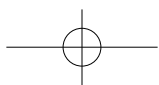
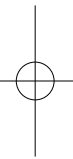
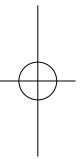
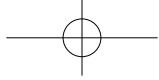


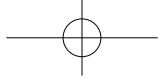
RUTH



WEEK STUDY ON THE BOOK OF RUTH

Written by Ruth Dickson

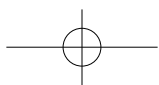
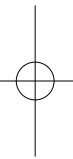
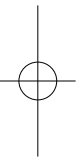
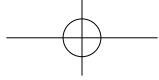


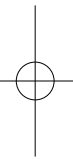
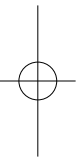
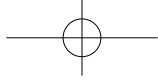


A Seven-week study on The Book of Ruth

By Ruth Dickson







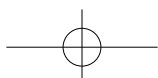
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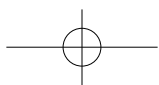
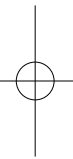
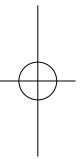
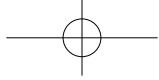
This study is a summary of a seven week teaching on The Book of Ruth.

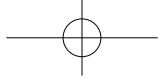
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This can be used for study groups and personal study.







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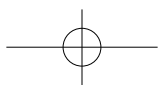
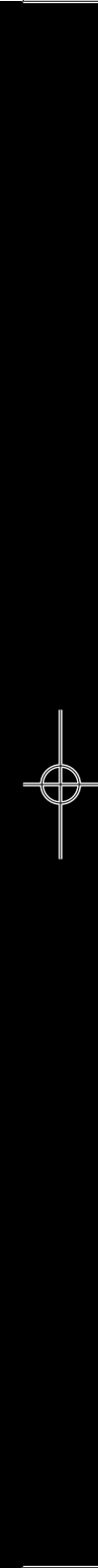
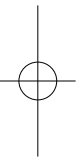
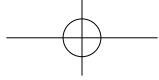
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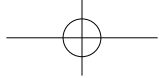
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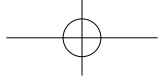
INTRODUCTION

Ruth is an extraordinary story of a very humble woman saved by grace. The Book of Ruth is a beautiful picture of God's grace towards sinners. Her story is loved because of the romantic story between her and Boaz. While this is lovely, there is a deeper message within these four chapters. It is about Redemption. Boaz became a Kinsman Redeemer to Ruth in that he was able to buy back all that belonged to her and Naomi. He would also continue her late husband's line through Ruth, genealogically linking her to Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ, like Boaz was to Ruth, is our Kinsman Redeemer. This is the central message within The Book of Ruth. Christ our Kinsman Redeemer has bought us and brought us into liberty, righteousness and life (Rom. 5:19). Ruth needed Boaz and we need Jesus Christ in our lives. Certain blessings and privileges come to all those who come under the redemptive blood of Jesus Christ. Ruth came into these privileges because she was redeemed by Boaz.

Seven Chapters: Seven Weeks.

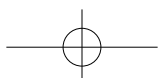
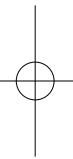
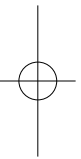
The idea behind this short study is to gain a deeper understanding into the story of Ruth. Your study time may be one day each week during your chosen seven weeks or a specific time every day or every other day, during seven weeks.

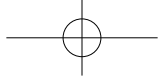


A Seven week study on The Book of Ruth

It is important to have your Bible handy to look up scripture and a note pad to make notes.

I hope this study blesses and enriches your life. If you desire more Bible Study, please obtain my daily devotional, "Oil for the Journey" it is available in three volumes. You can order this from GihonPublishing.com.





Week One

Lean not to Your Own Understanding.

“Lean not to your own Understanding” -Proverbs 3:5

“I wish I had all the solutions, I wish I knew the right decisions to make, I wish I could always make the right choices, I wish I knew God’s detailed and precise plans for my life, and I wish I knew God’s precise timings for the future...”

These are the questions we all wish we had the ability and power to answer...

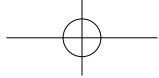
If we had all the solutions to life we would not need God. Despite the Serpent deceiving Adam and Eve into thinking they could take God out of the equation and acquire all wisdom and knowledge to themselves (Genesis 3:6) ... mankind still falls prey. We are still falling for the same deceit today. The sting in Satan’s attack lingers on and the only antidote is the blood of Jesus Christ. Please read Ruth Chapter 1:1-5.

This Chapter opens with a scene of a man called Abimelech and his wife Naomi leaving their home town in Judah of Bethlehem. They settled in an Idolatrous nation called Moab.

Why did Abimelech, Naomi’s husband decide to leave Bethlehem?



Bethlehem called; ‘The House of Bread’ had turned into; ‘The House of Scarcity’ because it was a nation under God’s judgment.



Why? Matthew Henry says, perhaps it was to, 'correct and restrain the luxury and wantonness of those that dwell therein.'

Abimelech was not used to hardship, shortage or living in lack. Many of the wealthy people of Judah, Bethlehem were land owners, possessors of vast quantities of farm land. They were basically really having a rough time and because of Abimelech's status within the community, he decided to run away. He moved to greener pastures with his family. They travelled to a town called Moab.

