

Ruth 3

v2

"See, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor."

- There was to be a gathering and a celebration for the workers. This marked the end of the harvest and there would have been a rejoicing/thanksgiving for the end of all the labour; for the fruit of a successful harvest and all that had been brought in.
- Ruth and the other maidens would be very welcome to join and help with the work and to rejoice and give thanks with the men.
- *GILL: It was usual to have threshingfloors in an open place without the city, so to winnow at them, whereby the chaff was more easily separated from the corn, and that, in the evening, when in those countries there were the strongest breezes of wind to carry it off; hence the Targum here has it, "behold, he is winnowing the barley floor with the wind, which is in the night. For before the invention and use of fans in winnowing, it was only done by the wind carrying off the chaff, as the oxen trod the corn, for it was done in the threshingfloor, as here: hence Hesiod advises that the threshingfloors should be χωρὶς ἐν εὐαεὶ, in a place exposed to wind; and so Varro observes, the floor should be in the higher part of the field, that the wind might blow through it;*
- The spiritual application of this is seen in Jesus Christ who will winnow all men on the threshing floor of judgement! This will be at the end of all time and labour! There will be great celebration, joy and thanksgiving among the labourers and maidens but the the chaff, the unbelievers, will be separated and burned up with fire. It is not God's will that any should perish! He died for all of us and longs for our hearts and souls!! Do we have such a heart for the unbeliever? Will we be found in His fields looking to save His precious grain?
- *Matthew 3:12 His winnowing fan (shovel, fork) is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear out and clean His threshing floor and gather and store His wheat in His barn, but the chaff He will burn up with fire that cannot be put out.*

v3

"Wash and anoint yourself therefore, and put on your best clothes and go down to the threshing floor"

- It's possible that Ruth was still in mourning clothes but certainly dressed appropriately for a widow or a worker. Whatever she wore, she was to change from her current garments of toil and suffering to garments of hope and joy. This was neither time for mourning nor for work. Sorrow had passed and joy/hope was seen in the morning.
- Ruth had left her land, her people, her culture and her gods. She gave up everything! She had taken nothing of her past life except what she could not remove herself... the sorrow and loss of her husband.
- She could not go to meet Boaz in garments of sorrow. She could not go to meet him in garments reminding them both of her past husband/relationship. The old garments were to be put off.
- I think there is more to be said about this... Yes, she had left Moab. Moab and its influence were completely cut off from her life but now there is something of a moving on. There is a washing off of the dirt and lowliness, a putting off of the old work clothes, a new appealing fragrance in the oil... Perhaps this can be likened to being filled with The Holy Spirit??

v4

"notice the place where he lies"

- Pay attention believer. Note the place where The Lord's presence abides. Note those with whom He is pleased to dwell. Note the church/fellowship where His testimony is evident. Note the place where you can see that The Lord has been at work.
- Note in your own life where The Lord lies. In the quiet place of prayer and communion. In the reading of His word. Not in the religious practice but notice how He is in the place where your heart seeks Him. Notice your habits and bents and find where The Lord is pleased to meet you.

"then go and uncover his feet and lie down. And he will tell you what to do."

- *GILL: let it be observed, that this man was, as Naomi thought, the next kinsman, and so in right of the law in Deuteronomy 25:5, was the husband of Ruth, and therefore might take such a freedom with him as she did; and it seems by the same law as if the woman was to make the demand of marriage, which may serve to reconcile the carriage of Ruth to her character:*

v5-6

"Ruth said to her, All that you say to me I will do."

- There was no confusion, no hesitation, no objection... Just obedience.
- *Trust and obey, For there's no other way, To be happy in Jesus, But to trust and obey.*
- *1 John 5:2 By this we come to know (recognize and understand) that we love the children of God: when we love God and obey His commands (orders, charges)-[when we keep His ordinances and are mindful of His precepts and His teaching].*
- *Revelation 2:26 And he who overcomes (is victorious) and who obeys My commands to the [very] end [doing the works that please Me], I will give him authority and power over the nations;*
- A saying that I grew up with is "Obedience is instant". Obedience is submission and the relinquishing of control and responsibility. There is a wonderful liberty and freedom in obedience.
- *John 14:31 But [Satan is coming and] I do as the Father has commanded Me, so that the world may know (be convinced) that I love the Father and that I do only what the Father has instructed Me to do. [I act in full agreement with His orders.] Rise, let us go away from here.*
- Jesus learned obedience and walked in it! His life within us will naturally desire to do the same. We must decrease!! Let His life LIVE!

v7-8

"Then [Ruth] came softly and uncovered his feet and lay down."

