

The Book of Ruth

REDEMPTION

Ruth 3 and 4

Introduction from the English Standard Version:

“The book of Ruth tells of a young Moabite widow who, out of love for her widowed Israelite mother-in-law, abandoned her own culture, declaring, “Your people shall be my people, and your God my God” (1:16). Though she was destitute and needing to rely on the kindness of others, Ruth’s disposition and character captured the attention of Boaz, a close relative of her deceased husband. Boaz fulfilled the role of kinsman-redeemer and took Ruth as his wife. Ruth serves as a wonderful example of God’s providential care of His people, and of His willingness to accept Gentiles who seek Him. Ruth was an ancestor of Christ. The author is unknown, but the genealogy at the end suggests that it was written during or after the time of David.”

The harvest is nearly over and the threat of losing contact with Boaz is a possibility that causes action. Naomi is a changed woman. She is not "bitter" any longer, now she has hope in a kinsman-redeemer.

1. NAOMI's COUNSEL

Ruth 3:1-5

Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, should I not seek rest for you, that it may be well with you? ² Is not Boaz our relative, with whose young women you were? See, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor. ³ Wash therefore and anoint yourself, and put on your cloak and go down to the threshing floor, but do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. ⁴ But when he lies down, observe the place where he lies. Then go and uncover his feet and lie down, and he will tell you what to do." ⁵ And she replied, "All that you say I will do." ESV

Here is the pattern for the older Christian women to teach the younger Christian women. Naomi instructs Ruth in the ways of the Law of the kinsman-redeemer. In a nutshell, Ruth was to secretly go to Boaz in the night and propose marriage to him! There is nothing about this that is shameful. Boaz is a godly man and both Naomi and Boaz are believers who know the truth. Ruth has become a believer and is willing to obey Naomi.

2. RUTH'S VENTURE of FAITH

Ruth 3:6-10

⁶ So she went down to the threshing floor and did just as her mother-in-law had commanded her. ⁷ And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain. Then she came softly and uncovered his feet and lay down. ⁸ At midnight the man was startled and turned over, and behold, a woman lay at his feet! ⁹ He said, "Who are you?" And she answered, "I am Ruth, your servant. Spread your wings {corners of a garment} over your servant, for you are a redeemer." ¹⁰ And he said, "May you be blessed by the LORD, my daughter. You have made this last kindness greater than the first in that you have not gone after young men, whether poor or rich.

There was some risk in Naomi's plan. Boaz could have misinterpreted Ruth's appearance at night on the floor beside him. Some of the workers would have surely thought the worst about it if they had known.

Boaz was taken with Ruth's character. She had not gone after a younger man, but had cared for Naomi and Ruth wanted to do what was right.

3. The ASSURANCE of BLESSING

Ruth 3:11-18

¹¹ And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you ask, for all my fellow townsmen know that you are a worthy woman. ¹² And now it is true that I am a redeemer. Yet there is a redeemer nearer than I. ¹³ Remain tonight, and in the morning, if he will redeem you, good; let him do it. But if he is not willing to redeem you, then, as the LORD lives, I will redeem you. Lie down until the morning."

¹⁴ So she lay at his feet until the morning, but arose before one could recognize another. And he said, "Let it not be known that the woman came to the threshing floor." ¹⁵ And he said, "Bring the garment you are wearing and hold it out." So she held it, and he measured out six measures of barley and put it on her. Then she went into the city. ¹⁶ And when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, "How did you fare, my daughter?" Then she told her all that the man had done for her, ¹⁷ saying, "These six measures of barley he gave to me, for he said to me, 'You must not go back empty-handed to your mother-in-law.'" ¹⁸ She replied, "Wait, my daughter, until you learn how the matter turns out, for the man will not rest but will settle the matter today."

There was a nearer kinsman, but now Boaz knew that Ruth wanted him! And Boaz wanted her! Boaz assures Ruth that he would redeem her if the nearer kinsman forfeited the right of redemption.

Ruth goes home with a bountiful portion of grain. Naomi again counsels Ruth.

4. BOAZ ACTS as KINSMAN-REDEEMER

Ruth 4:1-12

Now Boaz had gone up to the gate and sat down there. And behold, the redeemer, of whom Boaz had spoken, came by. So Boaz said, "Turn aside, friend; sit down here." And he turned aside and sat down. ² And he took ten men of the elders of the city and said, "Sit down here." So they sat down. ³ Then he said to the redeemer, "Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, is selling the parcel of land that belonged to our relative Elimelech. ⁴ So I thought I would tell you of it and say, 'Buy it in the presence of those sitting here and in the presence of the elders of my people.' If you will redeem it, redeem it. But if you will not, tell me, that I may know, for there is no one besides you to redeem it, and I come after you." And he said, "I will redeem it." ⁵ Then Boaz said, "The day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the widow of the dead, in order to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance." ⁶ Then the redeemer said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I impair my own inheritance. Take my right of redemption yourself, for I cannot redeem it."

⁷ Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging: to confirm a transaction, the one drew off his sandal and gave it to the other, and this was the manner of attesting in Israel. ⁸ So when the redeemer said to Boaz, "Buy it for yourself," he drew off his sandal. ⁹ Then Boaz said to the elders and all the people, "You are witnesses this day that I have bought from the hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and to Mahlon. ¹⁰ Also Ruth the Moabite, the widow of Mahlon, I have bought to be my wife, to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his native place. You are witnesses this day." ¹¹ Then all the people who were at the gate and the elders said, "We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman, who is coming into your house, like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel. May you act worthily in Ephrathah and be renowned in Bethlehem, ¹² and may your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, because of the offspring that the LORD will give you by this young woman."

Boaz goes that very day to the city gate where business was conducted.

The nearer relative of Elimelech "just happened" to walk by.

Do you ever marvel at the providence of God? I can see this man drinking his morning coffee and reading the paper when all at once he says, "I've got to go into town right now!" Of course, he had his own reasons for going, but the real reason was in the **providence** of God.

The man likes the idea of redeeming Elimelech's land. But Boaz then tells him it is a "package-deal" that involves another wife. The man didn't like the idea of splitting his inheritance so he declines the opportunity. The same God that sent him to town that day prevented him from wanting another wife.

Boaz moves quickly! The people of the town are happy for them and bless them.

This pagan girl from Moab is drawn into the kingdom of God as a believer. She then takes her place among the most blessed of women. She is in the direct lineage of Jesus Christ! The reference to Perez identifies Boaz as being in the line of Judah.

5. The ROYAL BENEFITS of REDEMPTION Ruth 4:13-22

¹³ So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. And he went in to her, and the LORD gave her conception, and she bore a son. ¹⁴ Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without a redeemer, and may his name be renowned in Israel! ¹⁵ He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age, for your daughter-in-law who loves you, who is more to you than seven sons, has given birth to him." ¹⁶ Then Naomi took the child and laid him on her lap and became his nurse. ¹⁷ And the women of the neighborhood gave him a name, saying, "A son has been born to Naomi." They named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

¹⁸ Now these are the generations of Perez: Perez fathered Hezron, ¹⁹ Hezron fathered Ram, Ram fathered Amminadab, ²⁰ Amminadab fathered Nahshon, Nahshon fathered Salmon, ²¹ Salmon fathered Boaz, Boaz fathered Obed, ²² Obed fathered Jesse, and Jesse fathered David.

Thinking back over the long and sad experience of Naomi, how could she know that one day she would hold her grandson in her arms? God's providence had overruled the poor judgments, forgiven her sins, been compassionate with her complaints of bitterness, and faithfully restored her to a place of blessing.