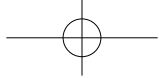
It was an idolatrous nation. Moab was a town booming in trade at the time and Abimelech thought the move was best for the family. Unfortunately, it was a very heavy price to pay for his decision. His move ended up in complete disaster, not just for himself and his wife, but for his two children.

(At this point I would kindly ask that you pick up your Bible for two minutes and read the story: Ruth 1:1-5).

I cannot count the countless number of women *and men* I have met whose homes have been destroyed because of their husband's or wife's pursuit of wealth.

What started out as something to better the family, to increase the wealth, ended up in physical and spiritual adultery, Ishmaels, divorce, shattered dreams and disgrace. The statistics are there to prove it.

The move of Abimelech (Ruth1:1-5) from the 'House of Bread' (Bethlehem) to Moab, an Idolatrous nation had far wider implications than he first understood. They obviously had strong historical ties with Yahweh because Abimelech was named 'God is King' by his father.



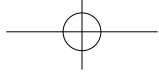
Sadly, by the time he had his own children he named one Chlion (meaning sickness) and the other one Mahlon, (meaning consumption). It was evident that there had already been a watering down of Abimelech's faith.

Naomi, however, was still very strong in her faith. Their moving to Moab meant they would have had to sever ties with the Israelites specified place of worship. Although his decision was part of God's great plan in the end, there are lessons to be learnt from Abimelech's mistake.

The place of Blessing can have trying times and seasons.

A trying and sorrowful time does not mean that God has left you! The place of Blessing, Bethlehem meaning, 'House of Bread' was simply going through a season of scarcity and this was just to bring the nation back to worship. Naomi effectively had to return to her first love (Yahweh) when all else failed.

She went back home and discovered that the Lord had shown them mercy by restoring prosperity to her home land. We should learn to seek God more during the trying times and not run away. In the secret quiet place is where we hear God speak. True fellowship and communion with God during discouraging and trying times is worth more than what money can buy. It is the place of restoration. It is the place where hopes and dreams are restored. It is the place where your faith in God and His promises are strengthened.



Trust in God's ability and not your own



As human beings we love to be in control and we love to figure everything out. We need to get to the place where we are totally dependent on God to work things out for us. He has all the solutions. Proverbs 3:5 says we are not to try and figure it out by ourselves, but, totally lean upon God. The next verse (6) gives the solution: when we acknowledge him, He will direct us the right way.

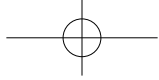
And even in that, you must be patient for him to work things out for your own good. He knows all things and searches all things. 1 Corinthians 2:10. There are some things that are so hidden within God and that you will only waste your time in trying to work it out yourself.

Let deep call to deep (Psalm 42:7) in the quiet place of the throne room. God will give none of His sons and daughters more than they can bear. He will always give them enough Grace to go through the trial.

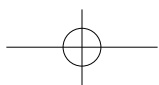
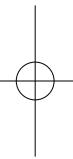
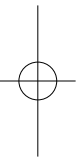
The Grace of Humility

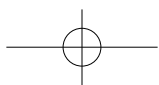
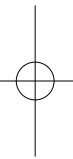
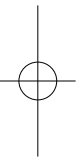
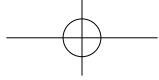


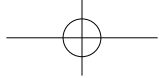
We can return to God in Humility when we know we have made mistakes. Only God can give us the power to both acknowledge our sin and come back to Him. Grace is that undeserved favour, given by God: without it being earned in any way. The power to lean totally on Him and cease from leaning on our own understanding, is a Grace given by Almighty God. It is God who determines the measure in which it is given. It is free of any human influence and not dependent on your own worthiness. No matter how far you have



gone in relying on your own abilities, His Grace is totally sufficient for you. Jeremiah 31:3 says, 'I have loved you with an everlasting love.'







Week Two *Return by The Narrow Path*

Can I build my life again...? Will this night ever turn into day? Surely there is hope for tomorrow...? Where do I go from here...? Surely I can start over? Is there a God who can see my grief and affliction?

'To every-thing there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven...' - Ecc.3:1-8

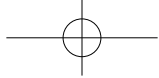
These are some of the questions that Naomi, the widow of Abimelech must have asked herself. Abimelech's decision to move to Moab, based on temporary worldly pleasures, ended in devastation for the whole family.

His choice of the broad way, a journey to the land of Idols, seemed promising at first...

Naomi had come to the place of complete brokenness and hopelessness. Every-thing that framed her world had crumbled. All she had left were broken dreams and shattered pieces all around her. Her husband was her security, he provided for all her needs. He meant every-thing to her, if he asked her to jump, she would gladly say, how high. Nothing could have prepared her for his sudden departure. Naomi, naturally, was devastated... She was a poor widow, bereft of everything she held dear.

She left home, (Bethlehem), full and now she found herself completely empty (Ruth 1:1-5).

When life dishes out sour lemons instead of a wholesome meal it can be devastating. Grief and sadness impact people differently. Some



people are able to disguise their wounds and carry on as normal, while others run to the nearest place of comfort and consolation. In the case of Naomi, she ran home, to the place she knew best. To the place where Yahweh was worshipped, the place of God's blessing. Naomi had always been a woman of faith. The arms of the loving Saviour are always open to those who are weary and in need of rest.

