

Living Life!

Number 10

February 2007

Virginia, U.S.A.

page 1

My parents will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary this year!



my mother and father on their wedding day, 1957

Both of my parents grew up in strong evangelical Christian homes. My mom is the oldest of two kids in her family and my dad is the fourth out of five kids. They met each other when they were in college studying the Bible.

They came from really different backgrounds!

My mom's ancestors were Dutch, Irish, and English and they immigrated to America a long time ago (1650). My mom grew up in big cities in southern California and my dad grew up on a small farm in western Oregon. My mom's father always bought the latest car and was one of the first people in the family to buy a television when they were made. They enjoyed eating out in restaurants occasionally.

My dad's ancestors were German. His great-grandfather emigrated to America around 1875. My

dad's family spoke German at home until he and his younger sister when to school, and then they switched to English. My dad's family was on the poor side. His siblings and he only had two sets of clothes each when they were growing up. They drove an old car. And they hardly ever went out to eat.



my mother's parents

my father's parents

My parents were both 21 years old when they got married. Two years later my brother was born; 18 months after that my sister was born; and 2½ years after that I was born. My dad worked and went to school when they were first married, and our family moved a lot. Eventually we moved to Texas, and my parents have been there ever since.

When my parents got married, they said their wedding vows before God, their families and friends, and they promised to stay with each other until death – whether rich or poor and whether in good health or poor health. They've been faithful to each other – in private and in public – and are fulfilling their vows. Their love has matured over the years. They've been through a lot of hard times, a lot of fun times, times when they didn't have very much money, and times when there was money to save and give away. They've had good health and times of poor health. They worked hard to raise us kids, and they've served other people faithfully in many ways.

My Dad has always been a strong spiritual leader. As a family we always read the Bible and prayed together every day for each other and for others.

Happy Valentine's Day, Mom and Dad!

Congratulations on 50 years of loving each other and honoring God in your life together! ☺

What is True Freedom?

How can we be free in marriage? The best way to be free in *any* relationship is to follow the lines of authority and responsibility that God set up. This is what God established:

God, of course, is the King and is the leader over everyone. Because he loves us so very much, his leadership is not a burden to us. It's a blessing to be able to serve the Lord.

God has given leadership – and responsibility – to people in various roles.

Husbands are to be the leaders in the families. They are responsible to God to love their wives, to raise their children in a godly manner and with godly teaching, and to make wise decisions for their families. Husbands should love their wives as much as they love themselves!

Wives are responsible to respect their husbands as men and to respect their leadership.

Children are responsible to obey their parents.

As in any leadership position, God holds the leaders responsible for their decisions and for the demands they place on other people. God holds the other people (e.g., the wives and children) responsible for respecting and obeying their leaders. Of course, if the leader tells you to do

something that would displease God – something that's sinful – you shouldn't do that.

Family relationships are very dependent on each person's relationship with God. A wife will find it much easier to respect her husband if her husband loves her and is submitted to God in his life. Children will find it much easier to obey their parents if their parents are submitted to each other and to God.

What about divorce? I know that many, many Americans get divorced and frequently get remarried. That is *not* what God wants for us. When Jesus was on earth, this is what he said about divorce:

It was said, "Whoever divorces his wife must give her a legal document." But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for immorality, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery. (Matthew 5:31-32)

Copyright (c) 2006, Biblical Studies Press, reprinted with permission from www.bible.org.

I truly hope that divorce will never be a common thing in Kurdistan and that people will be faithful to their wives and husbands. Men, love your wives! Women, respect your husbands! That is how you will find true freedom in marriage.

“Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator made them male and female, and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and will be united with his wife, and the two will become one flesh’? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.”

- Jesus (Matthew 19:4-6)

Copyright (c) 2006, Biblical Studies Press, reprinted with permission from www.bible.org.

