



## BIBLE RADIO PRODUCTIONS

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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

**A2268      ~      Ruth Marries Boaz.**

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*Welcome to Bible Adventures. Help for today. Hope for tomorrow. Jesus is Lord of all.*

During the Old Testament time that judges ruled Israel, a man with his wife and two sons left Bethlehem in Judah while in famine, to live in a neighbouring country named Moab. Not long after they arrived there, the man died. Ten years later, his two sons also died, leaving the mother and two daughters-in-law as three widows needing to survive together. The wife, Naomi, decided to return to Israel but discouraged her daughters-in-law from going with her. One called Orpah returned to her family in Moab while the other, Ruth, refused to leave her aging mother-in-law's side. Ruth was prepared to sacrifice her own future of having a family of her own, so she could be a loving and kind help to Naomi in her old age.

Naomi, for her part, came back to Bethlehem as a bitter woman, blaming God for what she had considered her misfortune of losing all the men in her family and not having any children to pass their name onto. Although Naomi thought she was full when she went to the pagans of Moab, she left empty, being in need. But when Naomi returned home, she thought that she had returned empty but in reality, she had the loyal companionship of her daughter-in-law Ruth. Do we think God has made mistakes with our lives? Over time, we have to accept that God never makes mistakes even though His plans are unsearchable. With the arrival of Naomi and Ruth as two widows in Bethlehem, God actually changed the course of history.

On arrival in Bethlehem, Ruth started working as a gleaner in the field of a rich man named Boaz, who was a relative of Naomi's late husband. When Boaz came back to check on the work during the barley harvest, he saw Ruth and spoke to her. He treated her kindly and told her to keep gleaning behind his reapers for the rest of the harvest. Naomi was very thankful that Boaz had been kind to Ruth and that they had enough food to eat.

After the harvest was over, Naomi decided it was time for Ruth to have a husband of her own again. Naomi informed Ruth that Boaz was a close relative and one of their family's kinsman-redeemers. The principle of 'kinsman-redeemer' is very important throughout the Scriptures. To 'redeem' means to 'buy back' something or someone sold. To redeem something, like a relative's land, the redeemer had to pay a price or make a sacrifice. This element of sacrifice underlies the redemption provided for us by Jesus Christ: He purchased us with His own blood.

According to Old Testament law, each member of a family or clan was responsible for providing for any family member who had fallen onto hard times. In this way, the integrity of the family could be maintained. The family member who undertook to help another family member was called a 'kinsman redeemer.' Such help was to be given not just to one's immediate family, but to members of the extended family as well.

A kinsman-redeemer was expected to help in various ways, depending on what the need was. The need might be, for example: being called on to marry his brother's childless widow to produce an heir for the dead brother, or redeem land that a poor relative was forced to sell off, or redeem a relative who had sold himself into slavery to pay off debts, or repay a relative's murder.

In all these ways, the actions of the kinsman-redeemer reflect what God has done for His large human family. It was God who redeemed Israel from bondage in Egypt. And it was His Son who, through His death on the cross, redeemed us from bondage to sin. These great acts of redemption on God's part are reflected in the kind actions of Boaz. Boaz was not legally required to make Ruth his wife and he gained no legal or financial advantage from doing so. In fact, Ruth and Naomi's first son would legally be Naomi's late husband's heir and therefore, would inherit the land that Boaz had redeemed.

Naomi advised Ruth what to do to bring the kinsman-redeemer law into action.

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When Boaz talked with a closer relative of Naomi's in front of the town elders, the nearer kinsman thought that he'd receive a windfall. He knew that as part of redeeming the land belonging to Naomi's late husband, he'd have to marry the widow Naomi. He assumed that Naomi was too old to have children and he would end up with the property with no heir to claim it. Financially, the investment was a bargain without risk. How could he lose? So he agreed to buy the property.

But Boaz than sprang a surprise, saying that the redeemer would be required to father a son by Ruth to seal the family name over the inheritance. In other words, the kinsman would not be allowed to keep the property when the son was old enough to claim it for himself. Suddenly, the picture changed for the nearer kinsman. He quickly waived his rights of redemption and this left the way open for Boaz to marry Ruth.

Boaz was an older man when he married Ruth. In time, she gave birth to a baby boy that the neighbourhood women called Obed, which means 'servant and worshipper' in the Hebrew language. How Naomi's life changed then! She had a new purpose for living. The women were glad for Naomi and told her that Ruth was better to her than having seven sons! The bonds of love are stronger than blood relationships.

The book of Ruth finishes with a short list of the ancestors of Israel's greatest king, King David. In summary, a poor Moabite widow, Ruth, became the great-grandmother of King David. The mother of Boaz was Rahab, the woman who saved the Israelite spies from being captured as they spied out the land of Canaan for Joshua. Boaz, although the great-grandfather of King David, was also half-Canaanite. This is recorded in the list of the ancestors of the Lord Jesus in Matthew, Chapter 1. But despite their backgrounds, the legacy of Ruth is that all the people mentioned were people of faith in the living God of Israel.

Let us reflect on the book of Ruth and its application to our own lives. God has given us these Biblical stories so that we might learn more about Him and about ourselves. The story of Ruth begins with a famine, death and sadness; but it ends with fullness, life and joy. There are millions of people in the world today who, like Ruth and Naomi, are experiencing poverty, loss and hopelessness. God wants them to know that He is a loving heavenly Father who desires to change their unfulfilled story to one of fullness, life and joy in Christ Jesus.

For this to happen, one must make the decision that Ruth initially made, which was to cling to the one true God and not return to the dead idols of the world in Moab. Our lives hinge on the seemingly small decisions we make. If we trust God and obey Him, He will bring us through our trials, no matter how difficult they are. No person is beyond God's help. Let us then fully commit ourselves to Him and trust God to make our pathway clear. In 1 Peter, Chapter 2, it says that the person who believes in Jesus Christ will never be put to shame.

We, like Ruth, have come to our loving Redeemer, Jesus Christ, for protection and salvation. And through faith in Him and by what He has done for us, we have also become united to Him as His bride. If Boaz, a mere human, was willing to redeem and love an outcast like Ruth, how much more will Christ, the Son of God, be willing to redeem and love the outcasts of this world and bring them into fellowship with Himself.

Ruth could never have redeemed Naomi's family land, which was her inheritance, on her own. Neither can we redeem our heavenly inheritance on our own. Our inheritance has been forfeited because of our sin and sinful nature. Only a sinless Redeemer, who took on the punishment for our sin, can restore to us a God-given inheritance in heaven. And that is exactly what Christ has done for us. He has done His part for us, but have we done ours?

What level of faith do we have? Do we truly believe that Jesus Christ is the answer to removing our sin barrier before our Heavenly Father? With it removed, we can go into eternal paradise when we leave this world. We first must admit our sinfulness to Jesus and ask Him to forgive and remove it from us. Immediately as our redeemer, He places us in His protection and provides us with His Holy Spirit to live within us forever more. We're no longer our own decision-maker in life, but look to Him for His special plan for our lives each and every day. We trust Him fully to bring us to Himself when the time is right for Him to do so, but until then, we pray that He will make us the kind of person He wants us to be – just like Himself.

In Ephesians, Chapter 2, verses 8-9, it says: "For it is by God's grace that you have been saved through faith. It is not the result of your own efforts, but God's gift, so that no one can boast about it. God has made us what we are, and in our union with Christ Jesus he has created us for a life of good deeds, which he has already prepared for us to do."

*The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.*

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