“Come to me, all ye who labour, and are burdened, and I will give you rest” - Matt. 11:28

The Spirit of God comforts and consoles in times of trouble. Naomi could feel the comforting voice of the Holy Spirit drawing her back to the place of worship. Even though the journey there would be through excruciating pain, God gave her the power to do it. She could never have made it in her own strength.

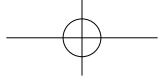
Every person that submits to the authority of Jesus Christ does not do so in their own strength, but by the power of God that works within them. Salvation is by grace and not by the works of human hands – Eph. 2:9.

There was something far greater than what Ruth could perceive, with her physical senses.

‘We know all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose’ -Rom. 8:28.

Whatever the degree of the affliction or trial the Christian goes through, God is able to deliver.

‘For what if some were without faith? Shall their want of faith make none effect the faithfulness of God? -Rom.3:3. Though in tears



and sorrow, she pressed on and found consolation in the God of all comfort and strength. God draws His children to Himself regardless of what is happening externally around them.

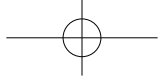
The Narrow Path

‘Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction and there are many who go in by it’ - Matthew 7:13-14, Luke 13:24

A Broad path is a road that can carry a lot of people on it. Practically any-thing can be done on it because of its size. On the broad-way you can delight yourself to your hearts content and there will be lots of company to join in the fun. Multitudes may have been drawn to Moab in the season of its prosperity, but the Bible only gives us the account of Abimelech’s family. Hordes of people feel comfortable along the broad path.

The Narrow Path on the other hand is a very lonely and isolated walk. Very few people choose to walk on this path. It is a pathway that you must count the cost of walking upon. It takes the grace and mercy of God to journey along The Narrow Path. Not everyone is called to it, “many are called, but few are chosen” (Matthew 22:14). Not everyone can deny themselves for the sake of the Gospel. When God is calling you to make decisions that you know will cause discomfort and pain, it will take the power of God to walk in this obedience. On the Narrow Path is the stripping away of self, in exchange for God’s plan and purpose. There is a higher call (and it is a calling). It is the place to where the Narrow Road leads...

but very few find it, rather, preferring to stay on the broad path, that leads to destruction.



“Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able- Luke 13:24.

The journey upon the Narrow road is a journey of Faith. It is not knowing what lies ahead, but nevertheless, stepping out in total reliance upon God. Naomi knew that despite her poverty, desolate and deplorable situation, Yahweh, the God of Abraham and Jacob would see her through.

When Naomi asked her daughter in laws, Ruth and Orpah, to return to Moab, she had her reasons (Ruth 1:8-9).

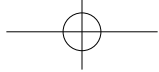
(Discussed further next week) She knew it would be an arduous and treacherous journey. She asked them to count the cost of returning with her to Bethlehem.

You can either run away or draw near to God when there is uncertainty about the future.

“It is God who arms me with strength and makes my way perfect”- Psalm 18:32

Conquering fear with Faith

The only way that Naomi could make it to Bethlehem, despite her circumstance and situation was to conquer her fear with FAITH. Fear destabilises and robs people of their strength and peace, but Faith conquers fear, in what-ever form this fear presents itself. Life is a journey and you may be wondering how you are going to take that step of faith to your destination.



When you feel you can no longer cope; when you feel like you are walking blindly around in the dark with no clarity or light in sight; when you are on the **Narrow** path and cannot see the pathway ahead remember:

Jesus says, “Do not be afraid; just believe” -Mark 5:36

He is your consolation: In Jesus Christ is all the consolation you need. This should reassure the discouraged heart. He has **‘loved you’** and given you **‘everlasting consolation, good hope and grace’**—2 **Thess. 2:16**

He is your comforter: The Comforter, will **‘comfort your heart’** and **‘establish you in every good word and work’** - 2Thess 2:17.

Comfort, comfort my people, says The Lord – Isaiah 40:1

He is your strength: In loving the Lord you are strengthened,

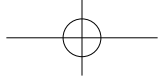
“I love you, O Lord, my strength’—Ps.18:1.

He is your **‘strength’**, your **‘rock’**, your **‘fortress’**, your **‘deliverer’**, your **‘trust’**, your **‘salvation’**, your **‘stronghold’** and your **‘praise’**—Ps.18:2,3.

He is your hope: **‘We walk by faith and not by sight’** - 2 Cor. 5:7.

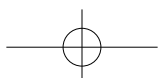
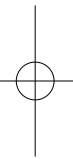
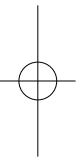
“Faith is being certain of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see” -Hebrews 11:1

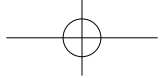
‘Hold fast the confession of your hope without wavering. For He who promised is faithful’ -Hebrews 10:22.



Is this not comfort and joy to weary soul? To the bruised reed, God will not break you, but heal and help you (Isaiah 42:1- 3). Keep your eyes fixed on Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith.

By faith Naomi returned to the promises of God. By faith, you will enter into the promises of God.





Week Three *Is Your Heart In Moab?*

Who is Orpah and what can I learn from her?