Ruth and Boaz

A Family Tragedy: Famine and Death

During the time of the judges there was a famine in the land of Judah. So a man from Bethlehem in Judah went to live as a resident foreigner in the region of Moab, along with his wife and two sons. (Now the man's name was Elimelech, his wife was Naomi, and his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. They were of the clan of Ephrath from Bethlehem in Judah.) They entered the region of Moab and settled there. Sometime later Naomi's husband Elimelech died, so she and her two sons were left alone. So her sons married Moabite women. (One was named Orpah and the other Ruth.) And they continued to live there about ten years. Then Naomi's two sons, Mahlon and Kilion, also died. So the woman was left all alone – bereaved of her two children as well as her husband! So she decided to return home from the region of Moab, accompanied by her daughters-in-law, because while she was living in Moab she had heard that the LORD had shown concern for his people, reversing the famine by providing abundant crops.

Ruth Returns with Naomi

Now as she and her two daughters-in-law began to leave the place where she had been living to return to the land of Judah, Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Listen to me! Each of you should return to your mother's home! May the LORD show you the same kind of devotion that you have shown to your deceased husbands and to me! May the LORD enable each of you to find security in the home of a new husband!" Then she kissed them goodbye and they wept loudly. But they said to her, "No! We will return with you to your people."

But Naomi replied, "Go back home, my daughters! There is no reason for you to return to Judah with me! I am no longer capable of giving birth to sons who might become your husbands! Go back home, my daughters! For I am too old to get married again. Even if I thought that there was hope that I could get married tonight and conceive sons, surely you would not want to wait until they were old enough to marry! Surely you would not remain unmarried all that time! No, my daughters, you must not return with me. For my intense suffering is too much for you to bear. For the LORD is afflicting me!"

Again they wept loudly. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye, but Ruth clung tightly to her. So Naomi said, "Look, your sister-in-law is returning to her people and to her god. Follow your sister-in-law back home!"



But Ruth replied, "Stop urging me to abandon you! For wherever you go, I will go. Wherever you live, I will live. Your people will become my people, and your God will become my God. Wherever you die, I will die – and there I will be buried. May the LORD punish me severely if I do not keep my promise! Only death will be able to separate me from you!"

When Naomi realized that Ruth was determined to go with her, she

stopped trying to dissuade her. So the two of them journeyed together until they arrived in Bethlehem.

Naomi and Ruth Arrive in Bethlehem

When they entered Bethlehem, the whole village was excited about their arrival. The women of the village said, "Can this be Naomi?" But she replied to them, "Don't call me 'Naomi'! Call me 'Mara' because the Sovereign One has treated me very harshly. I left here full, but the LORD has caused me to return empty-handed. Why do you call me 'Naomi,' seeing that the LORD has opposed me, and the Sovereign One has caused me to suffer?" So Naomi returned, accompanied by her Moabite daughter-in-law Ruth, who came back with her from the region of Moab. (Now they arrived in Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.)

Ruth Works in the Field of Boaz

Now Naomi had a relative on her husband's side of the family named Boaz. He was a wealthy, prominent man from the clan of Elimelech. One day Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, "Let me go to the fields so I can gather grain behind whoever permits me to do so." Naomi replied, "You may go, my daughter." So Ruth went and gathered grain in the fields behind the harvesters. Now she just happened to end up in the portion of the field belonging to Boaz, who was from the clan of Elimelech.

Boaz and Ruth Meet

Now at that very moment, Boaz arrived from Bethlehem and greeted the harvesters, "May the LORD be with you!" They replied, "May the LORD bless you!" Boaz asked his servant in charge of the harvesters, "To whom does this young woman belong?" The servant in charge of the

harvesters replied, “She’s the young Moabite woman who came back with Naomi from the region of Moab. She asked, ‘May I follow the harvesters and gather grain among the bundles?’ Since she arrived she has been working hard from this morning until now – except for sitting in the resting hut a short time.”



So Boaz said to Ruth, “Listen carefully, my dear! Do not leave to gather grain in another field. You need not go beyond the limits of this field. You may go along beside my female workers. Take note of the field where the men are harvesting and follow behind with the female workers. I will tell the men to leave you alone. When you are thirsty, you may go to the water jars and drink some of the water the servants draw.”

