

Sagecreek Bible Church

Worksheet

Ruth Chapter 3

The Law of “The Kinsman Redeemer”



27 April 2022

RUTH FINDS A REDEEMER

(Ruth 3:1–18)

REVIEW: Let's review the background of the Ruth account:

1. Elimelech and Naomi were husband and wife, of the town of Bethlehem.
2. They had two sons: Mahlon and Chilion.
3. Elimelech and Naomi and their sons traveled to Moab to find relief from famine.
4. Elimelech died leaving Naomi a widow.
5. Mahlon married Ruth of Moab. Chilion married Orpah.
6. Mahlon and Chilion died, and Naomi was left with two widowed daughters-in-law.
7. Ruth returned to Bethlehem with Naomi. Orpah stayed in Moab.
8. Ruth gleaned in the field of Boaz, who gave her many favors.
9. Boaz was related in some way to Mahlon and Elimelech.

SETTING: To clearly understand the events of **Ruth Chapters 3 and 4**, we need to be acquainted with two Mosaic laws (rules) which the Jews followed to preserve the continuity of each family through the ages. These laws are:

A. Law of Levirate Marriage (from Latin *levir*, "brother-in-law").

Deuteronomy 25:⁵ "If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the widow of the dead man shall not be *married* to a stranger outside *the family*; her husband's brother shall go in to her, take her as his wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. ⁶ And it shall be *that* the firstborn son which she bears will succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel. ⁷ But if the man does not want to take his brother's wife, then let his brother's wife go up to the gate to the elders, and say, 'My husband's brother refuses to raise up a name to his brother in Israel; he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother.' ⁸ Then the elders of his city shall call him and speak to him. But *if* he stands firm and says, 'I do not want to take her,' ⁹ then his brother's wife shall come to him in the presence of the elders, remove his sandal from his foot, spit in his face, and answer and say, 'So shall it be done to the man who will not build up his brother's house.' ¹⁰ And his name shall be called in Israel, 'The house of him who had his sandal removed.'

According to this rule, if a husband should die having no children, what was his brother to do and why? Why could this not be done in Ruth's case?

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See text surrounding **Genesis 38:8** and **Matthew 22:24** for case studies. How seriously did God take this law and how was it used against Jesus in His day?

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B. Law of Nearest Kinsman. If a young widow has no one whom she can claim as her husband in a levirate marriage, the closest male relative is under obligation to seriously consider marrying the young widow, in order that she might have a place to live and also give birth to a male heir of her deceased husband.

NOTE: The phrase “close relative” is translated from the Hebrew word *qo-el*, which literally means “redeemer.”

God gave specific direction under the law of the Nearest Kinsman regarding ownership of the land.

Leviticus 25: 23 ‘The land shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with Me.

24 And in all the land of your possession you shall grant redemption of the land.

What two rules do you see God put in place here?

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Leviticus 25: 25 ‘If one of your brethren becomes poor, and has sold some of his possession, and if his redeeming relative comes to redeem it, then he may redeem what his brother sold.

If land is sold, how would a redemption for the land be granted?

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This applied not only to property but also to persons.

“Leviticus 25: 47 ‘Now if a sojourner or stranger close to you becomes rich, and one of your brethren who dwells by him becomes poor, and sells himself to the stranger or sojourner close to you, or to a member of the stranger’s family, **48** after he is sold he may be redeemed again. One of his brothers may redeem him;

How is a person redeemed under the law of the nearest kinsman and who can do it?

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Ever since Ruth became a widow, her mother-in-law Naomi has been hoping Ruth would find a new husband. Recall the context of this verse: **“The Lord grant that you may find rest, each in the house of her husband.” (1:9a, NKJV)**. When Naomi heard Ruth had been working in the field of Boaz, she must have recognized the possibility of Ruth marrying Boaz through the law of nearest kinsman. **“The man is our relative, he is one of our closest relatives [redeemers]” (2:20)**. We learned from **Ruth Chapter 2** that ever since Boaz saw Ruth in the field, he was attracted to her and kept giving her all kinds of favors. Also, Ruth encouraged him by telling him over and over how grateful she was for the favors he was showing.

