



No.12 - Ruth and Boaz - love made in Heaven

Ruth 3 and Ruth 4 "I will do whatever you say" Ruth 3:5

Her first morning in her new home, Ruth did not respond to her tiredness but immediately took up her responsibility to work to provide for her mother-in-law, Naomi. She 'happened' (**Ruth 2:3**) to stop in the field belonging to Boaz and he just 'happened' to come along (**Ruth 2:5**). Their meeting was not contrived or manipulated by either women, but it was the divine plan of the Sovereign loving God. Ruth had an opportunity to serve and that kept her right in the centre of God's will for her life. She had every opportunity to be full of self-pity and bitterness, like Naomi who had changed her name to Mara. Ruth chose to cling to the God of Israel

who she knew she had totally abandoned her life to, and He was totally trustworthy.

Ruth **walked by faith** in her God who had given her a new life, so she knew she could trust Him with where she could glean (**Deuteronomy 24:19**) and there would be plenty of food for herself and Naomi. She did not allow fear of attack to hold her back from obeying what God wanted her to do. Ruth faced each day with peace and contentment looking to God as the provider of **all** her needs. Because she had such peace and patience she was noticed by the most eligible bachelor in town, Boaz. Naomi instructed Ruth how to approach Boaz and ask him if he would be her kinsman redeemer (**Deuteronomy 25:5-10**). Imagine Ruth's happiness when he said "**I will do for you all you require.**" **Ruth 3:11**. Her wait had paid off but Naomi encourages her to just wait a little bit longer to make absolutely sure there are no problems from another kinsman redeemer (**Ruth 3:18**).

"So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife...she gave birth to a son." Ruth 4:13

It is so much easier to look at life's setbacks from the other side when we can look at the bigger picture, which God sees all the time. We can then see where the right decisions were made and where the mistakes were made. Ruth must have been so grateful to God that by His grace she had decided to go with Naomi, as with her new baby and wonderful husband she would not have wanted to be anywhere else. All the time of heartbreak and hard work must have paled into insignificance, when looking into the eyes of her precious son, Obed.

These events are recorded as part of God's preparation for the birth of David and Jesus, the promised Messiah (**Ruth 4:18-22**). Just as Ruth could not see the full purpose of her life in the light of eternity but had to make choices with God's written values in mind: So we too cannot afford to live for short term gain and expect to get away with it in the long-term. God has laid down standards of morality for all relationships and we have to live by them for our own good. God is **not** a great big ogre trying to deprive us of all pleasure and so give us a long list of don'ts. He longs for us to experience true love and harmony, and His plan is for this to take place within the security and comfort of marriage.

Choosing a Boaz

Boaz would be a good husband because he:-

- Treated her with respect
- Cared - Gentle, Watching, Reputation (**Ruth 2: 8-15; Ruth 3:14**)
- Provided for her and her mother-in-law (**Ruth 2:14; 3:15**)
- Took no advantage (**Ruth 3:10**)
- Very keen but not jumping ahead of God (**Ruth 3:18; Ruth 4:10**)
- Recognised her qualities (**Ruth 2:11**)
- Showed God was first by his talk (**Ruth 2:4; Ruth 2:12**)
- Generous (**Ruth 3:17**)
- Put her needs ahead of his own (**Ruth 3:13**)
- Takes his responsibility (**Ruth 4:9-10**)

If we marry as an incomplete person we will be very disillusioned and dissatisfied, as we are missing total abandonment to Jesus and we are looking to our partner to fulfil us and that is something he can never do. Likewise we cannot complete him and make him whole, only his love relationship with Jesus will do that for him. If our relationship with Jesus completes us, other people will want to meet this Jesus and as they abandon themselves to Him He will complete them, through the Word, **2 Timothy 3:17**. They will be so fully satisfied like no relationship in this earth can give them. Our total abandonment will also challenge other Christians who may be content to just have a religious half-hearted relationship with Jesus Christ. God

is speaking to this world at this time to warn us that this half-heartedness is not good enough (**Joshua 24:15; Revelation 3:14-22**). The parable of the foolish virgins is singing in everyone's ears (**Matthew 25:1-13**) and a warning to all who are working hard for God. Also to all who are seeing great miracles happen in their daily lives, but do not 'know' the God of the miracle (**Jeremiah 9:23-25**). Ruth was so determined to be totally devoted to God and so we must be the same in our commitment to Jesus Christ (**Galatians 2:20**). If we do not want a mundane peaceless existence we must be sold out to the King of Kings and give Him everything, don't hold back. The choice is ours.