- This practice may seem strange by today's standards and we cannot fully understand this historic culture.
- What we have is Ruth coming to Boaz. She came to where He was. She had watched and paid attention and she came to where she knew she would find him.
- The uncovering of his feet can be likened to making a petition for his presence/attention in that her intent/desire was to awaken him and has an audience with him. This action was the most gentle and gracious way that she could wake him. There is also some explanation to gained in the next verse. She moved his "skirt" to expose His feet and to seek permission to be covered by the same skirt.
- She uncovered his feet and then she lay patient. She brought herself before The Lord of the feast and she lay quietly and patiently for him. We may come before The Lord, seeking communion/audience with himself. Let us uncover His feet in prayer, in petition, in intercession and let us wait there in His presence.

v9

"Spread your wing [of protection] over your maid-servant, for you are a next of kin."

- Just as your feet are exposed to the cold and you desire to cover them, in the same way be a covering to me. Cover my shame, cover me from the cold, cover me with your garments, your provision, your honour, your name.
- *GILL: which seems to account for the reason of her uncovering his feet, or turning up the skirt of his garment that was upon them; not through wantonness and immodesty, but to direct him, when opportunity offered, to spread it over her as a token of his taking her in marriage, and of her being under his care and protection, and of her subjection to him; so the Targum, "let thy name be called upon me to take me for a wife,"*
- I lay here as low and humble as your feet and I ask to be covered as they are. To be as much a part of you as they are.

v10-11

"Blessed be you of the Lord, my daughter. For you have made this last loving-kindness greater than the former"

- *GILL: that is, to her husband's family; she had shown much love to her husband living and dying, and to her mother-in-law, in leaving her country and kindred to come with her into a strange country, and in labour to support her, as she had done, all which was great kindness; to which the Targum adds, her being proselyted; but the kindness she now showed exceeded all the former, in that she was desirous, according to the law of God, to build up her husband's family, to marry the next near kinsman, even though an old man, to raise up seed to the name and memory of her husband.*

"for you have not gone after young men"

- She didn't chase after selfish gain. She didn't try to make herself available to younger men. She did not "go after" at all.
- She was not making any effort to satisfy any sensual desire. She wasn't trying to gain for herself a new name or a new home/inheritance.
- She avoided and stayed clear their company and conversation. She did not put herself in a position to be caressed or addressed by them. She did not choose to follow any young man in a way that a bride would follow her husband when married to him. She maintained her modesty and her dignity as one set apart, holy and innocent.
- *GILL: Boaz mentions this as an instance of her virtue, and of her great respect to her husband's family, that a woman of such amiable qualities, virtuous, young, and beautiful, who doubtless might have been married to a young man in her own country, or in Israel, but chose to marry the nearest of kin in her husband's family, to perpetuate his name and memory; the Jews say Boaz was now eighty years of age, and Ruth forty.*

"fear not. I will do for you all you require"

- As a type of Christ, Boaz says to one who is petitioning him. Do not be afraid and do not worry for I will do all that is required.
- Our responsibility as believers is to petition The Lord. It is our right and our privilege to approach The Lord Jesus and to make our requests known to Him. (Philippians 4:6) But then, after we have come to Him... Have faith and fear not for truly He will do all that is required. Hallelujah!

"for all my people in the city know that you are a woman of strength (worth, bravery, capability)."

