

## **HOPE IN HARD TIMES**

**(The Book of Ruth) #8:**

**“Wilt Thou Have  
This Woman?”**

*Ruth 3:1-10*

## **GREAT LOVE STORIES OF HISTORY**

Paris and Helen  
Anthony and Cleopatra  
Tristan and Isolde  
Romeo and Juliet  
Napoleon and Josephine  
Isador and Ida

**“Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me.”**

*Ruth 1:16-17 KJV*

## **FAMOUS COUPLES OF THE BIBLE**

Adam and Eve  
Abraham and Sarah  
Isaac and Rebekah  
Jacob and Rachel  
David and Bathsheba  
Hosea and Gomer  
Joseph and Mary  
Aquila and Priscilla  
Boaz and Ruth

**KEY VERSES = V,V. 5-6:**

**“I will do whatever you say,”  
Ruth answered. So she went down to the threshing floor and did everything her mother-in-law told her to do.”**

*Ruth 3:5-6*

## **RUTH DID THREE THINGS TO DRAW CLOSER TO BOAZ...**

- 1. She Washed Up**
- 2. She Went Up**
- 3. She Waited Up**

**We Don't Clean Up To  
Come To Jesus. We  
Come To Jesus And  
Then We Clean Up!**

**We Don't Meet Jesus  
And Then Stay In Our  
Old World. We Meet  
Jesus And Then Begin  
To Live In His World!**

### **III. RUTH WAITED UP AT THE FLOOR**

*Ruth 3:3c-4*

**We Don't Meet Jesus  
And Force Him To Act  
By Our Agenda. We  
Meet Jesus And Then  
Wait Upon Him To  
Direct Our Steps!**

**RUTH WAS COMMITTED  
TO A DEEPER RELATIONSHIP  
WITH BOAZ AND PREPARED  
HERSELF FOR SUCH AN  
EXPERIENCE, NO MATTER  
WHERE IT TOOK HER OR  
WHAT IT INVOLVED!**

**CAN IT BE SAID OF YOU AND  
ME THAT WE ARE EACH SO  
COMMITTED TO A DEEPER  
RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS  
THAT WE ARE WILLING TO  
PREPARE OURSELVES FOR  
SUCH AN EXPERIENCE, NO  
MATTER WHERE IT TAKES US  
OR WHAT IT INVOLVES?!**

## **HOPE IN HARD TIMES**

(The Book of Ruth) #8:

**“Wilt Thou Have  
This Woman?”**

*Ruth 3:1-10*

**RUTH TOOK A  
GREAT LEAP OF FAITH  
BY SURRENDERING  
HERSELF COMPLETELY  
TO THE LIFE-GIVER!**

**I. AT NAOMI’S URGING,  
RUTH COMMITTED  
HER BODY TO  
THE LIFE-GIVER**

*Ruth 3:7*

**HERE WE SEE ONE FAIRLY  
OBSCURE BIBLICAL CUSTOM:**

Ruth 3:7 is one of the most  
puzzling verses in the entire Bible.

As such, it raises all sorts of  
interesting questions?

- What is the origin of this strange custom?
- Is this something Israelites are specifically commanded to undertake in the law?
- Is it an Israelite custom or a Canaanite custom?
- Or is it a wider Near-Eastern cultural custom?
- Is this custom implicitly immoral?
- Was Naomi right to direct Ruth to undertake this procedure?
- Was Ruth right to undertake it regardless of Naomi’s request or motives?
- Why did this custom exist?
- What purpose did it serve?

**Ruth 3:7 is one of the  
most puzzling verses in  
the entire Bible.**

**What are the possible  
interpretations?**

**THREE POSSIBLE INTERPRETATIONS  
FOR RUTH 3:7:**

**1. That Naomi was wrong in suggesting that Ruth bypass the rightful Kinsman-Redeemer of Elimalech's family and seduce Boaz while he was drunk, all for financial security.**

**After all, Ruth was a Moabite; and this is exactly how "Moab" was conceived by Lot's older daughter in Genesis 19!**

**THREE POSSIBLE INTERPRETATIONS  
FOR RUTH 3:7:**

**2. That Naomi was wrong in suggesting that Ruth embrace a non-Biblical (perhaps even Canaanite) custom of prostituting herself to Boaz so he would fulfill the role of Levirate Marriage/Kinsman-Redeemer of Elimalech's family and provide for them.**

**After all, this was what Tamar had done to Judah in Genesis 38 after his son Onan had refused to fulfill the duty of Levirate Marriage.**

**THREE POSSIBLE INTERPRETATIONS  
FOR RUTH 3:7:**

**3. That Naomi was right in suggesting that Ruth simply seek the protection of the benefactor Boaz and beseech him to fulfill the role of Kinsman-Redeemer of Elimalech's family and provide for them.**

**IF NUMBER THREE IS THE CASE, THEN, IN EFFECT, RUTH IS ACTUALLY PROPOSING MARRIAGE TO BOAZ!**

**SO WHICH ONE OF THE THREE POSSIBLE INTERPRETATIONS FOR RUTH 3:7 IS THE CORRECT ONE?**

**FIRST, REMEMBER THAT THERE WERE MANY CUSTOMS IN THAT DAY AND AGE WHICH MAY SEEM ODD TO US NOW BUT WERE PERFECTLY NORMAL AND ACCEPTABLE IN THAT TIME AND PLACE.**

**EXAMPLES OF RATHER OBSCURE BIBLICAL CUSTOMS:**

Mourning and Lamentation, Rending of Garments, Wearing of Sackcloth and Ashes, Anointing with Oil, Foot Washing, Greeting with a Kiss, Arranged Marriages, Blessings and Cursings, Swearing of Oaths (by Placing One's Hand under the Thigh), Betrothals, Dowerys, Trading Sandals, Consulting of Urim and Thummim, Cleromancy (Casting of Lots), Necromancy (Consulting the Dead), etc...

