2) Her recompense was from God. vs. 12
 - a)) Boaz declares his desire that the Lord give her a full reward her for her work of love. vs. 12a-b
 - b)) Boaz tells her that she had actually come for refuge under the wings of the Lord God of Israel. vs. 12c
 - 3) Her humbleness was consistent, expressed by her gratitude and recognition of his favor, though she was a foreigner. vs. 13
- D. Ruth was willing to receive kindness. Ruth 2:14-23**
- 1. Boaz yielded himself as the instrument of God to reward Ruth. vs. 14-16
 - a. He gave her a place of acceptance before the reapers at meal time by his personal invitation and identifying with her. vs. 14
 - b. He commanded his young men to let her glean even among the sheaves and not to reproach her. vs. 15

- c. He told them also to purposely drop grain from the bundles so she would have a abundant reaping and not to rebuke her. vs. 16
* God uses His people to bless others as an extension of God's love!
- 2. Boaz's was seen as the Kinsman redeemer. vs. 17-23
 - a. Ruth gleaned till the evening and beat out what she had gleaned, about an ephah which is about six and a half to seven and a half gallons ? vs. 17
* Enough for about five days for her and Naomi.
 - b. Ruth returned to the city and saw what she had gleaned and she gave Naomi the food she had saved. vs. 18, 14f-h
* Her love for Naomi was great and selfless on a consistent basis!
 - c. Ruth's mother-in-law was astonished at her abundant reaping and asked where she had gleaned, blessing the one who had noticed her at which time Ruth declared that she had worked with a man named Boaz. vs. 19
 - d. Ruth's mother-in-law instantly prayed a blessing on Boaz from the Lord for not forsaking kindness to the living and the dead and told Ruth that he was a close relative, a kinsman "goel". vs. 20

- e. Ruth told Naomi of his words to stay close to the young men till the end of all his harvest, which Naomi concurred, so Ruth stayed close to the young women of Boaz and dwelt with her mother-in-law. vs. 21-23

Illustration

Remember the true evidence of a servant is when you are treated like a servant and don't like it or are upset!

This was Ruth the servant!

III. Ruth the redeemed. Ruth 3:1-4:22

- A. Ruth was a woman of faith. Ruth 3:1-4
 - 1. Naomi was going to instruct Ruth in order to seek rest for her. vs. 1-2
 - a. The indication was to have Boaz redeem the property and marry Ruth. vs. 1
 - b. The man would be winnowing at night at the threshing floor. vs. 2
 - 2. Naomi gave Ruth advice according to the customs of the day. vs. 2-4
 - a. She was to get prepared by washing, anointing herself and putting on her best garment to go down to the threshing floor. vs. 3a-b
* Separating the wheat from the chaff by throwing it up in air!

- b. She was not to make herself known till the men had finished eating and drinking. vs. 3c
- c. She was then to notice where Boaz lied down, uncover his feet and lie down by his feet until he told her what to do. vs. 4

B. Ruth was a woman of obedience. Ruth 3:5-18

- 1. She told Naomi that all she had instructed she would do. vs. 5
 - * The instructions had nothing to do with being immoral or seducing Boaz.
- 2. She acted in accord with the custom of the land revealed to her. vs. 6-9
 - a. She did according to Naomi's instructions. vs. 6-7
 - b. She being at his feet startled Boaz about midnight. vs. 8
 - c. She was asked who she was and identifying herself as Ruth his maidservant asked Boaz to fulfill the duty of a kinsman "goel". vs. 9
 - 1) The phrase "take your maidservant under you wing" was a cultural expression for redemption. Lev. 25:25, 28, 48-49
 - 2) The identity is clear "a close relative" means "the goel" the one to redeem her out of poverty and debt. Ruth 3:12, 13; 4:1, 3, 6, 8, 14

- * Even to the present day when a Jew marries a woman he throws the skirt or end of his talith over her, to signify he has taken her under his protection.
- 3. Ruth was assured by Boaz he would attempt to fulfill the duty of a kinsman. vs. 10-18
 - a. She was commended for her kindness. vs. 10
 - 1) He blessed her in the Lord. vs. 10a-b
 - 2) He declared that she had shown more kindness now at the end than at the beginning of her kindness in that she did not choose to go after a younger man whether poor or rich. vs. 10c-d
 - * The implication being that Boaz was no spring chicken but in fact much older than Ruth.
 - b. Ruth was told by Boaz she was not to fear for he would do all she had requested and all the people of Bethlehem knew she was a virtuous woman. vs. 11
 - * At times pagans put Christians to shame!
 - c. Ruth was informed by Boaz that he truly was a "goel" in line but there was one who had the right before him and if he chose to exercise his right that was the way it would be, but if not he swore by the Lord that he would perform the duty

and told her to lie down till morning. vs. 12-13

- 1) The redeemer of property and person. Lev. 25:25-28, 47-48; Deut. 25:5-10
- 2) The redeemer at the year of jubilee. Lev. 25:10, 13-16, 24-28
- 3) The avenger of blood. Num. 35:19
- d. Ruth and Boaz arose before dawn so as not to be noticed and he gave her six ephahs of barley to return to the city. vs. 14-15
- e. Ruth communicated to Naomi the message of Boaz when she arrived at home. vs. 16-18
 - 1) She told her all Boaz had done for her. vs. 16
 - 2) She showed the deeds of Boaz, the barley. vs. 17
 - 3) She was assured by the words of Naomi, "Sit sell, 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". vs. 18

