

Ruth 3:1 ¶ Then Naomi her mother in law said unto her, My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee?

Ruth 3:2 And now *is* not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley to night in the threshingfloor.

Ruth 3:3 Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor: *but* make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking.

Ruth 3:4 And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do.

One of the first things I noticed is that the record references the barley harvest again. The Hebrew for “barley” is actually a reference to the grain, and I believe this had to be at the end of the wheat harvest in light of the last verse of the previous chapter.

Naomi has had time to consider and has determined that it is now the appropriate time to appeal to Boaz as their kinsman-redeemer. I believe she is truly motivated to see Ruth with a secure future. It’s finally the end of the harvest season, and she knows that Boaz will be taking part in winnowing the wheat (separating the grain from the chaff) on the threshing floor. She tells Ruth to wash herself, use a little perfume and dress herself nicely. She wants her to go to the threshing floor but to remain out of sight until Boaz has lain down to go to sleep. Ruth is to pay careful attention and note the place Boaz is sleeping. Then she is to go and uncover his feet and lay down at his feet. Naomi assures Ruth that Boaz will tell her what to do after that.

Obviously, Naomi had great respect for Boaz as a godly man and had no fear that he would mistreat Ruth or take advantage of her in any way.

Ruth 3:5 And she said unto her, All that thou sayest unto me I will do.

Ruth 3:6 ¶ And she went down unto the floor, and did according to all that her mother in law bade her.

Interesting to me is the fact that Ruth doesn’t ask questions. She just agrees to do as Naomi has instructed her and then acts accordingly. This tells me that Naomi has earned Ruth’s complete trust; she knows that Naomi is acting in her best interests.

Ruth 3:7 And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn: and she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down.

Ruth 3:8 And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and turned himself: and, behold, a woman lay at his feet.

Ruth 3:9 And he said, Who *art* thou? And she answered, I *am* Ruth thine handmaid: spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou *art* a near kinsman.

At the end of the day Boaz enjoyed a good meal and was feeling quite pleased. When he went to sleep by the heap of grain, Ruth came softly and uncovered his feet and lay down. Evidently, around midnight Boaz became frightened as he became conscious of something at his feet, until he realized it was a woman. He immediately asked the woman to identify herself, and she did. Ruth told him that he was her kinsman-redeemer and basically asked him to marry her in keeping with the accepted custom of that day. By placing herself at his feet she was placing herself in a position of submission to him.

This explains that Ruth understood all along the purpose of Naomi's instructions to her.

Adam Clarke explains in his commentary: "Even to the present day, when a Jew marries a woman, *he throws the skirt or end of his talith over her*, to signify that he has taken her under his protection."

Ruth 3:10 And he said, Blessed *be* thou of the LORD, my daughter: *for thou hast shewed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich.*

Ruth 3:11 And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest: for all the city of my people doth know that thou *art* a virtuous woman.

Ruth 3:12 And now it is true that I *am thy* near kinsman: howbeit there is a kinsman nearer than I.

Ruth 3:13 Tarry this night, and it shall be in the morning, *that if he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsman, well; let him do the kinsman's part: but if he will not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee, as the LORD liveth: lie down until the morning.*

Boaz was impressed with Ruth's humility. He was evidently an older man and would not have expected that she would wish to marry him in spite of how it would benefit her family. He thought this exemplified a greater commitment to family than she had already evidenced toward Naomi. Obviously, Ruth had great respect and admiration for Boaz as a godly man and realized that this was much more to be valued in a husband than age or appearance.

Boaz assures Ruth that he will gladly do as she asks because she is widely known by the people of the city as a virtuous (worthy, strong, righteous) woman. This would be important to a man of his position.

Proverbs 31:10 "Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies."

Boaz then reveals that though he is willing, there is a nearer kinsman that must be given the first opportunity to act on her behalf. He tells Ruth to wait through the night, and he will go and meet with the nearer kinsman in the morning. If the man declines to act on her behalf, Boaz will.

Ruth 3:14 ¶ And she lay at his feet until the morning: and she rose up before one could know another. And he said, Let it not be known that a woman came into the floor.

Ruth 3:15 Also he said, Bring the veil that *thou hast* upon thee, and hold it. And when she held it, he measured six *measures* of barley, and laid *it* on her: and she went into the city.

Ruth 3:16 And when she came to her mother in law, she said, Who *art* thou, my daughter? And she told her all that the man had done to her.

Ruth 3:17 And she said, These six *measures* of barley gave he me; for he said to me, Go not empty unto thy mother in law.

Ruth 3:18 Then said she, Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day.

Ruth lay at his feet, but rose up to leave before the other workers got up so that no one would know she had been there; I believe Boaz was guarding her reputation. Before she left Boaz told her to bring her veil and hold it out while he filled it with grain; he filled it with six measures or scoops, and she returned to Naomi. Naomi immediately wanted a report of what had happened, and Ruth told her all that Boaz had said. She ended by saying that Boaz told her he did not want her to return to her mother-in-law empty-handed, so he gave her the six measures of grain.

Naomi was content and assured Ruth that Boaz would have everything settled by the end of the day, and it seems that she had faith that he would be the one to redeem her. I think that was understandable since she felt that it was God's hand that led Ruth to glean in the field belonging to Boaz in the first place.

Naomi had complete faith in her kinsman-redeemer, just as we should have complete faith in Jesus, our Kinsman-Redeemer. She told Ruth to "sit still" as she waited on Boaz to act on her behalf, just as we should learn to be still and patient as we wait on the Lord to act on our behalf.

Psalms 46:10 "Be still, and know that I am God...."

Psalms 37:7 "Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him...."

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."

Lamentations 3:25 "The LORD is good unto them that wait for him...."