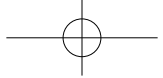


The Study of Biblical Characters is of utmost importance to our lives today. These people, whether mentioned for good or bad, have been acknowledged for a reason. Orpah, though mentioned fleetingly, is part of, 'The Book of Ruth'. Her name is there for a reason. It is important and we must find out why? There is need to study her character and find out what God want us to learn about her?

Orpah was also a Moabites, just like Ruth. The Moabites were decedents of Lot, an incestous generation of people produced by Lot and his eldest daughter. Historically, the Moabite language differed only in dialect from Hebrew and their cultures differed only slightly. However, Yahweh had forbidden marriage between the Moabites and Israelites. They were to be excluded from 'the assembly of the Lord' (any feasts, wars or religious activities) Deut.23:2, for up to ten generations. This was because of what hap¬pened Deut.2:26-30.

It was a period when Isreal was in conflict with the surrounding regions. During a time of war, Israel needed help and support, but the Moabites behaved like an enemy. They refused to assist the Israelites or let them pass through their land.

The Moabites were regarded as the enemies of the Lord. When Naomi's husband decided to move his family from Bethlehem, 'the house of bread', to live amongst the Moabites, it was considered sin by God. He paid a very high price it.



The three Widows journey to Bethlehem

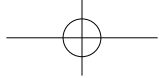
It was obvious that Naomi had been an affectionate and compassionate mother-in-law towards Orpah and Ruth, otherwise they would never have agreed to follow her in the first place. Naomi tried everything within her power to dissuade Orpah and Ruth from travelling to Bethlehem. There were tears, wailing, hugs and sobs when Naomi lovingly asked Orpah and Ruth not to follow her. It was a very emotional time for all of them. With persuasion from Naomi, Orpah made the decision to 'go back to her family and her gods' (Ruth 1:14-15). She knew they would not be welcome in Bethlehem, the journey would be arduous and the prospect of re-marriage would be bleak. There was not a single incentive for these young girls to follow Naomi (Ruth 1:8-14). They were just three destitute and poor widows.

Orpah turns back

Orpah, like Ruth, spent a lot of time with Naomi. It was a journey they started out together, but Orpah did not complete it. **'Surely we will return to you and your people' (Ruth 1:10).**

Both Orpah and Ruth made this statement, but Orpah had doubt in her heart about it.

James 1:7 talks about the person that doubts in his heart. He describes Him like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. He further goes on to say that a double minded man receives nothing from The Lord. Every Christian goes through periods of weariness from trials, no one is exempt from it. However, there is



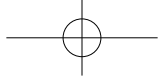
hope because, the Bible tells us to hold on to the confession of our faith (Hebrews 10:23).

In Acts 10:20, Peter had an extraordinary vision about His ministry and the gospel. While He was reflecting on the vision, the Spirit spoke to Him: **'Arise, go with them, doubting nothing.'** Peter had to hear the voice of God three times before He could believe. He was not immediately convinced about what the Spirit of God was telling Him.

If Peter, had times were he doubted God, every Christian will experience doubt. These stories are recorded to encourage us. Perhaps the Spirit of God spoke to Orpah many times, assuring her that everything would turn out fine in Bethlehem. Ruth would also have had cause to be afraid, but she turned her doubt and fear into Faith. By Ruth trusting in the unseen, she came into what could not be seen by the vision of the natural eye.

There are many reasons to entertain doubt, but we are to hold **'unswervingly'** (Heb.10:23) to the promises of God. We are to keep on asking, seeking, knocking and be into faith that our prayers have been answered (Matt 7:7). Not all carnal desires may be answered, but every prayer that lines up with God's plan and purpose will be. When we ask, we must ask in faith. Faith, is the opposite of wavering and doubting. The effectual and reverent prayer of the righteous avails much (James 5:16). God answers prayers that line up with His will, He gives us whatever we ask in His name (John 16:23). Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full—John 16:24.

Are your prayers offered from a sincere heart? Do you desire God's will and stand for His divine purpose?



Ruth was uncertain about the whole picture, she did not understand God's plan.

Ruth's decision was to stand by faith, patiently, to see what God would do in Bethlehem.

Prayer is never a fruitless exercise, we are instructed to ask, that it may be given to us. You are encouraged to pray for the things God has promised: His promises to you, promises for your family, promises for your nation, the promise of His imminent return.

Psalm 40:1 'I waited patiently for the Lord, He inclined onto me and heard my cry.'

Psalm 119:67 'Thou art good, and doest good; teach me thy statutes.'

While Orpah's desire was to save herself, Ruth's desire was to look after Naomi (Ruth 1:16-17). It went beyond herself, she had a greater purpose in life. It was a selfless love, not knowing her fate, she promised to stay with Naomi: "Your God will be my God" (Ruth 1:16). Her trust was in God of Naomi, Yahweh, and not what Moab had to offer. She was not going to rely on herself, her past, her parents or anyone else. Ruth put her trust in Almighty God. Even if they were going to die along the way, she would die with Naomi, they would die trusting God. Ruth recognised something far greater in Naomi while Orpah didn't.

Ruth wanted more of the God Naomi served, but Orpah was not totally convinced. She started a journey in her own strength. Orpah represents those who hear about Christ, acknowledge they know him, but have no faith in Him. They do not keep going, they do not endure in faith. Orpah represents those who turn away from Jesus.



