

Living Between the Promise and the Presence of the Redeemer

Ruth 3:6-15

1. Ruth Executes the Plan

- a. She secretly sneaks up on Boaz
 - i. She is faithful to Naomi's plan
 - ii. Cheshed down to the end
- b. Boaz shivers in the night and is surprised to find a woman laying at his feet
 - i. "was startled" is literally "trembled"
 - ii. The cold night air woke him up and he turned over to cover his feet and found a woman
 - iii. "Behold" indicates great surprise!
 1. Remember that prostitutes were known for hanging out at threshing floors
- c. Boaz is Surprised
 - i. "What the heck?!" is a good paraphrase
 - ii. In the dark it is clearly a woman, but not clear who it is
 1. He may not have recognized Ruth all cleaned up
 2. The smell of perfumed oil hanging in the air
 3. The confusion of coming out of sleep
 - iii. Ruth gives him her name
 1. Interestingly, without any of the usual attachments
 - a. Moabitess
 - b. Came with Naomi
 - c. To give someone a name was a vulnerable thing due to curses
 - i. She trusted him by doing so
 - ii. She also saw that he knew her, remembered her from their first date
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 2. Your "maidservant"
 - a. Again, the word for marriageable young woman, not merely a servant
 - b. She is reminding him of her availability
 - i. "It's me, Ruth, the ringless one."

2. Ruth Proposes that Boaz Propose to Her

- a. Ruth responds and proposes that Boaz fulfill his duty as a levir and goel
- b. different than Naomi told her!
 - i. She was supposed to wait for his plan
 - ii. Instead, she blurts out that she wants him to marry her!
 1. She is proposing that he propose
 2. It is possible that she is thinking of Naomi's progeny and name continuing for Elimelech, hence the issue of "Goel"
 - a. If so, this indicates again her faithfulness (chesed) toward Naomi
 - b. Boaz's mention of her "last act" being better than her first
- c. "spread your covering over your ringless one"
 - i. Possibly referring back to Boaz's prayer in 2:12, "under whose wings you have come to seek refuge"
 - ii. Same word as "wings"
 - iii. Is NOT indicative of a sexual advance, but rather marriage
 1. Ezek 16:8 - was a covenant made by YHWH to His people

2. In ANE a husband spread his blanket over his bride to indicate that he covers her nakedness
 - a. In opposition, adultery was to have one's nakedness uncovered
 - b. Deut 27:20 - "uncovered his father's 'wings' or 'garment'"
 - i. Same word in Ruth 3:9
 - c. Shame to be uncovered - Ezek 16:36-7; 23:29; Isa 47:3
- iv. Boaz's response was not sexual, but rather commitment to be her redeemer if possible

3. Boaz Rejoices in Ruth's Desire for Him to Redeem Her

- a. she didn't go after younger men
 - i. money didn't matter to her
- b. She was younger than him
 - i. "my daughter"
 - ii. Sign of affection toward a younger woman
- c. He is excited that she would want him
 - i. "Blessed are you of YHWH"
 - ii. Joy, joy, joy at her desire for Him
 - iii. Her love brought him joy
 1. Isn't that just like love
 2. Placing your joy in another's joy
- d. Boaz covenants to pursue her because she is a woman of excellence (and praised for it!)
 - i. she is not to fear!!
 1. Trust me
 2. I will accomplish what you desire
 - ii. He will do it all!!
 1. "I will do whatever you ask"
 2. Opposed to Naomi's suggestion, "He will tell you what to do"
 3. He promises to fulfill her need for a redeemer
 - iii. Her "honor" now is placed beside his honor from 2:1
 1. "man of mighty strength"
 2. Here he calls her "woman of strength"
 3. They are a perfect match!
 - iv. Notice his honor and desire is not based upon
 1. Physical beauty: nowhere in Ruth does it mention that Ruth was physically beautiful
 2. Racial heritage: Her race is inconsequential to Boaz
 - a. The Moabites were born through Lot and his incestuous encounter with his daughter
 - i. They were literally produced from inbreeding
 - ii. Genesis 19:30ff
 1. Produced Moab and Ammon, from whom the Moabites and Ammonites were descendants
 2. Both of these peoples were constant thorns in the side of Israel
 - b. Boaz's mother was Rahab, the Canaanite prostitute from Jericho
 - i. Joshua 2; Matt 1:4-5
 3. Religious Past: Her previous worship of other gods was not held against her
 - a. Moab worshipped Chemosh, who is called "detestable" or "abominable" in Scripture
 - i. 2 Kings 11:7; 23:13
 - ii. Possibly even child sacrifice, Deut 12:31, cf. with Molech the god of the Ammonites in Jer 32:35 and 2 Kings 23:10

