

**Ruth #4**

**December 3, 2023**

**Series Title: Ruth: Painful Providence and Sovereign Grace**

**Today's Message: Greater is the Source of the Blessing!; Ruth 3:1-18**

Greater is the source of the blessings received than the blessings themselves.

We know that statement to be true. We may not always think about that when we are counting our blessings. But, a wise and thoughtful person will awaken to the reality that greater is the source of the blessing than the blessing itself. The Bible tells us that God, who alone is the Creator and Sustainer of all things is also the Source of "every good and perfect gift. (James 1:17)"

We see an example of this in Luke 5. Jesus commands Peter to take his boats out to deep water and let down the nets once more. And as Peter sees his greatest catch of fish ever causing their nets to break, almost immediately he falls on his face before the giver of the blessing! You can see the light of the glory of God shine in Peter's heart when he realizes that the source of the blessing of his greatest catch of fish is standing before him, and his response is humble submission before the greatness of the Giver! The result of Peter's humble submission was to obey the word of Jesus and begin following Him to become a fisher of men!

Another example is the apostle Paul. Paul had everything. He lived a very blessed life. He says he profited from his devotion to his life as a Hebrew of Hebrews, and as a Pharisee. His zeal led him on expeditions of terror against Christians. For this devotion he enjoyed a very celebrated life. But when he was found by Jesus and he came to know Christ, who is the Supremacy, he declared, "But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ... I want to know Christ!" (Philippians 3:7-11)

One of the truths about God that we should take away from this study is that He is greater than the Blessing. Ruth 3 illustrates this well. As wonderful are the blessings of Ruth 2, it is more wonderful the person in Ruth 3. The grace and gifts by which Boaz kindled the affections of Ruth in chapter 2, would not fully satisfy these affections, only Boaz, the source of the blessings would satisfy! Someone wrote, "It is the possession of the Blessor not the blessings that gives satisfaction to the heart."

And so it is with us in our relationship with our Lord Jesus. Nothing, no blessings, no attainments, no reward for service, can eclipse the glory of knowing Him and being found in Him! But, you need to examine yourself as we work through Ruth 3, and find out if it is a love for the blessings from God, or a desire to know and love God the Blessor, which dominates your desires and affections.

Here is our outline for Ruth 3: Boaz is desired (3:1-9); Ruth is admired (3:10-13); and Waiting is required (3:14-18).

**I. (3:1-9) Boaz is Desired**

- A. (3:1) Naomi's desire for Ruth
  - 1. A happy home and a happy future
- B. (3:2a) Naomi's desires Boaz for Ruth
  - 1. He is desirable for at least three reasons

- a) He is a man of standing (2:1)
  - (1) Probably a respected leader
- b) He is a man of means
  - (1) Enough to support many servants
- c) He is a man of advantage
  - (1) As a kinsman, or close relative.
    - (a) Naomi does not name him as a *ga-el*, perhaps because she knows there is another person who is the *ga-el*.
      - (i) More on *ga-el* (kinsman-redeemer as we go.)

C. (3:2b-4) Naomi's plan for Ruth

- 1. Naomi knows where Boaz will be and what he will be doing
  - a) It was threshing time. This took place at the end of the harvest.
    - (1) Nearing the time of the feast of Shavuot (shah-voo-oh)
    - (a) Ruth 1:22 took place at Passover and now in Ruth 3 we are 4- 7 weeks after Passover.
      - (i) The book of Ruth is read among Jewish people every year around the Feast of Shavuot.
  - b) Boaz will be staying there threshing and protecting his produce.
- 2. (3:3-4) Naomi gives Ruth precise instructions
  - a) Prepare yourself
  - b) Go, but do not let him know you are there until he is finished eating
  - c) Then, when he lies down, go and uncover his feet and lay at his feet.
  - d) Wait for Boaz to tell you what to do.
- 3. Application: Naomi's takes does not wait but rather she takes initiative, acting on her knowledge of God's provision for the redemption of her dead husband's land and his name in Israel. God provided that a near relative, the *ga-el*, could fulfill this role as redeemer of land and name, through marriage. Boaz was desired for this.
  - a) As believers we should take the initiative to act in faith when opportunities for obedience arise, believing that God has presented the opportunity.

D. (3:5-7) Ruth follows Naomi's instructions, "doing everything [Naomi] told her to do."

- 1. Ruth's actions were noble (nothing immoral or illicit).
- 2. By her act of obedience to Naomi's instruction indicated two things:
  - a) Her actions indicated her willingness to marry Boaz
    - (1) Boaz was older and would never instigate marriage to a younger woman, even if he was the rightful *ga-el* (kinsman-redeemer).
  - b) Her actions demonstrated a humble willingness to listen to and do whatever Boaz would tell her to do. "He will tell you what to do."

