



=THE BOOK OF RUTH=

Lesson 4

Chapter 3

INTRODUCTION: Review the story very carefully. Last week's lesson ended with Ruth's gleaning in the fields of Boaz. One thing we must understand, and that is that Boaz was a kinsman of Ruth. Actually, he was a "goel"—"a kinsman-redeemer." As such, it was his duty to marry the widow of a kinsman, providing he was the next of kin. Of course, Ruth did not hold him to this and would not have done so. In Deuteronomy 25:5, 7-10, we find this strange law of Israel. Let us notice the Gospel in the romance between Boaz and Ruth.

- I. **BEFORE ROMANCE BLOSSOMED, RUTH GLEANED IN THE FIELDS OF BOAZ.** In this story, Boaz is a type of Christ, and Ruth is a type of the Christian. The gleaning in the fields, as we found out last week, is a type of the Word of God. There was no romance until there was first the gleaning. There can be no salvation without the Word of God. The Word of God is the seed which must be sown in order that a person might be saved. This is why it is so important that we preach and teach the Bible. It is the seed.
- II. **NAOMI INTRODUCED RUTH TO BOAZ.** Naomi is a type of the Holy Spirit. Not only was the gleaning necessary, but there had to be someone to lead her to him. It is the Holy Spirit Who leads the Christian to lead the sinner to the Lord Jesus Christ.
- III. **NAOMI SOUGHT A MARRIAGE FOR RUTH.** In Ruth 3:1, notice Naomi's words, "My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee?" The word "rest" here implies "a husband and a home." Naomi saw no rest for Ruth without such. Here is a picture of the rest Jesus Christ gives once we become a member of His bride through faith in Him. When through the Word of God and the Holy Spirit, we come to Christ, we find rest. Matthew 11:28, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."
- IV. **BOAZ MADE THE FIRST MOVE.** This is found in the previous chapter. Boaz invited Ruth to come in and glean with the reapers. He also left her some "handfuls of purpose." Here is a blessed picture of Christ inviting sinners to come to salvation. (Teacher, a practical point here would be to encourage the young ladies not to be too forward toward the young boys. It has long been considered in poor taste for a young lady to call a boy on the telephone or to make overtures to a boy. The first advances toward friendship should come from the young man.)
- V. **RUTH, HOWEVER, HAD TO RECIPROCATATE THAT MOVE.** The next move was Ruth's. According to the Mosaic system, it was incumbent upon Ruth to make a definite move, especially after the events of barley harvest had occurred. If Ruth had been silent after Boaz had shown his interest in her during the harvest season, it would have constituted a rejection of him as a suitor for her hand. Consequently, Ruth must take the next step. Here again is the picture of salvation. Christ invites us to come to Him, but we must accept. He will not force us, even as Boaz did not force Ruth.
- VI. **BEFORE RUTH COULD COME TO BOAZ, SHE HAD TO WASH HERSELF, ANOINT HERSELF AND PUT ON NEW RAIMENT.** In Ruth 3:3 is a beautiful picture of salvation. When a person comes to Christ, he is cleansed, anointed with the Holy Spirit and given garments. For Ruth, old things were passed away; hence, she put on a new garment. What a beautiful picture of salvation! (Teacher, stress to the young people the importance of being clean (washed), of following the Holy Spirit and His leadership (anointing), and, for that matter, even of dressing properly.)
- VII. **RUTH OBEYED NAOMI COMPLETELY.** In Ruth 3:5, notice the words, "All that thou sayest unto me I will do." She is coming to Boaz, and she obeys Naomi completely. Since Ruth is a type of the Christian, Boaz is a type of Jesus, and Naomi is a type of the Holy Spirit, this teaches us that we should obey the Holy Spirit completely in our lives.

VIII. **RUTH COMES TO THE FEET OF BOAZ.** Boaz had joined his laborers in the work of threshing the grain. A multitude had gathered there, some even bringing their families. It was a time of celebration, of expressions of joy, when man made vocal his gratitude to God for the gracious harvest. Boaz, though a rich man, joins his workmen in this occasion. They were winnowing the grain at night to get the advantage of the night wind of that country which is ideal for that process. Winnowing consisted of picking up the grain with some instrument after it had been tramped out and then pitching it into the wind that the chaff might be blown away. After the workmen had labored into the night and the wind had stopped, they ate a midnight meal and then retired for the night there on the threshingfloor that they might stand guard over the winnowed grain. Naomi had told Ruth to go down to the threshingfloor in the evening, but not to make herself known. Ruth was to observe Boaz when he finished the late midnight meal and lay down for the night on the threshingfloor. It must be noted that the threshing floor was a public place, and that these incidents all took place in the open. Both men and women were lying about on the threshingfloor, and families were gathered there. There was no privacy at all. Ruth was instructed to go to the place where Boaz had returned and take her place at his feet. She was offering herself to him. She did not force him as the nearest kinsman to marry her. She offered herself to him and accepted his attention. Here is a beautiful picture of the rest we have in Christ. Thank God for salvation and for the beautiful pictures of salvation we find in the Word of God.