

## 1. Even With His Gifts, You Are Insecure Without a Redeemer

- a. Ruth continues to glean with Boaz's maids
  - i. "maids" is not the feminine word for "servant" but rather the word for "young women"
    1. Unlike 2:13 "maidservants"
  - ii. This indicates that they were the unmarried and able to be married young girls among Boaz's female workers
  - iii. Ruth places herself in the "available" group
- b. She continued gleaning for 4-6 weeks
  - i. Barley harvest first
  - ii. Wheat harvest second
  - iii. Usually ended in late May, early June
  - iv. Throughout all this time there is no more interaction with Boaz mentioned!
    1. He never called after the first date
    2. What was Ruth thinking? Boaz? Naomi?
- c. She remained with Naomi
  - i. 1:16, her vow to Naomi to never leave her
  - ii. She kept the "disgrace" of widowhood
    1. Note Naomi is referred to as "mother-in-law"
    2. Relationship that is incomplete for rest
  - iii. She looked for no husband
    1. Going home to Naomi
    2. Going to glean (work) in Boaz's field
  - iv. She showed no interest in leaving
- d. Ruth still wasn't ultimately secure
  - i. Not secure in Israel
    1. Still in poverty
    2. Without the security of home, family, and land
    3. Without a name in Israel
  - ii. The gifts without the Giver are hollow and unfulfilling
    1. The kindness of God is meant to lead us to repentance (Rom 2:4)
      - a. All of our desires, tainted as they are by sin, are too weak for what we really need, not too strong
      - b. These desires are reflections of the deeper need to be filled up by God, to worship Him, to rejoice in His person and work
    2. If you ate candy every day instead of the real food, you would be weak, sick, even dead
      - a. So also if we become content with the gifts that the LORD brings to us, but do not pursue the Giver, we become weak, sick, and eventually dead
      - b. This is why the LORD sometimes pulls away our blessings, so that we would trust in HIM and not in His gifts

## 2. Now is the Time to Seek Rest in a Redeemer

- a. Boaz was looking out for Ruth's best (v21)
  - i. He commanded her to stay with his "lads" while gleaning
    1. "close" to them
  - ii. For her safety from harm

1. Note that Naomi indicates that she should stay close to the young women in order to be safe
  2. Boaz is not merely concerned about her safety
  - iii. I believe that Boaz wants her to find a good husband among his young men
    1. He places her near to them for her rest in marriage, too
    2. He does not assume that he would be her choice
  - b. Naomi seeks “rest” for Ruth
    - i. Word indicates a “resting place”, or a state of rest
      1. A place of little anxiety
      2. Used of Noah’s dove who found no place to land and build a home (Gen 8:9)
      3. Used of Israel’s lack of a resting place while in exile (had no home) in Lam 1:3; Deut 28:65
    - ii. Naomi’s acts are the LORD’s answer to Naomi’s earlier prayer
      1. 1:8-9
      2. Prayer is not a passive expectation, but also an active participation when the opportunity arrives
        - a. Boaz will do the same thing later when he fulfills the LORD’s plan that he prayed for earlier
    - iii. Naomi is looking to Ruth’s future and her place in Israel
      1. Usually it was the father’s place to find a husband for his daughter
        - a. This is a good thing, not a bad thing, for a father to run interference for his daughter
        - b. He loves her dearly and wants what is best for her: a godly husband who will love her as much as he has loved her
        - c. Ruth has no father, or even a father – in – law, so Naomi acts as such to get Boaz, whom she sees as godly and a great match for Ruth
      2. She doesn’t want Ruth falling for one of the young men, so she tells her to stay close to the young women
        - a. “Those boys aren’t trustworthy” – what a ploy!
        - b. It makes you wonder what she was researching and planning for these 4 weeks, doesn’t it?
      3. Naomi wants Ruth to pursue Boaz because he is their kinsman-redeemer
        - a. She reminds Ruth of Boaz’s position: Goel
        - b. He is obviously interested in you, Ruth
          - i. We just have to help him out a bit to take the first step
3. NOW is the Time to Proclaim Your Love and Claim Your Redeemer
  - a. Go and proclaim your desire to have him as your husband!
    - i. Winnowing barley
      1. Long, hard work
      2. The winnowing was to separate the grain from the chaff by throwing it up into the air so that the wind would blow the lighter chaff away and leave the grain behind
    - ii. Threshing floor
      1. These threshing floors were usually on the seaward side of town to catch the evening breeze coming off of the sea