**SECOND, REMEMBER THAT THE KEY TO INTERPRETING ANY DIFFICULT PASSAGE OF SCRIPTURE IS TO "PUT THE TEXT IN ITS CONTEXT"**

**Two "Contextual Reasons" why Number Three is the preferred interpretation:**

- 1. RUTH 2:12 Gives Us the Specific Context**
- 2. EZEKIEL 16:8 gives Us the General Context**

**THUS, I BELIEVE THAT THE IMMEDIATE CONTEXT SHOWS US THAT RUTH WAS NOT MOTIVATED BY PROSTITUTION, AS SOME HAVE SUGGESTED, BUT BY PROTECTION!**

**In addition to Judges 19 (the rape of the Levite's concubine) being the setting for the actual book, Ruth 2:9, 2:15, 2:16, 2:22, and 3:9 all show us the terrible danger that young attractive Ruth and even aged Naomi faced!**

**MORE TO THE POINT, THIS INTERPRETATION IS SUPPORTED BY THE GENERAL CONTEXT OF GOD'S RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL, WHICH THE RELATIONSHIP OF BOAZ AND RUTH SYMBOLIZE!**

**NOTICE WHAT GOD SAYS TO ISRAEL IN EZEKIEL 16:8:**

**"I spread the corner of my garment over you and covered your nakedness. I gave you my solemn oath and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Sovereign LORD, and you became mine."**

**AS MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH, WE ARE THE BRIDE OF CHRIST. AS SUCH, WE ARE CALLED UPON TO BE SET APART FOR HIM AND FOR HIM ALONE.**

**2 Timothy 2:21  
NIV: "honorable" =  
GREEK: "timēn" =  
"something which has high value in the eye of the beholder"**

**2 Timothy 2:21  
NIV: "holy" =  
GREEK: "hēgiasmenon" =  
"having been set apart as holy, having ben sanctified, hallowed, or purified."**

**Romans 12:1**  
**NIV: “offer” =**  
**GREEK: “parastēsai” =**  
**“to bring, to present”,**  
 From a combination of  
 “pará”, “close-beside” and  
 “hístēmi”, “to stand”,  
 i.e.. standing ready to present

**II. AT NAOMI’S URGING,**  
**RUTH COMMITTED**  
**HER SOUL TO**  
**THE LIFE-GIVER**  
*Ruth 3:8*

**TWO FAIRLY OBSCURE O.T.**  
**LAWS COME INTO PLAY HERE:**

**A. THE LAW OF LEVIRATE**  
**MARRIAGE (Found in Deut.**  
**25:5-10, and Illustrated in**  
**Genesis 38 with Judah)**

**TWO FAIRLY OBSCURE O.T.**  
**LAWS COME INTO PLAY HERE:**

**A. THE LAW OF LEVIRATE**  
**MARRIAGE (Deut. 25:5-10)**  
**B. THE LAW OF THE KINSMAN-**  
**REDEEMER (Lev. 25:23-55)**

**A. LEVIRATE MARRIAGE WAS**  
**DESIGNED TO MAINTAIN ON A**  
**FAMILY’S EXISTENCE (LIFE)**

**B. THE KINSMAN-REDEEMER WAS**  
**DESIGNED TO MAINTAIN A FAMILY’S**  
**INHERITANCE (ABUNDANCE)**

**III. AT NAOMI’S URGING,**  
**RUTH COMMITTED**  
**HER SPIRIT TO**  
**THE LIFE-GIVER**  
*Ruth 3:9*

RUTH APPROACHED BOAZ  
THE LIFE-GIVER WITH:

A. A SENSE OF SOFTNESS

RUTH APPROACHED BOAZ  
THE LIFE-GIVER WITH:

A. A SENSE OF SOFTNESS  
B. A SENSE OF SUBMISSION

RUTH APPROACHED BOAZ  
THE LIFE-GIVER WITH:

A. A SENSE OF SOFTNESS  
B. A SENSE OF SUBMISSION  
C. SENSE OF SATISFACTION

REMEMBER,  
RUTH MEANS  
“Pleasant,  
Agreeable, or  
Satisfied”!

RUTH APPROACHED BOAZ  
THE LIFE-GIVER WITH:

A. A SENSE OF SOFTNESS  
B. A SENSE OF SUBMISSION  
C. SENSE OF SATISFACTION  
D. A SENSE OF SUPPLICATION

Sadly, Ezekiel 16:15-43 then shows us how Israel scorned all that God had done for her. Like Gomer, she played the role of an unfaithful wife and broke her husband’s heart! She then left God no option but to withdraw His favor over her!



**FOR TONIGHT, RUTH  
3:1-10 SHOWS US A VERY  
BEAUTIFUL PROPOSAL  
FOR AN HONORABLE  
MARRIAGE!**

**SO, TONIGHT, RUTH  
3:1-10 SHOWS US A  
SOMEWHAT STRANGE  
PROPOSAL FOR AN  
HONORABLE MARRIAGE!**

**NEXT WEEK,  
BOAZ'S  
RESPONSE!**