E. (3:8-9) Ruth bold request

- 1. Boaz was startled
- 2. Ruth's words to Boaz are loaded with significance
  - a) "I am your servant."

- (1) indicates her willingness to be subject to Boaz
  - b) "Spread the corner of your garment over me, since you are a *ga-el*."
    - (1) Ruth was asking for Boaz to fulfill his role as *ga-el*.
      - (a) This is a proposal for marriage
      - (b) That she is willing to be under his wing (his protection, etc.).
        - (i) In a Jewish wedding the groom covers his bride with his garment to signify that she was under his protection and provision as his wife.
  - c) She is claiming that Boaz is the reward that he had prayed for her!
    - (1) In Ruth 2:12: Read it. "May the Lord reward you..."
      - (a) First she had given herself to the God of Israel.
      - (b) Now, she gives herself to God's man for her!
    - (2) This marriage to Boaz would become God's means for her protection and provision.
3. Application: The Lord works through Providence to care for His own!

## II. (3:10-14) Ruth is Admired

- A. (3:10) Boaz Prays a blessing from the Lord upon Ruth!
  - 1. A Beatitude, or Supreme blessing
    - a) "The Lord bless you, my daughter!"
  - 2. Why? Because of Ruth's *hesed*
    - a) "This *kindness* is greater than that which you showed earlier..."
      - (1) He recognized that her marriage to him for the sake of Naomi, so that Elimelech and Mahlon's land and name would be redeemed is a greater display of self-giving and self-sacrifice than she showed before when she was gleaning in the fields to feed Naomi.
        - (a) "Ruth," says Boaz, "your *hesed* goes above and beyond what would ever be expected!"
      - (2) Ruth could have married anyone, but chose Boaz, an older man, yes, but a man who would willingly redeem what was lost!
- B. (3:11) Boaz immediately agrees to do what she asks!
  - 1. "Do not be afraid. I will do all you ask!"
    - a) Why not fear?
      - (1) Because the whole town knows that Ruth is of noble character!
        - (a) A woman of excellence
        - (b) A woman of valor.
- C. (3:12-14) Boaz typifies Christ-like character
  - 1. He looks out for the interest of the nearer-kinsman-redeemer
  - 2. How does he typify Christ-like character?
    - a) Philippians 2:3-4: "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also the interests of others."

- b) (3:14) looked out for both his and Ruth's reputation. Noble. Upright.
- D. Application: Boaz is a shining example of a Christ-like redeemer
  - 1. He prays for her (2:12, 3:10a, with John 17:6-26, where Jesus prays for His own.)
  - 2. He praises her (3:10b with Mark 14:3-9, the woman who poured perfume on Jesus)
  - 3. He protects her emotionally (3:11, "do not be afraid", with Jesus in Mark 6:50)
  - 4. He protects her physically (3:13-14a, with Jesus in John 17:12)
  - 5. He protects her reputation and dignity (3:14b, with John 12:7 "leave her alone")
  - 6. And, He redeemed the least and the lost, just like Jesus! (See Luke 19:10)

### III. (3:15-18) Waiting is Required

- A. (3:15) He blessed her and Naomi by providing Ruth with a gracious gift!
  - 1. Ruth did nothing for it. He gave freely and abundantly. Just like our Father in Heaven gives graciously and abundantly!
    - a) Could have been a larger amount of barley than before (see 3:17, 30 pounds)
- B. (3:16-18) Wait!
  - 1. Ruth reports the events of the night before
  - 2. Naomi tells Ruth to wait.
    - a) Waiting for the plan to come to a conclusion requires waiting.
- C. Application
  - 1. Waiting upon the Lord requires us to commit our lives to the Lord, to entrust outcomes to Him.
    - a) Psalm 37:5 tells us, "Commit your way to the Lord (to His Providence); trust in Him..."
      - (1) Spurgeon says on this, "Roll the whole burden upon the Lord."
  - 2. Waiting requires trusting in the character of the Lord God. It is a test of faith:
    - a) Selwyn Hughes writes: "A true sign of maturity is the willingness to wait! Believing that a purpose far wiser than you can ever conceive is being worked out for your good! A heart more infinitely loving than any you will ever know is caring for you! A mind greater than your is planning for you. So wait."
- D. Closing:
  - 1. We see great qualities in Boaz, which make him desirable. We catch a glimpse of Christ-like character in him. We can see such admirable qualities in Ruth, as well. But, our Redeemer, Jesus, is flawless, matchless and incomparable. He is the Source of our salvation, our earthly blessings and eternal life! He is better than everything!
    - a) Jesus is better than Boaz and is to be desired!
    - b) Jesus is better than Ruth and is to be admired!
    - c) And Jesus is always on time, and worth waiting for!