"...For my Maker is my husband – the Lord Almighty is His Name – the Holy One of Israel is my Redeemer; He is called the God of all the earth..." Isaiah 54:4-8

If you are in the position of trusting God for a partner, take this passage of the Word and speak it until God is your everything by the comfort of the Holy Spirit. When this becomes a reality to you then you will be in a position to meet Mr Right and he will not become an idol in your life. Our prayer at this time should be roughly "I don't care if I never get married, I just want to love You and please You, Lord." Surrender your dreams and expectations to the Only one who can be trusted with your desires (**Psalm 62:5-8**)

Never become attached to a man who you think you can change, you love him for the qualities he has now, not for the ones you hope he will develop.

We will make the right choice if we follow these points:-

- Total abandonment to Jesus (**Psalm 18:2-3; Psalm 27:1-5; 1 Corinthians 13:3**)
- Patience (**Psalm 37:7**)
- No compromise – God given guidelines (**Joshua 23:12-13; 2 Corinthians 6:14-17**)
- Humility, acceptance of God's plan (**Psalm 62:1; Philippians 4:11-13**)
- Joy even in trials (**James 1:2-4**)
- No manipulation (**Ruth 2:3; Proverbs 16:2**)
- Faith (**Hebrews 11:6**)
- Care for others first (**Isaiah 50:4; Proverbs 15:4**)

We have a kinsman redeemer in Jesus Christ, who though He was God came to earth as a man in order to save us from the guarantee of hell. By His death on the Cross, He has redeemed us, bought us back, from sin and hopelessness and so purchased us to be His own personal possession (**1 Peter 1:18-19**). This guarantees our eternal home for the future (**John 14:1-3**) and hope, security and real love here.

Why do we not obey God?

- I don't recognise His character and amazing Love, **1 John 3:1-2**.
- I want my own way – mind and body! **Romans 7:15-19; Romans 7:24-25; Romans 8:1-2**.
- Think I know what is best, **Proverbs 1:22**.
- No 'fear' of the Lord, **Job 28:28; Psalm 19:9; Isaiah 11:2-3**.
- Peer pressure, **Psalm 1:1-6**
- Not willing to wait! **Acts 1:4**
- Do not persist, **Romans 2:7-8**.
- Foolish, **Ecclesiastes 12:13; Proverbs 1:7**.
- Self sufficient, **James 3:16**
- We love our activities, relationships, and possessions more than God, **Deuteronomy 8:19; 2 Corinthians 7: 1**
- Don't recognise God's love for us, **Deuteronomy 7:9-13; 1 Corinthians 1:9**
- Play the blame game, **Hebrews 4:16; Philippians 4:8**.

No.12 - Ruth and Boaz - love made in Heaven - Challenge Questions.

1. What spoke to you most in the previous study about '**Ruth and Naomi**'? What changes are you making as a result of all you have studied?
2. Read the notes about '**Ruth and Boaz**'. What do you feel about the fact that God set Ruth's meeting with Boaz?
3. What circumstance do you have in your life, that looks better when you encourage yourself in the Word? As you look at how God worked with Ruth and Naomi does this help you?
4. Is Jesus 'your everything' or are you looking to your husband or a future partner more for love, than looking to Jesus? Be honest?

Read Judges 4

5. What is the name of Deborah's husband? What is her anointing from God? (**Judges 4:4**) What is her position in Israel?
6. Where did she daily sit and what did she do for the people?
7. What was the main problem for the Nation of Israel at this time?
8. What instruction did God give to Deborah regarding this problem? (**Judges 4: 6-7**)
9. What was Barak's response and what did he lose because of his immediate reaction? (**Judges 4: 8-10**)
10. What encouragement did Deborah give to Barak?

11. What happened to Sisera and who was the cause of it?

12. What were the consequences for Israel as a result of this action? (**Judges 4:24**)

Read Judges 5

13. What day did Deborah and Barak sing this song?

14. What does the song show you about Deborah's view of God?

15. How much emphasis does she place in her song about other people and about herself?

16. Is there anyone to whom you are a leader and you feel you are **not** being a 'Deborah' to them? Stop now and pray and if necessary apologise to them. Are you following a leader? How can you encourage them?

17. What has spoken to you in this study? Is the story of Deborah relevant to today? If so in your opinion how?

18. Write one short sentence to sum up the content of this study. Is there any particular verse that spoke to you?