The gods of Moab

The Moabites worshiped the pagan god Chemosh. Naomi knew that when Orpah left her, ^{Orpah}she would return to the worship of this god. Orpah would have seen Naomi worship God and call upon Him throughout their time together.

Today, 'The gods of Moab' represent those things that stop people from following Jesus Christ. Jesus gave parables in the Bible about the rich young man with great wealth (Matt.19:16-30, Luke 18:18-30), and the great banquet feast (Luke 14:15-24). These presented examples of hindrances and excuses people gave not to follow Him. God wants us to count the cost of following him. Many people may have an affection for Him, but come short of salvation by Him. Materialism, holds the world in bondage. The power of the world economy is controlled by of the Prince of this world, so they feel they have no need of God.

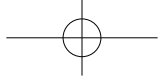
When Orpah considered the cost of leaving Moab, it was a price she was not prepared to pay.

Luke 14:26-27

'If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, even their own life, such a person cannot be my disciple. And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.'

Orpah was moved by emotion

Orpah was very sentimental when she decided to travel with Naomi. She shared some lovely memories with this godly woman, but decisions made by emotion never last. Orpah represents people who



hear about Christ, get really excited, may even honour an invitation to Church, but never have true faith in God.

Are we simply pleasing others?



Orpah exemplifies those who say they believe in Christ to please someone else. A child will attend church because the child's parents ask him or her to attend. It does not necessarily mean that child loves God. It is the Holy Spirit that brings conviction. Naomi wanted Orpah and Ruth to return with her to Bethlehem, not for her sake, but for Yahweh's sake.

While Ruth yielded to the call of the Holy Spirit, Orpah's heart was still bound up with the comforts of Moab. The fear of the unknown kept her back.

Letting go of the past

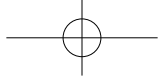


Orpah typifies someone who refuses to let go of the past, to embrace the future. How many people miss the beautiful things God has in store for them because they refuse to let go of the past. They refuse to let go of the superficial to embrace the secure promises of God. Moab represented Orpah's past life, it made her feel secure. Ruth put her trust in Yahweh and by faith she entered into God's promise of a Redeemer. Though she could not see it with her naked eyes, she entered in by faith.

Trust in God's divine providence



If Orpah knew there was someone like Boaz waiting for her on the other side, it would have been a very good incentive for her to make



the unpredictable journey. Ruth on the other hand, had to believe without knowing what would happen to her.

Without faith we cannot enter into the plans and purposes of God. While Orpah put her hopes in Moab (the past), Ruth put her trust in the **Living God**.

God's Grace preceded Ruth by her choosing Yahweh. After Orpah turned back, her name was never mentioned again in 'The Book of Ruth.' Neither was it ever mentioned again in the Bible.

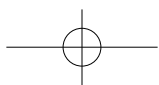
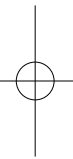
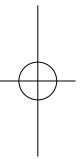
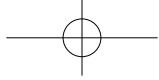
Christ is of no effect to those who are justified by the law; you have fallen from grace (Gal. 5:4).

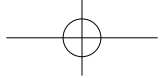
Whatever you let you go for choosing Christ, will never be compared to what you will gain from choosing Him.

Ruth's name is etched in eternity forever for women to imitate and follow. Families name their daughters after her, she has left a heritage for future generations.

The greatest thing that happened to her was becoming the great grandmother of Jesus Christ. She wears an imperishable crown and has been given an eternal inheritance.

Let us not be like Orpah, who chose '**the gods of Moab**' over the **eternal, imperishable and unsearchable riches of Yahweh**.





Week Four *An Uncertain Future - Unshaken*

Choices, choices, choices! What are the choices you make and how do you make them? Who is affected by the decisions you make?

Every woman wants a happy home and every woman wants to lead a successful life. Nobody wants to live in a tidal wave of calamity, adversity and misery. Ruth in “The Book of Ruth” was faced with sorrow and suffering after losing her husband.

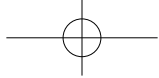
What would she do now? Where would she go? Would she get another husband?

These are questions any woman in the same position would ask herself. Having children is part of womanhood. Proverbs 30:16 uses the description of a barren womb to epitomise something that is never satisfied. A dry land will continually thirst for water; fire will continually burn as long as there is combustible material around it. The reality and sadness of her situation was also heightened because she and Mahlon, had not yet had a child.

Even her mother-in-law, Naomi, wanted her to return to Moab because she had no husband to give her: Ruth 1:9.

“The Lord grant that you may find a home and rest, each in the house of her husband!” “Ruth clung to her” -Ruth 1:14

Ruth was faced with a very difficult decision. She did not know at that time that her choice would impact thousands of generations to come. Her choice to follow Naomi went against what any woman would naturally do. The natural instinct would have been to go back



to her family, having experienced so much sorrow.

Luke 14:26 says, **'If any man come to Me and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.'**

Ruth's decision to journey on the Narrow Path changed her destiny and portion of generations forever:

We can learn so much from the decision Ruth made. Why did Orpah decide to return to Moab and Ruth keep on the route with Naomi even though it was a very difficult decision? Ruth's decision was costly.

Counting the cost of following Jesus.



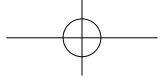
Ruth's choice is a picture of those who by faith have come to follow Jesus.

