

Lesson 8 18 March 2012

Ruth's Rest in Redemption

Lesson Scope: [Ruth 3 and 4](#)

Lesson Focus

When Ruth committed herself to Israel's God, she did not yet know the things we see unfolding in the last two chapters of the Book of Ruth. This account illustrates for us the grace and mercy of God as He reaches out to redeem men.

While God has taken the necessary steps to provide redemption, man must do his part to experience it. As Ruth did her part, God providentially arranged the circumstances for her, making it possible for her to be redeemed.

Through redemption Ruth became part of the family of God. She was an ancestor of the Messiah, the Redeemer of Israel and of the world. Just as God used Ruth in His redemptive preparations, He uses His redeemed ones today to reach those still in sin.

Boaz filled an important role in Ruth's redemption. He bought the land belonging formerly to Elimelech, and he married Ruth to preserve Elimelech's family name in Israel.

The Kinsman-Redeemer provides the rest and fulfillment of redemption. The seeking soul must reach out by faith and obey without reservation in order to receive these blessings.

This lesson portrays, in story form, the process of our redemption through Jesus Christ. Numerous comparisons can be made between Ruth and ourselves, and between Boaz and Jesus Christ, our Redeemer.

Ruth was at the mercy of Boaz. It was his choice to redeem or not to redeem her. Yet Boaz did not attempt to redeem Ruth without her consent and cooperation. Both the redeemer and the redeemed one had a part in this process.

God has done His part. Emphasize how Ruth sought for redemption and what we must do to be redeemed.

Lesson Aim: To identify principles for finding rest in redemption.

Theme Verse: [Psalm 116:7](#). Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee.

Lesson Text:

"Shall I Not Seek Rest for Thee?"

[Ruth 3:1-3](#) 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? ² And now *is* not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley to night in the threshingfloor. 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 3:9](#) 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.

"I Am Thy Near Kinsman"

[Ruth 3:10-13](#) 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. 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. ¹² And now it is true that I *am thy* near kinsman: howbeit there is a kinsman nearer than I. 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.

"I Have Bought All"

[Ruth 4:1-4](#) ¹ Then went Boaz up to the gate, and sat him down there: and, behold, the kinsman of whom Boaz spake came by; unto whom he said, Ho, such a one! turn aside, sit down here. And he turned aside, and sat down. ² And he took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, Sit ye down here. And they sat down. ³ And he said unto the kinsman, Naomi, that is

come again out of the country of Moab, selleth a parcel of land, which *was* our brother Elimelech's: ⁴ And I thought to advertise thee, saying, Buy *it* before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem *it*, redeem *it*: but if thou wilt not redeem *it*, *then* tell me, that I may know: for *there is* none to redeem *it* beside thee; and I *am* after thee. And he said, I will redeem *it*.

Ruth 4:9-10,13,17 ⁹ And Boaz said unto the elders, and *unto* all the people, Ye *are* witnesses this day, that I have bought all that *was* Elimelech's, and all that *was* Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi. ¹⁰ Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: ye *are* witnesses this day. ¹³ So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went in unto her, the LORD gave her conception, and she bare a son..... ¹⁷ And the women her neighbours gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed: he *is* the father of Jesse, the father of David.

Questions for Study

"Shall I Not Seek Rest for Thee?"

1. How does Ruth's approach to Boaz depict a sinner coming to Jesus?
2. What evidence of faith do we observe in Ruth's actions?
3. What steps must a sinner take to find redemption in Christ?

"I Am Thy Near Kinsman"

4. In what ways did the response of Boaz foreshadow that of Jesus Christ?
5. Why is Jesus Christ the only one who is able to redeem us?

"I Have Bought All"

6. Why is the flesh, our nearer kinsman, incapable of redeeming us?
7. What elements of our redemption do we see in Boaz's actions?
8. How can we perpetuate the faith in the generations that succeed us?

Analyzing the Passage

Rest (Ruth 3:1) refers to a place of quietness and, by implication, a home. Naomi understood that everyone needs a place to call home. Spiritually, God is our home. "LORD, thou halt been our dwelling place in all generations" (Psalm 90:1).

Parents desire that their children find rest in redemption. Naomi pointed Ruth to the one who could redeem her, and she told her how to proceed. When Naomi asked, "Is not Boaz of our kindred?" (Ruth 3:2), she was expressing the hope that he would be willing to redeem Ruth. Ruth's statement, "Spread ...thy skirt over thine handmaid" (Ruth 3:9) indicates her desire for kinsman protection.

The nearer kinsman was consulted first because it was his obligation to redeem the land of the deceased. However, though he was willing, he was not able to do this. Boaz was both willing and able. Thus he was a fitting type of Christ. The flesh, which is our nearer kin, cannot redeem us. Only Jesus could accomplish our redemption.

Obed (Ruth 4:17) means "serving." The choice of this name indicates a desire that the next generation would follow Ruth's example of servanthood.

Principles and Applications

"Shall I Not Seek Rest for Thee?"

1. To experience redemption, one must both desire it and choose to seek it (3:1). Just as Ruth was unable to redeem herself, so all mankind must look beyond themselves for redemption. Ruth made a choice to follow Naomi's counsel and to seek for redemption. She showed her submission to Boaz and her confidence that he could redeem her.

2. The Redeemer is available to the sincere seeker (Ruth 3:2). Boaz was not only a near kinsman; he was also near at hand. "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart" (Romans 10:8). Jesus is not a Redeemer who is too far removed to be of help. He is as near as the prayer of faith.

3. To find rest, one must follow the prescribed way (Ruth 3:3). The flesh is of no help in finding redemption, because the way of the flesh and the way of the Spirit are at enmity. The way of the cross, though abhorrent to the flesh, is the way of redemption.

