

# Ruth

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## *Ruth's Love Rewarded*

### *Ruth's Request for Redemption by Boaz*

#### *Naomi Seeks Redemption for Ruth*

*Ruth 3:1-5: Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, shall I not seek security for you, that it may be well with you? 2 "Now is not Boaz our kinsman, with whose maids you were? Behold, he winnows barley at the threshing floor tonight. 3 "Wash yourself therefore, and anoint yourself and put on your best clothes, and go down to the threshing floor; but do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. 4 "It shall be when he lies down, that you shall notice the place where he lies, and you shall go and uncover his feet and lie down; then he will tell you what you shall do." 5 She said to her, "All that you say I will do." NASU*

When Naomi left Moab, one of the difficulties she told her daughters-in-law that they would confront, if they returned with her, would be the lack of security; they could not expect to marry another son of Naomi's to provide security and a family. As the events of life have played out, Naomi recognizes, that God has provided a means by which Ruth could find a husband, be cared for, and secure, Boaz.

Key to Naomi's instructions to Ruth is the relationship between the three, Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz. Naomi notes that *Boaz our kinsman*. Additionally, more than likely, Naomi was picking up that Boaz was interested in Ruth. So, as Ruth had committed to caring for Naomi when she left her homeland and family, Naomi now returns the commitment by fulfilling the role of Ruth's mother by working to arrange Ruth's marriage. Naomi's desire was to care for Ruth as Ruth had cared for her; Naomi did not want to see Ruth live out her life as she expected to live out hers, alone, struggling, and destitute.

In verse 3, Naomi gives good advice to Ruth. Naomi was not so pious to think that Ruth should venture out to meet Boaz in her work clothing. Instead, Naomi, wisely, tells Ruth to first prepare herself for Boaz – to put her best foot forward. *Ezekiel 16:10-13; 1 Timothy 2:9-10; Titus 2:3-5; 1 Peter 3:3-4*

*Ezekiel 16:10-13: "I also clothed you with embroidered cloth and put sandals of porpoise skin on your feet; and I wrapped you with fine linen and covered you with silk. 11 "I adorned you with ornaments, put bracelets on your hands and a necklace around your neck. 12 "I also put a ring in your nostril, earrings in your ears and a beautiful crown on your head. 13 "Thus you were adorned with gold and silver, and your dress was of fine linen, silk and embroidered cloth. You ate fine flour, honey and oil; so you were exceedingly beautiful and advanced to royalty.*

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***1 Timothy 2:9-10: Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments, 10 but rather by means of good works, as is proper for women making a claim to godliness.***

***Titus 2:3-5: Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, 4 so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored.***

***1 Peter 3:1-4: In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, 2 as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior. 3 Your adornment must not be merely external -- braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; 4 but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.***

Then, Naomi told Ruth she needed to go to where she knew Boaz would be (“*at the threshing floor tonight*”) and provide an opportunity for them to “meet.” The intentions and instructions of Naomi were of the purest motives; although Boaz had been cordial, their encounters, to this point, shall we say, we both public and professional. Naomi was providing Ruth the opportunity to meet Boaz privately and personally.

Some have tried to ascribe to Naomi and Ruth immoral intents in Naomi’s instructions to Ruth to “*uncover his feet*” of Boaz, in the night, after Boaz was asleep, and “climb into bed with him.” This is not what was going on or is being suggested. The idea of presenting herself at the foot of Boaz’s bed was an acceptable and normal Eastern or Oriental custom. Servants often slept at the feet of their masters and would use the master’s sleeping covers.

***1 Samuel 26:7; Titus 1:15***

***1 Samuel 26:7: So David and Abishai came to the people by night, and behold, Saul lay sleeping inside the circle of the camp with his spear stuck in the ground at his head; and Abner and the people were lying around him.***

***Titus 1:15: To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled.***

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Additionally, Naomi's instructions for Ruth were for her to be discreet in not making her presence known to him. Part of the Law allowed the widow to appeal to her kinsman for marriage. Naomi's instructions placed Ruth in a position of humility; she was not going to force her rights upon Boaz. Rather, this would provide an opportunity for Boaz to discover Ruth – and for Boaz to discuss his thoughts and intentions and make his decision with respect to Ruth freely. It seems Naomi, knowing the character of Boaz, believed Boaz would fulfill his role without Ruth having to ask if provided the opportunity. **Deuteronomy 25:5-9**

**Deuteronomy 25:5-6:** *"When brothers live together and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the deceased shall not be married outside the family to a strange man. Her husband's brother shall go in to her and take her to himself as wife and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. 6 "It shall be that the firstborn whom she bears shall assume the name of his dead brother, so that his name will not be blotted out from Israel.*

## **Ruth Obeys Naomi**

*Ruth 3:6-9: So she went down to the threshing floor and did according to all that her mother-in-law had commanded her. 7 When Boaz had eaten and drunk and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain; and she came secretly, and uncovered his feet and lay down. 8 It happened in the middle of the night that the man was startled and bent forward; and behold, a woman was lying at his feet. 9 He said, "Who are you?" And she answered, "I am Ruth your maid. So spread your covering over your maid, for you are a close relative." NASU*

Ruth again did as Naomi had instructed her. When Boaz awoke with a start as he discovered a woman at his feet. When Boaz asked, "Who are you?," Ruth identified herself, and wasting no time, Ruth made her request known to Boaz. She told him why she was there - "spread your covering over your maid, for you are a close relative." The cultural equivalent of "as my kinsman, and in accordance with the Law, I am asking you to fulfill the duty of a kinsman redeemer; will you marry me." **Romans 8:15-17; Hebrews 4:15-16**

**Romans 8:15-17:** *For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" 16 The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.*

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*Philippians 4:6-7: Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

*Hebrews 4:15-16: For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

*Hebrews 10:21-22: and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.*

## ***Boaz Desires to Redeem Ruth***

*Ruth 3:10-11: Then he said, "May you be blessed of the LORD, my daughter. You have shown your last kindness to be better than the first by not going after young men, whether poor or rich. 11 "Now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you whatever you ask, for all my people in the city know that you are a woman of excellence. NASU*

Boaz reaction shows he understood exactly what Ruth was asking; he is flattered as he is considerably older than she was and she had asked him rather than pursue younger and "more eligible" men. Boaz acknowledges the character and moral excellence of Ruth and he tells Ruth he will do exactly what she has asked and she did not need to be afraid. *Proverbs 12:4, 18:22, 31:10-11, 29-31; 1 John 4:18-19*

*Proverbs 12:4: An excellent wife is the crown of her husband...*

*Proverbs 18:22: He who finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor from the LORD.*

*Proverbs 31:10,29-31: An excellent wife, who can find? For her worth is far above jewels. ... 29 "Many daughters have done nobly, but you excel them all." 30 Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised. 31 Give her the product of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates.*

*1 John 4:18-19: There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love. 19 We love, because He first loved us.*