

RUTH, A LOVE STORY

June 5, 2016

OPEN:

√ The book of Ruth is short ... only 4 chapters but what a difference the end is from the beginning.

– The book opens with 3 funerals and closes with a wedding.

– There is weeping in the first chapter and rejoicing in the 4th chapter.

→ A reminder that though we face difficulties in this life ... God is with us.

Psalm 30:5 NLT ... weeping may last through the night, but joy comes with the morning.

* We watched Naomi and Ruth make the 3-day journey from Moab to Bethlehem.

√ We heard the whispers when they arrived in town ... is that Naomi? 10 years of harsh difficulties had taken their toll.

√ Call me not Naomi (comfort, pleasant) but call me Mora (bitter) for the Almighty has made my life bitter! (1:20)

√ Jobless, no income, Ruth ventured out to see if she could find some food.

√ Unbeknownst to Ruth, God directed her steps until she found herself working in a field that belonged to Boaz.

√ It was love at first sight if there is such a thing. 3 months of courtship (getting to know one another) had quickly passed.

√ As the harvest season came to an end, Naomi encouraged her daughter-in-law to let Boaz know how she felt about him.

- √ Every night Boaz went to sleep, thoughts of the beautiful girl from Moab danced in his head.
- √ He being older and of humble character thought: she would never go for a guy like me ... she will go after a younger, muscular man ... I haven't a chance!
- √ That's what made the night at the thrashing floor so surreal ... sleeping under the stars, Boaz awoke at midnight and saw something that startled him.
- √ There at his feet lay a woman ... he would soon learn it was Ruth, and she had come to make known her request: "Will you marry me?"
- √ Boaz could hardly believe what he heard. It would be an honor for me to fulfill the office of kinsman redeemer for you.
- √ But there is a problem ... there is a closer relative than I ... by law he has first rights ... I will meet with him and see what he says.

Ruth 4:1-12 NLT ⁴ Boaz went to the town gate and took a seat there. Just then the family redeemer he had mentioned came by, so Boaz called out to him, "Come over here and sit down, friend. I want to talk to you." So they sat down together. ² Then Boaz called ten leaders from the town and asked them to sit as witnesses. ³ And Boaz said to the family redeemer, "You know Naomi, who came back from Moab. She is selling the land that belonged to our relative Elimelech. ⁴ I thought I should speak to you about it so that you can redeem it if you wish. If you want the land, then buy it here in the presence of these witnesses. But if you don't want it, let me know right away, because I am next in line to redeem it after you." The man replied, "All right, I'll redeem it."

⁵ Then Boaz told him, "Of course, your purchase of the land from Naomi also requires that you marry Ruth, the Moabite widow. That way she can have children who will carry on her husband's name and keep the land in the family."

⁶ "Then I can't redeem it," the family redeemer replied, "because this might endanger my own estate. You redeem the land; I cannot do it."

⁷ Now in those days it was the custom in Israel for anyone transferring a right of purchase to remove his sandal and hand it to the other party. This publicly validated the transaction. ⁸ So the other family redeemer drew off his sandal as he

said to Boaz, “You buy the land.”

⁹ Then Boaz said to the elders and to the crowd standing around, “You are witnesses that today I have bought from Naomi all the property of Elimelech, Kilion, and Mahlon. ¹⁰ And with the land I have acquired Ruth, the Moabite widow of Mahlon, to be my wife. This way she can have a son to carry on the family name of her dead husband and to inherit the family property here in his hometown. You are all witnesses today.”

¹¹ Then the elders and all the people standing in the gate replied, “We are witnesses! May the Lord make this woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah, from whom all the nation of Israel descended! May you prosper in Ephrathah and be famous in Bethlehem. ¹² And may the Lord give you descendants by this young woman who will be like those of our ancestor Perez, the son of Tamar and Judah.”

- * The theme is redemption ... the words “redeem” and “redeemed” appear multiple times in this passage.
 - “Redeem” means – to set free by paying a price. To purchase, buy back.
 - It is the major theme of the Bible.
 - In the case of Ruth and Naomi, the family land belonging to Elimelech (Naomi’s husband) had either been sold or was under some kind of mortgage.
 - Neither Ruth or Naomi had the financial means to redeem it.
 - Their hope and prayer: Boaz might redeem it for them.

(1) Boaz the business man

- * (Vs. 1) In Biblical times, business transactions occurred at the city gate.
 - Here, elders sat and heard legal cases and passed judgment.