2. Large flat area that animals would drag weights across to tear the grain off of the stalk and separate from the husk
  3. Largely open to the wind
- b. Wash Up!
- i. Gleaning long hours made one a little...funky ☺
  - ii. All that Boaz had seen was the sweaty working widow...it's time to get cleaned up!
  - iii. She was most likely in mourning attire, the garments of a widow
- c. Anoint Yourself!
- i. Spiced and/or perfumed oils, maybe "Bethel No.5" or something like that
  - ii. Do your hair up, doll up,
- d. Put on your clothes
- i. Change those widows clothes, girl, you're making yourself available!
  - ii. Most likely an outer garment, heavier than normal
    1. Used to hide her identity? Keep warm?
    2. Grab your coat!
- e. GO NOW!
- i. Urgency
  - ii. Ruth was told to wait until the work and celebration was over
    1. Typically celebrated when harvest was brought in
    2. The grain would be in a large pile and out in the open, so Boaz would have stayed to guard it at night
    3. Don't interrupt his party, but wait until it is over
      - a. Wait until he lies down! ("lies down" is mentioned three times)
      - b. Sexual tension in this verse...leaves one wondering what Naomi was thinking
- f. Tell Him Your Desires
- i. "uncover his feet"
    1. His feet would cold in the open night air and he would have to sit up and cover them up again
    2. When he sat up to cover his feet he would see her laying there, quite inappropriately for a woman to be sleeping near a man to whom she was not married
  - ii. Hosea 9:1 links prostitution with the threshing floor
    1. Payday and party typically mean foolish men with too much money on their hands at once
    2. Think of saloons after the cattle have been brought in
    3. This act of laying down at his feet could be taken as an appeal for prostitution
  - iii. He will tell you what to do
    1. Risky: to dress up nicely, put on perfume, wait until a man has filled his stomach and had a few drinks, then to lay down and uncover his legs in the middle of the night and then tell him, "I'll do whatever you say."
    2. This is racy stuff that puts Ruth in clear risk.
      - a. Either Naomi trusts Boaz greatly (possibly done her homework over these past weeks)
      - b. Or, Naomi is hoping for a Judah/Tamar incident
    3. Naomi most likely knows of the closer redeemer, but wants Boaz to be the one, so she is forcing him to deal with it
- g. "All that you tell me I will do"

- i. There is a deep trust of Naomi by Ruth
- ii. There is also a desire on Ruth's part for Boaz to be her redeemer (see on later in the chapter)
- iii. Complete commitment and obedience
  - 1. None of this half-hearted nonsense
  - 2. 6 weeks has been long enough for him not to call, it's time for action!!

#### 4. Let Us Run to Our Redeemer

- a. Seek the rest that is only found in the LORD
  - i. Heb 4:3-4, 10
  - ii. Rest from the condemnation of the law
  - iii. Rest from work-righteousness
  - iv. The rest that comes from knowing that the Father loves you more deeply than you can even imagine
    - 1. The Cross of Christ didn't convince the Father to love you, but rather "God so loved the world *that He gave* His only fathered Son..." (John 3:16-17; 1 John 3:1; 2 John 1:3)
    - 2. God set His love upon you and that is why the Son came down to die in our place. (Eph 1:3-14)
  - v. The rest that comes from Christ, our Savior, didn't leave any sin unatoned for, but paid for them all
    - 1. No sin left for us to pay (1 John 1:7; Rom 8:1)
    - 2. No law left unfulfilled that we must attain (Rom 8:2-4; Gal 3:13)
    - 3. The Son of God gave up His riches for our poverty so that we might become the children of God (John 1:1-14; 2 Cor 8:9)
  - vi. The rest that comes from knowing that the Holy Spirit indwells us, forever to bring to mind the glories of Christ
    - 1. He battles against the flesh: we are not alone (Rom 8:9; Gal 5:16ff)
    - 2. He seals us until the day of redemption: we belong to God! (Eph 4:30)
    - 3. He intercedes for us in prayer when we cannot! (Rom 8:26-27)
- b. So we see the work of rest by the Triune God for our good and His glory
  - i. **Isaiah 60:21** Your people shall all be righteous; they shall possess the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I might be glorified.
  - ii. **Isaiah 61:1-3** The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;<sup>2</sup> to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn;<sup>3</sup> to grant to those who mourn in Zion - to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified.

#### Conclusion:

Run to your Redeemer today! Now is the time to put off your widow's garments and rejoice in the work of Christ! Dance with the One who redeemed you: Father who loved you and chose you, the Son who loves you and redeemed you, and the Spirit who loves you and seals you and indwells you, all for His glory, the glory of the One True God. Run to Jesus, the author and perfecter of the faith and find your rest and your joy, not merely in His gifts, but in His presence and His covenantal love for you. He is the way, the truth, and the life and He will bring us to the Father by the Spirit for His glory and for our joy. He has taken our broken and burnt out ashes and replaced them with a crown of joy!