

Ruth 4A
(Draft Speaker's Notes)

You might give a brief overview of the last three nights and what brings us to Ruth ch 3.

Emphasize major events and themes (3-4 minutes)

Ruth 3:1 ¶ Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, “My daughter, shall I not seek security for you, that it may be well with you?”

Ruth 3:2 “Now is not Boaz our kinsman, with whose maids you were? Behold, he winnows barley at the threshing floor tonight.

Ruth 3:3 “Wash yourself therefore, and anoint yourself and put on your *best* clothes, and go down to the threshing floor; *but* do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking.

Ruth 3:4 “It shall be when he lies down, that you shall notice the place where he lies, and you shall go and uncover his feet and lie down; then he will tell you what you shall do.”

Ruth 3:5 She said to her, “ All that you say I will do.”

What does Naomi seek for Ruth?

“Security” (or a home or rest)

In the Hebrew this word is manoach, which means a resting place, state or condition of rest.

This was the same word used in Chapter 1:9 when Naomi says “May the LORD grant that you may find rest, each in the house of her husband.

As any housewife can tell you this is not the kind of rest that comes to mind when we think of relaxing or taking it easy. :-)

It refers to a provider.

Not just in the sense of food, since we know food had already been provided for them.

In one way a husband to provide but more importantly a continuation of provision given through children.

This can be demonstrated further as we see in v2 Naomi refers to Boaz as 'our kinsman.'

This word has been seen before in the first verse of chapter 2 where Boaz is referred to as a kinsman. We will take some time tonight to investigate this word and what it meant in the Jewish culture and what insight scripture can give us as to what a kinsman was to do.

When Joshua led the Israelites from their wandering in the desert to the promised land God set up the tribes in specific areas of the land and then sub-divided the land into areas per family

within the tribes. In Leviticus God gives details of how the Israelites are to handle the land He has given them.

Turn your Bibles to Leviticus 25.

You should read all this for yourself sometime but for now we will look at some highlights for understanding of the responsibility of a kinsman.

Read Lev. 25:1-5

[Lev. 25:1](#) ¶ The LORD then spoke to Moses at Mount Sinai, saying,

[Lev. 25:2](#) “Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, ‘When you come into the land which I shall give you, then the land shall have a sabbath to the LORD.

[Lev. 25:3](#) ‘ Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard and gather in its crop,

[Lev. 25:4](#) but during the seventh year the land shall have a sabbath rest, a sabbath to the LORD; you shall not sow your field nor prune your vineyard.

[Lev. 25:5](#) ‘Your harvest’s aftergrowth you shall not reap, and your grapes of untrimmed vines you shall not gather; the land shall have a sabbatical year.

Notice every seventh year is a sabbatical year, a year of rest for the land from producing.

Read v. 8-10

[Lev. 25:8](#) ¶ ‘You are also to count off seven sabbaths of years for yourself, seven times seven years, so that you have the time of the seven sabbaths of years, *namely*, forty-nine years.

[Lev. 25:9](#) ‘You shall then sound a ram’s horn abroad on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the day of atonement you shall sound a horn all through your land.

[Lev. 25:10](#) ‘You shall thus consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim a release through the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you, and each of you shall return to his own property, and each of you shall return to his family.

Every 50th year is called a year of Jubilee. Each person to return to your “own property” and each return to “his own family.”

Read v. 13

[Lev. 25:13](#) ¶ ‘ On this year of jubilee each of you shall return to his own property.

It repeats “return to your own property.”

The year of Jubilee was like starting over with a clean slate, bringing everyone back to where they were in the Land God gave them.

Read v. 15

[Lev. 25:15](#) ‘Corresponding to the number of years after the jubilee, you shall buy from your friend; he is to sell to you according to the number of years of crops.

*This is a key verse indicating that when a person receives money for their land, they were actually selling the number of annual crops the land would produce, **not the land itself**.*

Read v 16

[Lev. 25:15](#) ‘Corresponding to the number of years after the jubilee, you shall buy from your friend; he is to sell to you according to the number of years of crops.

This verse repeats for us the “formula” for determining the value of land: the number of crops that can be produced.

Read v 23

[Lev. 25:23](#) ¶ ‘The land, moreover, shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine; for you are *but* aliens and sojourners with Me.

We now see the reason they could not sell the land was because the land permanently belongs to God!

We can't sell what we don't own.

Later in Lev 25, we're introduced to a new concept...kinsman.

Read v 24-28.

[Lev. 25:24](#) ‘Thus for every piece of your property, you are to provide for the redemption of the land.

[Lev. 25:25](#) ¶ ‘ If a fellow countryman of yours becomes so poor he has to sell part of his property, then his nearest kinsman is to come and buy back what his relative has sold.

[Lev. 25:26](#) ‘Or in case a man has no kinsman, but so recovers his means as to find sufficient for its redemption,

[Lev. 25:27](#) then he shall calculate the years since its sale and refund the balance to the man to whom he sold it, and so return to his property.

[Lev. 25:28](#) ‘But if he has not found sufficient means to get it back for himself, then what he has sold shall remain in the hands of its purchaser until the year of jubilee; but at the jubilee it shall revert, that he may return to his property.

In verse 25 we see that the kinsman is supposed to buy back the property for a poor relative.

The kinsman actually has an obligation to redeem the property for the sake of the family. The same was true if someone sold themselves because of debt. This is seen in verses 47-55.

For our purposes we will read v47-49.