Ruth knelt before him with her forehead to the ground and said to him, “Why are you so kind and so attentive to me, even though I am a foreigner?” Boaz replied to her, “I have been given a full report of all that you have done for your mother-in-law following the death of your husband – how you left your father and your mother, as well as your homeland, and came to live among people you did not know previously. May the LORD reward your efforts! May your acts of kindness be repaid fully by the LORD God of Israel, from whom you have sought protection!” She said, “You really are being kind to me, sir, for you have reassured and encouraged me, your servant, even though I am not one of your servants!”

Later during the mealtime Boaz said to her, “Come here and have

some food! Dip your bread in the vinegar!” So she sat down beside the harvesters. Then he handed her some roasted grain. She ate until she was full and saved the rest. When she got up to gather grain, Boaz told his male servants, “Let her gather grain even among the bundles! Don’t chase her off! Make sure you pull out ears of grain for her and drop them so she can gather them up. Don’t tell her not to!” So she gathered grain in the field until evening. When she threshed what she had gathered, it came to about thirty pounds of barley!

Ruth Returns to Naomi

She carried it back to town, and her mother-in-law saw how much grain she had gathered. Then Ruth gave her the roasted grain she had saved from mealtime. Her mother-in-law asked her, “Where did you gather grain today? Where did you work? May the one who took notice of you be rewarded!” So Ruth told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked. She said, “The name of the man with whom I worked today is Boaz.” Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, “May he be rewarded by the LORD because he has shown loyalty to the living on behalf of the dead!” Then Naomi said to her, “This man is a close relative of ours; he is our guardian.” Ruth the Moabite replied, “He even told me, ‘You may go along beside my servants until they have finished gathering all my harvest!’” Naomi then said to her daughter-in-law Ruth, “It is good, my daughter, that you should go out to work with his female servants. That way you will not be harmed, which could happen in another field.” So Ruth worked beside Boaz’s female servants, gathering grain until the end of the barley harvest as well as the wheat harvest. After that she stayed home with her mother-in-law.

Naomi Instructs Ruth

At that time, Naomi, her mother-in-law, said to her, “My daughter, I must find a home for you so you will

be secure. Now Boaz, with whose female servants you worked, is our close relative. Look, tonight he is winnowing barley at the threshing floor. So bathe yourself, rub on some perfumed oil, and get dressed up. Then go down to the threshing floor. But don’t let the man know you’re there until he finishes his meal. When he gets ready to go to sleep, take careful notice of the place where he lies down. Then go, uncover his legs, and lie down beside him. He will tell you what you should do.” Ruth replied to Naomi, “I will do everything you have told me to do.”

Ruth Visits Boaz

So she went down to the threshing floor and did everything her mother-in-law had instructed her to do. When Boaz had finished his meal and was feeling satisfied, he lay down to sleep at the far end of the grain heap. Then Ruth crept up quietly, uncovered his legs, and lay down beside him. In the middle of the night he was startled and turned over. Now he saw a woman lying beside him! He said, “Who are you?” She replied, “I am Ruth, your servant. Marry your servant, for you are a guardian of the family interests.” He said, “May you be rewarded by the LORD, my dear! This act of devotion is greater than what you did before. For you have not sought to marry one of the young men, whether rich or poor. Now, my dear, don’t worry! I intend to do for you everything you propose, for everyone in the village knows that you are a worthy woman. Now yes, it is true that I am a guardian, but there is another guardian who is a closer relative than I am. Remain here tonight. Then in the morning, if he agrees to marry you, fine, let him do so. But if he does not want to do so, I promise, as surely as the LORD lives, to marry you. Sleep here until morning.” So she slept beside him until morning. She woke up while it was still dark. Boaz thought, “No one must know that a woman visited the

threshing floor.” Then he said, “Hold out the shawl you are wearing and grip it tightly.” As she held it tightly, he measured out about sixty pounds of barley into the shawl and put it on her shoulders. Then he went into town, and she returned to her mother-in-law.

