

Ordinary People, Extraordinary God

A study of the book of Ruth

Part 5: Falling at the feet of the Redeemer- Ruth 3:8-18

Tonight, we continue our study of the book of Ruth. Last time, we saw Naomi go from bitter to blessed, as Boaz showed Ruth much favor. We took time to look at how relatives rescued those in desperate need by keeping the family and their property intact. Finally, we saw a chance for cold feet, as Ruth is encouraged by Naomi to visit Boaz at harvest time. Tonight, the redemption story really begins to take shape.

1. Our daily *bread*

- The harvest time was a time of *celebration*. After all, they had just come out of a time of famine and want.
- The harvest was also a time of *hard* work for *everyone*. It was a *communal* effort.
- Today, we buy our food from stores, and we are separated from those who plant, tend, and harvest the crops. How many of us actually know a farmer today?
- We don't feed or care for the animals we eat. We don't ride on the tractor. Nor do we package up the food. We just consume. When we complain about prices, and they are high, a lot of work has gone into that process.
- As we noted last time, the men of the town would come together in the evenings at the threshing floor. Naomi knew this would be the place Ruth could find Boaz.
- A combination of God's *sovereignty*, Naomi's *urging*, and Ruth's *obedience* works to accomplish God's redemptive plans.
- Ruth finds Boaz resting and falls at the feet of the one who could save her and her mother-in-law. I pray that all of us have fallen at the feet of the Savior!
- *Four* times in chapter 3 (vs. 4, 7, 8, 14), the feet of Boaz are mentioned. We should note that Ruth smells her best, wearing her best clothes, yet has no reservation about lying on the *dusty* floor at the *dusty* feet of Boaz.
- *I hope he washed those feet!*

2. *Awakening* the *desire* to redeem

- Some have said that Ruth's action was improper, basically entrapping Boaz. There is nothing sexual or untoward about her action. She is not trying to seduce him.
- Boaz may have had cold feet, for something startled him.
- **3:8-9a**; *"In the middle of the night, something startled the man, and he turned and discovered a woman lying at his feet. 'Who are you?' he asked."*
- Ruth *proposes* to Boaz! We might think this is incredibly forward, especially at this time. **3:9b**; *"I am your servant Ruth," she said. "Spread the corner of your garment over me, since you are a kinsman-redeemer."*

- Note that Ruth identifies herself as Boaz's servant. Not a widow. Not a Moabitess. She completely places herself in the identity of Boaz. We do the same in Christ.
- She was clearly asking Boaz to obey the Law of the Lord in the area of redemption.
- **Why didn't Ruth wait for Boaz to act?** While we aren't explicitly told, there are clues.
- **Vs. 10;** *"The Lord bless you, my daughter," he replied. "This kindness is greater than that which you showed earlier: You have not run after the younger men, whether rich or poor."* My daughter and the younger men give us clues made clear later.
- He seems to have expected that Ruth, who is portrayed as younger than Boaz (4:12), would look for a different opportunity merely by age and looks.
- He is pleasantly surprised that Ruth is seeking him as a husband, and he speaks a blessing over her. Her desires are more than skin deep!
- Though Boaz had felt some initial attraction and showed her kindness, he must have assumed he did not have a chance with this younger woman.
- **It's funny:** Adam went to sleep and woke up after the first surgery to find his wife, Eve. Jacob woke up from his wedding night to discover he had married the wrong woman (Leah) in the dark. Boaz awakes to find a younger, beautiful woman who actually loves him! I wonder if he thought he was dreaming.

3. An assuring word

- Ruth still doesn't know what Boaz's response will be. But he calms her fears.
- **3:11;** *"And now, my daughter, don't be afraid. I will do for you all you ask. All my fellow townsmen know that you are a woman of noble character."*
- Ruth heard the words from the voice of the redeemer, which calmed her fears. I will do everything that you ask! In other words, Ruth, fear not!
- **"Our assurance is not in our feelings or our circumstances, but in His Word."**
- God used the phrase/command 'fear not' with many of His servants: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Ezekiel, Daniel, Joseph, Mary, the shepherds, John, and Paul.
- **What God starts in us, He will finish!**
- **Phil. 1:6;** *"Being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."*
- But there's a wrinkle! There is a closer family member.
- **3:12;** *"Although it is true that I am near of kin, there is a kinsman-redeemer nearer than I."* Under the Law, the closest relative had to have the opportunity to redeem.
- In this, we see Boaz's integrity. We also see that he is not just concerned with the property that he will acquire, but really loves Ruth and wants to secure her future.
- Boaz didn't hide the problem from Ruth; he just went to work. God does the same. Jesus is our Intercessor, always pleading our case before the Father in heaven.
- Boaz was more concerned about the redemption of Ruth and Naomi than he was about what he would get out of the situation. Another picture of Christ.

- Again, Boaz provides even more than the first time. Doesn't Christ continue to provide for us, above and beyond what we ever expected?
- **3:15;** *"He also said, "Bring me the shawl you are wearing and hold it out." When she did so, he poured into it six measures of barley and put it on her. Then he went back to town."* The first time, between Ruth's hard work and Boaz's generosity, Ruth and Naomi were supplied with around 10 days' worth of food.
- This time, Ruth didn't have to work but was given more than two bushels of grain.
- The first gift could've been stretched for two weeks, but now she is given weeks' worth of food. Boaz doesn't want his beloved working in the field any longer.
- Naomi has been waiting to hear the result. I wonder if she stayed up all night anxiously awaiting Ruth's return.
- **3:16-17;** *"When Ruth came to her mother-in-law, Naomi asked, 'How did it go, my daughter?' Then she told her everything Boaz had done for her and added, 'He gave me these six measures of barley, saying, 'Don't go back to your mother-in-law empty-handed.'"*
- Naomi is now **confident** that God's hand is at work and that Boaz will handle the matter. Whether it is Boaz or the closer relative, Naomi senses that their redemption is near.
- **3:18;** *"Then Naomi said, "Wait, my daughter, until you find out what happens. For **the man will not rest until the matter is settled today.**"*
- Our natural state is **fear** and **anxiety**, especially when we want something badly. Naomi, like a good mother, wants to calm any anxious thoughts Ruth may have.
- Boaz saw the prize before him, and he hurried to have the conversation.

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1. Our daily _____
 - The harvest time was a time of _____.
 - The harvest was also a time of _____ work for _____.
 - It was a _____ effort.
 - A combination of God's _____, Naomi's _____, and Ruth's _____ works to accomplish God's redemptive plans.
 - _____ times in chapter 3 (vs. 4, 7, 8, 14), the feet of Boaz are mentioned.
 - No reservation about lying on the _____ floor at the _____ feet of Boaz.
2. _____ the _____ to redeem
 - Ruth _____ to Boaz!
 - *Why didn't Ruth wait for Boaz to act?*
 - Her desires are more than _____ deep!
 - **It's _____!**
 - I wonder if he thought he was _____.
3. An _____ word
 - He _____ her fears.
 - Ruth, _____ not!
 - *"Our assurance is not in our feelings or our circumstances, but in His Word."*
 - **What God _____ in us, He will _____!**
 - But there's a _____!
 - Boaz didn't _____ the problem from Ruth; he just went to work.
 - Naomi is now _____ that God's hand is at work and that Boaz will handle the matter.
 - Our natural state is _____ and _____, especially when we want something badly.

