

# RUTH

In our last lesson, we learned a number of precepts from Ruth and Boaz regarding how to conduct our lives. Precepts about helping our brothers and sisters, about not being greedy, and about the duty of everyone prosperous to help provide for the not-so-fortunate? Boaz and Ruth both also give us excellent examples of living responsible, ethical, and upright lives, even when times are tough. Even though Ruth had no worldly possessions, she was willing to work, did not expect special favors, and respected the man who owned the land, the harvest and the servants. Boaz for his part did not take advantage of Ruth, or use his position and wealth in an untoward manner. He respected her dignity, and treated her with all fairness.

In this lesson, we will observe Naomi coming up with the plan that would insert Boaz into Ruth's life as a kinsman redeemer. We also see Boaz looking into the affairs of Ruth and Naomi, since he was already aware that someone else had first claim on being the kinsman redeemer. And finally, we will note that the behavior and character of both Ruth and Naomi are now well known and respected within the village — something that tells us the importance of our lifestyle as it relates to our Christian witness.

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## ***Read Ruth Chapter 3, then answer the following:***

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1. Who came up with the plan that would get Boaz to become their kinsman redeemer, Ruth or her mother-in-law Naomi? (see Ruth 3:1)
  - a. ANSWER: Naomi did.
2. Have you ever watched the movie "Fiddler On The Roof"? Remember the song "Match Maker, Match Maker"? How did brides and grooms meet each other in those days? Do you suppose that something similar is happening here? (see Ruth 3:1-4)
  - a. ANSWER: Clearly Naomi knows that Boaz qualifies as a potential redeemer and is doing all that she can to make the match for Ruth with Boaz. She knows the customs of the day, and she knows the honorable way to make all of this happen. She is instructing Ruth each step of the way.
3. Who would know about the Jewish custom of winnowing grain? This probably provides a big clue regarding who is hatching the plan, don't you think?
  - a. ANSWER: Naomi of course would have been fully aware of this law from Leviticus and was using it to help Ruth meet and marry Boaz. Naomi wanted the best for Ruth and was leading her in the ways of her people.
4. It was Jewish practice to share a common threshing floor—with each farmer taking turns threshing their wheat and barley by beating it on the floor then winnowing the chaff by throwing the grain in the air. At the end of each day, the grain would be piled high and the farmer would commonly sleep over, or camp at, the thrashing floor guarding his grain until the harvest was complete. Where was Boaz when Ruth found him? (see Ruth 3:7)
  - a. ANSWER: Following the custom of the day, Boaz was guarding his grain, sleeping on the threshing floor.
5. Ruth's actions in the middle of the night actually represented a proposal for Boaz to fulfill the role of kinsman redeemer. We know this from his reaction and actions recounted in Ruth 3:9-10. At first, Boaz did not know who was there, even though she was under his blanket. It was so dark that he could not see. But what did he call her once he knew who she was?
  - a. ANSWER: When Boaz knew who she was, he called her "my daughter." He recognized her and his responsibility toward her.
6. Did Ruth's actions often speak louder than words? Now that all of the harvest seasons are over, what do the townsfolk think of Ruth based on their observations of her and her relationship with Naomi, Boaz, and their gleaning in the fields? (see Ruth 3:11) Does this tell us something about our behavior in public, and how we can be a witness for a Christ without saying a word?
  - a. ANSWER: In a dramatic turn from how the townsfolk had received Naomi and Ruth when they first arrived, they now see both of them as honorable based on how Ruth has conducted herself in public. This tells us a lot about how people judge us and what the impact of our lives can be on others as we live out each day following Christ.
7. Had Boaz anticipated Ruth's proposal or was he caught off guard? (see Ruth 3:11-12).
  - a. ANSWER: Boaz knew who Ruth was and was prepared to be her redeemer, so her proposal came as no surprise to him.

8. What did Boaz mean in Ruth 3:12 regarding "a kinsman-redeemer nearer than I"?
    - a. ANSWER: Boaz was referring to the fact that a relative also in line to be kinsman redeemer was closer in the family line than Boaz.
  9. Now that Naomi's plan has been placed in action, and Ruth and Naomi have done all that they can, they must wait for Boaz to do something else before he can become their kinsman redeemer. What is it? (see Ruth 3:13)
    - a. ANSWER: Now that Ruth and Naomi knew that Boaz was willing to be the kinsman redeemer, they had to patiently wait while Boaz went to negotiate with the redeemer closer in relationship to the family. Boaz also had to be patient and follow the legal customs of the day before he could actually redeem Ruth and Naomi. It would be something that would be accomplished shortly, but in the meantime all three had to wait on the Lord to see His will revealed to them.
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In our last lesson, we noted how much the townsfolk respected Boaz. In this lesson, we see how they also respected Ruth. Both are examples of how we should "do all to the glory of God". How we live, how we conduct ourselves, even in the simple day-to-day things can affect our witness . We are mirrors, reflecting the love of Christ. What kind of reflection are you providing in your life?

May God bless you this week as you faithfully study His word.

In Christ,

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