Ruth Returns to Naomi

When Ruth returned to her mother-in-law, Naomi asked, “How did things turn out for you, my daughter?” Ruth told her about all the man had done for her. She said, “He gave me these sixty pounds of barley, for he said to me, ‘Do not go to your mother-in-law empty-handed.’” Then Naomi said, “Stay put, my daughter, until you know how the matter turns out. For the man will not rest until he has taken care of the matter today.”

Boaz Settles the Matter

Now Boaz went up to the village gate and sat there. Then along came the guardian whom Boaz had mentioned to Ruth! Boaz said, “Come here and sit down, ‘John Doe’!” So he came and sat down. Boaz chose ten of the village leaders and said, “Sit down here!” So they sat down. Then Boaz said to the guardian, “Naomi, who has returned from the region of Moab, is selling the portion of land that belongs to our relative Elimelech. So I am legally informing you: Acquire it before those sitting here and before the leaders of my people! If you want to exercise your right to redeem it, then do so. But if not, then tell me so I will know. For you possess the first option to redeem it; I am next in line after you.” He replied, “I will redeem it.” Then Boaz said, “When you acquire the field from Naomi, you must also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the wife of our deceased relative, in order to preserve his family name by raising up a descendant who will inherit his property.” The guardian said, “Then I am unable to redeem it, for I would ruin my own inheritance in that case.

You may exercise my redemption option, for I am unable to redeem it.”

(Now this used to be the customary way to finalize a transaction involving redemption in Israel: A man would remove his sandal and give it to the other party. This was a legally binding act in Israel.) So the guardian said to Boaz, “You may acquire it,” and he removed his sandal. Then Boaz said to the leaders and all the people, “You are witnesses today that I have acquired from Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech, Kilion, and Mahlon. I have also acquired Ruth the Moabite, the wife of Mahlon, as my wife to raise up a descendant who will inherit his property so the name of the deceased might not disappear from among his relatives and from his village. You are witnesses today.” All the people who were at the gate and the elders replied, “We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman who is entering your home like Rachel and Leah, both of whom built up the house of Israel! May you prosper in Ephrathah and become famous in Bethlehem. May your family become like the family of Perez – whom Tamar bore to Judah – through the descendants the LORD gives you by this young woman.”

A Grandson is Born to Naomi

So Boaz married Ruth and had sexual relations with her. The LORD enabled her to conceive and she gave birth to a son. The village women said to Naomi, “May the LORD be praised because he has not left you without a guardian today! May he become famous in Israel! He will encourage you and provide for you when you are old, for your daughter-in-law, who loves you, has given him birth. She is better to you than seven sons!” Naomi took the child and placed him on her lap; she became his caregiver. The neighbor women named him, saying, “A son has been born to

Naomi.” They named him Obed. Now he became the father of Jesse – David’s father!

Epilogue: Obed in the Genealogy of David

These are the descendants of Perez:

Perez was the father of Hezron,
Hezron was the father of Ram,
Ram was the father of
Amminadab,
Amminadab was the father of
Nachshon,
Nachshon was the father of
Salman,
Salmon was the father of Boaz,
Boaz was the father of Obed,
Obed was the father of Jesse, and
Jesse was the father of David.

- the book of Ruth

Copyright (c) 2006, Biblical Studies Press,
reprinted with permission from www.bible.org.

Email

☞ Hello. Happy New Year! I trust all your years and days will be happy!

I was really happy when your magazine came. I will send it to all my friends and fellow classmates. Thanks again. Good-bye.

R.B.

☞ Hello, how are you doing? I really miss you.

I was a student in your English program.

First of all, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! I'm sorry that it is late, but better late than never! I admire your English-Kurdish dictionary and I know that it takes a lot of hard work and patience to make an amazing dictionary like that. Even more amazing is that an American lady wrote it.

My regards to you and to your family.

Yours ,

A.A.B.