[Lev. 25:47](#) ¶ 'Now if the means of a stranger or of a sojourner with you becomes sufficient, and a countryman of yours becomes so poor with regard to him as to sell himself to a stranger who is sojourning with you, or to the descendants of a stranger's family, [Lev. 25:48](#) then he shall have redemption right after he has been sold. One of his brothers may redeem him, [Lev. 25:49](#) or his uncle, or his uncle's son, may redeem him, or one of his blood relatives from his family may redeem him; or if he prospers, he may redeem himself.

Who had this right to be a kinsman?

One of his blood relatives from his family.

This brings us back to the book of Ruth in verse 2:

[Ruth 3:2](#) "Now is not Boaz our kinsman, with whose maids you were? Behold, he winnows barley at the threshing floor tonight.

Naomi is reminding Ruth that Boaz is this blood relative and has the obligation of kinsman to them.

It would seem that as Naomi gives Ruth instructions about approaching Boaz on the threshing floor, because she is instructing Ruth on the Law of the Levirate. Naomi wants Boaz to take Ruth as his wife and to provide a child for her.

What was the threshing floor?

This would have been a common area where the reapers would take the harvest of grain to be separated.

Once separated, the grain would be put in large piles. The owner of the grain would stay with his grain overnight to protect it from thieves.

Naomi would have been familiar with this practice, so she gives Ruth specific directions to follow with this in mind.

What does it mean in v.4 when Ruth is instructed to “uncover his feet” and “lie down?”

There are so many interpretations of what this could mean.

It is important to remember what we know of these two people, their culture and the council of scripture.

Let's look at where this scene is echoed in other places in scripture.

[Ezek. 16:8](#) ¶ “Then I passed by you and saw you, and behold, you were at the time for love; so I spread My skirt over you and covered your nakedness. I also swore to you and entered into a covenant with you so that you became Mine,” declares the Lord GOD.

[Deut. 22:30](#) ¶ “ A man shall not take his father’s wife so that he will not uncover his father’s skirt.

[Deut. 27:20](#) ¶ ‘ Cursed is he who lies with his father’s wife, because he has uncovered his father’s skirt.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’

What can we reasonably conclude is happening here in Ruth 3?

It would seem then that for a man to use his skirt or covering to cover a woman is a picture of marriage

Ruth has removed some of Boaz's skirt to cover her own feet or legs. (Remember...men worn robes too!).

This was a test to see if he is willing to accept her in marriage. In a sense, she proposed to him, but in a discreet, honoring way.

Read verses 6-13

[Ruth 3:6](#) ¶ So she went down to the threshing floor and did according to all that her mother-in-law had commanded her.

[Ruth 3:7](#) When Boaz had eaten and drunk and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain; and she came secretly, and uncovered his feet and lay down.

[Ruth 3:8](#) It happened in the middle of the night that the man was startled and bent forward; and behold, a woman was lying at his feet.

[Ruth 3:9](#) He said, “Who are you?” And she answered, “I am Ruth your maid. So spread your covering over your maid, for you are a close relative.”

[Ruth 3:10](#) Then he said, “ May you be blessed of the LORD, my daughter. You have shown your last kindness to be better than the first by not going after young men, whether poor or rich.

Ruth 3:11 “Now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you whatever you ask, for all my people in the city know that you are a woman of excellence.

Ruth 3:12 “Now it is true I am a close relative; however, there is a relative closer than I.

Ruth 3:13 “Remain this night, and when morning comes, if he will redeem you, good; let him redeem you. But if he does not wish to redeem you, then I will redeem you, as the LORD lives. Lie down until morning.”

What observations can we make about Ruth’s behavior?

Ruth lays at Boaz’s feet in a submissive role like a servant.

She never makes assumptions upon Boaz. She goes to him at night and secretly. He can accept or reject without any humiliation.

She refers to him here as a ‘close relative’ – a kinsman. She is using the word to remind him of his duties toward Naomi.

What observations can we make about Boaz?

In verse 9, we see it was Boaz’s covering that was used to suggest marriage (not Ruth’s).

Boaz is smitten by her invitation and not burdened, because he recognizes she sought him over more worldly desirable alternatives

He blesses Ruth (verse 10).

He promises her and compliments her integrity (verse 11).

He is honorable in observing the Law strictly (verse 12) by mentioning a closer relative.

He promises to redeem her if the other doesn’t.

Read verses 14-18

Ruth 3:14 ¶ So she lay at his feet until morning and rose before one could recognize another; and he said, “Let it not be known that the woman came to the threshing floor.”

Ruth 3:15 Again he said, “Give me the cloak that is on you and hold it.” So she held it, and he measured six *measures* of barley and laid it on her. Then she went into the city.

Ruth 3:16 When she came to her mother-in-law, she said, “How did it go, my daughter?” And she told her all that the man had done for her.

Ruth 3:17 She said, “These six *measures* of barley he gave to me, for he said, ‘Do not go to your mother-in-law empty-handed.’”

Ruth 3:18 Then she said, “Wait, my daughter, until you know how the matter turns out; for the man will not rest until he has settled it today.”

What happens to Ruth as she awaits the redemption?

Verse 14, Boaz protects her by his presence from the reapers and the thieves.

Verse 15, He gives her assurance of good things to come for Naomi with the gift of grain. Boaz never loses sight of how the situation affects both women.

Verse 16, Naomi wants to know how the evening unfolded. Ruth reassures her by giving her the details of the evening along with the grain gift from Boaz.

Verse 18, Ends with an interesting tie back to verse 1 of chapter 3.

In verse 1 Naomi said to Ruth she would help provide “security” and this is the same word for “rest” we find here to describe what Boaz is seeking as well.

Boaz’s rest will become the women’s rest too.