- What a precious and wonderful testimony/reputation to have. Oh how sad it is to know the reputation of many "Christians" today. More than that... How shocking and sad is the realisation that our testimony is not what it ought to be! How do people talk about me? What is my reputation in the town? Do people talk of me as a man of strength, bravery, capability and virtue? Do they talk of my friendliness, my welcome, my grace, work ethic and care? Or do they talk of my lack, my weakness, my selfishness and pride??
- Ruth hadn't sought a name for herself. She hadn't tried to win favour. She simply was faithful in the small things. She was consistent and disciplined in her work. She avoided silly, immature relationships and focused on serving her household. She was faithful, loving and holy.
- *GILL: a good woman, possessed of grace and virtue, having every agreeable qualification to recommend to the marriage state; and therefore, should they come to the knowledge of the step taken to obtain it, will never reproach thee for it, nor blame me for marrying a person, though poor, of such an excellent character, which, by her conduct and behaviour, was universally established.*

v12-13

"there is a kinsman nearer than I."

- I've pondered over this for quite some time. Who is the nearer kinsman? What is the spiritual application of the nearer kinsman? Why is he mentioned?
- We learn more about him in the next chapter (Ruth 4:6)
- I think we can look at this relative as religion, a false church or the Law. He is related closer in the flesh. It is something closer in person... It is perhaps a logical or understandable option... But, as we will see, this kinsman cannot or will not redeem!

"But if he will not do the part of a kinsman for you, then, as the Lord lives, I will do the part of a kinsman for you. Lie down until the morning."

- As The Lord lives... And live He does!! Hallelujah!! He's alive! Our kinsman redeemer is alive!!
- He will do the part! He has done the part! The Lord Jesus Christ has done all that is required of a kinsman redeemer for us! He has purchased our pardon! He has paid in full! He has satisfied the judgement of God! Hallelujah! Praise The Lord!

v17

"And she said, He gave me these six measures of barley, for he said to me, Do not go empty-handed to your mother-in-law."

- When we have been in the presence of Jesus, we will always leave with enough to share!
- Boaz, like Christ, is concerned for the life and for the household. This is not merely Boaz taking advantage of a beautiful young woman to marry but he is truly caring for her household. Consider the comfort this would have been. In this seemingly small gesture Boaz is making it clear that he has care and concern for Naomi and that he will care for her estate. It is not just a convenience but he knows and gives care to the responsibility before him.

v18

"Sit still, my daughter, until you learn how the matter turns out"

- Boaz has told her not to fear/fret. Naomi has also encouraged her to sit still and be at rest.
- The waiting time can often seem so hard for the flesh. We can be so impatient! We have such a selfish, sensual need for control and gratification.
- We lose sight of the incredible, miraculous and free provision that is being given to us. We lose sight of the "rewarder of the reward" (Hebrews 11:26)
- *Psalm 46:10 Let be and be still, and know (recognize and understand) that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations! I will be exalted in the earth!*
- *Isaiah 40:31 But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.*

- When we have cried out to The Lord and brought our petition before Him then we ought to have the faith to believe that He "*will do for you all you require*". This is faith!! This is dependence. This is to rest in Him and to cast yourself upon His goodness and His provision. Ruth could go about her day with joy and contentment knowing that all was being done on her behalf. She could rest and sit still, without fear or worry because her redeemer was doing all that was required.

"for the man will not rest until he finishes the matter today."

- We underestimate how carefully and diligently the man (Jesus) will work to accomplish not our desire but his! This is such a precious truth that we often take for granted or under appreciate! Boaz was not working in a sensual sense just to make Ruth happy and give her what she wanted. Boaz was eager to fulfil his own desire to provide for and to care for Ruth and Naomi.

- Let us not lose sight of our Saviour's desire for us. How he longs for us, How His whole heart is longing to intimately commune with us. May we rest in great peace and joy knowing all that our Lord is doing on our behalf and all that He desires for us.

- *Psalm 121:4 Behold, He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.*

- *Isaiah 62:7 And give Him no rest until He establishes Jerusalem and makes her a praise in the earth.*

- *Hebrews 7:25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever lives to make intercession for them.*

- Our Lord, Saviour, Redeemer, Father and Shepherd will not rest until He has accomplished all that will glorify Him in our lives! He will not rest until we are at rest!