- Fast forward to the New Testament. No wonder Jesus said in **Matthew 16:18 ... I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.**
- In other words: All the plans, schemes, decisions and even the final word of hell will not be able to overpower the church.
- * Once again, we see the sovereignty of God ... just as Boaz took a seat, along came the man with whom Boaz wanted to have a conversation.
 - Whether this was good planning on Boaz’s part (he knew the man’s schedule) he was positioned at just the right place.
 - He called out to the man, invited him over, referred to him as “friend.”
 - Before Boaz brought the pressing matter up, he invited 10 elders/leaders (Vs. 2) to join them.
 - 10 was the minimum requirement to officially conduct business.
 - One wonders if the man was taken by surprise, 10 leaders show up and sit in a circle ... “I guess you would like to know why I called this meeting?”
- * Boaz makes his presentation (Vs. 3 & 4)
 - You are aware of Elimelech’s land ... Naomi has returned from Moab, she is selling the land (she needs the money). I thought you would want to know.
 - Since you are next in line, you could redeem it if you like.
 - Boaz had his poker face on ... cool as a cucumber, but I imagine his heart was beating fast. (He hid his emotions.)
 - The man expresses interest ... I would like to buy it! (Boaz’s heart skips a beat.)

- Notice how he played his cards: He starts with the land and not with two widows.
 - He presents the positive and closes with the negative.
 - The last news would overpower the first news.
 - Ex. “I’ve got good news and bad news ... which one do you want first?” You heard about the doctor that told his patient: I’ve got good news and bad news ... Patient said: What’s the good news? You have 2 days to live. What could be worse than that? It has taken me a day to find you!

- The man is interested in the land ... he feels it’s his “lucky” day, he has stumbled upon a good opportunity.
 - Boaz is reeling him in. You can almost see the smile on the guy’s face.
 - Waiting for the right moment (Vs. 5) Boaz says there is just one thing ...
 - If you redeem the land, you get the ladies ... you will be expected to marry Ruth, the Moabite.
 - Her husband died, leaving her without any children. You will be expected:
 - ∴ To raise this child.
 - ∴ Take care of Naomi.
 - ∴ Marry this foreign woman from Moab.
 - ∴ Give the land that you redeem back to the first born. (He is to carry on the deceased husband’s name.)
 - ∴ Oh, and if you don’t have but one child ... they get your inheritance as well.

- * (Vs. 6) He quickly changed his tune. “I am not able to redeem it, this might endanger my own estate.”
 - He wanted the land but not the widow.
 - Boaz kept his composure but inside he was shouting hallelujah, yeeha!

- * To finalize the transaction ... to demonstrate the man had refused to perform the duties of kinsman redeemer, a sandal was exchanged (Vs. 8).
 - You might wonder, why a sandal?
 - **In the Old Testament, shoes and feet symbolized ownership and possession.** (*Pro Presenter Slide Bulletin Outline*)
 - The Lord told mankind to rule over creation.
 - David, the psalmist said: **Psalm 8:6 NKJV** You have made him to have dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet.
 - When the Lord sent Israel to occupy the Promised Land, they were told:
 - **Deuteronomy 11:24a NKJV** Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours ...
 - To give one’s sandal over was to surrender the claim to the property.
 - The man was actually saying, the property is yours ... I am surrendering my rights.

- * To make the matter official, Boaz repeats what just transpired, mentioning names, giving details so nothing is misunderstood.

- * Interestingly: The “barefoot or one sandal redeemer” did not want to jeopardize “his name” by marrying Ruth.
 - He wanted to protect his name and property lest he be forgotten.
 - He was afraid he might be forgotten, and the funny thing is we don’t even know his name.

(2) Boaz – the family man (Vs. 11-12)

- * The meeting concluded with the leaders praying for God’s blessings.
 - May she bear children like Rachel and Leah (of whom would come 8 sons/tribes of Israel).
 - **Children were seen as a blessing, not a burden.** (*Pro Presenter Bulletin Outline*)

Psalm 127:3-5 NLT ³ Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a reward from him. ⁴ Children born to a young man are like arrows in a warrior’s hands. ⁵ How joyful is the man whose quiver is full of them! He will not be put to shame when he confronts his accusers at the city gates.

- **Ruth would become the great grandmother of King David**, and she would be listed in the ancestry line of Christ. (Matthew 1:5)
(*Pro Presenter Bulletin Outline*)
- * You might ask yourself, what’s a guy like Boaz marrying a gal like Ruth?
 - Was he not concerned that the lady from Moab might tarnish his reputation? After all, Jews didn’t marry Moabites.
 - Boaz saw in Ruth a true heart for Jehovah God.
 - She had left her pagan religion and put her hope and trust in Jehovah God.
 - What you may have forgotten was who Boaz’s mother was ... she too had demonstrated great faith, left her pagan country and put her trust

in Jehovah ... her name Rahab.

- Salmon married Rahab, and she gave birth to Boaz.

→ Boaz had learned from his parents what God's grace can do.

- Like his dad, he married a woman with a past, but more importantly with a present deep love for God.

→ God prepared Boaz because he grew up in a family that loved the Lord.

CLOSE:

- The fact that God uses the Rahabs, Ruths and even Tamars of this world should give you hope.

→ Jesus came to redeem sinners:

Romans 5:8 NLT But God showed His great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.

- Not only does Christ redeem sinners, but He makes them a part of His bridal party ... members in his family ... and then He puts them on display as testimonies of His grace.

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Message Notes
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