C. Ruth was a woman blessed by God. Ruth 4:1-12

1. Boaz sought out to redeem Ruth. vs. 1-4
 - a. He sat at the gate, the place of judgment by the leading elders who presided over

the city and waited till the close relative came by to discuss the matter. vs. 1

- b. He took ten men of the elders to hear the case as they sat and proceeded to inform the close relative of Naomi's return from Moab and his right to redeem the she had sold, but if he decided not to he would then be the next in line. vs. 2-4
2. Boaz informed the kinsman redeemer of his conditions for the redemptive right. vs. 5-6
 - a. He declared to him that for him to fulfill the redemptive right, he had also to take Ruth as his wife and raise up seed to the dead relative so that his name would not die out of Israel. vs. 5
 - b. Boaz was told by the relative that he could not redeem the field and Ruth lest he mar his own inheritance and then gave Boaz the right of redemption. vs. 6
3. Boaz fulfilled the customary ritual for redemption. vs. 7-12
 - a. The provision was in the Law. vs. 7
 - 1) "If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the widow of the dead man shall not be married to a stranger outside the family; her husband's brother shall go in to her, take her as his wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. And it shall be that the firstborn son which she bears will succeed to the

- name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel. But if the man does not want to take his brother's wife, then let his brother's wife go up to the gate to the elders, and say, 'My husband's brother refuses to raise up a name to his brother in Israel; he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother.' Then the elders of his city shall call him and speak to him. But if he stands firm and says, 'I do not want to take her,' "then his brother's wife shall come to him in the presence of the elders, remove his sandal from his foot, spit in his face, and answer and say, 'So shall it be done to the man who will not build up his brother's house.'" And his name shall be called in Israel, 'The house of him who had his sandal removed.'" Deut. 25:5-10
- 2) Jesus was confronted with this provision in the Law regarding the resurrection. Matt. 22:24
- b. The declaration was proclaimed by Boaz. vs. 8-10
- 1) The close relative gave Boaz the right, so he took of his sandal. vs. 8
 - 2) The man Boaz told the elder that they were witnesses to his redemption of all that was Elimelech's, Chilion's

and Mahlon's from the hand of Naomi. vs. 9

- 3) The widow of Mahlon, Ruth the Moabitess he had acquired as his wife to perpetuate the seed of the dead through his inheritance that he name not be cut off from among his brethren and his position at the gate to this they were also witnesses. vs. 10
- c. The people at the gate pronounce a blessing upon Boaz. vs. 11-12
- 1) That they were witnesses to all he said and did. vs. 11a-d
 - 2) That Ruth might be as Rachel and Leah, who built the house of Israel. vs. 11e-f
 - 3) That Boaz might prosper in Ehprathah, Bethlehem, and be famous. vs. 11g
 - 4) That Boaz's house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore. vs. 12
* Of whose tribe the Bethlehemites were, Tamar, one of another nation, as Ruth was, and from whom sprung a very numerous family, one of the five families of Judah; and they wish that the family of Boaz, by Ruth, might be as numerous.
- D. Ruth was identified with the family of God. Ruth 4:13-17

1. Boaz went into Ruth and the Lord gave her conception and she bore a son. vs. 13
 2. The woman pronounce a blessing on Naomi. vs. 14-15
 - a. They acknowledged that it was God who had not left her without a “gaal”, Boaz was the mere instrument. vs. 14a-c
 - b. They desire was that the child be famous in Israel. vs. 14d
 - c. They desired that the child would be a restorer of life and one to sustain her in her old age. vs. 15a
 - d. They pointed out that Ruth loved her and was better than seven sons. vs. 15b-d
 3. Naomi became a nurse to the child. vs. 16
 4. They proclaimed that a son had been born to Naomi, due to the fact of continuing her son’s name.
 - a. They named him Obed, whose name means “serving”. vs. 17d
 - b. He is the father of Jesse which means “I posses”, who was the father of David “belove”. vs. 17e-f
- E.** Ruth is lined up with the genealogy of Christ Jesus. Ruth 4:18-22
1. The line of Perez is the kingly line. vs. 18
 2. The genealogy is varifiable. vs. 18-22;
1Chron. 2:9-15

3. The name Boaz was the great-grandfather of David the King of Israel and Obed his grand-father. vs. 21-22
4. The very genealogy is found in Matthew’s Gospel, for the genealogy of Jesus Christ. Matt. 1:3-6, Lk. 3:32
 - a. Ruth is a picture of he Gentiles to be received by grace.
 - b. Ruth is a picture of the future fulfillment when we will be wed to Christ, through the redemption work of Christ.
 - c. Ruth and Boaz are a type of the redemptive love story of Jesus Christ and His bride, the church!

Illustration

Marriage to a person who has been honest regarding their past and shortcomings is like the redemption by Christ in that the person knows that the person’s willingness to marry them is not based on their purity or perfection, but love for them!

This was Ruth the redeemed!

Conclusion

We have looked at Ruth by the three-fold picture that we have of her.

- I.** Ruth the bride!
- II.** Ruth the servant!
- III.** Ruth the redeemed!