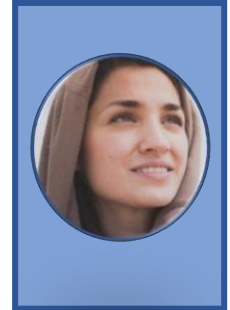


Ruth

God's Loving-Kindness Exemplified

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RUTH CHAPTER 3

RUTH AND BOAZ AT THE THRESHING FLOOR

In this book of Ruth we see Boaz as type of Jesus Christ our Redeemer, and we see Ruth as a type of the believer.

A. BACKGROUND

1. Threshing floor (3:2, 3, 6, 14). Sheaves of grain would be opened up and the stalks spread across the threshing floor. Pairs of donkeys or oxen (or sometimes cattle, or horses) would then be walked round and round, often dragging a heavy threshing board behind them, to tear the ears of grain from the stalks, and loosen the grain itself from the husks. After this threshing process, the broken stalks and grain were collected and then thrown up into the air with a wooden winnowing fork or a winnowing fan. The chaff would be blown away by the wind; the short torn straw would fall some distance away; while the heavier grain would fall at the winnowers' feet. The grain could then be further cleansed by sieving.



2. Uncovering Boaz's feet (3:4, 7, 8, 14). This was not a seductive act, it was an Israelite custom. A close relative would marry the widow of a kinsman who had no son in order to produce one. By doing this, Ruth was expressing her desire to marry Boaz (which the older, gracious Boaz would not have initiated with a younger woman). By observing this social custom Ruth was asking Boaz to claim her in marriage as her kinsman-redeemer (Ruth became part of Naomi's family when she married to her son, Mahlon). This custom also meant that Boaz could find Ruth a husband if he chose not or marry her himself, the choice was his.



3. "Spread the corner of your garment over me" (3:9). To cover her with his skirt was a token of matrimony. No doubt the idiom reflected the custom, still practiced by some in the Middle East, of a man throwing a garment over the woman he has decided to take as his wife, and symbolizing protection as well as fellowship.
4. "Let it be known" (3:14). This is a phrase describing Boaz's concern for propriety and for his and Ruth's good reputation.
5. Six measures of barley (3:15, 17). About 60 lbs. of Barley, a rather heavy load for a woman.

B. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Naomi being destitute now sees some hope for herself and Ruth. What was this hope (3:1-2)?

2. What did Boaz's say to Ruth when he woke up and saw her at his feet (3:10)?

3. What kept Boaz from marrying Ruth (3:12)?

4. Why do you suppose Boaz instructed Ruth to stay with him until morning (3:13-14)?

5. Why do you suppose Boaz gave Ruth six measures (~60 lb.) of barley (3:15, 17)?

C. SEEING GOD IN THIS CHAPTER

1. Like Boaz, God _____.
"You have made this kindness greater than the first, and did not choose younger men" (Ruth 3:10)
"The Lord takes pleasure in those who fear him, in those who hope in his steadfast love." (Psa. 147:11)
"But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God." (Rom. 2:29)

2. Like Boaz, God is your _____.
"And now, my daughter, don't be afraid." (Ruth 3:11)
"He holds victory in store for the upright, he is a shield to those whose walk is blameless, for he guards the course of the just and protects the way of his faithful ones." (Prov. 2:7-8)

3. Like Boaz, God _____.
"He also said, "Bring me the shawl you are wearing and hold it out." When she did so, he poured into it six measures of barley and put it on her." (Ruth 3:15)
"And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:19)

Sources used in this study

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