



THE BOOK OF RUTH

Lesson Three

Seeking Security for a Stranger

Ruth 2:15 – 3:6

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Harvesting Grain

1. Men with sharp sickles cut down the stalks of grain.
2. Servants gathered the stalks into bundles and tied them. They were stored in barns.
3. Gleaners came behind and reaped the corners of the field and gathered any residual grain.
4. Threshing crushed the stalks and separated the grain from the pods, making a mixture of chaff and grain.
5. Winnowing was done by tossing the grain-chaff mix into the air and letting the breeze blow the chaff away, while the grain fell back.

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Ruth 2:15-16

- Gleaners were not allowed to glean around the stacks of sheaves—the property of the landowner.
- Boaz waives this prohibition and allows Ruth to glean around the sheaves.
- Boaz also commands his reapers to purposely drop some grain stalks for Ruth to pick up.

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Ruth 2:17-18

- Boaz's servants obey him to the letter.
- Ruth works very hard at gleaning.
- An ancient system of welfare—but not just a handout.
- An *ephah* equals about 4 gallons—about 20-25 pounds of barley.

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Ruth 2:19-20

- Ruth brings home much more than what is typical for a day of gleaning.
- Naomi's attitude changes from bitterness to praise.

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Ruth 2:21-22

- Gleaners typically gleaned in several different fields.
- But Boaz tells Ruth to stay close to his reapers and stay under his protection.
- Naomi agrees knowing that she could suffer abuse from other gleaners.

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Faith – *Notitia Assensus Fiducia*

- ***Notitia*** – Believing in the data—intellectual awareness
- ***Assensus*** – Being persuaded of the truth
- ***Fiducia*** – Acceptance of and commitment to the truth

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Ruth 2:19-22

- Naomi had previously come to *fiducia* faith and was a believer.
- When hard times came she temporarily lost her faith, but God did not lose her.
- God restored her faith and it was stronger than before.

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Ruth 3:1

- Naomi sees God opening up opportunities, and she begins to make plans to exploit them.
- Naomi takes an active interest in improving Ruth's lot—and her own.

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Ruth 3:2

- Naomi is familiar with the harvesting process
- She knows that Boaz will be winnowing his harvest, and where he will be doing it.
- Winnowing began in the early evening and continued well into the night.
- The workers would often spend the night there.
- The time of day is very important to the story.

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Levirate Marriage

- An old custom of the ancient Near East.
- Existed before the time of Moses—Gen. 38.
- Incorporated into the Mosaic Law—Deut. 25:5-10.
- If a married man died and had no son his brother was obliged to take his widow and have children with her.

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Inheritance of Land—The Kinsman-Redeemer

- The real owner of the land was God—Lev. 25:23-28.
- God distributed the land among the tribes of Israel. They had use of it but they were not to part with it.
- If they had to sell it because of hardship, the closest relative was to redeem it—the kinsman-redeemer.
- Every 50 years unredeemed land would revert back to the original landholder.

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Parallels with Jesus Christ and the Kinsman-Redeemer

1. The redeemer had to be a close relative. Jesus became our near kinsman by taking on human flesh—Phil. 2:8.
2. The redeemer paid the redemption price. Jesus paid for our redemption with His own blood—Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 1:18-19.
3. He had to be willing to redeem. Jesus was willing to redeem us—Heb 12:2.
4. He had to be free to redeem; he could not redeem himself. Jesus was free of sin and therefore qualified—Heb. 4:15; 2 Cor 5:21.

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Ruth 3:3-4

- Naomi counsels Ruth to make herself as attractive as possible.
- She instructs her to wait until after Boaz has had supper and has gone to sleep to do anything.
- After he goes to sleep she is to uncover his feet and lie down at his feet.
- This does not have any sexual connotation whatever.



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