As things turned out—which is the story of **Ruth chapters 3 and 4**—Boaz marries Ruth. The question here is, How did this come about? Answer: through the Mosaic law described above. Let’s study the Bible text.

I. NAOMI INSTRUCTS RUTH

The opening verse introduces a major theme of this chapter—that Naomi will help Ruth get a husband. Naomi says to Ruth, **“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?” (3:1, NKJV)**.

Ruth 3:² Now Boaz, whose young women you were with, is he not our relative? In fact, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor.

What new husband does Naomi have in mind?

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3:³ Therefore wash yourself and anoint yourself, put on your *best* garment and go down to the threshing floor; *but* do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. ⁴Then it shall be, when he lies down, that you shall notice the place where he lies; and you shall go in, uncover his feet, and lie down; and he will tell you what you should do.”

What would these actions of Ruth tell Boaz?

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3:⁵ And she said to her, “All that you say to me I will do.”

Does Ruth go along with Naomi’s plan?

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II. BOAZ PLEDGES TO SECURE REDEMPTION

Ruth 3:⁶ So she went down to the threshing floor and did according to all that her mother-in-law instructed her. ⁷ And after Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was cheerful, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain; and she came softly, uncovered his feet, and lay down.

⁸ Now it happened at midnight that the man was startled, and turned himself; and there, a woman was lying at his feet. ⁹ And he said, “Who *are* you?”

So she answered, “I *am* Ruth, your maidservant. Take your maidservant under your wing, for you are a close relative.”

¹⁰ Then he said, “Blessed *are* you of the Lord, my daughter! For you have shown more kindness at the end than at the beginning, in that you did not go after young men, whether poor or rich. ¹¹ And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you request, for all the people of my town know that you *are* a virtuous woman. ¹² Now it is true that I *am* a close relative; however, there is a relative closer than I. ¹³ Stay this night, and in the morning it shall be *that* if he will perform the duty of a close relative for you—good; let him do it. But if he does not want to perform the duty for you, then I will perform the duty for you, *as* the Lord lives! Lie down until morning.”

¹⁴ So she lay at his feet until morning, and she arose before one could recognize another. Then he said, “Do not let it be known that the woman came to the threshing floor.” ¹⁵ Also he said, “Bring the shawl that *is* on you and hold it.” And when she held it, he measured six *ephahs* of barley, and laid *it* on her. Then she went into the city.

What do you think are Ruth’s objectives in doing what she does? What is there about the paragraph and the context of the whole book that indicates that no immoral acts or thoughts are part of the account? Include **Ruth 3:10, 11, 14** in your answer.

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Read **Ruth 3:9** and **Ruth 3:12** again. Ruth says to Boaz, “**You are a *qo-el* (redeemer).**” Boaz echoes with, “**It is true that I am a *qo-el* (redeemer).**” How close in spirit are Boaz and Ruth now?

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Read **Ruth 3:12b–15**. What problem does Boaz introduce?

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What quick solution does he offer?

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What does this assurance do for Ruth?

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III. RUTH RETURNS TO NAOMI

Ruth 3:¹⁶ When she came to her mother-in-law, she said, “*Is that you, my daughter?*”

Then she told her all that the man had done for her. ¹⁷ And she said, “These six *ephahs* of barley he gave me; for he said to me, ‘Do not go empty-handed to your mother-in-law.’ ”

¹⁸ Then she said, “Sit still, my daughter, until you know how the matter will turn out; for the man will not rest until he has concluded the matter this day.”

How do you account for Naomi’s advice to Ruth now?

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How difficult do you think it was for Ruth to wait?

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Summary

Summarize **Ruth Chapter 3** in your own words.

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Applications

Read **Ruth Chapter 3** again and record all the good traits of character you see in Ruth and in Naomi.

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What character and actions of Boaz in this chapter point to him as being a type of Christ?

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Looking Ahead

Do you believe that the marriage of Ruth and Boaz is in God’s providential plan? If so, what obstacle can stand in its way?

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