

Beyond The Crisis †

Ruth Part Seven



In the first chapter of the Book of Ruth we discover three women who found themselves in a life-situation requiring important choices. These women were faced with the need to “put feet on their faith” and walk out what they truly loved and believed. Life tends to do that to us all! Whether we feel ready or not, life happens to us and we are faced with daily choices that mold our relationship with the Lord. Ruth made a decision to leave Moab, the place of her birth and her people, and cleave to Naomi. Ruth made this decision in the face of overwhelming forces. In those tearful moments with Naomi pleading for Ruth to leave her and remain in Moab, Ruth’s heart opened to the real issue. Ruth perceived something beyond the crisis and the pain. Ruth felt something beyond the devastation and the loss. She pressed into God and found Him there in the midst of her crisis.

We all seek changes in the “Moabs” of our lives, the places where we have been fruitless in bringing forth Christ. We seek real changes in the face of Moab’s cruel realities. We wrestle with the pressures and fears that try to cover over our heart for God. Condemnation and depression lurk around every corner trying to draw us into their unholy fellowship and keep us bound up in our own loss and pain. Yet within every “Moab” there is a “Naomi” who represents Christ Crucified. Naomi is our path out of this state of barrenness and into the land of “Living Bread” (Bethlehem). The problem is, our “Naomi’s” are usually disguised in bitterness and trouble. It requires Doves eyes to see the treasure buried deep within our Naomi’s.

Isn't it interesting that Ruth was unable to make the journey from Moab to Bethlehem without Naomi? How many times are we ready to fly away from our Naomi just to escape to a place of comfort? Yet, to stay with Naomi is to cleave to one who is in an embittered state. For Ruth to stay with Naomi was to be stuck with an old woman who has no future. Ruth staying with Naomi made her appear as a worthless widow and foreigner. Can anyone relate to those feelings in their own lives? How easy it would be to escape Naomi, for Naomi herself was commanding Ruth to return to her own people. How incredible was it that Ruth perceived something so much deeper and more eternal than her trial and her way of escaping the trial? Many say they want Christ to be formed in them no matter what the cost, but is that really true? What is our relationship with our "Naomi's"? Do we see them as the gift from God that will carry us out from the land of our barrenness into the land of Living Bread and bringing forth the Son?

It can be tempting to abide in our Moab's with a broken heart, our soul's wrought with a sense of a wasted life, ... a barren existence. Hopelessness and depression can press our souls into a state of overwhelmed surrender to our circumstances. Ruth's husband was dead. She had no children. But Ruth chose an eternal path at this point, a path that is missed by many. **Her heart reached past the pain in her own heart into the pain in God's heart.** She chose to leave the corpse of her old existence and its place, and fall into the grave of the God she loved. She pursued a fellowship with Christ in His sufferings rather than focusing on her own loss. She identified in His death and burial. Ruth's value of the Cross of Christ exceeded the religious experience of it in a church service and governed her choices in times of crisis. Because of this, Ruth got to know the Lord in a deep and fruitful way.

The beauty of Ruth's story is that IN THE MOMENT OF CRISIS Ruth chose to remain with Naomi. Orpah cried and kissed BUT LEFT. We may weep and worship during a church service or a quiet time with the Lord, but what happens when crisis comes and we must chose to cleave or leave the Lord in our circumstances?

Paul said it this way, "Those who LOVE God will allow everything to work together to bring forth the Son in them" (Romans 8:28-29). Are our eyes on the prize (Christ being formed in us) or the person (Naomi in her bitterness)? Do we see in that Naomi a goldmine of opportunity to know the Lord in a way beyond anything we could have found in Moab with all its comfort and blessing? The sad part is, when we yield to our "Orpah" motives and return to Moab, we may never really realize what we missed out on. Orpah may have lived out the rest of her life feeling she escaped a horrible situation by leaving Naomi and returning to Moab. The truth is, Orpah missed out on an opportunity to bring forth the Son in the Land of living Bread and be found in the genealogy of Jesus Christ (Matt. 1:5). Would you like to be found written into the genealogy of Jesus Christ for your generation? Or would you like to find a way of escaping the circumstances that God has blessed your life with so you could bring forth Christ in a real and eternal way?



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Ruth looked back to Moab and saw it as something dead. It was not something she could remain in or return to. Ruth left the corpse of her old existence and embraced the grave of a death that would bring her into newness of Life! We seek life changes, but true life changes only come out from union into Christ's death. Romans 6:5 tells us that if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection. Being planted into His death requires more than a doctrinal agreement, but a cleaving with purpose of heart. Ruth planted herself into that death. She refused to accept anything short of a deep and personal union into all that Naomi was, (Naomi being a type of Christ in death and burial). God gives us a glimpse into this type of faith through Ruth's words found in Ruth 1:17, *"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"*. When we choose to know our Lord's death in this way we can expect to also know His Life in us in deep and real ways.

Ruth did not just leave Moab, she saw her "Naomi" as an opportunity to cleave to Christ in His death and burial, and remain in that embrace until the change Himself rose up from that low end of the old. "Where you die I die, where you are buried I am buried." Ruth did not just embrace her death with Christ as a ticket out of Moab, but an intimate knowing of the Lord in His death and burial. Love was involved. Sometimes we want the doctrine of our death with Christ to save us from ourselves, our past, and our circumstances. Doctrines have no power. Christ Crucified is the power of God (I Cor. 1:18). When we join to Him in His death in a real way and cleave with purpose of heart, then we will discover what no eye, ear or heart would have ever fathomed. We will find Him in ways no teaching could give and no work could earn. But these things are reserved only for those who love God. (I Cor. 2:9). Ruth loved God. She did not just believe, she cleaved and did so in the crisis. God named a book of the Bible after her. She reached His Heart,... may she also reach our hearts.

Lord Jesus, awaken us to the reality of these things in our lives. Holy Spirit, may we look beyond the crisis into the heart of God and join Him there. Father, may we not complain, escape, or simply cope with the things that you have put in our lives to bring us into knowing Your Son in ways beyond all comprehension. May we cleave to our Naomi's. May we find the gold of Christ Crucified in our situations. May we buy the field for this treasure and may we be buried with Him in this field until the Son Himself arises as our new Life. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