Unlike Orpah who returned to "the gods of Moab" Ruth made the unnatural decision to follow Naomi.

Can you commit yourself to the course of life that will be determined by someone else? Are you prepared to follow God's leading, not knowing where He is taking you, but trusting Him regardless?

'Ruth's choice is a good example for all men to set their hearts on what has eternal value. The riches of this world cannot compare with the treasure reserved for those who will believe and follow Jesus.' – Ruth Dickson

Those who follow Jesus have not come to Christ in themselves, but have come by Grace. 'By Grace you have been saved, through



faith—and this is not from yourselves, not by works, in case any man should boast’—Ephesians 2:8-9.

God’s Grace preceded Ruth’s faith. God is calling many people today, to walk on the highway that He has chosen for them. Temporary and perishable comforts pull people away from Narrow Road to the Broad path that leads to destruction. The Broad path is the cause of many being diverted from God’s divine plan for their lives. By faith you are to believe that even when the decision to follow His leading is difficult, His way is the right way.

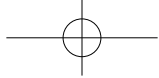
God give you the Grace to see it through.

“Wherever you go, I will go”—Ruth 1:16

Ruth is a picture of those who commit to walk with God. The journey of life may have taken you to a cross roads and you may not know which way to take. When Jesus was physically present on this earth, He spoke about, ‘The Comforter’ to direct and lead us in all ‘Truth’ (John 14:15-18). The Spirit of God is with us as a friend and guide. When the decision you make will take you away from God’s plan and purpose, The Holy Spirit will tell you. He acts as a guide to lead you in the right way (Psalm 32:8).

Ruth was loyal and dedicated to Naomi, despite her situation. Ruth was committed to following her. This is the same way we are to commit to following Christ. There is a treasure reserved for those who follow Christ.

If Orpah had been told of God’s divine providence and plan for Ruth and Naomi in Bethlehem she would have gladly followed.



Jesus said,
'Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed' (John 20:29).

Without faith you cannot enter into the promises of God.

Are you prepared to commit to God even though the road prepared to follow him might seem rough?

Job 29:21

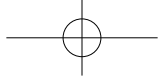
Men listened to me and waited and kept silence for my counsel.

Psalm 143:8

Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you. Show me the way I should go, for to you I entrust my life.

Ephesians 1:11

In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will.



Week Five *Diligence and Humility*

*Will the Lord come through for me? Can He do it?
Will He bring deliverance?*

Ruth found herself between a rock and a hard place in her decision to follow Naomi to Bethlehem. Her choice came with so much risk. It presented a very 'Uncertain Future.'

We are all faced with decisions and how to make the right choices.... The right choices can only be made with total reliance and dependence on God.

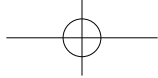
Her faith

When they arrived in Bethlehem, Ruth, in her kindness and humility went into the fields in search of food. She accepted the responsibility of providing for Naomi. She did this in faith and kindness, believing the God of Naomi every step of the way. This was a clear demonstration of her faith in Yahweh.

Without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb. 11:6 a).

Ruth stepped out in faith, not knowing what would happen. Anyone who believes God, must believe that God exists (Heb. 11: 6 b).

Ruth knew that God had to do something about their situation. She could not help herself, but She had faith that God would meet them at their point of need. Jesus is described as hope for the hopeless,



the Father to the fatherless and the defender of widows. **He is a very present help in time of trouble.** Psalm 34:17-20, Jer.29:11, Phil. 4:6-7. **He rewards those who diligently seek Him** (Heb. 11:6 c). Ruth's selfless act of desiring to serve Naomi came with much reward. She followed Naomi because she desired to know Yahweh and His people. Her selfless act was evidence of her faith.

Are you facing any trouble today?

Those who seek the Lord are never put to shame. When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears and delivers them out of all their troubles.

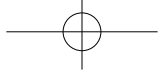
'The Lord is near to the broken hearted and saves the crushed in spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all. He keeps all his bones; not one of them is broken' (Jeremiah 29:11).

Her Humility

Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi:

'Let me go to the fields and pick up the leftover grain behind anyone in whose eyes I find favour.'

(Ruth 2:2) Humility is a Grace that is bestowed (given) to man by Almighty God. Without Humility, Ruth would not have gone into the fields in search of **'left over grain'**. But He gives more Grace... God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble (James 4:6). In Humility, Ruth took instruction from Naomi on where to glean. She did not just get up and go. Naomi said; **'Go ahead, my daughter'** (Ruth 2:2).



Without taking instruction, anything could have happened to Ruth. She could have been killed or hurt. Many writers compare Naomi to the voice of the Holy Spirit. (Psalm 119; 105), just like Mordecai, was the voice of instruction to Esther. It is important to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit for direction. He is a guide to all who put their trust in Him (Psalm 48:14). He keeps you safe from harm and will bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone (Psalm 91). Where God directs, there is covering... It is a great danger to step out of your calling, what God wants you to do and where He wants you to be. You cannot assume the will of God. You cannot take for granted God's desire and be presumptuous on His behalf. Seeking His face, in every decision, is critical for every Christian.

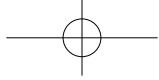
Ruth willingly yielded to the voice of the Holy Spirit. We must willingly yield to the authority of God's word. Humility is a Grace to embrace.