- b. Chemosh was also worshipped through various sexual practices
 - i. Numbers 25
 - ii. This sexual immorality was based upon idolatry
- v. His honor of her is based upon her:
 - 1. Faithful covenant love - *chesed* (v10, “kindness”, cf. 1:16-17)
 - a. Ruth could have gained another husband and not redeemed Naomi’s land and Elimelech’s name through a redeemer
 - b. But Ruth chose the *Goel*, Boaz, in order that Naomi would be redeemed too and Elimelech and Mahlon’s names would continue (4:10)
 - c. Ruth’s faithful kindness to Naomi brought her great honor in Boaz’s eyes
 - 2. Hard Work - evidence of true love
 - a. True love produces external fruit
 - b. More than mere words, but acts of kindness, compassion, and grace (Ruth gleaned for Naomi, toiling hard)
 - c. Selfless, even self-forgetful, in her earnest hard work
 - 3. Woman of Strength
 - a. Her character is noble and good
 - b. She is even praised in the gates of the city
 - i. Center of the marketplace, civil decisions, and gossip
 - ii. The gates served as the local gathering and everybody there, says Boaz, knew that this Ruth lady was an amazing woman
 - c. Her character recalls Proverbs 31
 - i. Attached to the proverbs of King Solomon, Ruth’s great-great-grandson
 - ii. He knew the story of his g-g-grandma

4. A Problem is Revealed: There is a closer *goel*

- a. Boaz is under no legal obligation to redeem Naomi and Ruth
 - i. The Law only requires the nearest kinsman to redeem his brother’s wife and land
 - ii. The point that Boaz promises to do it should this other man fail indicates the amazing *chesed* of Boaz and his heart both for the LORD and for Ruth
 - iii. This also may give us the reason why Boaz has not acted already to redeem the two widows
- b. if he redeems you, good
 - i. Boaz still desires Ruth’s good more than his own
 - ii. So, if she is redeemed and saved from her poverty and shame, then he considers it good
- c. if not, I SWEAR I will
 - i. Either way Ruth will be redeemed
 - ii. His promise to Ruth is that she will be redeemed
- d. We’ll look closer at this problem next week as it relates to Christ and our redemption from sin

5. Our Redeemer Has Betrothed Us to Himself as our *Goel*

- a. Jesus is often placed as the Bridegroom and the Church as the Bride
 - i. Ephesians 5:22-32
 - ii. Matt 25 - awaiting the Bridegroom’s return
 - iii. Matt 9:15 - nobody fasts while the bridegroom is still around
 - iv. John 3:26-30 - Jesus is the Bridegroom because the Bride belongs to Him, John is just the joyful wedding attendant
- b. Jesus has worked the plan of our redemption with His blood
 - i. Titus 2:14 - He gave Himself for us to redeem us from all impurity and to purify us for Himself
 - ii. Galatians 3:13 - He redeemed us from the curse of the Law by becoming a curse for us

- iii. Yet, our redemption is not completely fulfilled in experience
 - 1. We still await the redemption of our bodies: Romans 8:23
 - 2. We are awaiting our righteousness with hope: Galatians 5:5
 - 3. We still hope for the promises to be fulfilled
 - a. To see God's glory - Romans 5:2
 - b. Freedom from corruption - Romans 8:20-27
 - c. Perfect love for each other - Romans 15:4-5
 - d. Comfort - 2 Cor 1:7
 - e. The glorious inheritance of the saints as children of God - Eph 1:18
 - f. Reconciliation and peace - Colossians 1:20
 - g. Holiness, blamelessness - Col 1:22
- c. We live between the promise of the Bridegroom and His actual presence when He returns
 - i. In the ANE, there was a period where the bride and the groom would make preparations for the marriage, each with his/her wedding party at their homes.
 - ii. Then the groom would party through town on his way to the bride's house to pick her up, where she had made preparations for meet the groom when he arrived to take her to his home
 - iii. In between the promise of marriage and the actual arrival of the bridegroom the bride made herself ready with the help of her wedding party, often over a period of many days
 - 1. This is where we currently live as Christians, in between the promise and the presence of the Groom
 - 2. We, too, are left with a wedding attendant who is like the Groom, the Holy Spirit, the "One Called Alongside to Help" (Parakletos)
 - a. John 14:1-6 - Jesus is going to prepare us a place (as the Groom)
 - i. He is coming again to bring us home
 - b. John 14:16 - Jesus sends us "another Helper"
 - i. "another" is one of "like kind" as Jesus, the Holy Spirit
 - ii. "Helper" is "One called alongside"
 - iii. The Holy Spirit helps us live between the promise and the presence of Jesus
 - 1. Teach us the things of Christ
 - 2. Bring to our remembrance the words of Christ
 - 3. Spirit of Truth
 - 4. He dwells with us and in us for our good and Christ's glory
 - 3. The Holy Spirit is purifying us for the Big Day when Christ returns to complete our redemption
 - a. Revelation 19:6-9
 - b. We will be dressed in the righteous deeds of the saints
 - c. They adorn us like the wedding gown that pleases the Groom
 - i. Note that the deeds are not the Bride, but they adorn the Bride
 - ii. Titus 2:10 - righteousness adorns the teaching of God, but is not the teaching itself
- d. The Groom is returning to gather His Bride to Himself
 - i. Remember this!!!
 - ii. Christ has plighted to redeem you, O Church, and He will fulfill His promise
 - iii. He is returning in joy to bring you home where He has prepared a place for you
 - iv. Let us live today dependent upon the Holy Spirit of God, adorning ourselves with the righteousness that pleases the Groom, awaiting the Big Day when He returns to complete His promise
 - 1. Hebrews 9:28 - appearing a second time without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him

Come Quickly, Lord Jesus, Your Bride Awaits With Joy