☞ Dear Shireen,

You have an amazing life and amazing ambition. I am very happy and proud to have you as a friend. Actually your ambitions are honoring to God and I hope your ambitions come true. I have printed out the first attachment to read carefully.

Happy New Year! I am so sorry that your father had to have surgery. I pray that the Almighty will return him to his previous health.

Sincerely,

T.Kh.

☞ Merry Christmas! Happy New Year!

Hi Shireen. I like this magazine. It's very very good for the best life. In January I will be in Moscow, Russia, studying at the University.

Bye bye. Have a good day! Good luck! 🌹

L.

☞ Greetings.

Happy New Year to you and all your friends from this magazine. My friends and I really like it. I'm sorry I've been busy and haven't been able to write. Please forgive me.

Thanks again. Have a very happy new year!

D.K.

☞ Hi, Shireen.

Thanks for sending "Jin" to me. It's beautiful work. Blessings!

Kh.

☞ Dear Shireen,

Hello! Happy New Year!

I hope you're well. We really miss you and hope to see you sometime.

I finished college and am now working to study for my M.A. degree at a U.S. university or in the U.A.E.

I was very happy when I got your message.

N.Y.H.

Language Learning and Teaching

If you want some ideas for how to learn – or teach – English (or Kurdish or French or German, etc.), then read this column every month. I'll write up a suggestion or two each month and then you can try it out in your language learning or in the classes that you teach.

Memorize Vocabulary. When you study a foreign language, it's important to learn a lot of vocabulary. It's usually best to learn vocabulary in a meaningful context:



- (1) Choose words that are related to each other (e.g., *fruit – apple, orange, watermelon, banana, grape*).
- (2) Write your new words on cards or in a list. Memorize the words.
- (3) Add some action words (verbs) that are naturally associated with these words (e.g., *buy, sell, eat, wash, peel, cut, bring, give, like, dislike*). Memorize those those, too.
- (4) Use all of the words to make meaningful sentences (e.g., *I bought some apples. She washed the grapes. They peeled the oranges. I'll bring you some bananas. We like to eat watermelon.*)

subject	verb	object
I	buy	fruit
you (singular)	sell	apple
he	eat	orange
she	wash	watermelon
it	peel	banana
we	cut	grape
you (plural)	bring	pear
they	give	
	like	
	dislike	

Read. Read children's stories, short stories, letters, email, magazines, newspapers, websites, the Bible, etc. to increase your vocabulary. Try to figure out the meanings of new words by their context before you look them up in a dictionary. Here are some English websites to start with (for advanced learners):

- Focus on the Family magazine - <http://www.focusonthefamily.com/>
- Reader's Digest magazine - <http://www.rd.com/>
- Time Magazine - <http://www.time.com/time/>
- Fox news - <http://www.foxnews.com/>



Read and Listen to a text (e.g., the Bible - <http://net.bible.org/bible.php?book=Mat&chapter=1>).

Write. Write down new words and phrases that you hear your American friends say when you're talking to them or when they're talking to other people. Write a dialog journal with an American who will check your entries. (Write about any topic – just write!)

Use a Dictionary. Use the online Behdini-English dictionary at www.dcklci.com/dictionary or an online English-English dictionary, such as <http://nhd.heinle.com/home.aspx>. Or use a regular dictionary.



Alphabet

A, a **Australia**



J, j **Jordan**



S, s **sunflower**



B, b **bicycle**



K, k **kangaroo**



T, t **tomato**



C, c **camel**



L, l **lemon**



U, u **umbrella**



D, d **dress**



M, m **monkey**



V, v **van**



E, e **eye**



N, n **nurse**



W, w **watermelon**



F, f **fox**



O, o **old**



X, x **x-ray**



G, g **guard**



P, p **porcupine**



Y, y **yawn**



H, H **hotel**



Q, q **queen**



Z, z **zebra**



I, i **Iraq**



R, r **rope**



Love

This picture was painted by Gulzar Salih, 2005.