Her diligence

Ruth was not afraid to put her hand to the plough. Fear could have robbed her of her destiny. Ruth put her trust in God, she willingly went to work with her hands.

**The hand of the diligent will rule, but laziness ends in forced labour.
Prov. 12:24.**

It wasn't something that Naomi forced her to do. She willingly went to work with her bare hands. Many women can learn from this in using whatever gifts God has given them to lovingly play a positive role in the lives of others. Ruth worked voluntarily with her hands.



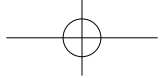
‘**Woman**’ has been given special gifts by God to be an asset to mankind. ‘**Woman**’ is described as a ‘**helper**’ in Gen. 2: 18-14. It is an honourable role, it something to be treasured. It should never be looked down upon. Ruth was diligent with her God given gifts. It is not a coincidence that the Holy Ghost of the trinity is referred to as, ‘The Helper’. Women possess many gifts, like ‘The Helper’, that have been divinely imparted by Almighty God. Women provide comfort, they are kind, they are compassionate and long-suffering.

The ‘Woman’ is nurturing and has in-built intuition and discernment. ‘Woman’ supports ‘Man’. In many ways, this work resembles the role of ‘The Helper’ the Holy Spirit.

With this in mind, every ‘Woman’ should be diligent in their God given role and gifts. It is part of who you are, it has been given freely by God...

Divine Providence

Pure Grace preceded Ruth’s faith. By Faith she entered into the fields of Boaz. By faith she met with divine providence for herself and Naomi. By faith she entered into the promises of God.



Week Six

A man like Boaz

Every woman should pray for a man like Boaz. Boaz loved Ruth freely. He had the power to redeem her and his love was not based on anything she could do for him.

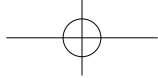
“The Book of Ruth” presents a beautiful picture of Redemption. Boaz presents a portrait of Jesus Christ, our Kinsman–Redeemer. A “Kinsman” is someone who has the right to redeem. Jesus Christ is our Kinsman Redeemer. He redeemed and bought back that which was sold into bondage by Adam. The word ‘Kinsman’ is used repeatedly throughout ‘The Book of Ruth.’

He Provided

Through divine providence Ruth and Naomi arrived at Bethlehem during the time of Harvest. In divine providence, Ruth went to glean in the fields of Boaz. This was also part of God’s plan.

There was spiritual significance to this: First fruits and the beginning of the barley harvest foreshadow the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead (1Cor.15:20; Col. 1:18).

It was the beginning of the barely harvest when Ruth arrived in Bethlehem. It refers to that which was dead, coming alive. Jesus Christ rose from the dead. In divine providence, Ruth went to glean in the fields of Boaz. Ruth and Naomi were in a dead end situation. Grace led Ruth to the place where she was divinely provided for.



He was Compassionate



Boaz looked upon Ruth with compassion (Ruth 2:5). Boaz noticed her before she noticed Him and he had compassion upon her. Boaz asked his foreman who was in charge of the reapers, **'whose young woman is this?'** (Ruth 2:5). This is the same way Christ has considered us in our weakness, even before the world began. He watches over us, His banner over us is love (Song 2:4). He knew you before you were formed in your mother's womb (Jer.1:5) and had compassion upon you. You are a chosen generation, an elect people.

(Zech.7:10, Eph.4:32, Col.3:12, Gal 5:22-23, Math 9:36-38, Phil.4:8, 1Peter 3:8).

He was Merciful



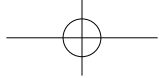
When Ruth lay at the feet of Boaz it was a request for Him to carry out the role of "Kinsman Redeemer".

Ruth was a widow, left childless and under the Levirate law, a close relative had the power to raise up children through her on behalf of her late husband. As Ruth lay at Boaz feet in need of mercy, so every Christian is wise to kneel at the feet of the one whose is called merciful. The sinner who needs mercy will always be found at the feet of Jesus. His mercies are renewed every morning. (Lamentations 3:22-23, 2 Sam.24:14, Psalm 85:6, Psalm 145:9, Eph.2:4, Titus 3:5).

He was Loving



God is sovereign love. Ruth was undeserving of the love Boaz showed her, so many poor widows were about the fields gleaning.



There was nothing she could have done to earn this love. There is nothing we can do to make God love us more. Jesus is our Kinsman Redeemer. In His loving kindness, He has drawn us to Himself. We do not deserve the love He gives, but He loves us anyway. His love is everlasting; it does not change or waiver, it never runs dry. Every Christian is undeserving of this love. This great pardon has been shown us by Jesus Christ. He has given us this love freely. All that the Father gives is motivated by His everlasting love. (Jeremiah 31:3, John 3:16, 1John 4:8, 1John 4:19, Romans 8: 37-39 Ephesians 3:17-19).

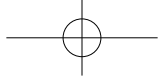
He was her 'Kinsman Redeemer (Go'-el).

In Ruth 3:9, Boaz said, 'Who are you? So she answered, **'I am Ruth your maidservant. Spread the corner of your garment over your maidservant, for you are a redeemer.'**

In Hebrew, the term 'Go'-el' means ('to deliver, to redeem') Boaz played the role of 'Goel' for Ruth in this wonderful little biblical book of four chapters. In the case of Ruth and Naomi, all that belonged to them had been lost because of the death of their husbands. According to the Levitical law, only a redeeming relative could purchase this back on their behalf.

