

Ruth/ The Cowgirl with Grit



Introduction

Girls love a romantic story. From *Sleeping Beauty* to *Romeo and Juliet* young ladies are intrigued at love, romance, and a happy ending. Well, not so happy with *Romeo and Juliet*, but even that can be overlooked for a dramatic ending anyway.

But in Ruth we have no fantasy, just fact. A true story unfolds about a lady with GRIT. That's why I have included her in my *Cowgirl Up!* Series.

Ruth had to Cowgirl Up! more than once in her lifetime. We can learn a lot from her; it's no accident that God has an entire book in the Bible dedicated to her story and gives her the honor of it bearing her name. Before Teaching Ruth; take the time to Read the entire *Book of Ruth*.

Reference: *The Book of Ruth*

Ruth: Raised by Unbelievers in a Heathen Country

Ruth was raised in a country called Moab. Heathen gods were worshiped. The one True God was not worshiped by her family while she was growing up. She was not a Jew or Hebrew, that is, she was not an Israelite. The Israelites were God's Chosen People in the Old Testament and largely the only people that worshiped God.

Ruth chose the God, Jehovah of her husband's family.

Ruth: When times got hard; she Cowgirl'd UP!

First Ruth is raised in Moab, by unbelievers, but she marries into a family of Believers. Then the father-in-law, her brother-in-law, and her husband all die! This was a huge dilemma for Ruth.

When Ruth's mother-in-law decides to go back home to Bethlehem [*Where have we heard about that town before?*] Ruth makes a decision that took a lot of GRIT.

In the times of Ruth the vocation for a woman was mainly limited to being married; raising children, farming, weaving, and caring for people who weren't able to care for themselves. How would she support herself? And what about her elderly mother-in-law, Naomi? Who would take care of her?

Ruth 1:15-16 And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister in law. And Ruth said, Intreat 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.

Ruth decides to Cowgirl UP! She leaves the country where she has lived all of her life up until now. She goes with Naomi to Bethlehem.

When Ruth arrives in Bethlehem with Naomi it's big news in town. People talked about the young widow.

They said things like:

- She's not from around here.
- She wasn't raised by Believer parents, you know, she was raised to worship idols.

Ruth could have:

- She could have chosen to stay in Moab in the comfortable spot; where her family was; where her family could have assisted her in "getting back on her feet" after the death of her husband.
- She could have been bitter. After all, she isn't a young damsel anymore; she's widowed; she had not had children by her husband. [That was a big deal in those times; to have an heir was important.]
- She could have gotten depressed. She could have just QUIT!

But instead we see Cowgirl UP! traits:

- People in Bethlehem noticed something special about her.
- She **CHOSE** to worship the one true God, Jehovah.
- She willingly left Moab to come to live with Believers.
- She worked hard to support herself and her widowed mother-in-law Naomi, working all day to feed them both, gleaning leftovers the reapers have left behind in the fields, like a pauper.
- She's a survivor and a thriver.

Ruth: When God is the "Matchmaker"

When God is the "matchmaker", well, it just doesn't get any better than that!

God was working a plan. He was lining events up to:

- Put the right two people together to make a family.
- Get the right two Great-Grandparents for King David.
- Get the right lineage in line many generations in advance for Jesus' birth.
- AND to give Ruth a fulfilling life that God had planned just for her.

Ruth doesn't just wake up one day and have all her dreams and prayers answered instantly. No, there was a process of getting Ruth ready for the life God had planned for her.

You, too, won't just have "happily ever after" handed to you either. There is a preparation time; a getting you ready time table. And what's more, if you don't pass the "tests" along the way, you may have your time table delayed or even changed because you chose not to follow God but rather your own selfish whims.

Ruth had to be spiritually ready to take on the role and position God had for her. What if she had decided to take the EASY trail and stay in Moab with her folks? What if she had decided to have a pity-party at her circumstances?

Ruth: The Love Story of Love Stories

Keep in mind that there are no coincidences with God. God makes no mistakes. We step out of His Will because we have "free-will" to choose. We are not God's puppets. He gives us the choices to follow Him or not. Which is the better choice?

Ruth 2: 1-3 And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name was Boaz.

And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter.

And she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers: and her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech.

Remember, there are no coincidences with God. He's working a plan for Ruth; will she listen to the still small voice of the Holy Spirit in everything? Which field will she go to work in today?

In these Bible times when a man died his wife did not automatically inherit his property. In fact, it was the accepted practice for a family member to take over the lands and possessions. When Naomi and her husband left Bethlehem many years earlier, he had not sold his property.

However since he had died, when Ruth and Naomi showed up in Bethlehem the family land was now up for grabs by the next available male family member to take over the property to manage or to redeem.

Ruth "happens" to go work on the land of one of the kinsman of the family that is a relative that could possibly "redeem" the property of her deceased husband. The scripture implies that Ruth has no idea whose field she has started gleaning in.