4. Sincere seekers acknowledge their need of rest to the One who is capable of giving rest (Ruth 3:9). Ruth was willing to wait until Boaz noticed her. No matter how long it took, she continued to wait. She believed he would hear her request and grant her rest.

"I Am Thy Near Kinsman"

5. The Redeemer responds readily to sincere requests of faith (Ruth 3:11).

Ruth conducted herself in a manner that showed her sincerity. Boaz could see that she had come with pure motives. He agreed to do all that she required. Jesus, likewise, welcomes the sinner who comes to Him in true repentance.

6 There is only one Kinsman-Redeemer (Ruth 3:12-13). Only one could per-

form the part of the kinsman-redeemer. That one had to have all the qualifications required of him, that is, to buy the land of the deceased and to marry his widow. Jesus is the only one who has all that is required to redeem sinful man.

"I Have Bought All"

7. Our rest in redemption is based upon our Redeemer's perfect fulfillment of the Father's will (Ruth 4:1-2). In redeeming Ruth, Boaz took all the necessary steps specified in the Law. His character and conduct made him a suitable redeemer for Ruth. Jesus likewise fulfilled all the Law, and was the perfect sacrifice for our redemption. He provides fully for our needs.

8. Finding rest in redemption involves a complete surrender to our Redeemer (Ruth 4:9). Since God has created us, He has the full right to possess us, including all that we are and have. He paid the full price to redeem us—body, soul, and spirit. We have no right to reserve any part for ourselves.

9. There is a bright future for the redeemed (Ruth 4:10). The redeemed have hope beyond the grave. The redemption of Ruth assured that Elimelech's name would be carried on. A fuller and more perfect redemption was realized in Jesus Christ, who came from Elimelech's descendants.

10. Those who find rest in redemption are linked in the chain of the faithful (Ruth 4:13, 17). Ruth, by her choice of faith, found rest for herself in redemption. She became the means of passing on the faith to succeeding generations in Israel.

Important Teachings

1. To experience redemption, one must both desire it and choose to seek it (Ruth 3:1).

2. The Redeemer is available to the sincere seeker (Ruth 3:2).

3. To find rest, one must follow the prescribed way (Ruth 3:3).

4. Sincere seekers acknowledge their need of rest to the One who is capable of giving rest (Ruth 3:9).
5. The Redeemer responds readily to sincere requests of faith (Ruth 3:11).
6. There is only one Kinsman-Redeemer (Ruth 3:12-13).
7. Our rest in redemption is based upon our Redeemer's perfect fulfillment of the Father's will (Ruth 4:1-2).
8. Finding rest in redemption involves a complete surrender to our Redeemer (Ruth 4:9).
9. There is a bright future for the redeemed (Ruth 4:10).
10. Those who find rest in redemption are linked in the chain of the faithful (Ruth 4:13, 17).

Answers to Questions

1. How does Ruth's approach to Boaz depict a sinner coming to Jesus?

By washing, anointing herself, and putting on appropriate dress, Ruth showed respect and consideration in her approach to Boaz. The sinner who comes into Jesus' presence by praying a prayer of repentance and seeking redemption should likewise demonstrate a reverence for the One of whom he seeks such unmerited favor.

2. What evidence of faith do we observe in Ruth's actions?

She sought redemption by following the prescribed methods as set forth in the Law and explained by Naomi. She did not attempt to redeem herself, but she went to the one who could provide for her redemption. She expressed faith in Boaz and trusted that he would be willing to redeem her.

3. What steps must a sinner take to find redemption in Christ?

The sinner must acknowledge his need of a redeemer. He must realize that he cannot redeem himself. He must go to Jesus in faith, believing that He is able to redeem him. He must confess that the cross and Jesus' shed blood are the only means by which he can be redeemed.

4. In what ways did the response of Boaz foreshadow that of Jesus Christ?

Boaz heard Ruth's plea for redemption. He accepted her request and promised to do all that she asked of him. He was willing to meet her need to the full extent.

5. Why is Jesus Christ the only one who is able to redeem us?

No other human being could have shed his blood for the sins of another, because all men are themselves sinful. Only Jesus was perfect and sinless.

Therefore, only His blood could accomplish our redemption.

6. Why is the flesh, our nearer kinsman, incapable of redeeming us?

The flesh lacks the qualifications required of a redeemer. The flesh is weak (Matthew 26:41). It does not have the power to do even those good things it desires to do, but it does by nature what it does not wish to do (Romans 7:19). Therefore, the flesh is of no help to us. Redemption must come from elsewhere.

7. What elements of our redemption do we see in Boaz's actions?

Boaz promised to carry out the redemptive process by his own public testimony (Ruth 4:9). Jesus said, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God" (Hebrews 10:9). Boaz bought all that was Elimelech's. Jesus, likewise, bought the field (the world) to obtain the treasure (the church) (Matthew 13:44).

8. How can we perpetuate the faith in the generations that succeed us?

We do that by submitting ourselves to our Redeemer and allowing Him to work His will in and through us. By our example, we can teach our children how to serve God. By giving our loyal support to the church, we help our children see their need of a relationship with God's people.

Summarizing the Lesson

"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19). Jesus, God's Son, is the link between our need and God's riches. By surrendering ourselves to Jesus and exercising faith in His shed blood, we find redemption that is full and complete.

"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift" (2 Corinthians 9:15).

Research Guide

1. Read Deuteronomy 25:5-10 regarding the process of redemption by a near kinsman.

2. Study Romans 10:6-15, which teaches the process of redemption from a New Testament perspective.