The Closer Relative

Ruth and Naomi had a closer relative than Boaz. When this '**closer relative**' (Ruth 3:11 – 4:1-14) was offered the first claim upon all that belonged to Elimelech, he eagerly wanted to buy it. Then Boaz said to him, 'If you buy the field, you must also marry Ruth, his daughter-in-law.'



But the 'closer relative' response was: 'I cannot do that, lest I ruin my own inheritance. You redeem it, I cannot do it' (Ruth 4:5). The 'closer relative' was more interested in redeeming Elimelech's land rather than preserving the family name and taking care of two widows.

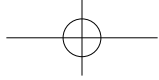
Jesus Christ loved us freely without any demand to pay him back. Jesus Christ has paid a debt and ransom that cannot be repaid. Christ in His uniqueness brought himself down to perform this work of Redemption. Through Christ's Humility, He has brought us eternal life. He has freely given us His endless joy for eternity.

Ruth's joy was full when she received the promise of her saviour. This is the same way we rejoice daily in expectation of the Kings of Kings. This is our promise and inheritance. We have an eternal inheritance, though undeserved. Christ has done this for us, not for anything He could gain, He has done this for us freely.

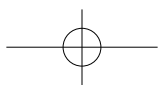
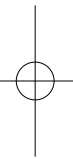
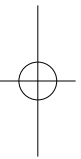
Only Jesus Christ has the power to purchase all that was lost and stolen through Adam. He has not done this with mere silver and gold:

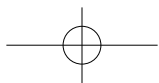
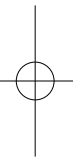
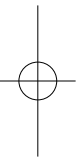
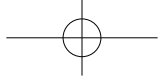
'knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold...' (1Peter 1-18).

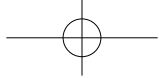
We have been redeemed with the precious blood of the lamb. Jesus Christ paid a ransom that could not have been paid for by anyone else, but himself. Christ, our Kinsman – Redeemer, purchased us and brought us into liberty, righteousness and life (Ephesians 1:7, Galatians 2:20, Colossians 1:14, Colossians 1: 20-22, Ephesians 2:9, 2 Cor.5:21, 1John 3:16, Romans 3:24-26, Titus 2:14, 1Peter 1:18-19).



God's will to save Ruth was of His free and sovereign grace. We have been saved by His Grace.







Week Seven

Faith

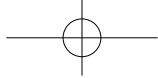
The 'story of Ruth' is a beautiful picture of God's sovereign Grace. She was chosen by God to play a wonderful role in Redemption. She never knew she would become the great-grand mother of the most revered man in the whole world; Jesus Christ. She was chosen by God, taken from the land of Moab, where they worshipped the Idol Chemosh. Both Ruth and Orpah came from a background of Idol worship.

Many people you know: friends from school, colleagues at work, people you meet every day are lost in their own world. They live with no understanding that they are in need of Saviour. They don't understand they need salvation... It is so easy to fall into the feeling of being superior to unsaved people. We can easily believe we are better people because Christ has chosen us. The only difference between your unsaved friend or colleague and yourself is simply the '**Grace**' of God. Looking through the window, the only difference between you and the unsaved individual on the street, is again: '**The Grace of God!**' It is God who chooses His elect and Ruth 1:6 clearly demonstrates this fact.

Eph.2:8

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.

Grace preceded Ruth's choice in following Naomi to Bethlehem. She had Faith that Naomi's God was real. She became converted and made her decision that only death would separate her from following the God Naomi served. We can see this in Ruth's famous statement: Ruth 1:16 Ruth answered,



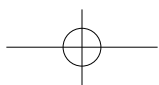
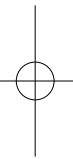
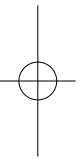
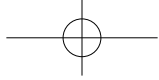
‘Please don’t tell me to leave you and return home! I will go where you go, I will live where you live; your people will be my people, your God will be my God.’

Faith

What Ruth was about to receive in Bethlehem was un-foretold. If Orpah knew how God would arise on their behalf, she would have joined them in that perilous journey to Bethlehem. The promises of God cannot be received without faith. By faith we believe in Jesus Christ. We believe He died to give us eternal life.

The basic qualities of faith can be found in Hebrews 11. God keeps His word. Faith gives us the assurance that when God promises, He keeps His word.

- God keeps His promises
- God controls the resources of the universe
- Faith expects God to keep His promises
- Faith accepts God’s provision





Seven Chapters: Seven Weeks

The idea behind this short study is to gain a deeper understanding of the Book of Ruth.

During your chosen seven weeks, you may decide to use a specific time everyday or every other day for study. This is just a guide. It is important to have your Bible handy, look up scripture, read other commentaries and use a concordance where possible. It is good to have a dedicated note pad for your Bible Study.

Meet the Author:



Ruth Dickson lives in the United Kingdom. She has authored many Christian books which include a yearly Bible Devotional, “ Oil for the Journey”, available in three volumes. Ruth is the founder of Heavenly Treasures Ministries and Gihon Publishing.

For more books by Ruth Dickson, kindly visit:
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