

NAOMI - RUTH CONNECTION

LESSON SEVENTY-EIGHT: RUTH 4:20b-22

"... And Nahshon begat Salmon, and Salmon begat Boaz, and Boaz begat Obed, and Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David."

Nahshon's son was Salmon, who was born during the 40 years the Hebrews wandered in the wilderness. Salmon entered the promised land under the leadership of Joshua. He was probably one of the two spies Joshua sent into Jericho to discover the city's defenses (Josh. 2:1). There he met his future wife Rahab, who saved him and his companion from the king of Jericho and his soldiers (Josh.2). In return, Salmon and his companion saved Rahab and her family when the city of Jericho was taken by Joshua's army (Josh. 6:22-26). Rahab's faith in the God of Israel saved her and her family when the people of Jericho were destroyed. And, Rahab the harlot, became Rahab the wife of one of the most prominent men in the tribe of Judah. Rahab had been redeemed by the grace of God.

Salmon and Rahab had a son, who they named Boaz. Boaz was the Kinsman-Redeemer of the Book of Ruth. The wealthy landowner whose kindness and protection sustained Ruth and Naomi during a difficult time in their lives. He married Ruth and became the father of Obed.

Nothing is known of Obed except that he became the father of Jesse.

Jesse had eight sons (I Sam. 17:12) and two daughters (I Chron. 2:16). His youngest son, David, became the second King of Israel. The Messiah (Jesus) is called the Branch, which shall grow out of the root of Jesse (Is. 11:1, 10; Rom. 15:12). This, of course, is a reference to the fact that the Messiah would come through the family of Jesse's son David.

David was known as the man after God's Own heart (I Sam. 13:14). David was not perfect. Scripture records his sins and failures as well as his faith and successes. What made David so special was his viewpoint. He saw sin as God saw it and was repelled by it. He abhorred his own sins and sincerely repented.

David's life was not easy. He was hunted off and on for 13 years by King Saul and his army. His son Absalom rebelled against him and tried to kill him. But it was Absalom who died and David grieved for him. The first baby Bathsheba bore him died in infancy. David turned to God whenever he was troubled or afraid. His trust in God never wavered. We would do well to follow his example.

God knows the beginning from the end (Is. 46:10). His viewpoint is higher than ours. He knows the future, which we do not. When things happen in our lives we don't understand we tend to ask, why me? why this? why now? God has the answer but He may not share it with us. What we have is the Bible. A collection of stories about real people who faced real problems and trusted - or didn't - in God. These records are written so that we can learn from them. Just as our own stories may help others in their time of trouble, Ruth and Naomi's stories have helped me in my quest for answers. How do I go on without my husband? I put my faith in God and just go on one step at a time.

"For thou, O God, has proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried. Thou broughtest us into the net; thou laidst affliction upon our loins. Thou has caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place."

Psalm 66:10-12