

though not a young man.

- 2) He agreed to do as she requested (v.11), as long as the **nearer** kinsman was not willing (v.12-13). Boaz was an honest and fair man.

## 5. The Anxious Waiting (3:14-18)

### a. He gave her a gift

- 1) Boaz told her to bring her veil and he filled it with six measures of grain (v.15).
- 2) He then sent her back home.

### b. She had to sit still and wait (v.18)

- 1) Naomi admonished her to “*sit still*”.
- 2) She assured her that the man would not rest until he finished the matter.

**Conclusion:** At first, Ruth’s proposal story may seem nothing more than an interesting novel. However, there are hidden truths in it from which we can benefit. This part of Ruth’s story is a picture of a sinner coming to Christ and asking Him for redemption.

**Naomi**, like a faithful witness for Christ, pointed Ruth to her need of a husband and kinsman-redeemer. Naomi did not force her; she simply told Ruth what she needed to do.

**Ruth**, like every sinner, did not deserve marriage or redemption, yet these were lawfully available to her. Her part was simply to admit her need, step out by faith, and ask to be redeemed.

**Boaz** was wealthy, willing and happy to pay the price to become Ruth’s husband and kinsman-redeemer. Jesus Christ willingly paid the priceless cost to redeem each of us and longs to do so.

Without pushing the types too far, I think you can see the principles for us in this beautiful story. If you have not yet admitted your need of redemption and asked Christ to redeem you, I urge you to do it this very evening.

**Song:** Come to the Saviour - 254

# Ruth’s Proposal

27 December 2020 PM – Ruth 3:1-18 – Ru20 – Scott Childs

**Introduction:** In our culture, it is a young man’s privilege of proposing to the young woman that he desires to marry. I have fond memories of the cool spring day that I asked Melody to become my wife.

This evening, we are going to see that in certain circumstances in the Jewish culture, the woman did the proposing.

**Transition:** Here in the third chapter of Ruth, I want to examine five parts of this unique story and then draw some types and principles from it that ought to encourage our souls.

## 1. The Unusual Laws (3:1-2)

### a. We have already looked at the laws

- 1) The first is the kinsman-redeemer law. The kinsman-redeemer had to be a close relative who was rich enough to buy back the land of his poor relative who had to sell it in desperation. He also had to be willing to buy back the land. It was not mandatory.
- 2) The second was the marry-the-widow law. In this law, a widow could ask one her husband’s brothers or close relative to marry her and give her a child in her husband’s name (cf., **Deu 25.5-10**). This law had at least two goals.
  - a) God wanted to protect womanhood. If her husband died and left her with a farm, she needed help to make a living on the farm.
  - b) God wanted to protect land ownership. Without this law, she might marry a man of another tribe and her land would become the possession of another tribe.
- 3) Naomi decided that it was time for Ruth to seek a kinsman-redeemer and a new husband. As far as she was concerned, Boaz was the man for the job. Being older, he may have been an old Bachelor or a widower. He was winnowing barley on the threshingfloor. The oxen pulled a sled over the grain to loosen the seeds, and then the farmer forked it into the air to separate the seeds and blow away the chaff.

## b. Let me illustrate the second law

- 1) Suppose there was a man of the tribe of Benjamin named Gemeriah who had three brothers. He began showing an interest in a young woman down the road. When his brothers found out, they called for a family council. They asked, "Gemeriah are you thinking of marrying that young woman down the road?" He said, "Yes I am." They responded, "We do not like the idea. We think that young woman is unusual." He said, "Well, too bad, I like her unusual ways. I think she will make me a fine wife." His brothers replied, "Do you remember the marry-the-widow law? If you marry that unusual young woman, and then you suddenly die in a farm accident or in a battle with our enemies, she will come and asked one of us to marry her. We do not want to marry her." Gemeriah said, "You guys worry too much. That won't happen." "Maybe not" they said, "but if it does and she asks us to marry her to give you a child, what are we to do? If we refuse, she will take us to court, pull off our shoe and spit in our face. That is a shame that we do not want to endure."
- 2) As you can see, this law had a good side and a bad side depending on who you were.

📖 *God cares about all of our needs.*

## 2. The Careful Preparation (3:3-5)

### a. Naomi instructed Ruth

- 1) She was to wash herself. No doubt, she did not smell very fresh after a day of gleaning in the hot sun.
- 2) She was to anoint herself. This ointment was likely nicely scented. Being a widow, she may not have anointed herself in this way since her husband had died.
- 3) She was to put on clean clothing.
- 4) Then she was to go to Boaz' threshingfloor; however, she was to wait until everyone had eaten and fallen asleep. It was customary for the men to eat a meal at the end of the day after threshing.
- 5) Last, once everyone was sleeping, she was to uncover Boaz' feet and lay down near them.

- 6) Naomi then told her just what she must say.

### b. Ruth obeyed Naomi

- 1) Note her words (v.5).
- 2) She followed Naomi's instructions explicitly.

## 3. The Bold Venture (3:6-7)

### a. Ruth went softly to the threshing floor.

- 1) Ruth put Naomi's plan into action.
- 2) She waited until Boaz had eaten and drunk. This does not imply that he got drunk. It simply means that he satisfied his hunger and thirst. It tells us nothing of what he drank.
- 3) Boaz laid down next to his pile of grain. This was to protect it from thieves. He fell fast asleep.
- 4) Ruth uncovered his feet and lay beside them.

### b. Though unusual, this was not immoral.

- 1) Repeatedly, God tells us that she lay at his feet (v.4, 7, 8, 14). She did nothing immoral nor did Boaz.
- 2) In our culture, this is very unusual; however, it was a custom of their day. Such action today is not advisable since it would be making provision for the flesh. (Romans 13:14) "*But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.*"

## 4. The Proposal (3:8-13)

### a. Ruth proposed (v.8-9)

- 1) It was not the usual custom of the Jews to have the woman propose to the man. In fact, a father often arranged the marriage of his son with a girl's father. While the couple had a choice, the father's did the arranging.
- 2) In the case of a childless widow, evidently, she was to seek marriage with a brother-in-law or close relative.
- 3) Ruth did just that when she said "*spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman.*" (v.9). The Hebrew word translated "*skirt*" literally refers to a wing. As a bird covers her young with her wings for protection, so a husband covered a woman with his wing in marriage for protection.

### b. Boaz accepted (v.10-13)

- 1) He blessed her because she sought him for a husband,