Now the story gets better than a "chick flick" because it is all true! We get the story straight from the Word of God as He preserved it and passed it into our hands.

That's the way ALL of the Word of God is; passed down to us like a love-letter from God Himself. All true, all beneficial for us.

2 Timothy 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

So let's go on and see what happens when Ruth "happens" to be in the field of a kinsman named Boaz;

Oh, and Boaz just happens to come from town out to the fields at just the right time.

He sees Ruth out in the field working.

Note that he doesn't see her with hair all fixed in place; makeup on; and wearing her best clothes or in a glamour shot moment. Nope, she's out there sweating [before deodorant was invented]; she's out there in work clothes covered in barley; she's a mess to look at!

Ruth 2:4-10 And, behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said unto the reapers, The LORD be with you. And they answered him, The LORD bless thee. Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, Whose damsel is this?

And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said, It is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab: And she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves: so she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house.

Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearest thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens: Let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them: have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? and when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn.

*Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, **that thou shouldst take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?***

Let's find out why he did indeed "take knowledge" of her!

Ruth 2:11-12 And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore. The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust.

There you have it:

- She took care of her widowed mother-in-law, Naomi
- She had taken the big step of leaving the only way of life she knew; she'd come to Israel
- She had become a believer, not because her parents were; but by choice.
- Later in *Ruth Chapter 3:10* he also mentions that he noticed she wasn't chasing young men.

In *Ruth 2: 13-19* we see the admiration and concern developing in this "chance" meeting of Ruth and Boaz, which of course is no "chance" meeting but the plan of God unfolding. This is a "good read" and adds to the understanding of this budding romance.

In *Ruth 2: 20* Naomi is praising God because she can see the Plan of God right before her eyes before Ruth and Boaz know it is happening. Romantic, huh?

The story continues in *Ruth 2:21-23* but really warms up in *Ruth Chapter 3*.

*Here the Lesson can be easily paused to
Create Two Lessons from Ruth.*

Ruth: Gets a New Life

Immediately after the harvest is all in and Boaz is about the business of working down at the grain mill on his farm Naomi gives the romance a little nudge. She tells Ruth:

Ruth 3:3 Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor: but make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking.

Ruth Chapter 3 relates the details of this scene. Again, this chapter is well worth the read to get the full story.

Once Ruth and Boaz have this late evening encounter, Boaz takes the hint that she is interested in him, too. Perhaps we see one characteristic of Boaz that is a clue to why he has remained single well into his adult years; that is, we can tell from the scriptures that he is indeed attracted to Ruth, but up to this point has not made a move to "ask her hand" and "declare his intentions". Once Ruth has shown a little interest, he takes it from there. He tells her he has to go through the chain of rightful inheritance in the culture to be able to "redeem" her and the property.

Ruth heads back to Naomi's house reporting the results of her visit with Boaz. Naomi is such a straight-forward lady, understanding Boaz well. She says:



Ruth 3:18 Then said she, Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day.

Boaz: The Kinsmen Redeemer

In *Ruth Chapter 4* Boaz goes to town the next day to attempt to meet up with the relative that has the first rights to the property and to Ruth. Once he finds him, the negotiations begin. Boaz wastes no time in getting the matter settled in his favor and making a public commitment down at the court house in town.

You see, he not only redeems her deceased husband's rights to the property for her; she comes along with the bargain. He redeems her as his own.

The picture God paints for us in this chapter is amazing:

- We, too, once were unclaimed.
- We, too, were in need of redemption.
- We, too, have a kinsmen Redeemer, that is, Jesus Christ.
- *Isaiah 47: 4 As for our redeemer, the LORD of hosts is his name, the Holy One of Israel.*

Ruth and Boaz: Make History

Ruth 4:11 And all the people that were in the gate, and the elders, said, We are witnesses. The LORD make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel: and do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem.

Prophecy is always fulfilled. God made sure that even now in the 21st Century we would "get it". So he has it recorded "*and be famous in Bethlehem*".

The people didn't even realize what they were prophesying at the time. God was saying that Ruth and Boaz were going to be in the generational line of Jesus. It was all a BIG PLAN.

Ruth 4:12-15 And let thy house be like the house of Pharez, whom Tamar bare unto Judah, of the seed which the LORD shall give thee of this young woman. So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went in unto her, the LORD gave her conception, and she bare a son.

And the women said unto Naomi, Blessed be the LORD, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel. And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age: for thy daughter in law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath born him.

Did you catch that: "*And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life...*"

Prophecy again in the words of Naomi's friends is recorded.

The Happy Ending:

Well the rest is history:

- Ruth and Boaz have the son, Obed.
- Ruth and Boaz become grandparents when Obed grows up and has a son, Jesse.
- Ruth and Boaz become great-grandparents when Jesse grows up and has David [King David].
- Then 28 generations after King David is born Jesus.
- Indeed the Redeemer, born in Bethlehem is Jesus the Christ.

[Plan of salvation presented here.](#)